

Unemployment Digest

January 2020



Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

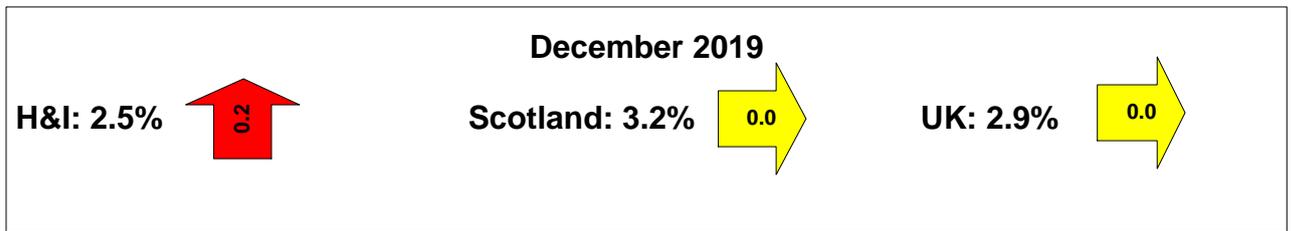
The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count and Universal Credit figures rather than job seekers allowance.

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 is now a measure of all those in receipt of Universal Credit who are out of work, including income based JSA claimants. Contribution based JSA claimants is 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 December 2019 claimant count figures were released on 21st January 2020.

As illustrated by the chart below, unemployment in the Highlands and Islands was lower than that for Scotland and the UK.

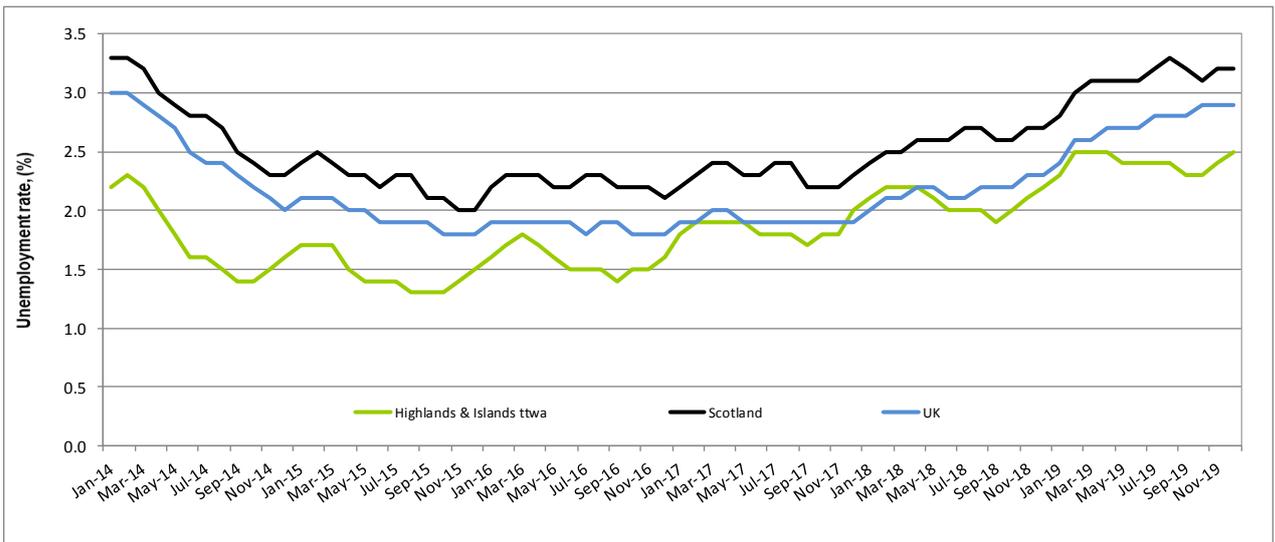


In December 2019, the average claimant count and universal credit unemployment rate for the 19 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was 2.5%, which was below the rate for Scotland (3.2%) and the UK (2.9%). The rate for the Highlands and Islands was higher than that of the previous month (2.3% in November 2019), and was also higher than that of a year earlier (2.2% in December 2018).

The TTWAs whose rates were higher than the Scottish average in December 2019 were Dunoon & Rothesay (4.4%); Wick (4.2%); Alness & Invergordon (4.0%); Campbeltown (3.7%) and Thurso (3.3%). Eleven TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in December 2019 lower than the Highlands and Islands average (2.5%) – Lochgilphead, Oban and Fort William (all 2.4%); Inverness and Ullapool (both 2.2%); Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh (1.9%); Shetland Islands (1.8%); Mull & Islay (1.4%); Orkney Islands, Aviemore & Grantown on Spey and Portree (all 1.3%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment related benefits in the HIE area during the month was 7,000. Out of the total, 1,185 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2014-2019)



* 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	December 2019		November 2019		December 2018		Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Dunoon & Rothesay	490	4.4	490	4.2	490	3.6	20	0.2	85	0.8
Wick	315	4.2	315	3.9	315	3.7	25	0.3	40	0.5
Alness & Invergordon	530	4.0	530	3.8	530	4.0	25	0.2	5	0.0
Campbeltown	160	3.7	160	3.3	160	2.5	20	0.4	55	1.2
Thurso	285	3.3	285	3.1	285	3.3	15	0.2	0	0.0
Golpsie & Brora	155	2.9	155	2.9	155	2.7	0	0.0	10	0.2
Eilean Siar	400	2.6	400	2.3	400	1.8	40	0.3	110	0.8
Elgin	1,580	2.5	1,580	2.5	1,580	2.2	25	0.0	210	0.3
Lochgilphead	130	2.4	130	2.4	130	2.1	0	0.0	15	0.3
Oban	240	2.4	240	2.3	240	1.7	10	0.1	70	0.7
Fort William	305	2.4	305	2.1	305	2.3	30	0.3	5	0.1
Inverness	1,630	2.2	1,630	2.1	1,630	2.2	85	0.1	-25	0.0
Ullapool	90	2.2	90	2.0	90	2.0	10	0.2	5	0.2
Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh	80	1.9	80	1.8	80	1.8	5	0.1	5	0.1
Shetland Islands	255	1.8	255	1.7	255	1.0	15	0.1	105	0.8
Mull & Islay	55	1.4	55	1.2	55	1.1	5	0.2	5	0.3
Orkney Islands	180	1.3	180	1.3	180	1.0	0	0.0	45	0.3
Aviemore & Grantown on spey	115	1.3	115	1.2	115	1.2	15	0.1	10	0.1
Portree	60	1.3	60	1.0	60	1.3	15	0.3	0	0.0
Highlands and Islands TTWA	7,050	2.5	7,050	2.3	7,050	2.2	360	0.2	755	0.3
Scotland	111,440	3.2	111,440	3.2	111,440	2.7	1,190	0.0	16,445	0.5
United Kingdom	1,210,625	2.9	1,210,625	2.9	1,210,625	2.3	13,860	0.0	243,405	0.6

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 – December 2019

HIE Area Office	Total Unemployment		Monthly change		Annual change		Youth Unemployment (18-24)
	number	rate*	number	%	number	%	number
Caithness and Sutherland	800	3.5	50	6.7	60	8.1	140
Argyll and the Islands	1,150	3.0	50	4.5	230	25.0	170
Innse Gall	400	2.6	40	11.1	110	37.9	50
Moray	1,455	2.5	20	1.4	165	12.8	300
Inner Moray Firth	2,285	2.3	125	5.8	-5	-0.2	390
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	475	2.0	45	10.5	-5	-1.0	60
Shetland	255	1.8	15	6.3	105	70.0	45
Orkney	180	1.3	0	0.0	45	33.3	30

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