

UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

APRIL 2017

HIE Research and Economics Team



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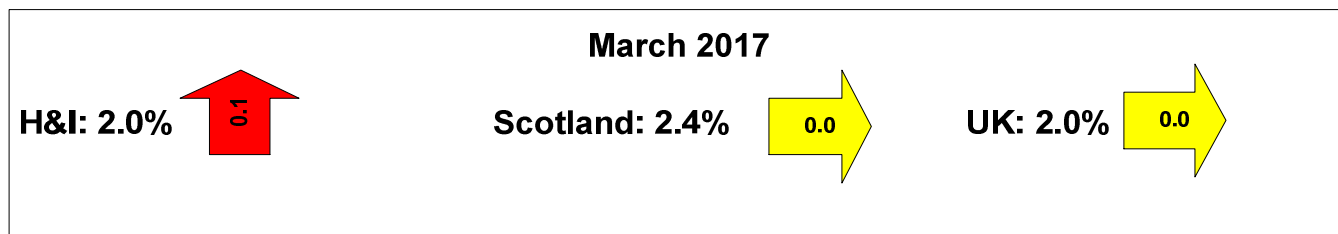
The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count and Universal Credit figures rather than job seekers allowance.

Since 1996, unemployment has been measured as a count of the number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA). However, the UK Government introduced a new benefit, Universal Credit, in May 2013 which has had a phased introduction across the country. The Claimant Count will now be a measure of all those in receipt of Universal Credit who are out of work, including income based JSA claimants. Contribution based JSA claimants will be measured separately.

JSA figures continue to be published, although they now form a subset of the new Claimant Count data, which the ONS believe to be the best measure of the number of people claiming unemployment related benefits.

The March 2017 claimant count figures were released on 12th April 2017.

As illustrated by the chart below, the Highlands and Islands continues to have lower unemployment than Scotland, but is in line with that for the UK.

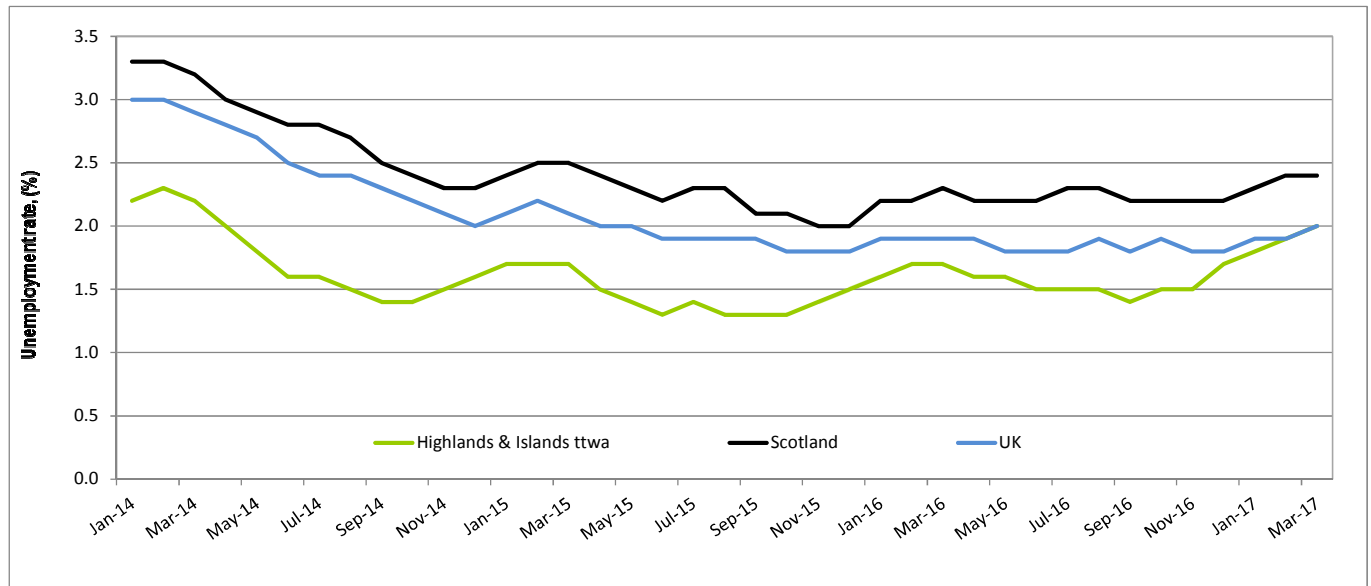


In March 2017, the average claimant count and universal credit unemployment rate for the 19 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **2.0%**, which was below the rate for Scotland (**2.4%**) but in-line with that for the UK. The region's rate was higher than that of the previous month (1.9% in February 2017), and that of a year earlier (1.8% in March 2016).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in March 2017 were AIness & Invergordon and Dunoon & Rothesay (both with 3.1%) and Wick (2.6%). Ten TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in March 2017 lower than the Highlands and Islands average (2.0%) – Ullapool (1.7%); Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh and Lochgilphead (both with 1.6%); Fort William and Aviemore & Grantown on Spey (both with 1.5%); Oban and Portree (both 1.3%); Orkney Islands (1.1%); Shetland (1.0%) and Mull & Islay (0.7%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment related benefits in the HIE area in March 2017 was 5,730. Out of the total, 1,115 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2014-2017)



* Based on Claimant Count and Universal Credit and, produced monthly by ONS.

^ As defined by Scottish datazones.

Table 1 below illustrates the claimant count and universal credit allowance rates for each of the 19 TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands.

Table 1 - Unemployment by TTWA

Travel to Work Area	March 2017		February 2017		March 2016		Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	rate	rate	rate	number	rate	number	rate	
Aless & Invergordon	415	3.1	3.2	2.9	2.9	-5	-0.1	35	0.2	
Dunoon & Rothesay	355	3.1	2.9	3.5	3.5	15	0.2	-50	-0.4	
Wick	200	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.6	0	-0.1	0	0.0	
Golpsie & Brora	130	2.4	2.3	2.0	2.0	5	0.1	20	0.4	
Campbeltown	95	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	5	0.0	0	0.0	
Thurso	190	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.3	0	0.0	-15	-0.2	
Elgin	1,345	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.9	50	0.1	150	0.2	
Eilean Siar	340	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.2	20	0.1	-20	-0.1	
Inverness	1,615	2.1	2.0	1.5	1.5	100	0.1	495	0.6	
Ullapool	70	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	0	0.1	5	0.1	
Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh	70	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.8	0	-0.1	-5	-0.2	
Lochgilphead	90	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.5	-10	-0.1	5	0.1	
Fort Wiliam	185	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.8	-15	0.0	-55	-0.3	
Aviemore & Grantown on spey	130	1.5	1.5	1.1	1.1	5	0.0	40	0.4	
Oban	135	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.3	-15	-0.2	5	0.0	
Portree	60	1.3	1.2	1.5	1.5	5	0.1	-10	-0.2	
Orkney Islands	150	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	10	0.1	30	0.2	
Shetland	145	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	10	0.1	5	0.0	
Mull & Islay	30	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	0	0.0	-5	-0.1	
Highlands and Islands TTWA	5,750	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.8	180	0.1	630	0.2	
Scotland	84,115	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	1,700	0.0	3,355	0.1	
United Kingdom	821,720	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	16,840	0.0	15,950	0.0	

Table 2 shows the total claimant count and universal credit unemployment, by number and rate over the month and year and youth unemployment by HIE area office.

Table 2 - Unemployment by Area Office - March 2017

HIE Area Office	Total Unemployment		Monthly change		Annual change		Youth Unemployment (18-24)
	number	rate*	number	%	number	%	number
Caithness and Sutherland	540	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	110
Inner Moray Firth	2,175	2.2	105	5.1	575	35.9	375
Moray	1,275	2.1	50	4.1	155	13.8	315
Innse Gall	340	2.1	20	6.3	-20	-5.6	45
Argyll and the Islands	750	1.9	-15	-2.0	-70	-8.5	150
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	355	1.5	0	0.0	-65	-15.5	45
Orkney	150	1.1	10	7.1	30	25.0	35
Shetland	145	1.0	10	7.4	5	3.6	40

Research and Economics
April 2017

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