

ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET

Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary

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Summary findings

This statistical publication provides summary information on Scotland's devolved employability services. This, the 19th edition, publishes statistics for the first four years of Fair Start Scotland (FSS) from April 2018 to March 2022, and experimental statistics on employability support delivered under the No One Left Behind strategic approach, reporting on the first two and three quarter years from April 2019 to December 2021.

FSS is an employability support service, launched in April 2018, which aims to help unemployed people into sustainable employment. No One Left Behind is a new approach to employability delivery which moves away from funding and delivering a number of separate and distinct employability programmes to a more flexible approach¹.

For FSS, there were 67,619 referrals and 45,030 starts from its launch in April 2018 up to March 2022. The number of starts includes 2,447 people who have previously received support on FSS – re-joining FSS has been possible since April 2021². As this publication covers the first full year of people being able to re-join FSS (April 2021- March 2022), with participants able to enter and sustain employment or leave the service during both periods of support, this has been reflected in a change to the language adopted in the publication. The description of participants leaving the service early or starting and sustaining employment now focuses on FSS starts rather than people. This reflects the fact that from the start of year 4 and thus overall, the total number of FSS starts is not the same as the number of unique people who have received support.

In the three month period from January – March 2022, there were 4,798 referrals and 3,184 starts on FSS. Referrals were 20% higher than the previous quarter (October – December 2021), and 7% higher than the same quarter in 2021. Starts were 18% higher than the previous quarter (October – December 2021), and 5% higher than the same quarter in 2021. Whilst some of the increase in referrals and starts in January – March will be a result of the preceding period's (October – December) annual seasonal fall, the increases compared to the same period last year (January – March 2021) will likely reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic during early 2021.

So far, there have been 15,355 job starts since the launch of FSS, with 945³ job starts during the January – March 2022 period. Job starts this quarter were 14% lower than the quarter before, and 1% lower than the same period in 2021.

Job outcome rates can only be reported for start cohorts where enough time has passed in pre-employment support and for outcomes to be achieved. For participants where data is complete, 50% of FSS starts left the service early without completing the programme of support offered or achieving a job outcome (53% from year 1, 46% from year 2 and 51% from year 3), 38% started a job (32% from year 1, 34% from year 2 and 47% from year 3), 27% sustained employment for 3 months, 21% for 6 months and 14% for at least 12 months.

¹ [Employment support programme: equality impact assessment - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/employment-support-programme-equality-impact-assessment/pages/10.aspx)

² See 'How many people have joined FSS?' section on page 6 and Fair Start Scotland (FSS) Background Information for more details of how this affects the counts in this publication.

³ Data from the 'Job starts, in month' column of Table 3 in the supplementary tables.

People who started work had high rates of sustaining it: 72% of job starts went on to sustain employment for 3 months, 80% of those who sustained employment for 3 months went on to reach at least 6 months and 76% of those who sustained employment for 6 months went on to reach at least 12 months.

Experimental statistics for No One Left Behind show that a total of 16,859 people started receiving support in the two and three quarter year period from April 2019 to December 2021. The number of people starting to receive support has steadily increased over time; 2,739⁴ people started in year 1 (April 2019 – March 2020), 4,891 in year 2 (April 2020 – March 2021) and 9,229 in the first three quarters of year 3 (April 2021 – December 2021) which was more than the overall total numbers supported in years 1 and 2.

⁴ There is a decrease in the year 1 total from previous publications as this was previously derived from year 1 aggregate data that was collected during that period. Since then we have developed year 1 data and combined it with data currently collected for subsequent periods, which has allowed us to provide more detailed information for year 1 participants, including their achievements. As a result of this and Management Information changes the start dates for some participants changed.

Fair Start Scotland (FSS)

Introduction

Fair Start Scotland is the Scottish Government's devolved employability support service, and aims to help those further from the labour market to move into and sustain fair work. FSS launched on 3 April 2018 with funding to support up to 38,000 people into work over an initial three year referral period to end March 2021. In response to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, referral into the service has been extended to March 2023.

FSS provides individualised one-to-one support to unemployed people who face the greatest challenges to obtaining work, including people with a disability or health condition, people with convictions, care-experienced young people, single parents, refugees, ethnic minorities, and people who live in some of the most deprived areas in Scotland. More information about the service can be found on [mygov.scot - get help to find a job](https://mygov.scot/get-help-to-find-a-job).

Fair Start Scotland is delivered by a mixed economy of public, private and third sector providers across nine geographical areas throughout Scotland. Potential participants can engage with Fair Start Scotland in a variety of ways. A referral can be made by an individual's Jobcentre Plus (JCP) Work Coach. Alternatively, participants can be signposted to Fair Start Scotland through third party organisations or they can self-refer to their local provider if they meet specific criteria. Third-party referrals relate to referrals from outwith JCP.

After a referral is made, the participant is matched with a provider in their local area. The provider makes contact and offers an introduction in which the service is fully explained. The participant is then given the necessary information to engage with Fair Start Scotland.

How many FSS referrals and starts have there been?

There were 67,619 referrals to FSS between its launch in April 2018 and the end of March 2022. Of the total referrals to FSS, 45,030 went on to start receiving employability support. This includes 2,447 people who have already been supported by Fair Start Scotland⁵.

Referrals and starts have decreased from a high point observed in April – June 2021, but remain high compared to levels seen in recent years, and especially when compared to the lower numbers of referrals and starts seen in the quarters after the first lockdown (April – June 2020 onwards, see Background Information section on the impact of COVID-19). Referrals have risen by 20% to 4,798 this quarter and starts have increased by 18% to 3,184. Compared to the equivalent quarter in 2021, referrals have risen by 7% and starts have increased by 5%.

⁵ This is a result of a change made to the service during April – June 2021. See 'How many people have joined FSS?' section on page 6 and Fair Start Scotland (FSS) Background Information for more details of how this affects the counts in this publication.

Figure 1: Number of referrals into Fair Start Scotland by quarter of referral, from April 2018 to March 2022

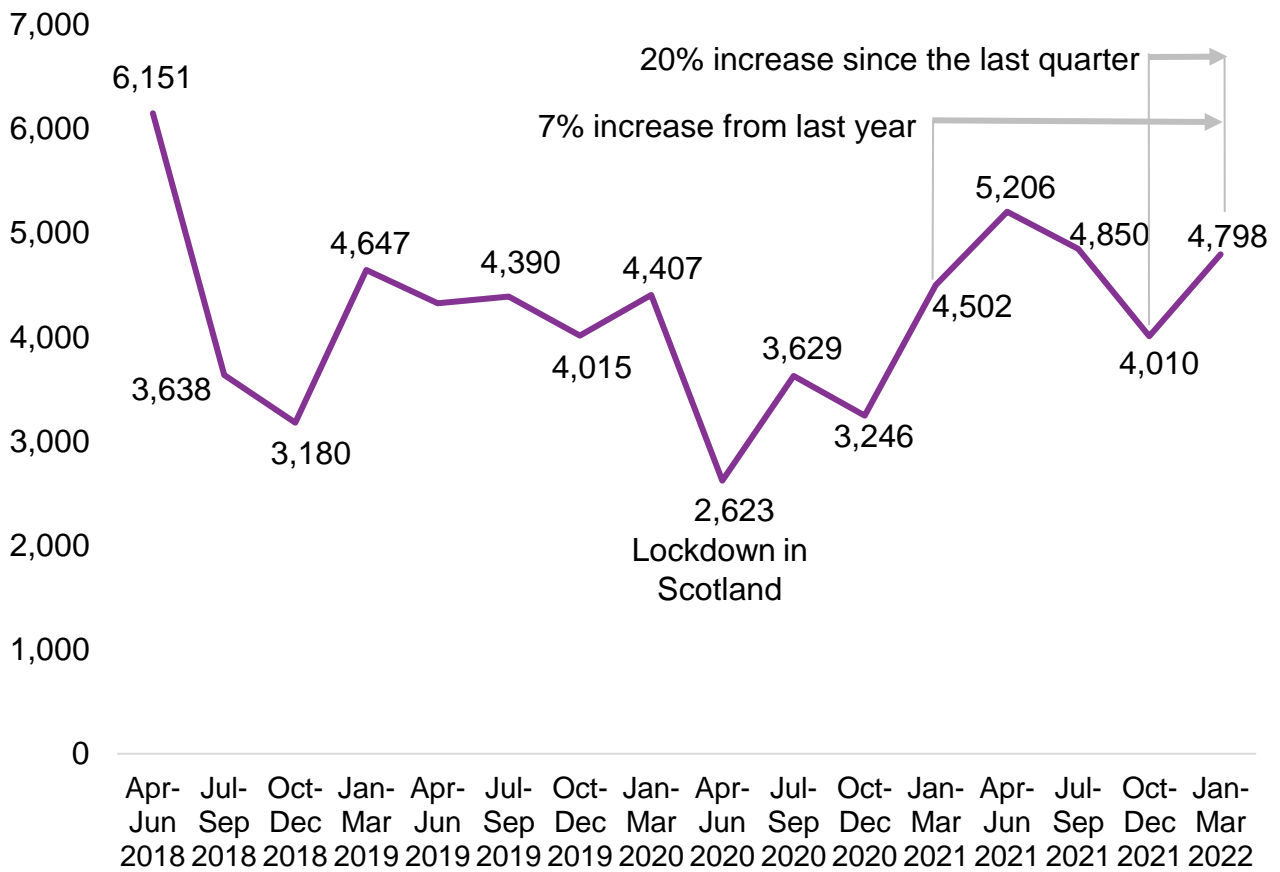
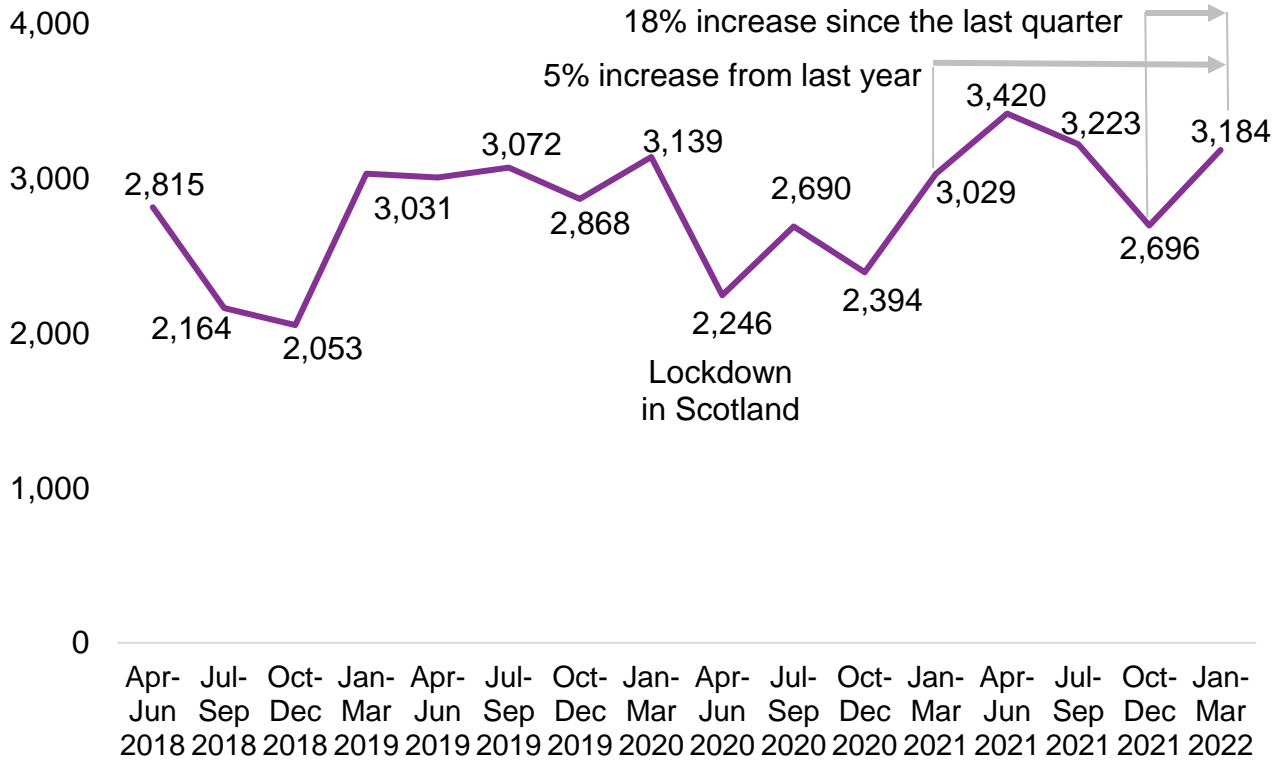


Figure 2: Number of Fair Start Scotland starts by quarter, from April 2018 to March 2022



How many people have joined FSS?

42,583 people started on FSS, from the 45,030 total starts on the service between its launch in April 2018 and the end of March 2022, with the difference reflecting people re-joining the service. From April 2021, with the extension of FSS beyond the initial three year period, people who have previously received support may re-join the service. As a result of this change, the total number of FSS starts in years 1 to 3 is the same as the number of unique people but from the start of year 4 and thus overall, the total number of FSS starts is not the same as the number of unique people who have received support.

The breakdown of equalities groups for the 42,583 people is shown in Figure 3; showing the characteristics that were reported for participants when they first joined FSS.

Overall, 38% of people who have joined FSS were women and 62% were men. The proportion of women in FSS increased from years 1 to 3: from 35% in year 1, to 37% in year 2 and 40% in year 3. In year 4 overall the proportion of women in FSS remained at 40%, whilst in the most recent quarter of year 4 (January – March 2022), 38% of participants were women.

The most common age group of people joining FSS was 35-49 years (28% of people), followed by 50 years old & over and 25-34 years (both at 25%), and 16-24 years (20%). Over the course of years 1 to 3, there was an increase in the proportion of participants from the younger age bands (16-34), and a decrease in the older age bands (35+). Participants aged 16-34 made up 38% of all starts in year 1, 44% in year 2, and 53% in year 3. In year 4 however there was a reversal, with a decrease in the proportion of participants from the younger age bands and an increase in the older age bands. In year 4 the proportion of participants aged 16-34 fell to 42%, primarily due to a decrease in 16-24 year old participants, from 23% in January – March 2021 (year 3) to a low of 13% during October – December 2021 in year 4. Participants aged 35 and over made up 60% of all starts in year 1, 52% in year 2 and 47% in year 3. The proportion of older (35+) participants increased in year 4 to 57%, mainly due to an increase in participants aged 50+, from 21% in January – March 2021 (year 3) to a high of 29% during October – December 2021 in year 4.

Overall, 5% of people who have joined FSS were from minority ethnic backgrounds and 72% were white, with ethnicity unknown for the remaining 23% of participants. In the most recent quarter, 9% of participants were from a minority ethnic group and 85% of participants were white. Monitoring changes to the proportion of minority ethnic participants over time is difficult due to the percentage being low and the high proportion of unknowns, and there is ongoing work to improve data quality and collection⁶. In year 1, 4% of participants were minority ethnic, 6% in year 2, 4% in year 3, and 7% in year 4.

⁶ Since the first COVID-19 lockdown FSS has mostly been delivered over the phone or online, with face-to-face interaction paused. This has impacted the collection of equalities data. We have been working with FSS service providers to ensure response rates are maximised. For more information, see the Data Quality section in the Background Information.

44% of people joining FSS reported a disability. The proportion of disabled participants decreased between years 1 and 3: from 55% in year 1, to 44% in year 2, and 32% in year 3⁷. In year 4 it increased once more to levels similar to year 2, with 47% of people joining in year 4 reporting a disability.

Overall, 63% of people joining FSS reported having a long-term health condition, 30% reported no long-term health condition, with the rest (6%) unknown. In the most recent quarter of year 4 (January – March 2022), 65% of people reported a long-term health condition, 34% did not, and for 1% this was unknown.

The Scottish Government's evaluation of the third year of the service was published in October 2021⁸ - with accompanying statistics tables published at the same time⁹. It showed that compared to the unemployed population of Scotland there were some groups that were under-represented in FSS in year 3: women, people from minority ethnic backgrounds, people from the youngest (16-24) and oldest (50-64) age bands, while a higher proportion of disabled people and people aged 25-34 used the service. For gender, ethnic group and disability, this pattern was also true for year 1¹⁰ and year 2¹¹. For age there was a change – all younger age groups (16-34, rather than just 16-24) were under represented and older groups were over represented before year 3.

⁷ Data for disabled participants in year 3 showed a lot of change throughout the year, as both data completeness and people identified as disabled decreased immediately after the first COVID-19 lockdown in the first half of the year.

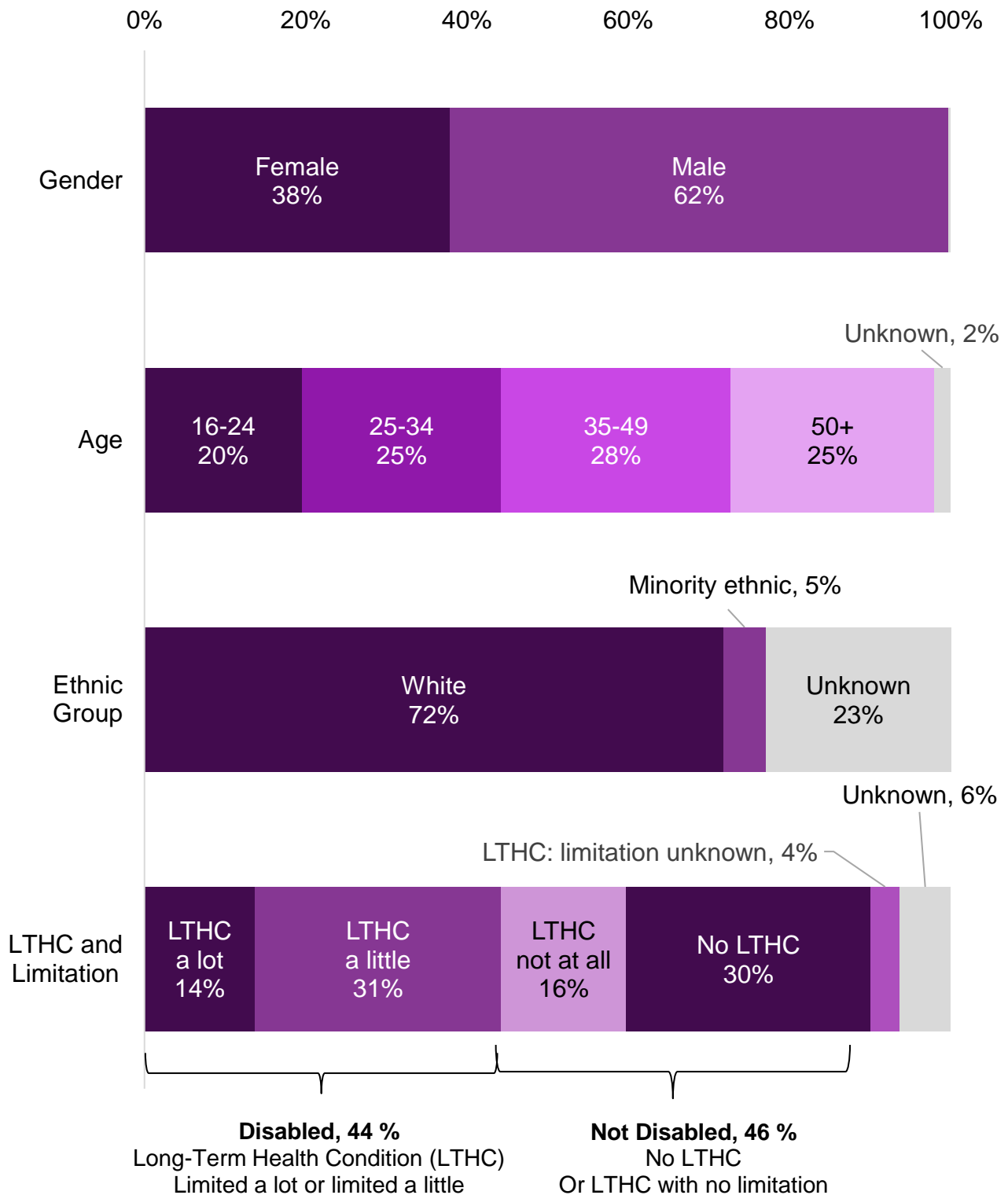
⁸ Fair Start Scotland - evaluation report 4 - year 3 overview - October 2021 Fair Start Scotland: evaluation report 4 - year 3 overview - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

⁹ Fair Start Scotland year three evaluation and annual reports: accompanying statistics - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

¹⁰ Fair Start Scotland evaluation report 2: overview of year one - November 2019
<http://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-start-scotland-evaluation-report-2-overview-year-1-november-2019/>

¹¹ Fair Start Scotland - evaluation report 3: year two – overview - November 2020
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-start-scotland-evaluation-report-3-overview-year-two/>

Figure 3: Breakdown of people starting Fair Start Scotland by equality characteristic group, from April 2018 to March 2022 ^{12 13}



¹² These breakdowns are for the 42,583 people that started on FSS, showing the characteristics that were reported for participants when they first joined.

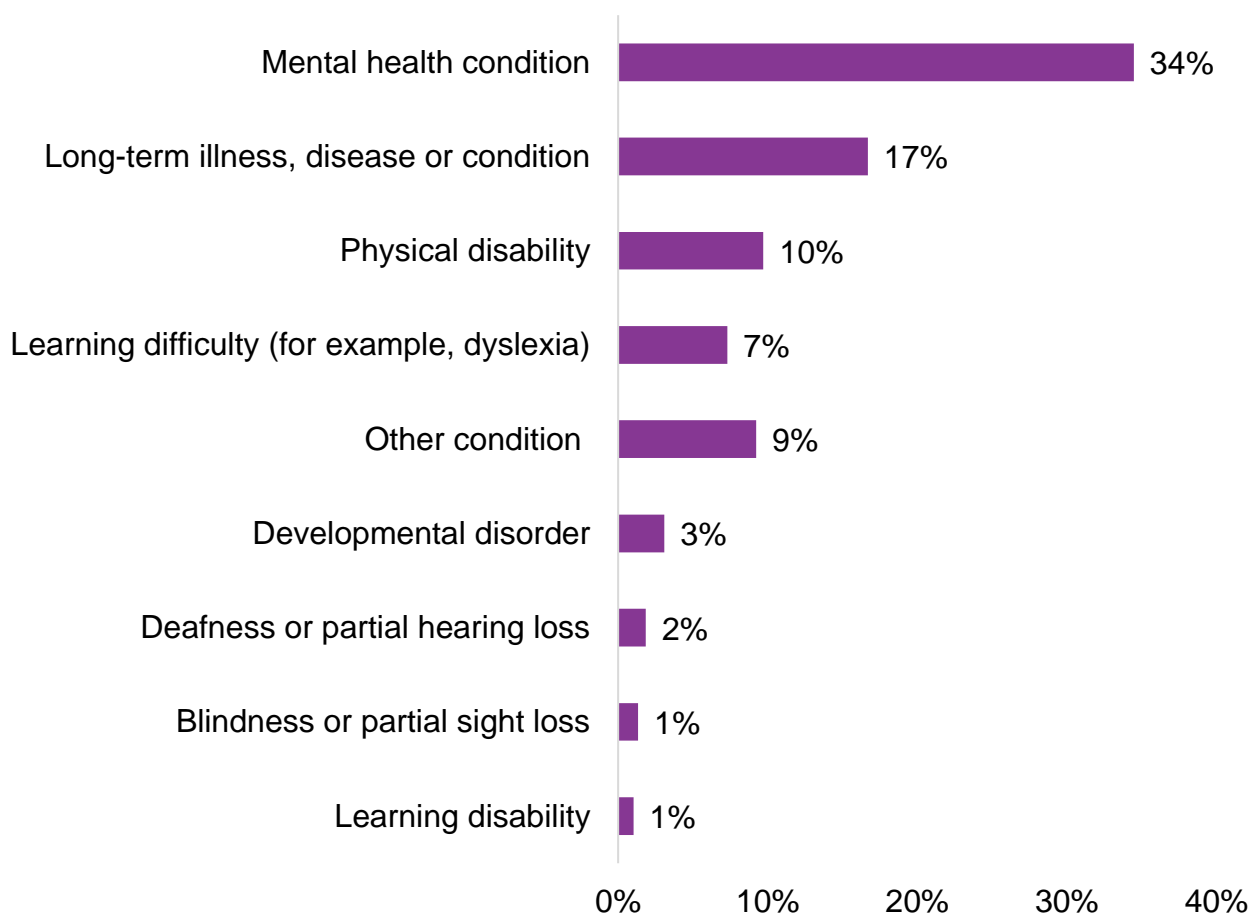
¹³ Gender was unknown for less than 0.5% of participants, these have not been displayed in Figure 3.

Figure 4 shows the long-term health conditions for the 42,583 people on FSS. For the individuals that have re-joined FSS, only their long-term health conditions that were reported when they first joined FSS are included. Overall, the most common type of long-term health condition reported was mental health (34%). Between year 1 and 2 there was a 5 percentage point increase in people reporting a mental health condition among those joining FSS, from 31% to 36%. This remained at 36% in year 3, but decreased to 34% in year 4.

The second most commonly reported type of health condition was a long-term illness, disease or condition, which affected 17% of people joining FSS and has remained close to this level over time. In the most recent quarter (January – March 2022), the proportion was higher at 20%.

A physical disability was the third most common type of long-term health condition reported at 10%. The number of people reporting a physical disability has varied over time from 14% in year 1, to 10% in year 2, 6% in year 3, and 10% in year 4.

Figure 4: Percentage of people starting on Fair Start Scotland who report long-term health conditions, broken down by type of long-term health condition, from April 2018 to March 2022 ¹⁴



¹⁴ These breakdowns are for the 42,583 people that started on FSS, showing the characteristics that were reported for participants when they first joined.

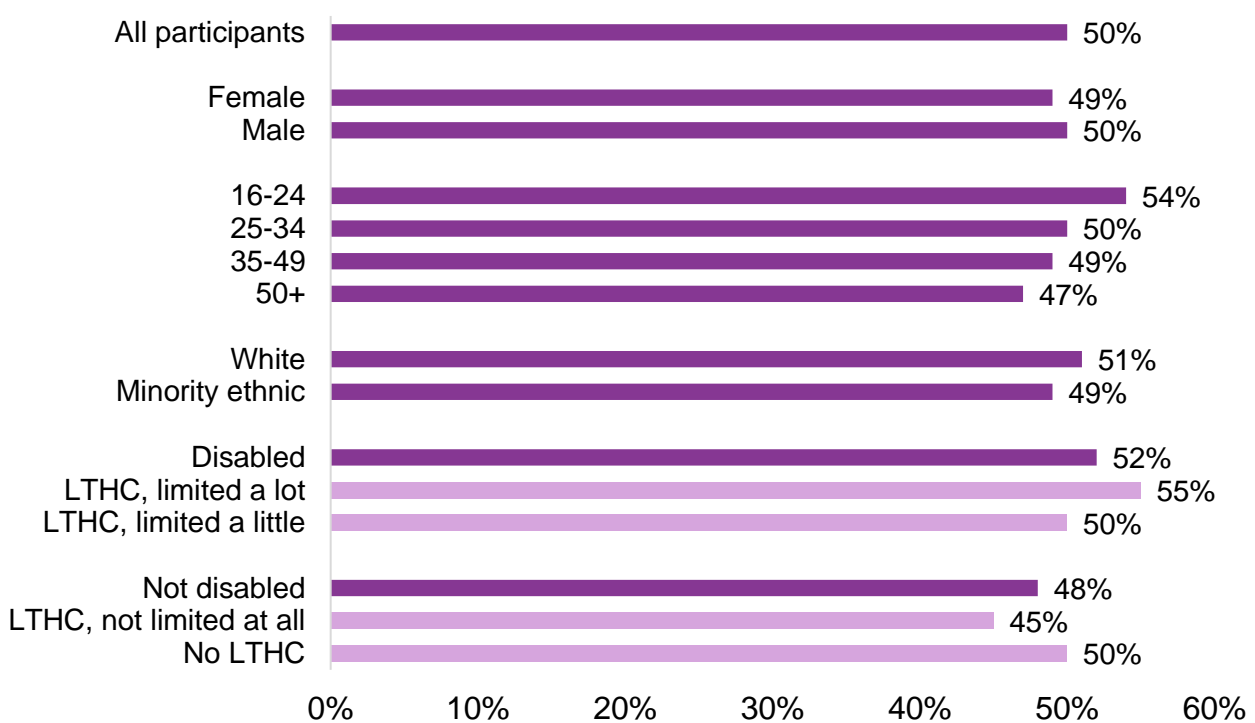
How many FSS early leavers have there been?

Someone is defined as having left FSS early (an 'early leaver') if they leave FSS before the end of the pre-employment support period and without having sustained employment for at least 3 months. The pre-employment support period usually lasts for up to 1 year. In some cases, it can last up to 18 months, but this has only applied to a small number of people so far.

There have been 20,535 early leavers from the 45,030 FSS starts, including the 2,447 people who have previously received support. As with job outcomes, as time goes on we get a more complete picture of the proportion of starts on the service that stay on FSS or leave early. Where we have a complete picture¹⁵ 50% of starts left early. There was a reduction in those leaving early between years 1 and 2, with 53% of participants who joined in year 1 leaving early compared to 46% in year 2. In year 3 there was an increase to 51% of participants leaving FSS early.

Figure 5 shows that the percentage of starts leaving early is similar across each of the equalities groups. However, the percentage was higher for those reporting a disability, particularly for those who have a long-term health condition that limits daily activities a lot (55% left early); compared with those with a long-term health condition that did not limit daily activities at all (45%). Younger participants also had higher rates of leaving early: 54% of those 16-24, compared with 47% of those 50+.

Figure 5: Percentage of Fair Start Scotland starts that leave the service early, broken down by equality characteristic group, from April 2018 to March 2022^{15 16}



¹⁵ The early leaver rate is calculated for the 32,507 starts on FSS who joined from April 2018 – March 2021 as we have the most complete data.

¹⁶ LTHC is an abbreviation of Long-Term Health Condition.

How many FSS starts entered and sustained employment?

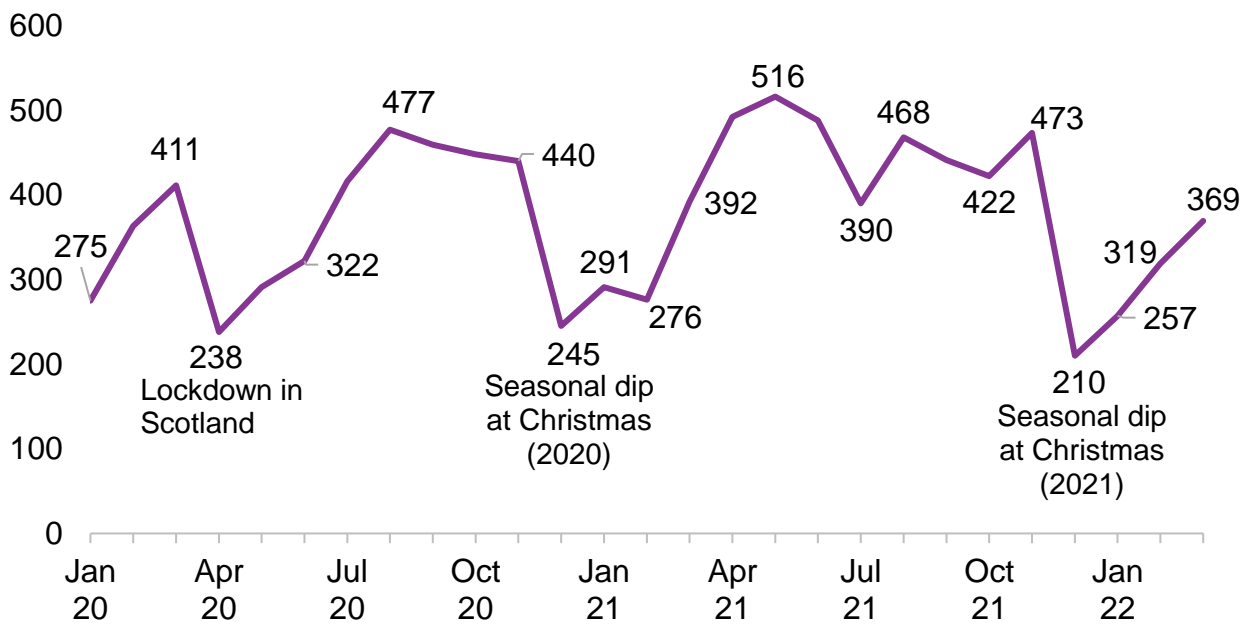
There has been a total of 15,355 job starts from the 45,030 FSS starts, including the 2,447 people who have previously received support, since the launch of FSS.

COVID-19 has had an impact on the operation of FSS as well as the labour market context¹⁷ (See background notes for more information). This has had an impact on job starts within FSS, though there is not a simple explanation for changes.

Figure 6 shows changes in FSS job starts since January 2020. Since COVID-19 restrictions began in March 2020 this has shown a lot of variation.

There was a reduction in job starts during April 2020 after the first lockdown in Scotland, followed by a large increase up until November 2020 (peaking at 477 job starts in August 2020). Levels of job starts rose in March 2021, after the seasonal decrease, reaching a peak of 516 jobs in May 2021 before subsequently falling, dropping to a low of 210 job starts in December 2021. In the latest quarter, following the 2021 seasonal dip, job starts rose to 257 in January 2022 and continued to rise across the quarter with 319 job starts in February and 369 job starts in March 2022. Figures for recent months are likely to increase in future publications as there can be a delay between a participant starting a job and it being recorded by service providers.

Figure 6: Number of Fair Start Scotland starts that enter employment after joining the service, by the month job was started, from January 2020 to March 2022



¹⁷ [Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/coronavirus)

Of the 15,355 job starts, so far 10,083 had sustained employment for at least 3 months (13 weeks), 7,361 sustained employment for at least 6 months (26 weeks), and 4,468 sustained employment for at least 12 months (52 weeks), as of March 2022.

Job outcome rates can only be reported for start cohorts where enough time has passed in pre-employment support and for outcomes to be achieved. These show:

- Most FSS starts did not enter work or go on to sustain employment: 38% started a job, 27% sustained employment for 3 months, 21% sustained employment for 6 months, and 14% sustained employment for 12 months¹⁸
- however, high levels of job starts are sustained: 72% of FSS starts that entered employment went on to sustain employment for 3 months, 80% of those who sustained employment for 3 months went on to reach 6 months, and 76% of those who sustained employment for 6 months went on to reach at least 12 months.

Figures 7, 8, 9 and 10 show how the rates of job starts and outcomes compare between different equality groups.

The rates of job starts do not show a difference by gender, though slightly higher rates of outcomes were achieved by FSS starts that were women. 38% of both female and male starts started a job. 28% of female starts and 26% of male starts achieved a 3 month job outcome, 23% of female starts and 20% of male starts achieved a 6 month job outcome and 16% of female starts and 14% of male starts achieved a 12 month job outcome.

The biggest differences in job start and outcomes rates were observed in age and long-term health conditions, which are often related. Of the FSS starts that were aged 16-24, 42% started work after joining FSS, compared to 34% of FSS starts that were aged 50 years or more - a difference of 8 percentage points. Differences were also seen in proportions of starts from these age groups that sustained employment at 3 months (28% for 16-24; versus 25% for 50+), 6 months (21% for 16-24; versus 20% for 50+) and 12 months (15% for 16-24; versus 13% for 50+).

Of the FSS starts with a long-term health condition that limited daily activities a lot, 25% went on to start work, compared to 46% starts that had a health condition that did not limit daily activities. The difference between these two groups was also observed in the proportions sustaining employment at 3 months (18% for those limited a lot, and 31% for those not limited at all), 6 months (15% and 24%) and 12 months (11% and 17%).

Of the FSS starts that were from minority ethnic backgrounds, 38% went on to start work, compared to 37% of white participants. Small differences were also seen for 3 month outcomes (27% for minority ethnic participants; 26% for white participants), 6 month outcomes (21% and 20%), and 12 month outcomes (16% and 15%).

¹⁸ Data from the Total Rates columns of Table 4 in the supplementary tables.

Figure 7: Percentage of Fair Start Scotland starts that started work after joining the service, broken down by equality characteristic group ^{19 20}

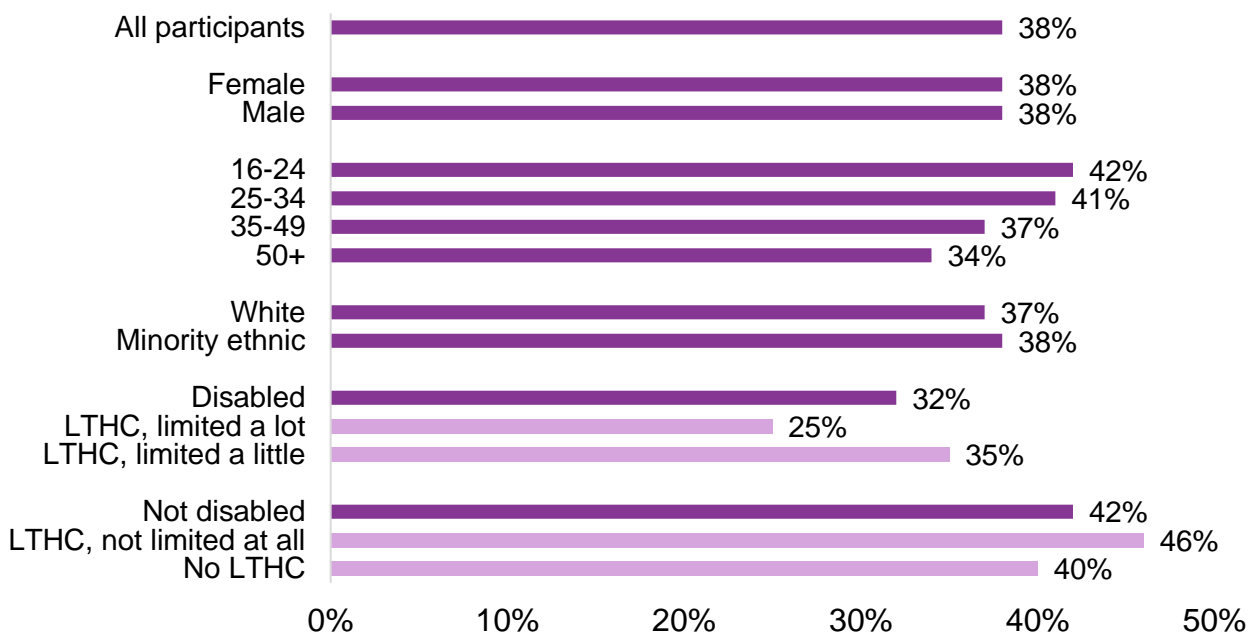
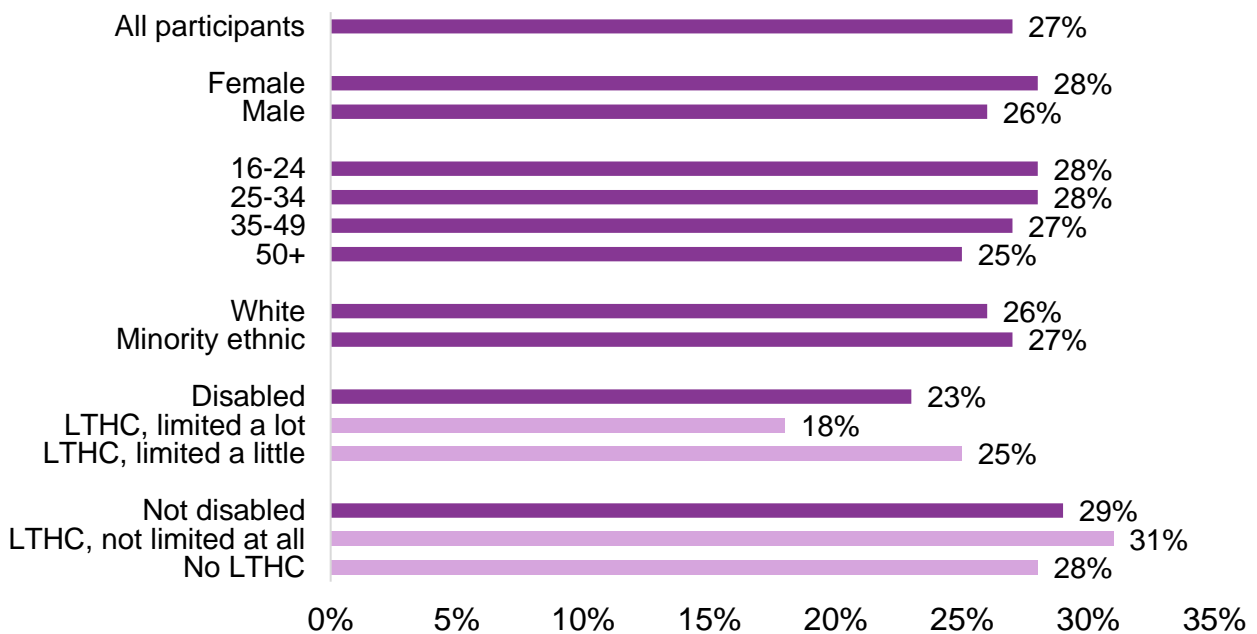


Figure 8: Percentage of Fair Start Scotland starts staying in work for 3 months after joining the service, broken down by equality characteristic group ^{19 21}



¹⁹ LTHC is an abbreviation of Long-Term Health Condition.

²⁰ The job start rate is calculated for the 32,507 starts on FSS that joined from April 2018 – March 2021 as we have the most complete data for this group.

²¹ The 3 month job outcome rate is calculated for the 29,478 starts on FSS that joined from April 2018 – December 2020 as we have the most complete data for this group.

Figure 9: Percentage of Fair Start Scotland starts staying in work for 6 months after joining the service, broken down by equality characteristic group ^{19 22}

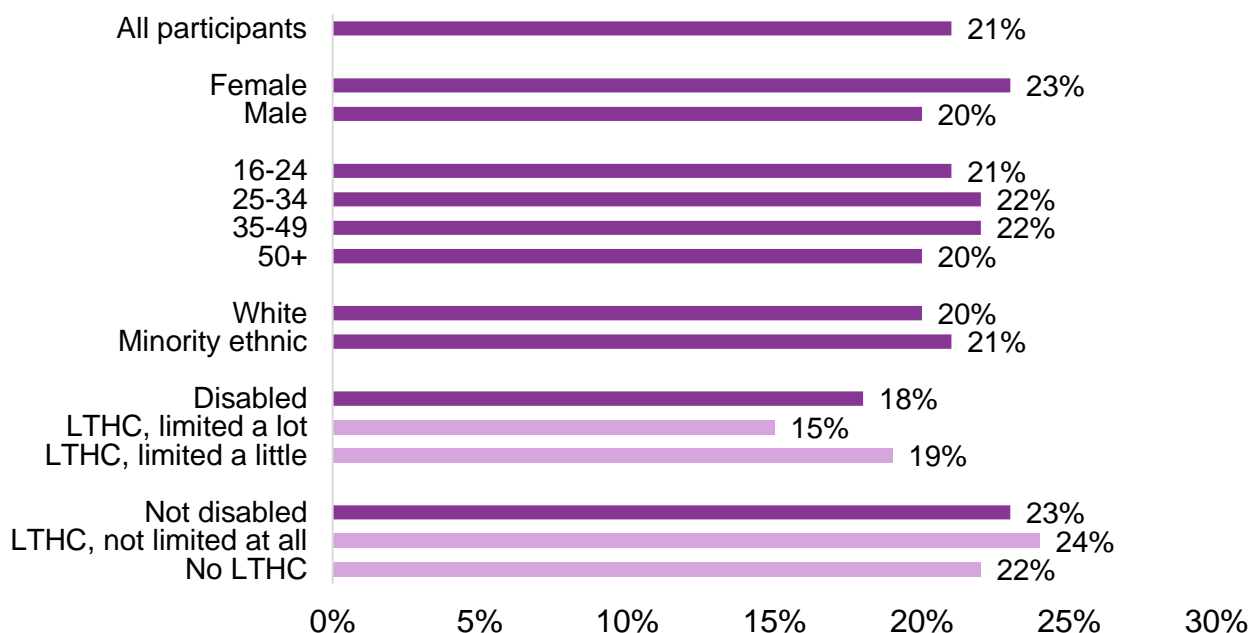
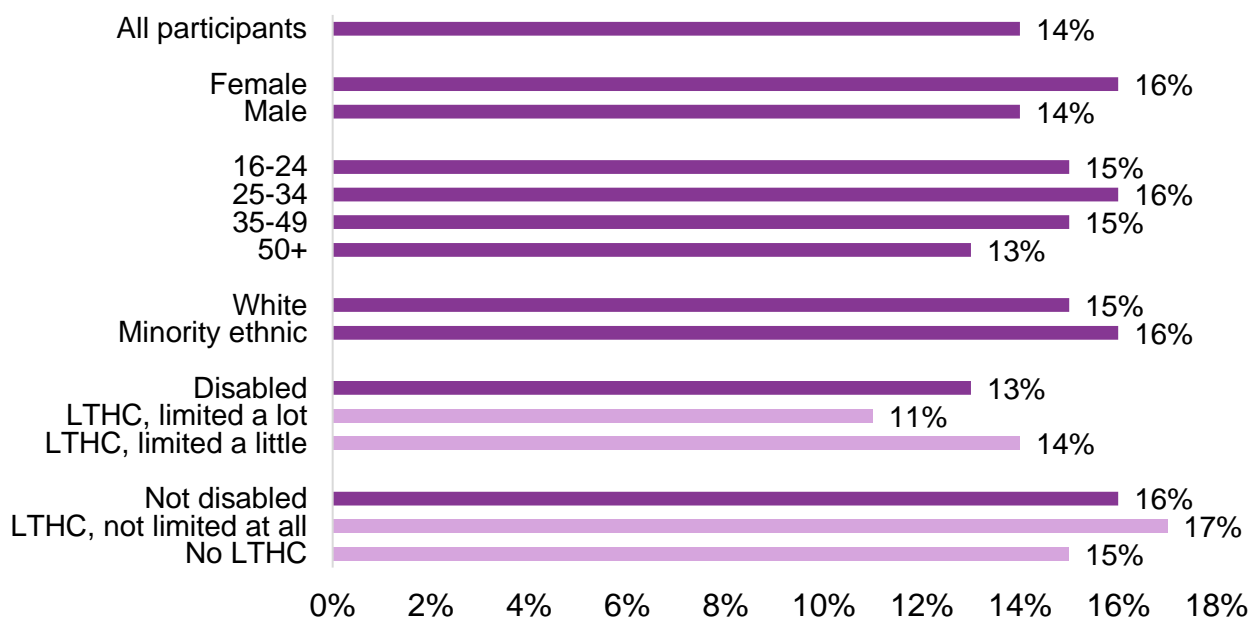


Figure 10: Percentage of Fair Start Scotland starts staying in work for 12 months after joining the service, broken down by equality characteristic group ^{19 23}



²² The 6 month job outcome rate is calculated for the 27,084 starts on FSS that joined from April 2018 – September 2020 as we have the most complete data for this group.

²³ The 12 month job outcome rate is calculated for the 22,148 starts on FSS that joined from April 2018 – March 2020 as we have the most complete data for this group.

How many parents have joined FSS?

Data on FSS participants that are parents was first published in May 2021 with the next annual release of parent data, covering year 4 (April 2021 – March 2022) of FSS, published in May 2022. There has been a revision to the number of participants recorded as parents for year 3 that was published in May 2021 due to a processing issue. Further information can be found in the Correction to an error in previous edition, in the Background Information.

8,348 people that were parents started on FSS, from the 8,891 total parent starts on the service between its launch in April 2018 and the end of March 2022, with the difference reflecting people re-joining the service. As with overall participants, the numbers of parent starts on the service in years 1 to 3 is the same as the number of unique people who received support. With the extension of FSS beyond the initial three year period, people who have previously received support may re-join the service. Therefore the total number of parent starts on FSS in year 4 and thus parent starts overall is not the same as the number of unique people that were parents receiving support.

Cumulative totals should be interpreted with caution and comparison of data between years is not possible, due to the way that the collection of data developed over time²⁴. In year 4, of the 3,490 parent starts on FSS there were 2,947 unique individuals. The 2,947 parents represented 29% of all 10,076 people starting in year 4. Of these 2,947 individuals, the following breakdowns were observed in terms of parents and those from families at highest risk of being affected by child poverty²⁵: 43% were disabled, 43% were lone parents, 3% were mothers aged under 25, 23% were parents with three or more children, 38% had a child aged under 12 months and 10% were from a minority ethnic background²⁶.

²⁴ Data on lone parents was collected from the launch of FSS in April 2018. Data on age of youngest child and number of dependent children was additionally collected from late 2019 and we worked with providers to implement and improve the collection of this data for the remainder of year 2, resulting in better quality data for year 3 onwards. As a result, the percentage of parents increases over time, but this is likely to be a result of data collection changes rather than changes to the number of parents supported.

²⁵ The Scottish Government has identified a number of 'priority family groups' at risk of child poverty, further information can be found here: [Tackling child poverty priority families overview - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-child-poverty-priority-families-overview-2021/pages/1-2.aspx)

Please note that the data presented in this publication and the supplementary statistical tables differs in some aspects from the priority family group definitions due mainly to its focus on participants rather than family units. For example, the data covers participants accessing FSS support that are disabled parents but does not include families with a disabled child, therefore differing from the 'families with a disabled adult or child' priority family type.

²⁶ These breakdowns are for the 2,947 unique individual parent starts in year 4 of FSS and their equality characteristics that were reported when they first joined.

How many parent starts on FSS entered and sustained employment?

For the 8,891 FSS starts that were parents, job outcome rates can only be reported for start cohorts where enough time has passed in pre-employment support and for outcomes to be achieved. These show:

- Most parent FSS starts did not enter work or go on to sustain employment: 39% started a job, 28% sustained employment for 3 months, 22% sustained employment for 6 months, and 14% sustained employment for 12 months²⁷

39% of parents started a job, similar to the 38% of FSS participants overall that started a job. 33% of disabled parents started work, compared to 32% of disabled people who were not reported to be parents, and 42% of people who were not disabled and not reported to be parents. A job start was achieved by 32% of lone parent starts, 35% of FSS starts that were mothers under 25, 41% of parent starts with three or more children, 45% of parent starts that had a child aged under 12 months and 36% of FSS starts that were minority ethnic parents. These figures should be used with caution as some percentages are based on very small numbers.²⁸

28% of parents achieved a 3 month job outcome, similar to the proportion of FSS participants overall at 27%. 23% of disabled parents sustained employment for 3 months which was the same proportion of disabled people who were not reported to be parents, whilst 29% of people who were not disabled and not reported to be parents sustained employment for 3 months. Three months sustained employment was achieved by 23% of lone parent starts, 22% of FSS starts that were mothers under 25, 30% of parent starts with three or more children, 30% of parent starts that had a child aged under 12 months and 27% of FSS starts that were minority ethnic parents. These figures should be used with caution as some percentages are based on very small numbers.²⁹

22% of parents achieved a 6 month job outcome which was also similar to the proportion of FSS participants overall at 21%. 18% of both disabled parents and disabled people who were not reported to be parents sustained employment for 6 months and for people who were not disabled and not reported to be parents the proportion was higher at 23%. Six months sustained employment was achieved by 18% of lone parent starts, 15% of FSS starts that were mothers under 25, 24% of parent starts with three or more children, 24% of parent starts that had a child aged under 12 months and 20% of FSS starts that were minority ethnic parents. These figures should be used with caution as some percentages are based on very small numbers.³⁰

Both 14% of parent starts and participants overall achieved a 12 month job outcome after starting on the service. 13% of both disabled parents and disabled people who were not reported to be parents sustained employment for 12 months and for people who were not disabled and not reported to be parents the proportion was higher at 16%. Twelve months

²⁷ Data from the Total Rates columns of Table 10 in the supplementary tables.

²⁸ The job start rate is calculated for the 5,401 parent starts on FSS that joined from April 2018 – March 2021 as we have the most complete data for this group.

²⁹ The 3 month job outcome rate is calculated for the 4,508 parent starts on FSS that joined from April 2018 – December 2020 as we have the most complete data for this group.

³⁰ The 6 month job outcome rate is calculated for the 3,815 parent starts on FSS that joined from April 2018 – September 2020 as we have the most complete data for this group.

sustained employment was achieved by 13% of lone parent starts, 10% of FSS starts that were mothers under 25, 17% of parent starts with three or more children, 17% of parent starts that had a child aged under 12 months and 14% of FSS starts that were minority ethnic parents. These figures should be used with caution as some percentages are based on very small numbers.³¹

³¹ The 12 month job outcome rate is calculated for the 2,674 parent starts on FSS that joined from April 2018 – March 2020 as we have the most complete data for this group.

No One Left Behind (Experimental Statistics)

Introduction

No One Left Behind is a strategy for placing people at the centre of the design and delivery of employability services. The transition to this new approach, delivered through a partnership agreement between Scottish and Local Government, commenced on 1 April 2019.

The No One Left Behind approach moves away from funding and delivering a number of separate and distinct employability programmes, to a more flexible approach. Scottish and Local Government are working with third and private sector to deliver support which aims to be more joined-up and responsive to the needs of individuals of all ages and to local labour market conditions.

Since April 2019, a range of Scottish Government funding has been made available to Local Government partners as the scope of delivery under No One Left Behind expands over time. This includes funding for the initial phase of No One Left Behind, from April 2019, the Parental Employability Support Fund, from February 2020, and the Young Person's Guarantee, from November 2020. Since February 2022, the experimental statistics in this publication have included people supported by the totality of these funds. The funding aims to provide support for people of all ages, with a range of differing characteristics and circumstances, including parents, who need help on their journey towards work.

Note that the experimental statistics in this publication relate only to Scottish Government funded activity and do not report on the entirety of employability related activity in each local authority area.

The support provided may vary from short, focused interventions or longer term support, dependent upon individual circumstances. Participants can access the support they require on an ongoing basis and can engage and disengage at times that best suit their needs. Individuals can self-refer to No One Left Behind support, or be referred through a variety of channels, including educational providers, local authorities, third sector organisations, Jobcentre Plus, and other local services.

Reach of services: How many people accessed employability support delivered under No One Left Behind?

A total of 16,859 people started receiving support in the two and three quarter year period from April 2019 to December 2021.³² The number of people starting to receive support has steadily increased over time; 2,739³³ people started in year 1 (April 2019 – March 2020), 4,891 in year 2 (April 2020 – March 2021) and 9,229 in the first three quarters of year 3 (April 2021 – December 2021) which was more than the overall total numbers supported in

³² A breakdown by local authority of all participants receiving support between April 2019 and December 2021 is available in Table 13 of the accompanying Excel tables.

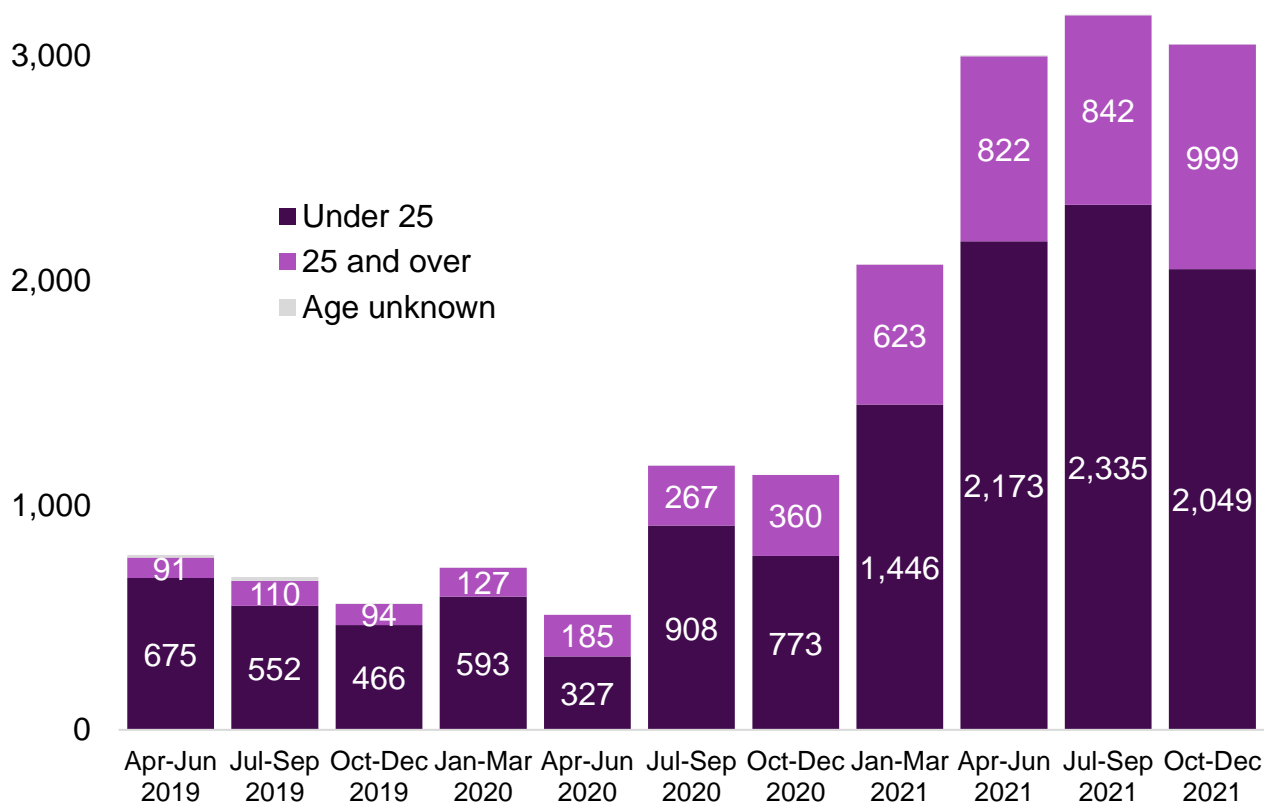
³³ There was a decrease in the year 1 total from previous publications as this was previously derived from year 1 aggregate data that was collected during that period. Since then we have developed year 1 data and combined it with data currently collected, which has allowed us to provide more detailed information for year 1 participants, including their achievements. As a result of combining year 1 data and Management Information changes the start dates for some participants changed.

years 1 and 2. The national lockdown in Scotland took effect on 23 March 2020, at the end of year 1, and therefore any effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to only be seen from year 2 onwards.

Almost three quarters (73%) of all participants were aged under 25. Of these 12,297 participants, 73% were aged 15-19 and 27% were aged 20-24. Over a quarter (27%) of all participants were aged 25 or over. Of these 4,520 participants, 77% were aged 25-49 and 23% aged 50 or over. Age was unknown for less than 1% of participants.

The number of people accessing support has varied over time across age groups (Figure 11), with a generally increasing trend from the start of year 2 (April – June 2020). Large increases occurred in both the under 25 and 25 and over age groups between the first (April – June 2020) and second (July – September 2020) quarters of year 2, and then again between the third (October – December 2020) and last (January – March 2021) quarters of year 2. Here, the near doubling of numbers seen in the under 25 age group (from 773 in October – December 2020 to 1,446 in January – March 2021) corresponds with the introduction of additional funding to support young people in late 2020. After another relatively large increase to 2,173 in the first quarter of year 3 (April – June 2021), numbers have reduced slightly (n=2,049) in the latest quarter (October - December 2021). The 25 and over age group also increased, from 623 (January – March 2021) to 822 (April – June 2021), peaking at 999 in the most recent quarter (October to December 2021).

Figure 11: Participants starting to receive employability support, by quarter, April 2019 - December 2021



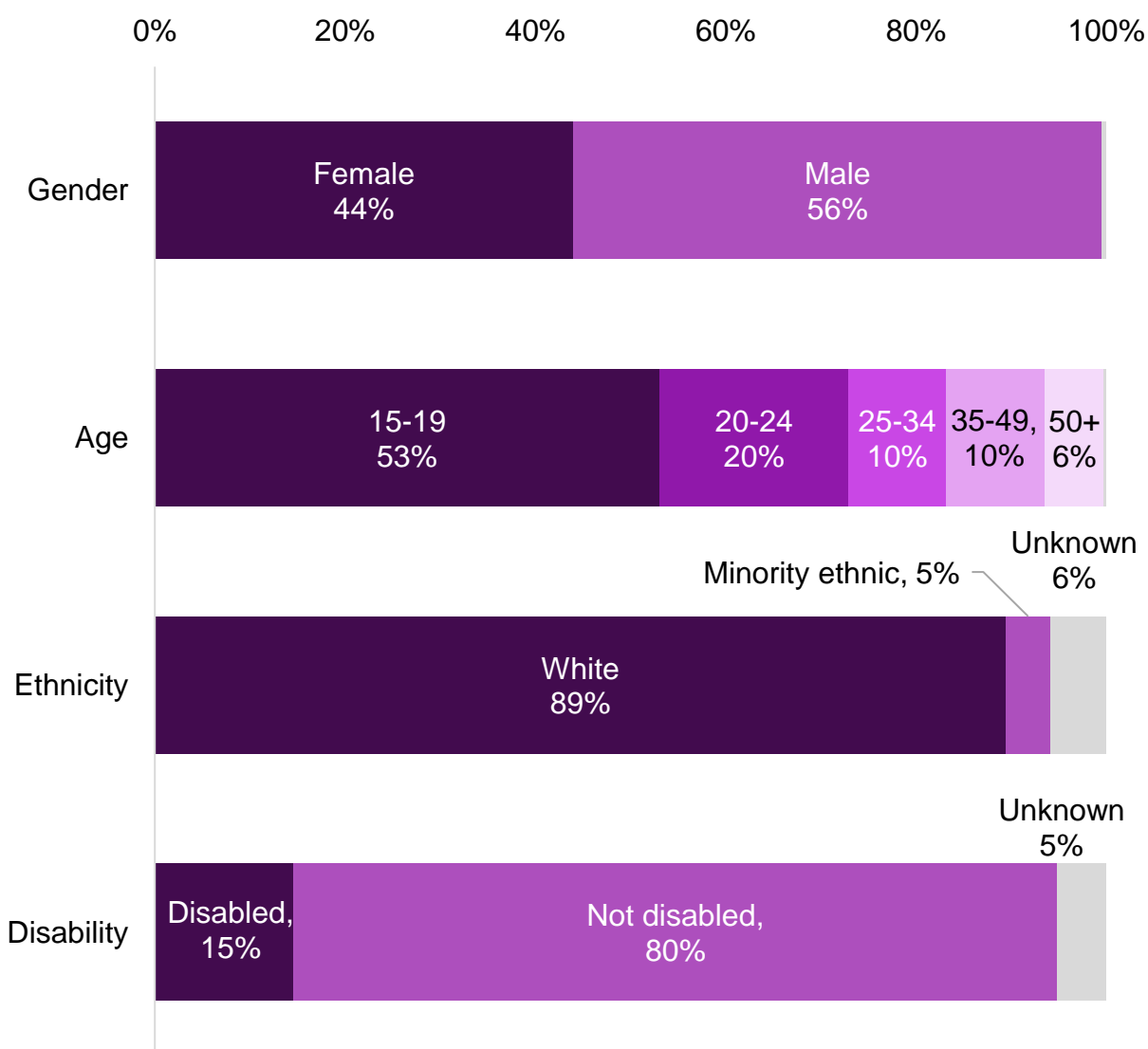
Of the 16,859 people who started to receive support during the first two and three quarter years (April 2019 – December 2021) (Figure 12), the gender split was fairly even, with slightly fewer women (44%) than men (56%). Gender was unknown for less than 1% of participants. The proportion of women increased from 40% in year 1 to 47% in year 2 before falling to 44% over the first three quarters of year 3. There was a lower proportion of women in both the younger (15-19, 38% and 20-24, 41%) and older (50+, 38%) age groups. However, there was a greater proportion of women in the mid age groups (25-34, 63% and 35-49, 64%).

The overall proportion of participants across the period April 2019 to December 2021 that were from minority ethnic groups was 5%. However, there were differences in this proportion in younger and older age groups; with minority ethnic participants being higher in those aged 25 and over (10%) compared with those under 25 (3%). Overall, the proportion of minority ethnic participants increased slightly over time, from 2% in April to June 2019 to a high of 7% in April to June 2020, with 6% of participants from minority ethnic groups in the latest quarter, October to December 2021. This increase was largely driven by the 25 and over age group, with fluctuations in the proportion of participants from minority ethnic groups over the earlier quarters and 10% of participants from minority ethnic groups in the latest quarter. These figures should be used with caution as some percentages are based on very small numbers.

15% of all participants accessing support over the period April 2019 to December 2021 reported having a disability and the proportion was the same for both participants aged under 25 and those aged 25 and over, with 15% reporting a disability over the period. The proportion of all participants reporting a disability initially fell, from a high of 18% in April to June 2019 to a low of 10% in July to September 2020. From October to December 2020 onwards, overall the proportion of participants reporting a disability has risen, with 15% of all participants reporting a disability in the latest quarter. The proportion of under 25s reporting a disability also initially decreased, from 18% in April to June 2019 to a low of 10% in July to September 2020. In the most recent quarter, 14% of participants aged under 25 reported having a disability. The proportion of those aged 25 and over reporting a disability fell from a high of 21% in October to December 2019 to a low of 8% in April to June 2020. From July to September 2020 onwards, the proportion of those aged 25 and over reporting a disability increased to a high of 16% in both January to March 2020 and October to December 2020 (the latest quarter).³⁴ These figures should be used with caution as some percentages are based on very small numbers.

³⁴ In year 1, 17% of participants were disabled. Disability data for year 1 was reported in the context of being a barrier to work.

Figure 12: Percentage of people supported through No One Left Behind, broken down by equality characteristic group, April 2019 - December 2021 ³⁵



Parents

Please note that parents are a sub group of participants supported during the period April 2020 to December 2021 (year 2 and the first 3 quarters of year 3³⁶) and so the number of parents is not additional to the number of under 25s and those aged 25 and over. Rather they are distributed across age groups, with 18% being aged under 25 and 82% aged 25 and above.

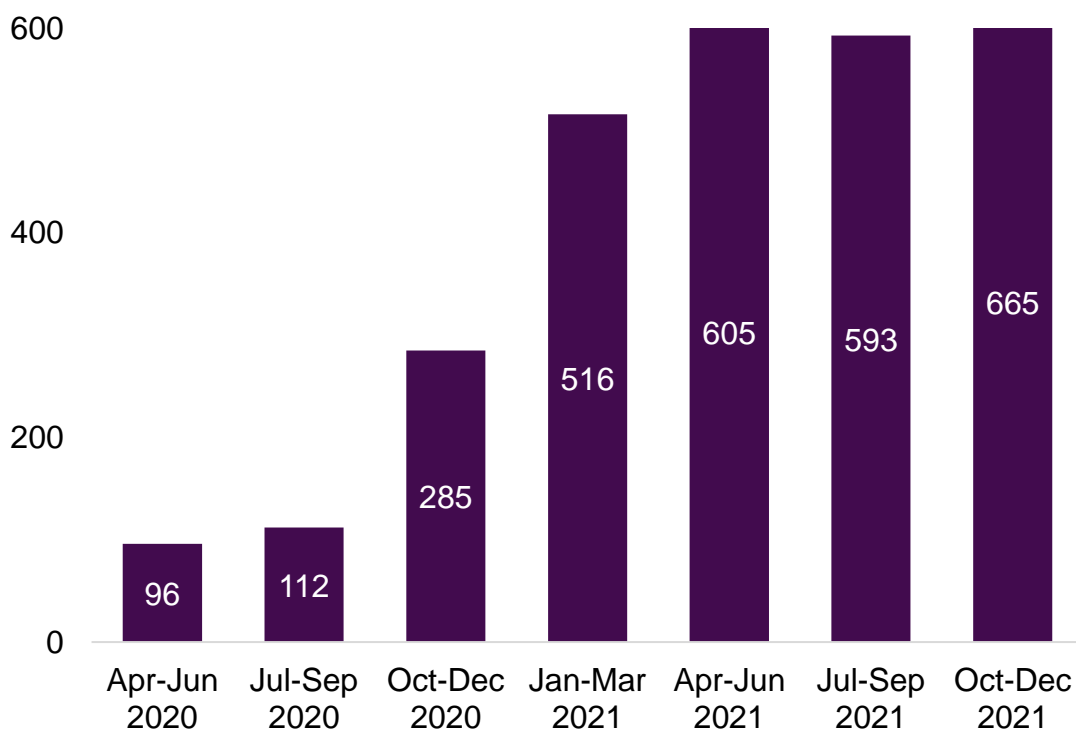
Of the 14,120 people who started to receive support during this period (April 2020 – December 2021), 2,872 (20%) were parents. The number of parents have in general

³⁵ Gender and age were unknown for less than 0.5% of participants, these have not been displayed in Figure 12.

³⁶ Parental status was not collected from participants in year 1. Parental Employability Support funding was made available from February 2020 onwards.

steadily increased across the period (Figure 13) to a high of 665 parents in the most recent quarter; more parents were supported in the first 3 quarters of year 3 (n=1,863) than over the whole of year 2 (n=1,009)³⁷.

Figure 13: Parents starting to receive employability support, by quarter, April 2020 - December 2021



Parents as a proportion of all people starting to receive support has fluctuated somewhat over the period; rising from 10% in July to September 2020 to 25% during the period October 2020 to March 2021, with a slight decrease to 22% in the latest quarter. This decrease in more recent quarters might partly be explained by the increasing number of young people being supported; only 18% of parents supported under No One Left Behind are aged under 25.

The breakdown of equalities groups for parents is shown in Figure 14. The majority of parents are aged 35-49 years (40%) and this has been consistently true over the April 2020 - December 2021 time period. The proportion of parents was lowest for the youngest (16-19 year olds, 3%) and oldest (over 50 years, 7%) age groups.

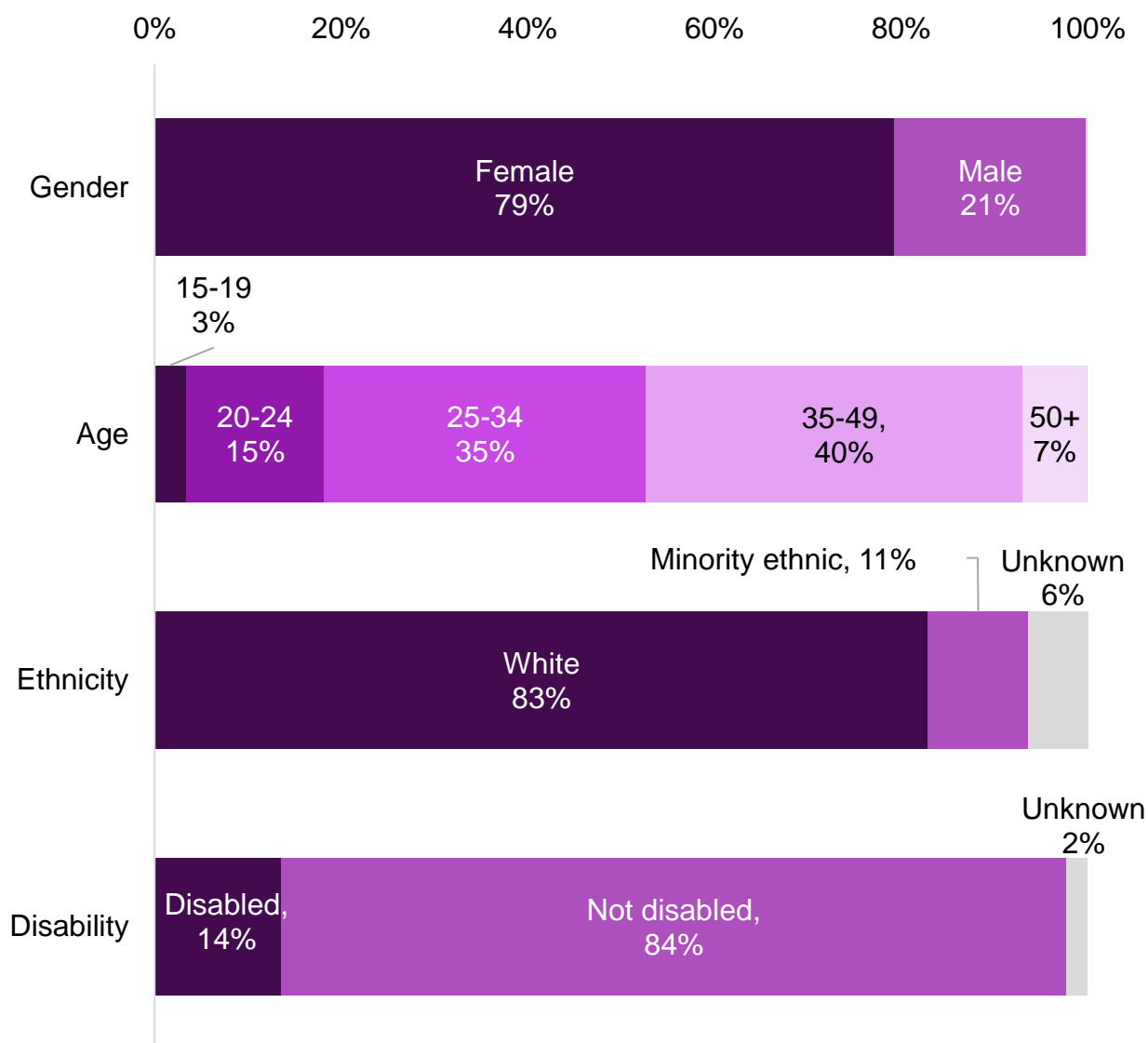
The gender difference is more pronounced in the parent subgroup (79% female) than all participants (44% female). Females outweigh males considerably in the parent subgroup across the period; however the proportion of male parents accessing support has generally increased over time, from 12% in July to September 2020 to 24% in both July to September and October to December 2021 (the latest quarter), leaving aside a dip during April to June 2021.

³⁷ In the previous publication there were 1,045 parents recorded as receiving support in year 2, as this is Management Information the numbers are subject to change.

11% of parents accessing support were from minority ethnic groups. The proportion fell to a low of 6% in October – December 2020 and since then steadily rose to peak at 13% during July to September 2021. In the latest quarter, 12% of parents accessing support were from minority ethnic groups.

14% of parents reported having a disability and this proportion has remained fairly stable over time, dipping slightly at 12% in the January to March 2021 period before increasing to a high of 15% in July to September 2021 and dropping to 13% in the latest quarter.

Figure 14: Percentage of parents supported through No One Left Behind, broken down by equality characteristic group, April 2020 - December 2021 ³⁸



Overall, just over two thirds (64%) of parents supported were single parents and this is the same for both the year 2 average and year 3 so far. 14% of parents were mothers under 25.

³⁸ Gender and age were unknown for less than 0.5% of participants that were parents, these have not been displayed in Figure 14.

42% of all parents had one child, 30% had two children, 24% had three or more children, with number of children unknown in 4% of cases. Whilst there has been some variation across the period the pattern is broadly similar, parents with one child represent the greatest proportion of all parents in each period, with the exception of April – June 2020, (34% of all parents had two children, compared to 33% with one child). The proportion of parents with two children has risen slightly in year 3 so far (32%) compared to the year 2 average (27%).

14% of all parents had a youngest child aged under 12 months. This proportion has increased from 10% in year 2 to 16% over the first 3 quarters of year 3. The latest quarter (October – December 2021) saw the highest proportion, at 19%.

11% of all parents had a disabled child within their family, with status unknown in 6% of cases. Similarly, the proportion of parents with a disabled child within the family has increased between year 2 (9%; 6% unknown) and year 3 so far (12%; 6% unknown).

Shared Measurement Framework (SMF)

The first SMF publication was released in April 2022³⁹. The initial data recommendations built on existing data collection practice and activity currently in place between Local and Scottish government, and formalised a number of key data items which we currently collect⁴⁰ on the theme of 'progression'. Therefore, it is an appropriate time to start to publish experimental statistics based on that data, aligned to the progression theme.

The flexible, person-centred support No One Left Behind seeks to put in place means that participants may experience support differently, based on their individual circumstances and needs – for example, being able to disengage and reengage in support as required. As a result, participant journeys will differ in nature and pace, and progression and achievements will vary based on what a positive outcome for the individual would be. This means broadening our understanding of success from a focus on job outcomes to that on the actual steps taken and progress made towards work.

The SMF publication is not a final product and more work is required to develop certain areas and themes. We will gradually develop and align our statistics reporting to the recommendations made by the Framework over time. They will be particularly important to help us understand the journeys and achievements of those who are furthest away from the labour market and to develop the range of data that we publish. The experimental statistics presented here on the progression of participants supported by No One Left Behind represent the first step in that process.

We first published statistics on the achievements of those supported by No One Left Behind in February 2021 for year 1 participants, derived from the aggregate data that was collected during that period. Since then we have developed year 1 data and combined it

³⁹ Shared Measurement Framework: [Employability Shared Measurement Framework published | Employability in Scotland](#)

⁴⁰ Currently not all data items presented here are fully aligned to the SMF recommendations. Data collection activity will align to the recommendations from 1 July 2022 and our statistics will reflect those in due course.

with data currently collected for subsequent periods, which has allowed us to provide more detailed information for year 1 participants, including their achievements⁴¹.

Progression of participants: What are the achievements of those supported by No One Left Behind so far?

Of the 16,859 people supported under the No One Left Behind approach between April 2019 and December 2021, 5,224 people (31%) started employment. Of those that started employment; 2,722 people (52%) were supported by a subsidy to do so and 832 people (16%) started modern apprenticeships. Additionally, 2,521 people supported (15%) entered further or higher education or training⁴², 1,500 people (9%) gained a qualification and 893 people (5%) started work experience opportunities.

Developing these statistics

We continue to publish data on people receiving employability support delivered under the No One Left Behind strategic approach. Publishing these statistics will contribute to understanding the impact of the approach, by providing information over time about participant journeys and achievements.

As part of our plans to develop these statistics, in this publication we have expanded the scope of our data to include the achievements of those people who are receiving employability support delivered under the No One Left Behind approach. This has been possible as a result of the development of the previously limited year 1 data, as described earlier.

As delivery under No One Left Behind is expanded over time (see the [Delivery Plan](#)) and we learn more about which data are important to report on to describe the journeys of the people who receive support, we will develop a range of statistics that are appropriate. Whilst we expect to produce some statistics that are similar to those for FSS, the range of data that we use and how we present them is likely to change and evolve over time, building a picture of the whole user journey. As already described, a key product to help us realise that ambition will be the Shared Measurement Framework.

Feedback

To ensure the statistics are developed in a way which is useful to users, we will be asking for views on a range of topics as the development work described above is taken forward. If you have comments or questions in the meantime please contact: employabilitydata@gov.scot.

⁴¹ The flexibility of the No One Left Behind approach allows people to come in and out of support as often as is needed, so the time between the initial start date and that to achieve certain progression outcomes can vary considerably.

⁴² The 2,521 people that entered further or higher education or training also includes some people that were in school.

Background Information

1. Official and Experimental Statistics

Statistics for No One Left Behind are Experimental Statistics. Experimental statistics are defined by the Code of Practice for Statistics as ‘a subset of newly developed or innovative official statistics undergoing evaluation, that are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in the assessment of their suitability and quality at an early stage’.

Statistics for Fair Start Scotland are official statistics – they are no longer classified as experimental statistics. This early stage has now passed, with user feedback used to improve the publication, though any comments or feedback are still welcome.

More detail on designation of statistics can be found at:

<https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system/types-of-official-statistics/>

2. Reporting periods

Fair Start Scotland. This publication reports on all referrals and starts from 13 March 2018 to the end of the most recent quarter (31 March 2022). The service was launched on 3 April 2018 (Q1). There was an opportunity for referrals to be made and starts to be recorded for a short period prior to the launch of the service, commencing 13 March 2018. Referrals and starts which occurred before the official launch of the service are reported along with the April 2018 data.

No One Left Behind. This publication reports on all participants who received support from 1 April 2019 to 31 December 2021.

3. Fair Start Scotland (FSS) background information

Tables

Detailed statistics on the number of referrals to FSS, number of starts and job outcomes are presented in the accompanying tables, numbered 1 to 11. Tables 1 to 11 show changes to FSS over time; with Tables 4 to 11 providing breakdowns of equalities characteristics and Tables 10 and 11 providing data on participants that are parents. Table 12 provides a breakdown of data by local authority and FSS delivery area. The caveats that apply to national data also apply to local authority data (see the end of Background Information section 3).

Data sources

The Scottish Employability Tracking System (SETS)

SETS is the Scottish Government referrals tracking system for Fair Start Scotland. Information on those referred to FSS (‘referrals’) and outcomes relating to those individuals, including those who join FSS (‘starts’), enter employment (‘job starts’), and subsequently achieve employment outcomes (‘job outcomes’), is recorded on SETS. It tracks the progress of referrals made to the service and provides management information in relation to performance.

The statistics in this release are based on figures extracted from SETS on 11 April 2022.

Information provided by service providers

The statistics on age, gender, long-term health conditions, disability and ethnic group are derived from information collected by service providers when an individual joins FSS. Information is usually collected via a combination of face-to-face interviews, SG equalities monitoring forms, phone conversations and electronic questionnaires (see section *Impact of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) on data quality*); using SG recommended questions and published using related output classifications. The statistics in this release are based on returns for the period 13 March 2018 to 31 March 2022.

Methodology

Referral

The referral numbers published in this release are net figures, which excludes 2,511 rejected referrals. The vast majority of these were duplicates.

Starts

The 'start rate' i.e. the percentage of people who joined FSS is calculated by dividing the number of starts by the number of referrals within a given period. People who were referred in the most recent quarter, particularly at the end, may not have had time to join the service by the end of the month. Because of this, the start rate for the most recent quarter should not be used for considering the overall performance of the service.

Before April 2021, participants were only able to receive support from FSS once, therefore the number of starts on the service is the same as the number of unique people who have received support in years 1 to 3. With the extension of FSS beyond the initial three year period, from April 2021 people who have previously received support may re-join the service. There must be a break of at least 13 weeks since the person left FSS to become eligible. As a result of this change, the total number of starts in FSS, from the beginning of year 4 and thus overall, is not the same as the number of people who have received support.

Early leavers

An early leaver is someone who exits the service before the end of the pre-employment support period without achieving an employment outcome.

Job starts

When an individual progresses into work, service providers record a 'job start' for the individual on SETS. An individual can enter employment more than once; however the figures in this publication are for the first recorded job. For individuals that re-join FSS, where applicable, their first recorded job during their initial period on the service will be counted as will their first recorded job during their second period on the service. All figures are up to the end of March 2022.

Employment outcomes

A 3 month (13 week) job outcome is achieved when a participant stays in a job, or is self-employed, working 16 hours per week or more, for at least 13 weeks out of 16; that is, continuous employment, but not necessarily in the same job, lasting 13 out of 16 weeks.

A 6 month (26 week) job outcome is achieved when a participant stays in a job, or is self-employed, working 16 hours per week or more, for at least 26 weeks out of 30; that is, continuous employment, but not necessarily in the same job, lasting 26 out of 30 weeks (breaks in employment must total no more than 4 weeks).

A 1 year (12 month, 52 week) job outcome is achieved when a participant stays in a job, or is self-employed, working 16 hours per week or more, for at least 52 weeks out of 60; that is, continuous employment, but not necessarily in the same job, lasting 52 out of 60 weeks (breaks in employment must total no more than 8 weeks).

Data quality

Some inconsistencies in responses to the questions on long-term health conditions and disability, as reported by service providers, were identified and amended as follows:

Of those people who responded 'No' to the question asking whether respondents had a physical or mental health condition lasting, or expected to last 12 months or more:

- 4,262 participants answered the second question on extent of limitation (106 yes, a lot; 503 yes, a little; 3,653 not at all). These responses were excluded from the totals.
- 2,057 people reported one or more long-term health condition (2,329 conditions in total were recorded). These conditions have been excluded from the count of long-term health conditions.

Comparisons with other employment services' data

Please use caution when comparing FSS data with data from other employment services across the UK, as features of service design (e.g. whether voluntary or mandatory, eligibility criteria) and definitions (e.g. how job outcomes are measured) may differ.

Local authority data

Please use caution in interpreting data at lower levels of geography, as numbers are small in some instances and there are many factors contributing to variations in totals across local authorities. The Scottish Government's evaluation of year 1 of FSS suggests factors include the local reputation of FSS staff, the prior roles of staff and the reputation of previous services, the range of other existing services available in the area, the relationship between FSS provider staff and JCP work coaches, and the range and scale of local job opportunities⁴³.

Impact of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) on Fair Start Scotland

This publication includes data for FSS over a period from March 2020 onwards when the COVID-19 pandemic, associated public health measures and economic and labour market impacts have caused several changes which impact the statistics published here.

Key changes to FSS include the following:

- 1) Early in the pandemic, The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) refocused their work to deal with the increased demand for benefit claims, so FSS referrals from DWP were paused between April and June 2020.
- 2) As a result of this, there was an increase in the proportion of referrals to FSS through other avenues, particularly from FSS providers' own marketing efforts.
- 3) FSS switched from face-to-face interaction to delivery via phone calls and online interaction. This affected the equalities data collected, with a decrease in people disclosing

⁴³ Fair Start Scotland evaluation report 2: local area case studies - November 2019
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-start-scotland-evaluation-report-2-local-area-case-studies-year-1-november-2019/>

information on protected characteristics like ethnicity on joining FSS. Data collection methods were adapted to the new circumstances in consideration of data protection guidance. It also caused disruption to some providers where data was held in the workplace and was not available to staff working from home. There were particularly high levels of missing data for ethnicity in July to September 2020. Data collection has since improved. During the quarter April-June 2021 some providers had a limited return to meeting participants in person, depending on the local situation and participant's preference.

4) There was a relaxation of rules specifying how often participants must be in contact with providers, from March to September 2020. This meant that some people who would otherwise be considered to have left the service during this period stayed on FSS.

5) There were fewer job vacancies in Scotland for approximately one year. ONS data⁴⁴ showed a sharp reduction in job vacancies in Scotland during April 2020 to approximately 40% of the level seen in February 2020, finally returning to February 2020 levels by April 2021. Lower levels of job vacancies would be expected to affect rates of job starts and outcomes in FSS, but numbers of job starts in FSS didn't necessarily follow trends in job vacancies.

4. No One Left Behind Background Information

Data collection

All participant data is collected and recorded on management information systems by Scottish local authorities. Data returns are submitted to the Scottish Government on a quarterly basis. No centralised recording system is in place.

Self-assessed disability is reported only if and when it is perceived by the participant as being a barrier for them to finding employment. This means that recording and reporting of disability is not comprehensive and is not currently collected using the SG recommended questions.

We first published statistics on No One Left Behind outcomes in February 2021 for year 1 participants, derived from the aggregate data that was collected during that period. Since then we have developed year 1 data and combined it with data currently collected for subsequent periods, which has allowed us to provide more detailed information for year 1 participants, including their achievements.

Starts

People are registered to start receiving support by a local authority Key Worker

Employment outcomes

Employment outcomes are defined as follows:

Where the participant has sustained employment (employment, self-employment, Modern Apprenticeship) for 13 weeks a self-declaration signed by the participant and countersigned the Employability Key Worker will confirm the 13 week milestone has been achieved.

⁴⁴ [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

Where the participant has sustained employment (employment, self-employment, Modern Apprenticeship) for 26 weeks a self-declaration signed by the participant and countersigned the Employability Key Worker will confirm the 26 week milestone has been achieved.

Comparisons with other employment services' data

When comparing with Fair Start Scotland:

Starts and employment outcomes are measured in a similar way and are therefore comparable. However, both the support offered and the groups targeted by these services are different, which may affect both the demographics and outcomes of participants.

For other services across the UK, features of service design (e.g. whether voluntary or mandatory, eligibility criteria) and definitions (e.g. how job outcomes are measured) may differ to a greater extent.

5. Previous editions of this publications

This publication has previously reported on Work First Scotland (WFS), Work Able Scotland (WAS), and the Health & Work Support pilot in Dundee and Fife. These services have now closed. The final statistics for WFS and WAS were published 26 February 2020 (<https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781839605901>), and the final statistics for the Health & Work Support pilot were published 27 May 2020 (<https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781839607677>). Other services operate within Scotland, including those run by local authorities and third sector providers, and these are not included in this publication.

6. Correction to an error in previous edition, published in May 2021

We apologise for the following error, which we have found in Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary (May 2021 publication)

Table 9: Fair Start Scotland parent data by year. Participants joining the service and achieving job outcomes, by demographic group, to end March 2021. (The supplementary tables to the statistical summary). The May 2021 publication can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-devolved-employment-services-statistical-summary-10/>

Due to a processing issue there was an undercount in the total number of participants recorded as parents in year 3 across the priority parent groups, with the exception of lone parents. This impacted the relevant proportions of parents in these groups and the overall total number of parents recorded. 427 participants in total were not correctly recorded as parents in year 3 of FSS. Please note the correct figures are shown in **table 10** in the annual update of parent data in this publication.

Any problems or inconveniences resulting from these errors are regretted

7. Tell us what you think

We are always interested to hear from our users about how our statistics are used, and how they can be improved.

Please consider answering our [short survey](#) on how you found this publication.

8. Correspondence and enquiries

For enquiries about this publication, please contact:

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For general enquiries about Scottish Government statistics, please contact:

Office of the Chief Statistician

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9. Complaints and suggestions

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to:

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e-mail: statistics.enquiries@gov.scot

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