

# Unemployment Digest

February 2020



Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

## UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

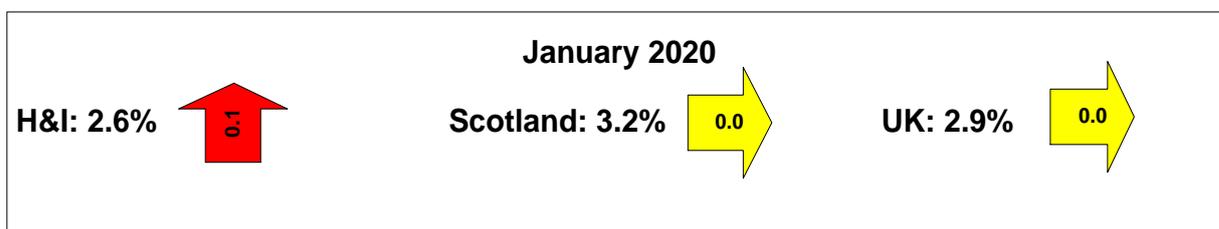
The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count and Universal Credit figures rather than job seekers allowance.

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 January 2020 claimant count figures were released on 18th February 2020.

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

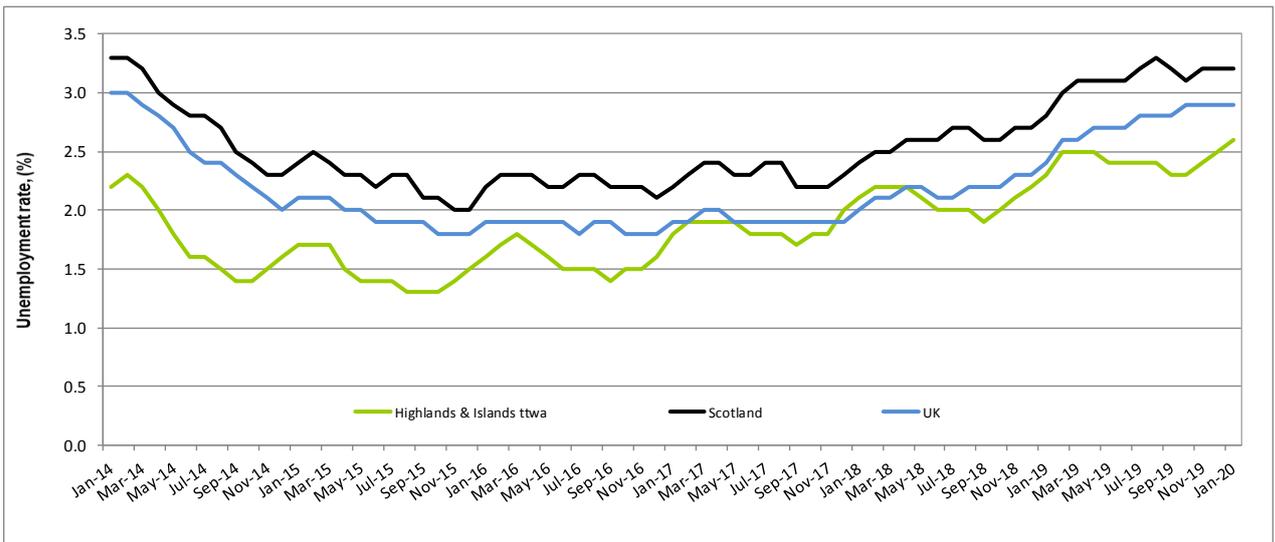


In January 2020, the average claimant count and universal credit unemployment rate for the 19 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was 2.6%, which was below the rate for Scotland (3.2%) and the UK (2.9%). The rate for the Highlands and Islands was higher than that of the previous month (2.5% in December 2019), and was also higher than that of a year earlier (2.3% in January 2019).

The TTWAs whose rates were higher than the Scottish average in January 2020 were Dunoon & Rothesay (4.6%); Wick (4.2%); Alness & Invergordon (4.1%); Campbeltown (4.0%) and Thurso (3.4%). Ten TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in January 2020 lower than the Highlands and Islands average (2.6%) – Oban and Fort William (both 2.5%); Inverness (2.3%); Ullapool and Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh (both 2.1%); Shetland Islands (1.6%); Aviemore & Grantown on Spey and Portree (both 1.5%) and Mull & Islay and Orkney Islands (both 1.4%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment related benefits in the HIE area during the month was 7,275. Out of the total, 1,220 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2014-2020)



\* 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	January 2020		December 2019		January 2019		Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Dunoon & Rothesay	520	4.6		4.3	4.0	4.0	35	0.3		0.6
Wick	315	4.2		4.3	3.9	3.9	0	-0.1		0.3
Alness & Invergordon	540	4.1		4.0	3.9	3.9	10	0.1		0.2
Campbeltown	170	4.0		3.7	2.7	2.7	10	0.3		1.3
Thurso	295	3.4		3.3	3.2	3.2	10	0.1		0.2
Golpsie & Brora	175	3.2		2.9	2.9	2.9	20	0.3		0.3
Eilean Siar	425	2.7		2.6	1.9	1.9	25	0.1		0.8
Elgin	1,620	2.6		2.5	2.3	2.3	35	0.1		0.3
Lochgilphead	145	2.6		2.4	2.2	2.2	15	0.2		0.4
Oban	250	2.5		2.4	1.9	1.9	10	0.1		0.6
Fort William	315	2.5		2.3	2.5	2.5	15	0.2		0.0
Inverness	1,705	2.3		2.1	2.2	2.2	85	0.2		0.1
Ullapool	85	2.1		2.1	2.3	2.3	0	0.0		-0.2
Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh	90	2.1		1.9	2.0	2.0	10	0.2		0.1
Shetland Islands	230	1.6		1.7	1.1	1.1	-15	-0.1		0.5
Mull & Ilay	60	1.4		1.3	1.4	1.4	5	0.1		0.0
Orkney Islands	190	1.4		1.3	1.2	1.2	15	0.1		0.2
Aviemore & Grantown on spey	125	1.5		1.4	1.3	1.3	10	0.1		0.2
Portree	65	1.5		1.2	1.3	1.3	10	0.3		0.2
Highlands and Islands TTWA	7,320	2.6		2.5	2.3	2.3	300	0.1		0.3
Scotland	112,630	3.2		3.2	2.8	2.8	1,925	0.0		0.4
United Kingdom	1,224,535	2.9		2.9	2.4	2.4	21,740	0.0		0.5

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 – January 2020

HIE Area Office	Total Unemployment		Monthly change		Annual change		Youth Unemployment (18-24)
	number	rate*	number	%	number	%	number
Caithness and Sutherland	820	3.6	25	3.1	60	7.9	145
Argyll and the Islands	1,225	3.2	80	7.0	210	20.7	190
Innse Gall	425	2.7	25	6.3	130	44.1	55
Moray	1,495	2.5	30	2.0	115	8.3	300
Inner Moray Firth	2,385	2.4	110	4.8	70	3.0	390
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	505	2.1	35	7.4	-5	-1.0	65
Shetland	230	1.6	-15	-6.1	75	48.4	45
Orkney	190	1.4	15	8.6	35	22.6	30

Research and Economics  
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