



## 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 fourteenth edition, publishes statistics for Fair Start Scotland (FSS) from April 2018 to December 2020 and new experimental statistics on the No One Left Behind approach to employability delivery, reporting on those receiving support from April 2019 to March 2020.

FSS is an employability support service, launched in April 2018, that 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 approach<sup>1</sup>.

For FSS, 44,253 referrals were received and 29,473 people started receiving employability support from its launch in April 2018 up to December 2020.

In the three month period from October to December 2020, 3,246 people were referred and 2,390 people started on FSS. Referrals were 11% lower than the previous quarter (July – September 2020), and 19% lower than the same quarter in 2019 (October – December 2019). Starts were 11% lower than the previous quarter and 17% lower than the same period in 2019. Referrals and starts have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and have been at lower levels since March 2020. There was a further reduction in referrals and starts in December 2020. However, similar decreases were seen in 2018 and 2019, so some or all of this change is likely to be seasonal.

So far, 9,484 people had started a job after joining FSS. There were 1,068 job starts in October – December 2020, which is 20% lower than the quarter before, but 9% higher than the same period last year. Job starts, as with referrals and starts are usually lower in December, which may explain the decrease seen here.

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 people left FSS early without completing the programme of support offered or achieving a job outcome, 33% started a job, 24% sustained employment for 3 months, 19% sustained employment for 6 months and 13% sustained employment for at least 12 months.

However, people who started work had high rates of sustaining it: 72% of people starting work went on to sustain employment for 3 months, 79% of those who sustained employment for 3 months went on to reach at least 6 months and 77% 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 3,824 people<sup>2</sup> were supported during the first year of delivery, from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

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<sup>1</sup> [Employment support programme: equality impact assessment - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

<sup>2</sup> This total includes 752 people who were on Activity Agreements the previous year.

# 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 now 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 [here](#).

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 has COVID-19 impacted the delivery of 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 has been 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 has affected the equalities data collected, with fewer people who join FSS disclosing information on protected characteristics like ethnicity.
- 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.

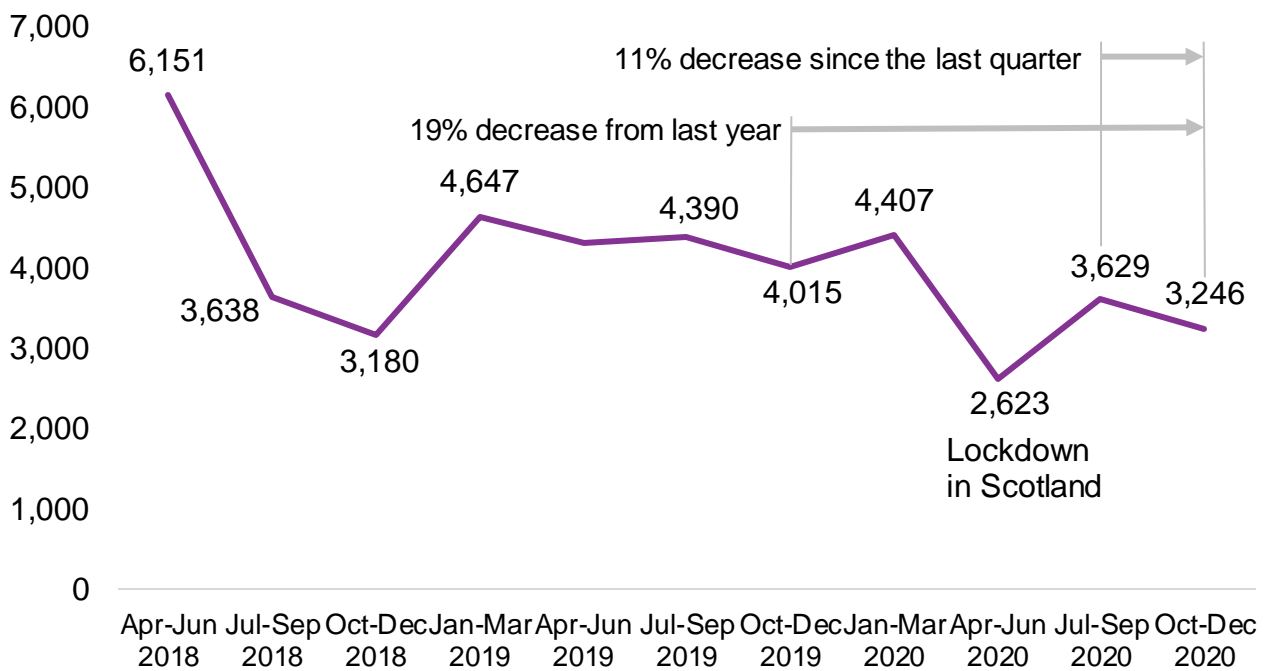
5) There were fewer job vacancies, making it harder for participants to start jobs and achieve sustained job outcomes. ONS data<sup>3</sup> shows a sharp reduction in job vacancies in Scotland after March 2020 to below 50% of the level seen in 2019, with a recovery throughout 2020 that remains at approximately 70% to 80% of the year before. However, after the first lockdown a reduction in job starts by FSS was only seen in April to June 2020, with a return to higher than previous levels by July.

**How many people have joined FSS?**

44,253 people were referred to FSS between its launch in April 2018 and the end of December 2020.

As set out above, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the referral process into FSS. The DWP pause on referrals from March to June 2020 will explain some of the drop in referrals to FSS in that period, illustrated in Figure 1 below. The 11% decrease in referrals in the latest quarter compared to the previous is at least partly due to seasonal effects, and is similar to the lower levels of referrals seen over the festive season in previous years.

**Figure 1: Number of people referred into Fair Start Scotland by quarter of referral, from April 2018 to December 2020**

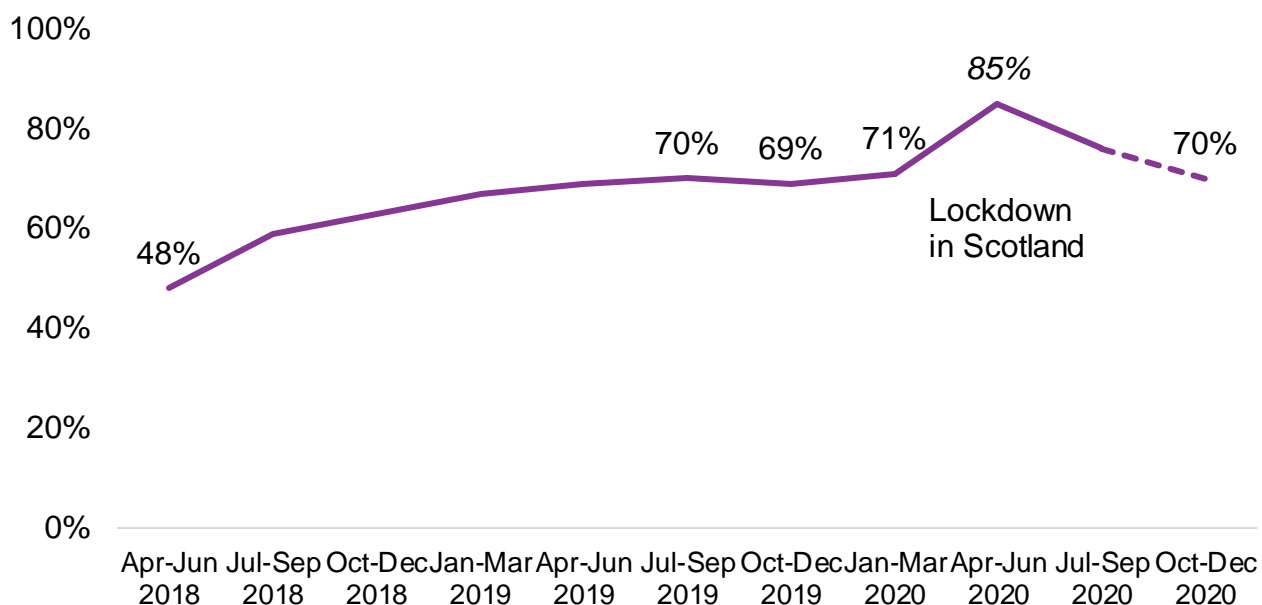


Of the total number of people referred to FSS, 29,473 went on to receive employability support. The start rate, the proportion of people referred who decide to join FSS, has changed over time. In the first quarter after launch it was 48%; this increased over the course of year 1, and then remained stable at around 70% over year 2. With the onset of

<sup>3</sup> [Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk)

COVID-19 pandemic at the start of year 3, the start rate increased to 85%, before falling back down to a level similar to that of year 2<sup>4</sup>. The most recent quarter shows a start rate of 70% (Figure 2). The changes in referral sources (described in the Introduction section) were highlighted as a possible reason for the increase in start rate during the period April – June 2020.

**Figure 2: The percentage of people referred into Fair Start Scotland that join the service per quarter, from April 2018 to December 2020**



Note:

1. The October - December 2020 start rate is not complete yet and may rise further.

<sup>4</sup> The start rate for the most recent quarter is 70% so far, but this is expected to rise by a few percentage points as it has done previously, as not everyone referred during that period has had sufficient time to join FSS.

The Scottish Government's evaluation of the second year of the service<sup>5</sup> highlighted that compared to the unemployed population of Scotland there were some groups under-represented in FSS: women, people from minority ethnic backgrounds and young people; while a higher proportion of disabled people and older people used the service. This was the same in the first year of FSS<sup>6</sup>.

The breakdown of equalities groups for FSS is shown in Figure 3. There have been changes in the demographic characteristics of those joining the service over time.

Overall, 37% of people who have joined FSS were women and 63% were men. The proportion of women has increased over time: from 35% in year 1, to 37% in year 2, 40% in the first and second quarters of year 3, and 43% in the most recent quarter.

The most common age group of people joining FSS was 35-49 years (28% of people), followed by 50 years old and over (25%), 25-34 years (24%), and 16-24 years (20%).

In both year 2 and year 3 so far, there were increases in the proportion of participants from the two younger age bands (16-34), and a decrease from the older age bands (35+). Participants aged 16-34 made up 38% of all starts in year 1, 44% in year 2, and 53% so far in year 3. In the most recent quarter, 50% of participants were aged 16-34, which is a decrease from a peak at 56% in April – June 2020. Participants aged 35 and over made up 60% of all starts in year 1, 52% in year 2, 46% in year 3 so far, and 49% in the most recent quarter.

Overall, 5% of people who have joined FSS were from minority ethnic backgrounds and 68% were white, with ethnicity unknown for the remaining 27% of participants. In the most recent quarter, 5% of participants were from a minority ethnic group and 74% of participants were white. The rate of unknowns increased in years 2 and 3 which has made ethnicity comparisons over time difficult<sup>7</sup>. However, the number of unknowns has decreased in the most recent quarter.

44% of people joining FSS reported a disability. The proportion of disabled participants decreased from year 1 to year 2: from 55% to 44%, and decreased further during the COVID-19 pandemic to 27% in April – June 2020. However in October – December 2020<sup>8</sup> the proportion of disabled people was 44%, similar to pre-pandemic levels.

65% of people joining FSS reported having a long-term health condition, 29% reported no long-term health condition, with the rest (7%) unknown.

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<sup>5</sup> 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/>

<sup>6</sup> 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/>

<sup>7</sup> Since the COVID-19 lockdown FSS is delivered over the phone or online, with face-to-face interaction paused. This has impacted the collection of equalities data. We are working with FSS service providers to ensure response rates are maximised going forward. For more information, see the Data Quality section in the Background Information.

<sup>8</sup> In July – September there was a large increase in the proportion of unknown data, so it is not possible to reliably report on the proportion of disabled people for this quarter.

**Figure 3: Percentage of people joining Fair Start Scotland, broken down by equality characteristic group, from April 2018 to December 2020**

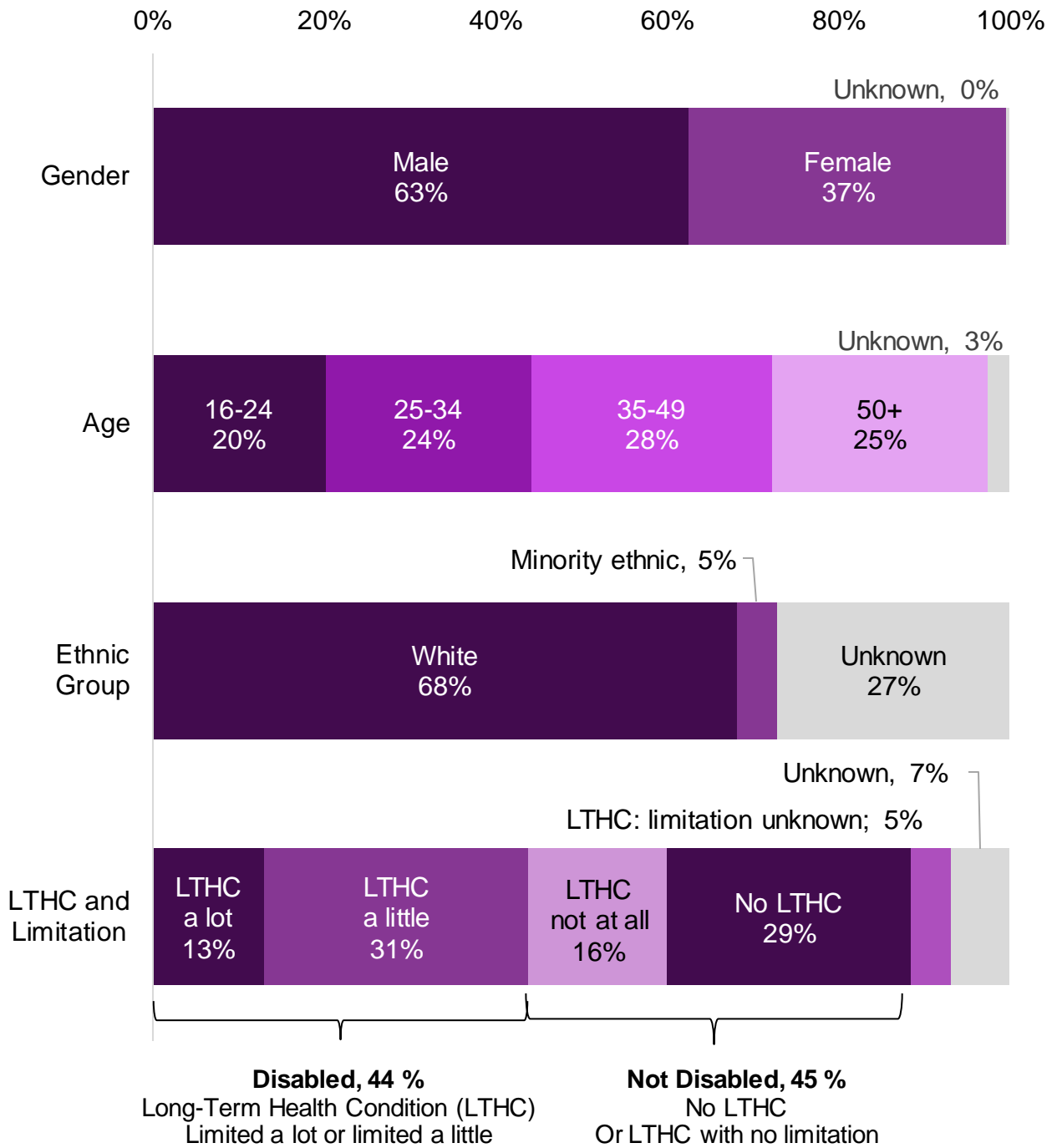
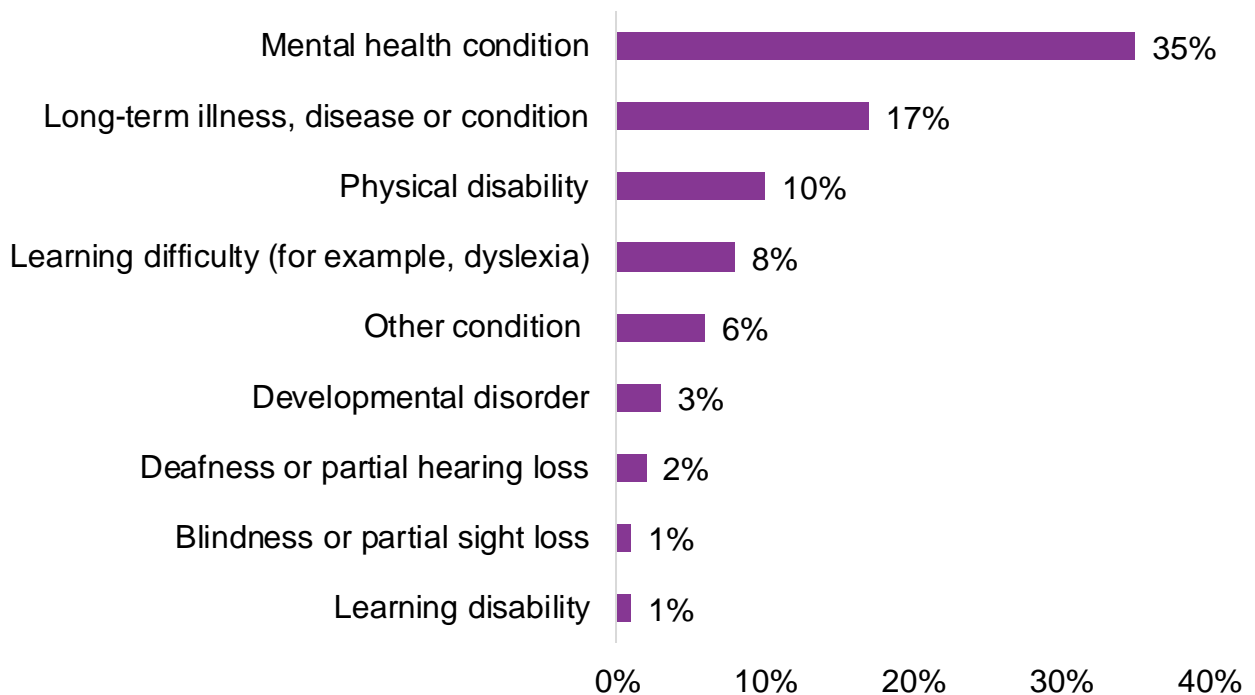


Figure 4 shows that the most common long-term health condition reported was mental health (35%). Between year 1 and 2 there was a 5 percentage point increase in people reporting a mental health condition among those joining FSS, from 31% to 36%. This varied between 36% and 38% in the the first three quarters of year 3.

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, the proportion was 20%, increasing from 15% in July – September 2020.

Physical disabilities were the third most common long-term health conditions reported. The number of people reporting a physical disability declined over time until April – June 2020 (14% in year 1, 10% in year 2, 5% in April – June 2020), and was 7% in the latest two quarters.

**Figure 4: Percentage of people joining Fair Start Scotland who report long-term health conditions, broken down by type of long-term health condition, from April 2018 to December 2020**





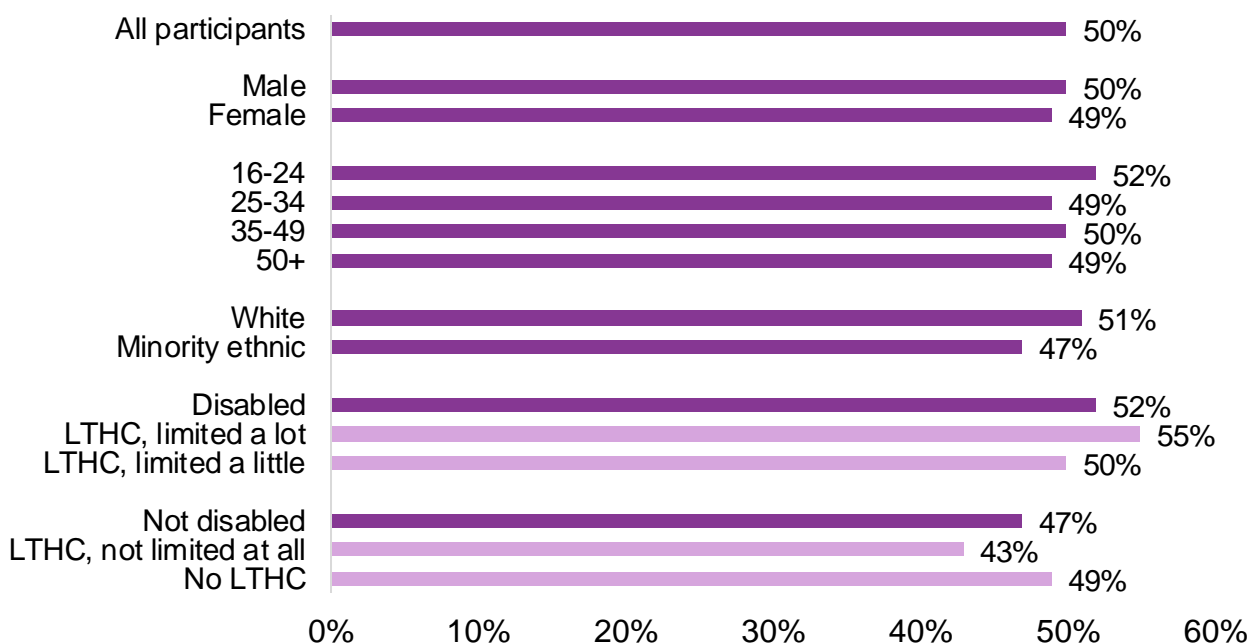
## How many people left FSS early?

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.

Overall, 11,664 people have left FSS early. As with job outcomes, as time goes on we get a more complete picture of numbers staying on FSS or leaving early. Where we have a complete picture<sup>9</sup> 50% of people joining left the service early.

Figure 5 shows that the percentage of people leaving early was broadly similar for most 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). The proportion of people leaving early was lower for those who had a long-term health condition that did not limit daily activities at all (43%).

**Figure 5: Percentage of people that leave Fair Start Scotland early, broken down by equality characteristic group, from April 2018 to December 2020<sup>9 10</sup>**



<sup>9</sup> The early leaver rate is calculated for the 19,009 people who joined FSS from April 2018 – December 2019 as we have the most complete data.

<sup>10</sup> LTHC is an abbreviation of Long-Term Health Condition.

## How many people entered and sustained employment?

A total of 9,484 people who joined FSS have started a job.

COVID-19 has had an impact on the labour market, and the number of job vacancies<sup>11</sup> available.

Figure 6 has been included to show changes in FSS job starts since COVID-19 restrictions began in March 2020. There was a substantial reduction in job starts in April 2020, followed by increases in May and June, but still remaining below previous levels. Job starts in April – June 2020 were 20% lower than the same period in 2019. However, by August 2020 the number of job starts was the highest for any month of FSS, and in the July – September 2020 period job starts were 10% higher than the same period in 2019. This high level of job starts continued until November 2020. Some or all of the decrease in December is likely to be seasonal: drops in job starts were also seen in December 2018 and 2019.

**Figure 6: Number of people starting work after joining Fair Start Scotland, by the month job was started, from April 2019 to December 2020**



<sup>11</sup> [Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/governmentandbusiness/othergovernmentandbusiness/coronavirusandthelatestindicatorsfortheukconomyandsociety)

Of the 9,484 people who started work, 5,567 had sustained employment for at least 3 months (13 weeks), 3,720 were employed for at least 6 months (26 weeks), and 2,135 were employed for at least 12 months (52 weeks), as of December 2020.

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 people who started FSS did not enter work or go on to sustain employment: 33% started a job, 24% sustained employment for 3 months, 19% sustained employment for 6 months, and 13% sustained employment for 12 months<sup>12</sup>
- however, high levels of those starting jobs sustain them: 72% of people starting jobs went on to sustain employment for 3 months, 79% of the people who sustained employment for 3 months went on to reach 6 months, and 77% 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 and outcomes did not show a large difference by gender, though slightly more outcomes were achieved by women. For both men and women, 33% started a job. 3 month job outcomes were achieved by 25% of women and 23% of men; 6 month job outcomes were achieved by 20% of women and 18% of men; 12 month outcomes were achieved by 15% of women and 13% of men.

The biggest differences in job start and outcomes rates were observed in age and long-term health conditions, which are often related. 38% of 16-24 year olds started work after joining FSS, compared with 28% of those aged 50 plus – a difference of 10 percentage points. Differences are also seen in the proportions of people sustaining employment at 3 months (27% for 16-24; 21% for 50+), 6 months (20% and 17%) and 12 months (16% and 11%).

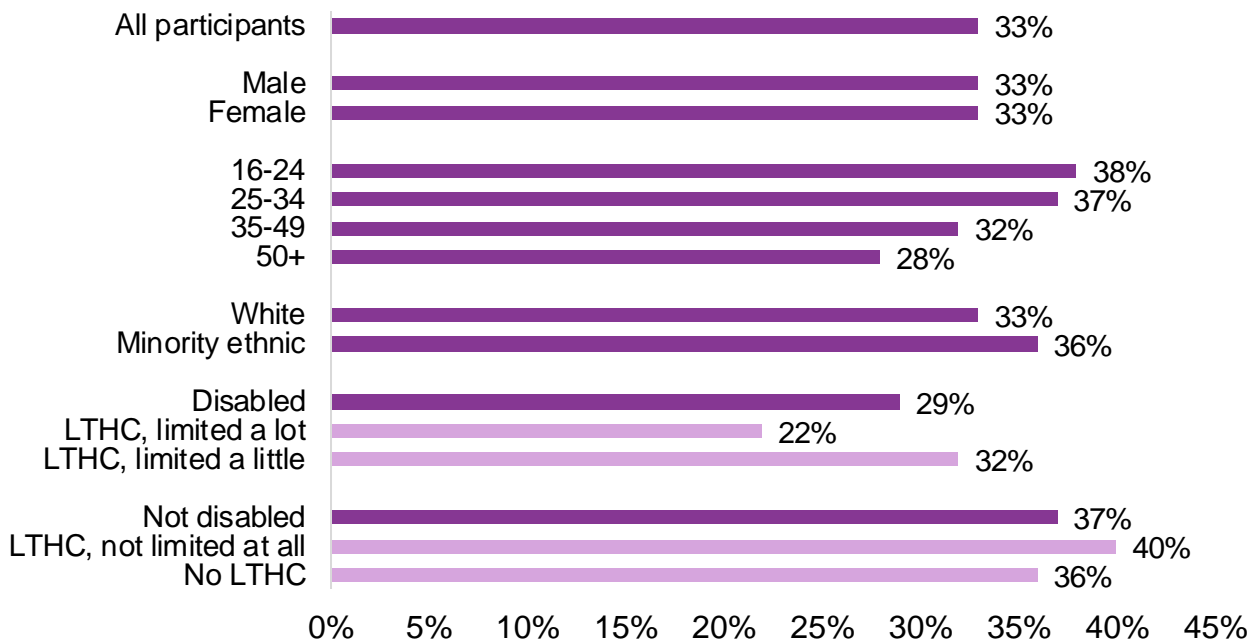
22% of those with a long-term health condition that limited daily activities a lot went on to start work, compared to 40% of those with a health condition that did not limit daily activities. The difference between these two groups was also observed in the proportions of people sustaining employment at 3 months (16% for those limited a lot, and 27% for those not limited at all), 6 months (13% and 21%) and 12 months (9% and 16%) sustained employment.

36% of minority ethnic participants went on to start work, which is 3 percentage points higher than white participants, 33% of whom went on to start work. The gap for 3 month outcomes is 4 percentage points higher for minority ethnic participants and for 6 month outcomes it is 3 percentage points higher. The difference widens further for 12 month outcomes, with a difference of 6 percentage points. Thus 19% of minority ethnic participants sustained a job for 12 months compared to 13% of white participants.

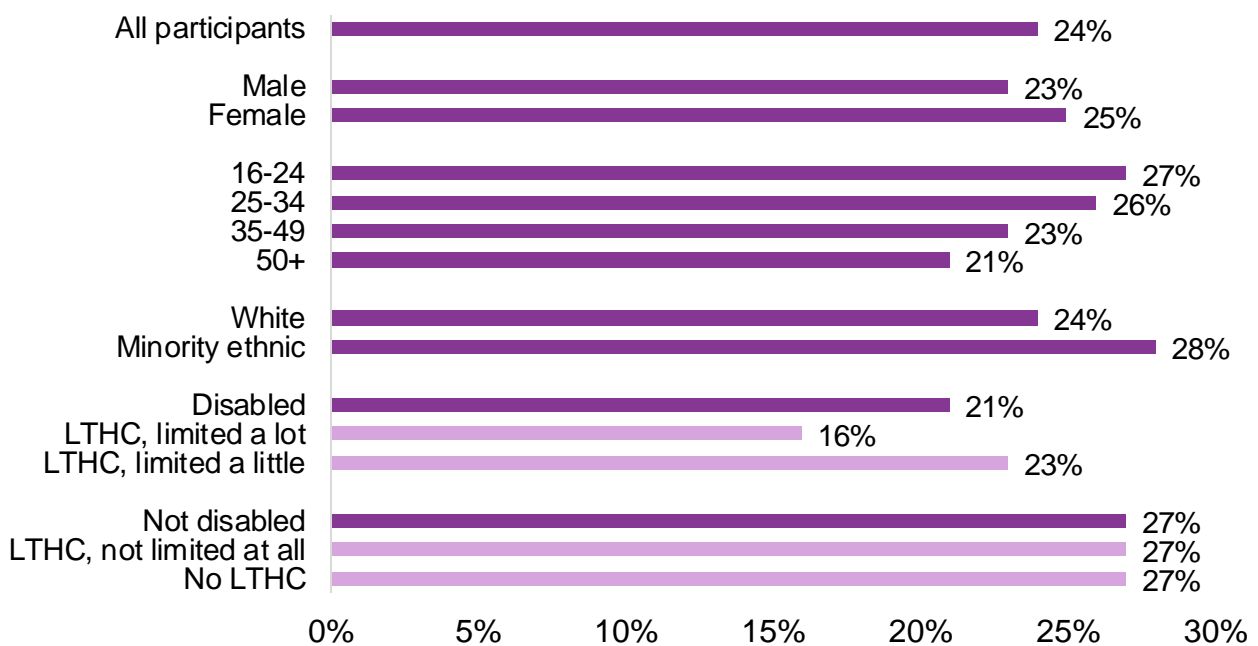
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<sup>12</sup> Data from the Total Rates columns of Table 4 in the supplementary tables.

**Figure 7: Percentage of people starting work after joining Fair Start Scotland, broken down by equality characteristic group<sup>13 14</sup>**



**Figure 8: Percentage of people staying in work for 3 months after joining Fair Start Scotland, broken down by equality characteristic group<sup>13 15</sup>**

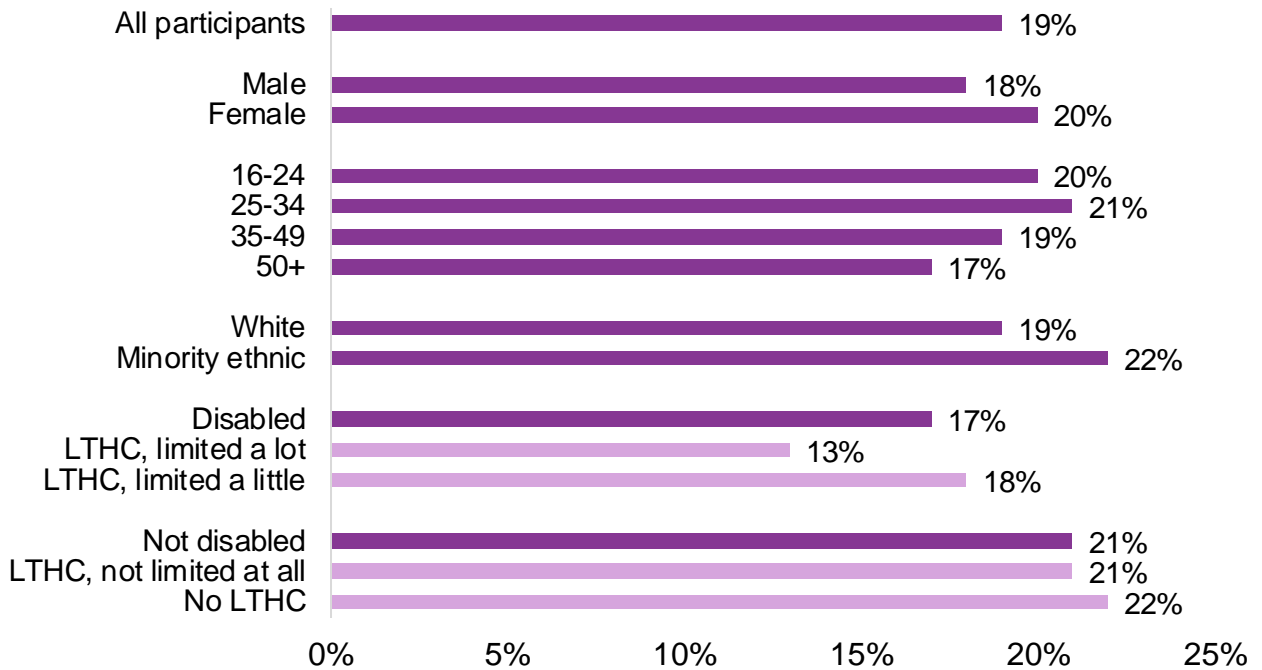


<sup>13</sup> LTHC is an abbreviation of Long-Term Health Condition.

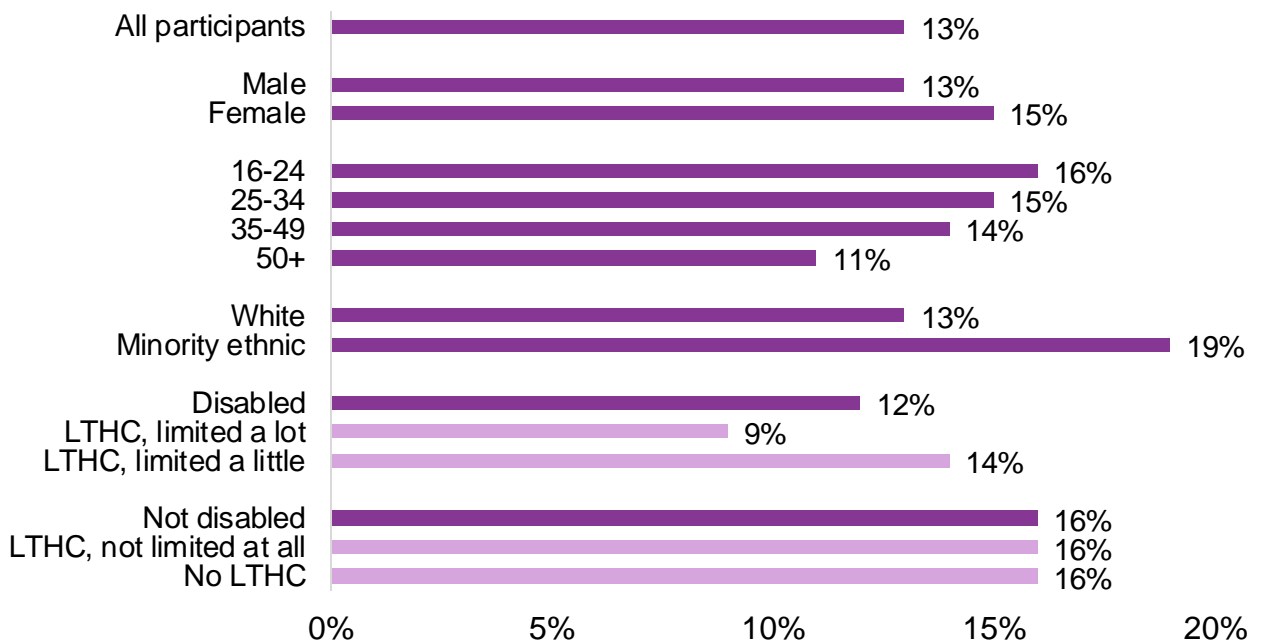
<sup>14</sup> The job start rate is calculated for the 19,009 people who joined FSS from April 2018 – December 2019 as we have the most complete data.

<sup>15</sup> The 3 month job outcome rate is calculated for the 16,141 people who joined FSS from April 2018 – September 2019 as we have the most complete data.

**Figure 9: Percentage of people staying in work for 6 months after joining Fair Start Scotland, broken down by equality characteristic group<sup>13 16</sup>**



**Figure 10: Percentage of people staying in work for 12 months after joining Fair Start Scotland, broken down by equality characteristic group<sup>13 17</sup>**



<sup>16</sup> The 6 month job outcome rate is calculated for the 13,069 people who joined FSS from April 2018 – June 2019 as we have the most complete data.

<sup>17</sup> The 12 month job outcome rate is calculated for the 7,032 people who joined FSS from April 2018 – December 2018 as we have the most complete data.

# 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.

The support provided may vary from short, focused interventions or longer term support, dependent on 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.

More information on No One Left Behind can be found [here](#).

## How many people received support from No One Left Behind?

During the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, a total of 3,824<sup>18</sup> people were supported by No One Left Behind.

The effect of COVID-19 on No One Left Behind data during this period is likely to be minimal, since the national lockdown in Scotland took effect on 23 March 2020, which was close to the end of the first year of delivery.

78% of those who received support were aged 15-19, 10% were aged 20-24, 8% were aged 25-49, and 4% were aged 50 or over (Table 1). 40% of participants were female, and 60% were male (Table 2). 654 participants (17%) reported having a disability<sup>19</sup>.

Of the 904 people receiving support during the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 who entered employment, 563 people went on to sustain employment for at least 3 months (13 weeks), and 462 people sustained employment for at least 6 months (26 weeks)<sup>20</sup>.

Because the support offered can extend beyond a 12 month period, some people who started receiving support during the first year of delivery were still receiving support beyond 31 March 2020 and so the figures presented here are not final. They will be updated in future publications as more data becomes available and is combined with data on those who started receiving No One Left Behind support from April 2020 onwards.

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<sup>18</sup> This total includes 752 young people who were participating in Activity Agreements the previous year. [Activity agreements - mygov.scot](#)

<sup>19</sup> Disability reported in context of being a barrier to work. See background section for more information.

<sup>20</sup> Employment outcome totals reported up to 31 December 2020, for those who entered employment during the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

**Table 1: No One Left Behind participants receiving support between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, by age**

<b>Age group</b>	<b>No One Left Behind participants</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>15-19</b>	2,965	78%
<b>20-24</b>	374	10%
<b>25-49</b>	319	8%
<b>50+</b>	166	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,824</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2: No One Left Behind participants receiving support between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, by gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No One Left Behind participants</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Male</b>	2,289	60%
<b>Female</b>	1,521	40%
<b>Unknown</b>	14	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,824</b>	<b>100%*</b>

\*totals may not sum to 100 due to rounding

## **Feedback**

This is the first time experimental statistics for No One Left Behind are being published. To ensure the statistics are developed in a way which is useful, we will be asking for views on a range of topics in future publications. If you have comments or questions in the meantime please contact [employabilitydata@gov.scot](mailto:employabilitydata@gov.scot).

# 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/what-we-do/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 December 2020). 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 March 2020; the first year of delivery of No One Left Behind. Employment outcome totals are reported up to 31 December 2020, for those who entered employment during the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

## 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 8. Tables 1 to 7 show changes to FSS over time, with Tables 4 to 7 providing breakdowns of equalities characteristics. Table 8 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 12 January 2021.



## **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 December 2020.

## **Methodology**

### **Referral**

The referral numbers published in this release are net figures, which excludes 1,245 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 in December 2020, 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.

### **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 individual's first recorded job only. The number of job starts is therefore equal to the number of people who had entered employment. All figures are up to 31 December 2020.

### **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:

- 2,739 participants answered the second question on extent of limitation (68 yes, a lot; 349 yes, a little; 2,322 not at all). These responses were excluded from the totals.
- 909 people reported one or more long-term health condition (1,030 conditions in total were recorded). These conditions have been excluded from the count of long-term health conditions.

### **Impact of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) on data quality**

Due to COVID-19 physical distancing guidelines, FSS providers have had to adapt their methods of supporting people, moving from contact in person to telephone and online contact. This has led to lower rates of data completion of equalities information, whilst data collection methods have been adapted to the new circumstances in consideration of data protection guidance. It has also caused disruption to some providers where data is held in the workplace and is not currently accessible to staff now working from home.

There were particularly high levels of missing data for ethnicity in July to September 2020. Data collection has improved in October to December 2020, and where possible data has been obtained for participants who started before October 2020 but had missing data at the time of the November 2020 publication.

### **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 LAs. 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 opportunities<sup>21</sup>.

## **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.

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<sup>21</sup> Fair Start Scotland evaluation report 2: local area case studies - November 2019  
[www.gov.scot/publications/fair-start-scotland-evaluation-report-2-local-area-case-studies-year-1-november-2019/](http://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-start-scotland-evaluation-report-2-local-area-case-studies-year-1-november-2019/)

During the first transitional year of delivery, data was submitted to the Scottish Government by local authorities as aggregate totals rather than individual level data. This means that further breakdowns or cross-tabulations of data are not possible. Individual level data reporting for No One Left Behind was put in place from April 2020; the start of year 2 delivery.

Data on the number of participants being supported (n=3,460) and the number of participants who entered employment (n=643) between 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 was previously released by Scottish Government in response to a Parliamentary Question (S5W-32026) on 1 October 2020. This data was based on management information initially reported to Scottish Government in April/May 2020. In preparation for publication, quality assurance work was undertaken by each local authority and data was resubmitted, including employment outcome totals achieved by year 1 participants up to 31 December 2020, in February 2021. Updated totals were confirmed for all local authorities except Inverclyde as part of this exercise.

Because the support offered to participants can extend beyond a 12 month period, some people who started receiving support during the first year of delivery were still receiving support beyond 31 March 2020 and so the figures presented in this publication are not final and are subject to further revision as more data becomes available.

### **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.

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.

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## 7. Complaints and suggestions

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