

Unemployment digest



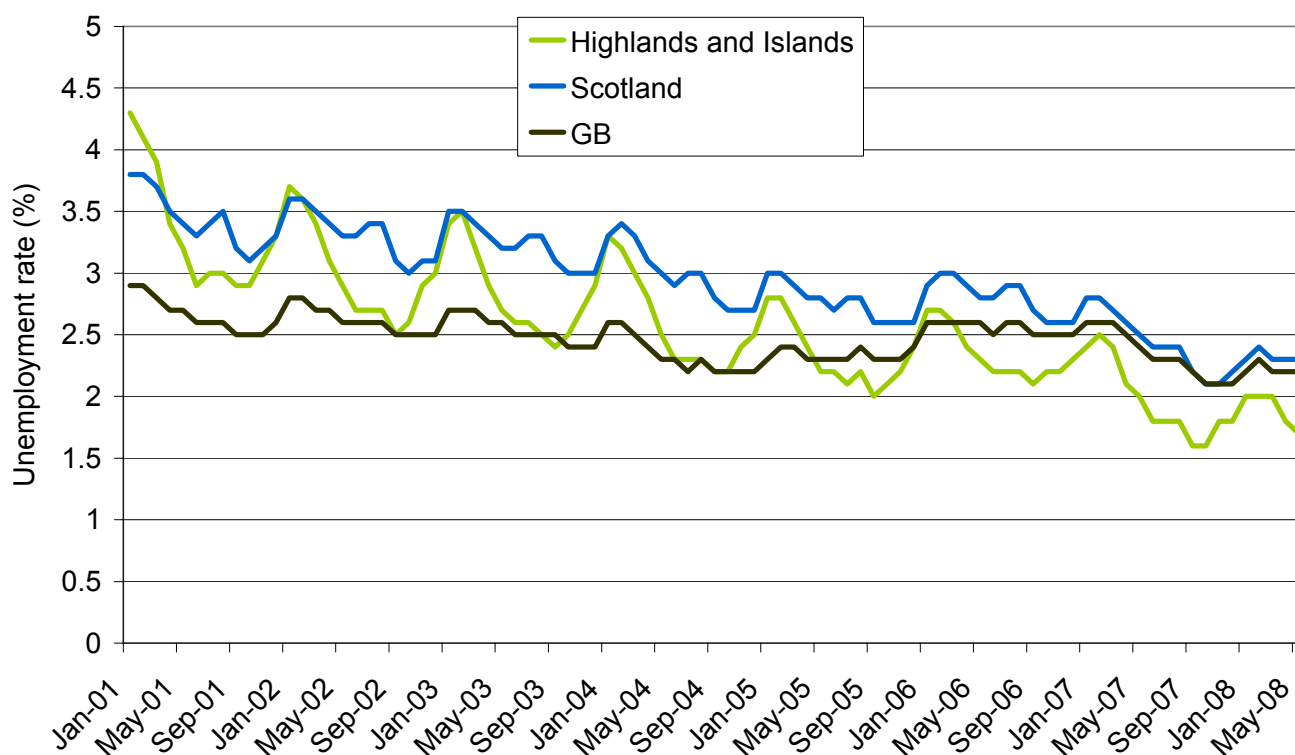
Summary

The May 2008 unemployment figures were released on 11th June 2008. During the month, April to May 2008, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit in Great Britain fell by 0.4%, from 810,417 to 807,191 (3,226). This figure is lower than May 2007, where the number of claimants stood at 864,705, a decrease of 6.7% (54,288 claimants).

The number of people claiming unemployment benefit in Scotland also fell during the month, falling 1.7% from 73,628 to 72,385 (1,243 claimants). This figure is lower than May last year, where the number of claimants stood at 79,521, a decrease of 9.0% (5,893 claimants).

The HIE area also witnessed a decrease in the amount of people claiming unemployment benefit during the month April to May 2008, falling 4.0% from 4,644 to 4,460 claimants (184 claimants). This figure is lower than the same period last year, where the total number of claimants stood at 5,061, a decrease of 12.1% (428 claimants).

Unemployment rates (%): 2001-2008



Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

Table 1 – Unemployment rates by TTWA

Table 1 below illustrates the claimant count rates for May 2008, using the 1998 TTWAs (Travel-To-Work-Areas). The claimant count rates are compared with April and May 2008 to highlight the monthly and annual changes. The TTWAs are ranked in descending order by the May 2008 figure.

Area	May 2008	April 2008	May 2007
Wick	3.4	3.2	3.3
Dunoon and Rothesay	3.2	3.2	3.2
Campbeltown	2.8	2.9	2.7
Lewis and Harris	2.1	2.4	2.9
Keith and Buckie	2.0	2.1	2.4
Dingwall	2.0	2.0	2.1
Uists and Barra	1.9	2.0	2.6
Thurso	1.9	1.9	2.1
Sutherland	1.8	2.1	2.5
Elgin and Forres	1.8	1.8	2.1
Skye and Ullapool	1.7	2.1	2.0
Lochgilphead	1.6	1.9	1.7
Oban	1.6	1.6	2.0
Dufftown	1.4	1.5	1.3
Inverness	1.4	1.4	1.5
Lochaber	1.3	1.4	1.4
Argyll Islands	1.2	1.6	1.3
Badenoch	1.0	1.0	1.1
Shetland Isles	0.8	1.0	1.3
Orkney Islands	0.8	0.9	1.0
HIE TTWAs	1.7	1.8	2.0
Highland	1.6	1.7	1.8
Scotland	2.3	2.3	2.5
Great Britain	2.2	2.2	2.4

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

During the month, April to May 2008, the claimant count rose in 1 TTWA, fell in 12, and was static in the remaining 7 – Dunoon & Rothesay, Thurso, Elgin and Forres, Oban, Dingwall, Inverness and Badenoch. Wick was the only area to increase over the month, rising 0.2% from 3.2% to 3.4%. Skye & Ullapool and Argyll Islands shared the greatest decrease over the month, both falling by 0.4%.

Over the year to May 2008, the claimant count rose in 3, fell in 16, and was static in the remaining 1 TTWA – Dunoon and Rothesay. Wick, Campbeltown and Dufftown all shared the greatest increase over the month, rising 0.1%. Lewis & Harris had the greatest decrease over the month, falling 0.8% from 2.9% to 2.1%.

Table 2 – Number of unemployed by Area Office

Table 2 below traces changes in the numbers (not rates) of unemployed people claiming benefits in the Highlands and Islands Area Offices (AOs) between April and May 2008. A yearly comparison between May 2007 and May 2008 is also provided. The AOs are ranked in descending order by the size of the annual change in the number of unemployed, displayed in the right hand column.

Area Office	Number claiming unemployment benefit (May 2008)	% change in number claiming unemployment benefit (April 08-May 08)	% change in number claiming unemployment benefit (May 07 - May 08)
Shetland	114	-18.0	-34.5
Innse Gall	322	-9.0	-26.8
Orkney	91	-12.5	-24.2
Skye and Wester Ross	181	-20.6	-15.8
Moray	958	-1.6	-14.8
Caithness and Sutherland	529	-0.8	-10.0
Lochaber	152	-7.3	-8.4
Inverness and East Highland	1,247	0.7	-6.7
Argyll and the Islands	866	-4.8	-4.4
HIE Area	4,460	-4.0	-12.0
Highland	2,109	-2.5	-8.5
Scotland	72,385	-1.7	-9.0
Great Britain	807,191	-0.4	-6.7

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

Over the month, April to May 2008, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit rose in 1 and fell in the remaining 8 AOs. Inverness and East Highland was the only area to increase, rising 0.7% from 1,238 to 1,247 claimants. Skye & Wester Ross had the greatest decrease over the month, falling 20.6% from 228 to 181 claimants.

Over the year to May 2008, all 9 AOs experienced a decrease in the number of people claiming unemployment benefit. Shetland had the greatest decrease over the year, down 34.5% from 174 to 114 claimants.

Table 3 – Long-term unemployment by Area Office

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 3 below shows the number of people who are long term unemployed in May 2008 in each of the AOs. It also highlights the percentage change in the number of those claiming long term unemployment benefit over the month (April to May 2008) and over the year (May 2007 to May 2008). The AOs are ranked by the right hand column, which contains the size of the annual percentage change in numbers of LTU.

Area Office	May 2008	% Change in number of LTU (April 08 - May 08)	% Change in number of LTU (May 07 - May 08)
Shetland	25	0.0	-58.3
Orkney	25	-16.7	-50.0
Lochaber	20	-20.0	-42.9
Innse Gall	115	0.0	-37.8
Moray	190	2.7	-35.6
Inverness and East Highland	215	-2.3	-28.3
Caithness and Sutherland	190	5.6	-24.0
Skye and Wester Ross	85	6.3	-19.0
Argyll and the Islands	305	1.7	-10.3
HIE Area	1,170	0.9	-27.8
Highland	515	2.0	-25.4
Scotland	19,750	1.0	-24.5
Great Britain	235,635	0.5	-22.9

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

During the month, the number of long term unemployment benefit claimants rose in 4, fell in 3 and was static in the remaining 2 AOs – Shetland and Innse Gall. Skye and Wester ross had the greatest increase over the month, rising 6.3% from 80 to 85 claimants. Lochaber had the greatest decrease over the month, falling 20.0% from 25 to 20 claimants.

Over the year to May 2008, all 9 AOs experienced a decrease in the number of people claiming unemployment benefit for over 6 months. Shetland had the greatest decrease over the year, down 58.3% from 60 to 25 claimants.

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Further economic information and previous factsheets can be accessed on the HIE Website: <http://www.hie.co.uk>

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