

UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

MARCH 2014

HIE Research and Economics Team

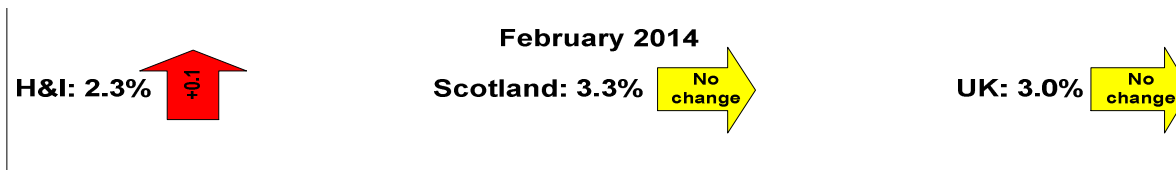


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The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count figures. The Claimant Count measures the number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed. The Department for Work and Pensions introduced a new benefit, Universal Credit, in April 2013. At present Universal Credit benefit is not included in the Claimant Count figures. National Statistics (ONS) and DWP are working to include jobseeker Universal Credit claims in the Claimant Count as soon as possible.

The February 2014 claimant count unemployment figures* were released on 19th March 2014.

As illustrated by the chart below, the Highlands and Islands continues to have significantly lower unemployment than either Scotland or the UK - a trend which has been fairly constant since the recession.

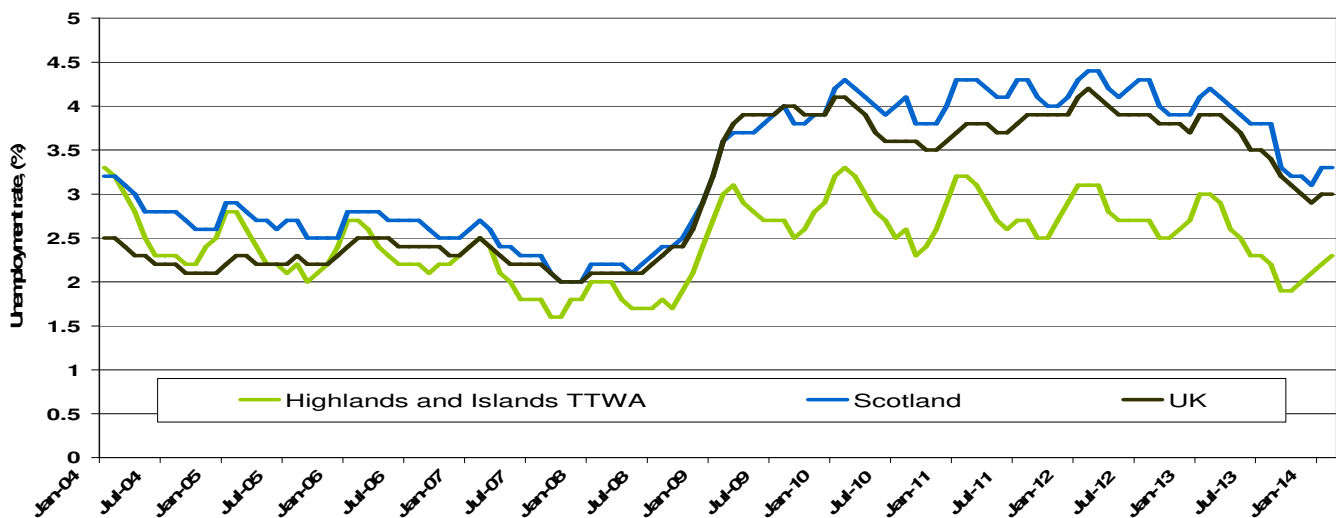


In February 2014, the average claimant count unemployment rate for the Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **2.3%**, which was below the rates for both Scotland (**3.3%**) and the UK's (**3.0%**). The region's rate rose by 0.1% on the previous month and was lower than a year earlier (3.0% in February 2013).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in February 2014 were Dunoon & Bute (4.1%), Wick (4.0%), Campbeltown (3.9%) and Invergordon (3.6%). Seven TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in February 2014 lower than 2.3% – Ullapool & Gairloch and Moray (both 2.0%), Inverness & Dingwall (1.7%), Mull & Islay (1.5%), Badenoch (1.4%), Orkney Islands (1.2%) and Shetland Islands (0.9%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment benefit in the HIE area^ in February 2014 was 6,365. Out of the total, some 2,260 were long term unemployed** and 1,355 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2003-2014)



Based on Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) Claimant Count figures, produced monthly by ONS.

^ As defined by Scottish datazones.

** For the purpose of this analysis, long-term unemployment (LTU) is defined as 'all those who have been unemployed and claiming benefit for over 6 months'.

Table 1 below illustrates the claimant count rates for each of the 18 TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands.

Table 1 - Unemployment by TTWA

Travel to Work Area	February 2014		January 2014	February 2013	Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	rate	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Dunoon & Bute	533	4.1	4.0	5.7	22	0.1	-204	-1.6
Wick	292	4.0	3.8	4.4	11	0.2	-27	-0.4
Campbeltown	188	3.9	3.9	3.9	1	0.0	0	0.0
Invergordon	471	3.6	3.0	4.4	73	0.6	-112	-0.8
Thurso	279	3.0	3.1	3.1	-9	-0.1	-7	-0.1
Skye & Lochalsh	248	3.0	3.0	3.9	-1	0.0	-69	-0.9
Eilean Siar	481	3.0	3.0	3.2	-1	0.0	-38	-0.2
Dornoch & Lairg	172	3.0	2.8	3.2	15	0.2	-8	-0.2
Lochgilphead	164	2.6	2.5	3.0	6	0.1	-25	-0.4
Lochaber	318	2.6	2.4	3.5	23	0.2	-114	-0.9
Oban	245	2.3	2.3	3.1	-7	0.0	-87	-0.8
Ullapool & Gairloch	102	2.0	2.1	2.9	-7	-0.1	-46	-0.9
Moray	1,099	2.0	2.0	2.6	-17	0.0	-357	-0.6
Inverness & Dingwall	1,227	1.7	1.8	2.8	-33	-0.1	-809	-1.1
Mull & Islay	75	1.5	1.5	2.1	2	0.0	-29	-0.6
Badenoch	114	1.4	1.3	2.6	9	0.1	-94	-1.2
Orkney Islands	156	1.2	1.1	1.5	13	0.1	-35	-0.3
Shetland Islands	122	0.9	0.9	1.5	-14	0.0	-89	-0.6
Highlands and Islands TTWA	6,286	2.3	2.2	3.0	86	0.1	-2,150	-0.7
Scotland	114,409	3.3	3.3	4.2	701	0.0	-31,510	-0.9
United Kingdom	1,243,434	3.0	3.0	3.9	522	0.0	-370,355	-0.9

Source: ONS

Table 2 shows the total claimant count unemployment, by number and rate over the month and year, long-term unemployment (LTU) and youth unemployment by HIE area office.

Table 2 - Unemployment by Area Office

HIE Area Office	Total Unemployment		Monthly change		Annual change		LTU	Youth Unemployment (18-24)
	number	rate*	number	%	number	%	number	number
Caithness and Sutherland	780	3.3	12	1.6	-52	-6.3	350	175
Innse Gall	481	3.0	-1	-0.2	-38	-7.3	225	70
Argyll and the Islands	1,284	3.0	29	2.3	-360	-21.9	525	285
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	631	2.6	20	3.3	-219	-25.8	165	115
Moray	1,099	2.0	-17	-1.5	-357	-24.5	350	295
Inner Moray Firth	1,812	1.9	49	2.8	-1,015	-35.9	570	345
Orkney	156	1.2	13	9.1	-35	-18.3	40	45
Shetland	122	0.8	-14	-10.3	-89	-42.2	35	25

*Calculated rate, as a % of working age population

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