



## Economy And Labour Market

### Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: Statistical Summary

#### Main Points

- There has been 97,233 starts on either Fair Start Scotland (FSS) or No One Left Behind since April 2018 up to March 2023. In the most recent quarter, there were 8,220 starts, the largest number in a single quarter. This was a 16% increase on the previous quarter and a 2% increase on the same quarter in the previous year.
- Experimental statistics for No One Left Behind show a total of 39,632 people started receiving support from April 2019 to March 2023. The number of people starting support has increased each year; 2,818 in year 1, 4,724 in year 2, 14,423 in year 3 and 17,667 in year 4. In the most recent quarter, 4,665 people started to receive support.
- Of the 39,632 people receiving support on No One Left Behind, 12,690 (32%) have entered employment, while a further 5,477 (14%) entered further or higher education or training.
- There have been 57,601 starts to FSS since April 2018, including 4,495 re-joins which has been possible since April 2021. There were 3,555 starts in the most recent quarter, 20% higher than the previous quarter and 11% higher than the same quarter in 2022.
- There were 1,113 job starts this quarter, 4% lower than the previous quarter and 10% higher than the same quarter in 2022. Overall, there has been 20,013 job starts since FSS launched.

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## About this publication

This is the 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of this statistical report providing summary information on Scotland's devolved employability services. It is split into three sections, the first section considers No One Left Behind and Fair Start Scotland (FSS) together, the second covers experimental statistics related to the No One Left Behind strategic approach, reporting on the first four years from April 2019 to March 2023, and the third section covers official statistics related to FSS, covering the first five years from April 2018 to March 2023.

In previous editions of this publication, No One Left Behind data lagged one reporting quarter behind FSS. However, from this edition onwards, both services are reported up to the same quarter.

Further detailed statistics including additional breakdowns not necessarily presented in this report are published in accompanying tables alongside the report.

### Data Developments in this Edition

For the first time, this publication presents data up to the same reporting period (March 2023) for No One Left Behind and FSS. Previously, No One Left Behind was reporting one period behind. There is a new section combining No One Left Behind and FSS data to give an indication of trends in Scottish Government funded employability as a whole. There is also data presented for the first time on trans status and age progression for No One Left Behind and on time unemployed, benefit status, urban/rural status, deprivation status and conviction status for FSS participants.

### No One Left Behind

No One Left Behind, introduced from April 2019, is a newer approach to employability delivery, which moves away from funding and delivering a number of separate and distinct employability programmes to a more flexible approach. No One Left Behind data is collected and recorded on management information systems by Scottish Local Authorities as part of the process for providing support to people. Local Authorities in turn provide data to the Scottish Government on a quarterly basis for reporting purposes.

### Shared Measurement Framework Data Reporting Template

From October 2022, a new data template ([Access the new data template - opens in a new window](#)) co-designed with Local Authorities and aligned to the Shared Measurement Framework (SMF) has been in place and going forward the statistics in this report will reflect this new information. We continue to work closely with Local Authorities to improve the accuracy and quality of returns following the transition to the new data template.

### Fair Start Scotland

FSS is an employability support service, launched in April 2018, which aims to help unemployed people into sustainable employment. There are two sources of information for the FSS statistics presented in this publication. The first source is the Scottish Government's Scottish Employability Tracking System (SETS) which tracks referrals, starts and outcomes for those starting employment. This system provides management information in relation to performance only and does not contain any information on personal characteristics. The second source is a data return provided quarterly by FSS service providers with personal characteristic information for participants such as age, gender, long-term health conditions, disability and ethnic group. It does not contain any service level information. These information sources both contain an anonymous ID number which is used to link them together to create a final dataset for analysis.

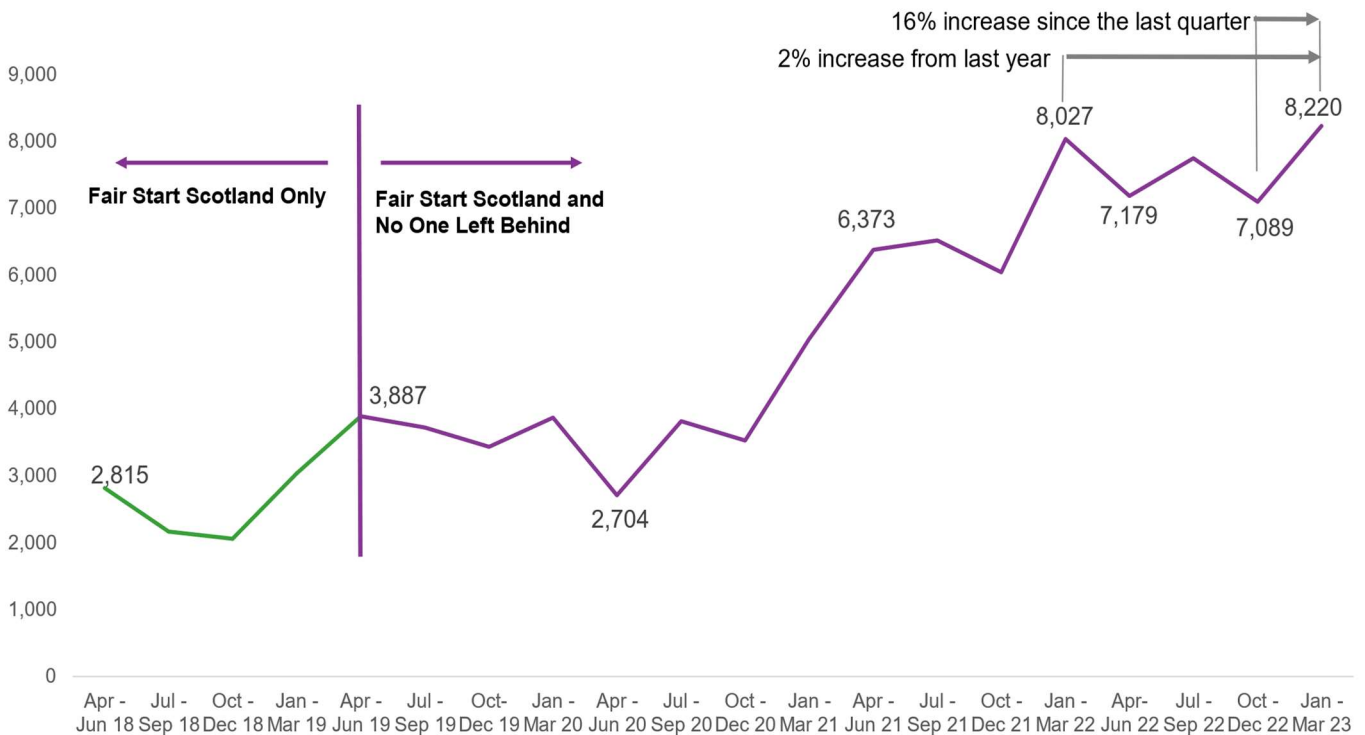
# No One Left Behind and Fair Start Scotland

No One Left Behind and FSS are different approaches to employability support, varying over time in the support offered and groups targeted. This is likely to impact on both the demographics and outcomes of participants across both approaches. It is therefore not recommended to make direct comparisons between them. However, this short section considers both approaches together to give an indication of total demand for Scottish Government funded employability support over time.

Please note, the data presented here refers to starts and is not a unique count of individuals. For example, people have been able to re-join FSS since April 2021 (there must be a break of at least 13 week to be eligible to re-join) therefore FSS starts are not the same as unique individuals. FSS pre-employment support is available for 12 months, or up to 18 months in some cases. However, for No One Left Behind, participants are able to disengage and re-engage in support as required. Unlike FSS, regardless of the length of time between a participant disengaging and re-engaging with No One Left Behind, they are only ever counted once. It is also possible that people may have accessed both FSS and No One Left Behind. Data from April 2018 to March 2019 includes only FSS starts.

There has been 97,233 starts on either No One Left Behind or FSS since April 2018 up to March 2023. In the most recent quarter, January – March 2023, there were 8,220 starts across No One Left Behind and FSS, the largest number in a single quarter. This was a 16% increase on the previous quarter and a 2% increase on the same quarter in the previous year.

**Figure 1: Number of starts on No One Left Behind and Fair Start Scotland, by quarter, from April 2018 to March 2023**



# No One Left Behind (Experimental Statistics)

## Experimental Statistics

The Code of Practice for Statistics describes experimental 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’.

Users should be aware that experimental statistics will potentially have a wider degree of uncertainty and require extra caution when interpreting results. We continue to work with data suppliers to improve the accuracy and quality of returns with the aim of removing the experimental badge. Please see the [data quality section in the background information](#) for more details.

## 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 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.

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 expanded over time. This includes funding for the initial phase of No One Left Behind (April 2019), the Parental Employability Support Fund (February 2020) and the Young Person’s Guarantee (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.

## Shared Measurement Framework

The first SMF publication was released in April 2022 and subsequently updated in December 2022 to reflect work undertaken with Local Authorities during the summer of 2022 to agree and finalise the new data template.

The initial data recommendations built on existing data collection practice and activity that was in place between Local and Scottish Government, formalising key data items collected around the ‘progression’ theme. The new data template is further aligned with the ‘reach’

and 'progression' themes of the SMF and the data published in this report will evolve to reflect this in the future.

The flexible, person-centred support No One Left Behind seeks to put in place acknowledges that participants may experience support differently, based on their individual circumstances and needs – for example, being able to disengage and re-engage 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 means to that individual. This means broadening our understanding of success from a focus on job outcomes to focus 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. 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.

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 with data collected quarterly for subsequent periods, which has allowed us to provide more detailed information for year 1 participants, including their achievements. It should be noted that 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.

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.

# Reach of Services: Who are we reaching and what challenges do they face?

**SMF Theme 1 - Reach: Employability services are reaching all those who need support to progress towards, move into and sustain fair work.**

## All Participants

A total of 39,632 people started receiving support from April 2019 to March 2023. The number of people receiving support has increased over time; 2,818 in year 1, 4,724 in year 2, 14,423 in year 3 and 17,667 in year 4. In the most recent quarter (January – March 2023) 4,665 people started to receive support.

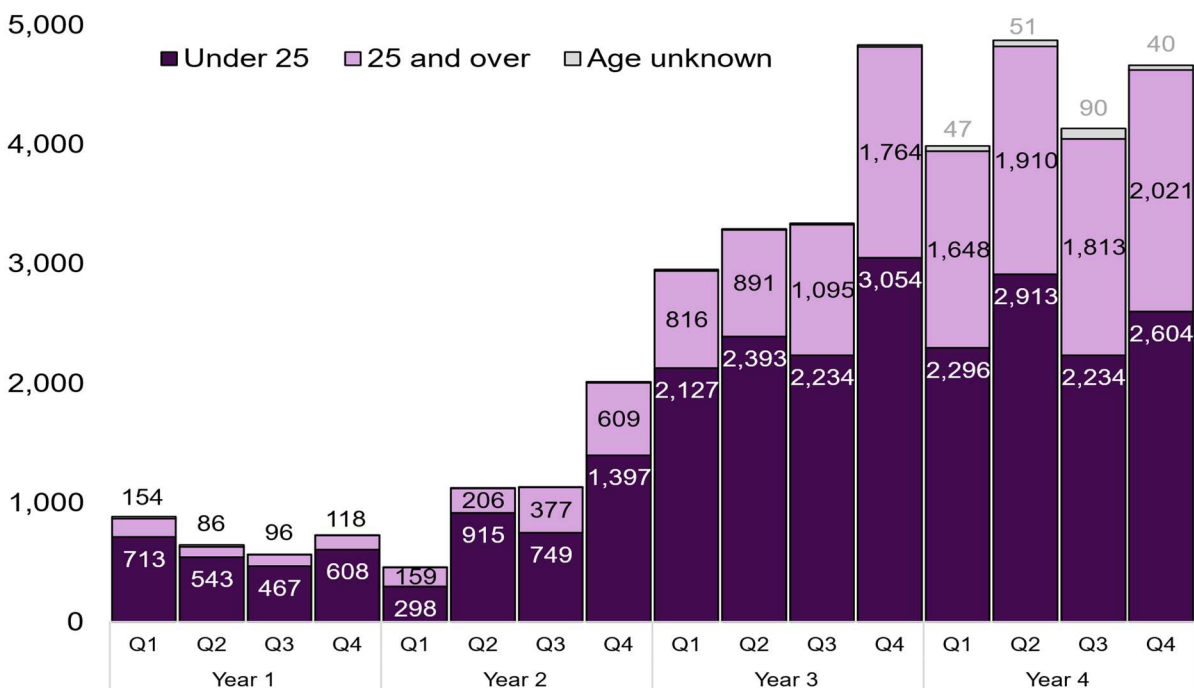
## Age

Most people receiving support through No One Left Behind were aged under 25 (64%; 25,545). Of these, 18,388 (72%) were aged 15-19 and 7,157 (28%) were aged 20-24. The remaining 13,763 (35%) participants were aged 25 or over, with a similar proportion aged 25-34 (36%; 4,988) and 35-49 (42%; 5,741), while only 22% (3,024) were aged 50 or over. Age was unknown for less than 1% (324) of participants.

Figure 2 shows increases for both the under 25 and 25 and over age groups over time, with peak participation seen in January – March 2022 (under 25) and January – March 2023 (25 and over). The latest quarter shows 2,604 (56%) people under 25 and 2,021 (43%) people aged 25 and over accessed support. The gap between these age groups has narrowed each year.

It should be noted that the large increase in participation of under 25s seen between January – March 2021 coincides with the introduction of additional funding to support young people.

**Figure 2: Participants receiving employability support, by quarter and age (unknowns less than 30 are not visible), April 2019 – March 2023**



## **Sex**

Of the 39,632 people who started to receive support between April 2019 and March 2023, 17,158 (43%) were female and 22,174 (56%) male. Sex was unknown for 1% (300) of participants. The proportion of female participants has increased from 41% in year 1 to 47% in year 2, before declining to 44% in year 3 and then again to 42% in year 4. The highest proportion of female participants receiving support in a single quarter was 54% (April – June 2020).

However, there are marked sex differences by age. The youngest (15-19) and oldest (50+) age groups have the lowest proportion of females at 37% and 38% respectively, however for the middle age groups, 25-34 (56%) and 35-49 (59%), the sex difference reverses and females account for the highest proportion of participants.

Trans status is reported in this report for the first time. This is a new variable included in the new data reporting template since October 2022 and as such will only be available for participants starting on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022. This question is voluntary.

A total of 129 people have responded yes to the question on trans status. Of these, 56 have identified as a trans man, 42 as non-binary, 19 as a trans woman, with the remaining 12 people choosing the “other” option.

## **Ethnicity**

Overall, ethnic minority groups have accounted for 5% (2,114) of participants since April 2019. The proportion of minority ethnic participants has varied across years with the highest proportion (6%) in year 4 and the lowest (3%) in year 1. In the most recent quarter (January – March 2023), the proportion was 6%.

However, there are age differences; with a higher proportion of minority ethnic participants in the 25 and over group (9%) compared with those under 25 (3%).

These figures should be used with caution as some percentages are based on small numbers and the proportion of unknowns can vary across time periods.

## **Disability**

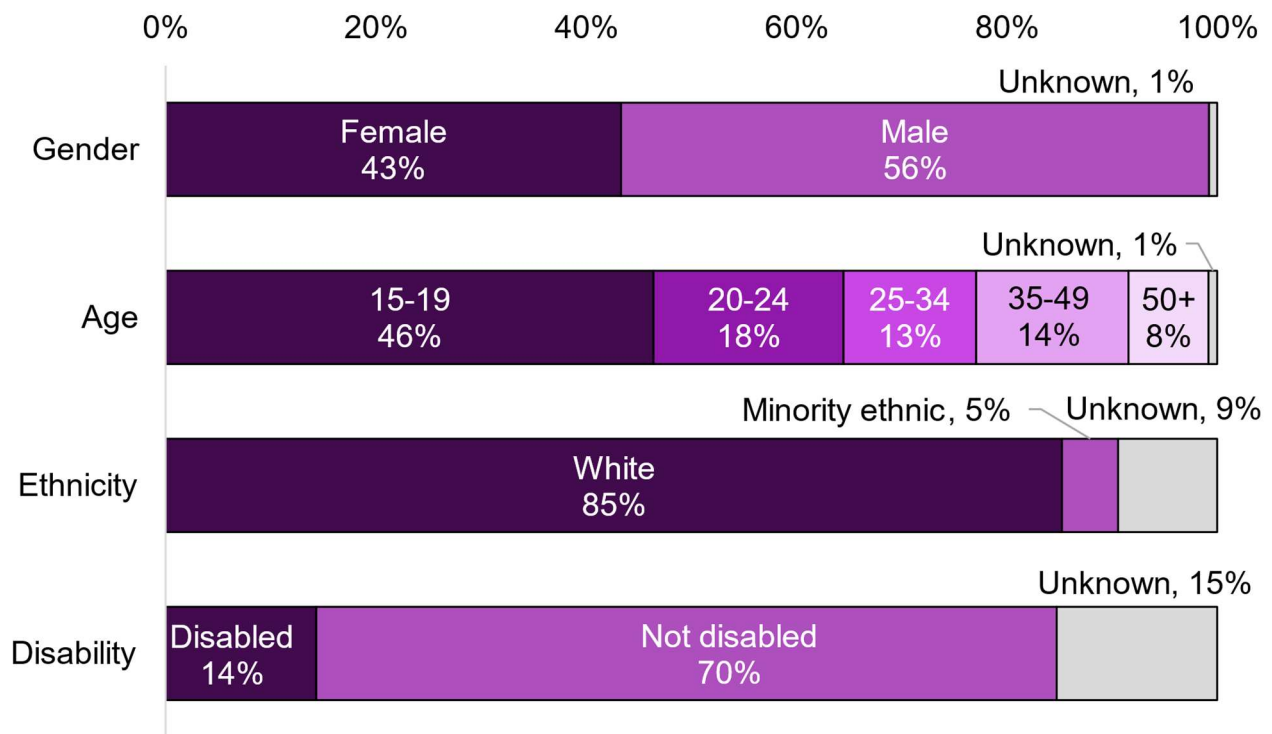
Overall, 14% of participants accessing support reported having a disability (see [Disability section in background information](#) for disability definition). The proportion of participants reporting a disability has been fairly consistent with the exception of a marked decrease across year 2 to 10% before increasing to 13% in year 3, and increasing again to 16% in year 4. It should be noted that year 2 covered the first year of the pandemic which may be a factor for the noted decrease in that year. In the most recent quarter (January – March 2023), the proportion was 18%.

Unlike with sex and ethnicity, there is little variation between younger (under 25; 14%) and older (25 and over; 16%) age groups.

These figures should be used with caution as some percentages are based on very small numbers and the proportion of unknowns can vary across time periods.



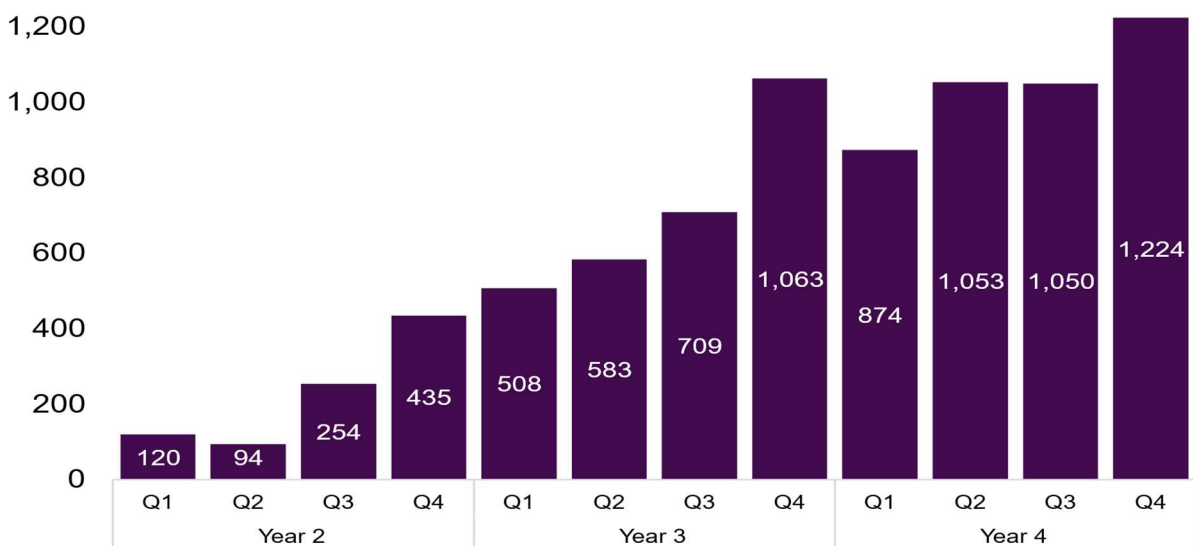
**Figure 3: Percentage of people supported through No One Left Behind, broken down by equality characteristic group, April 2019 – March 2023**



## Parents

Please note that parents are a subgroup of all participants supported during the period April 2020 to March 2023 (year 2 onwards). Of the 36,814 people who started to receive support from year 2, 7,967 (22%) were parents. The number of parents has generally increased reaching a high of 1,224 (26%) parents in the most recent quarter (January - March 2023). This was the joint highest proportion of parents in a single quarter, alongside April – June 2020.

**Figure 4: Parents starting to receive employability support, by quarter, April 2020 – March 2023**



## Age

Most parents are aged 25 and over (84%; 6,727), with the majority consistently in the 35-49 years age group (44%; 3,535). The proportion of parents is lowest for the youngest (15-19 year olds) (3%; 262) and oldest (50 and over) (8%; 624) age groups.

## Sex

Sex differences are reversed and more pronounced in the parent subgroup (74%; 5,875 female) compared to all participants (43% female). Females have accounted for a significantly higher proportion of parents across the period; however, the proportion of male parents accessing support has generally increased over time, accounting for 17% of parents receiving support in April - June 2020, increasing to 30% in the latest quarter. The highest proportion observed to date was 31% in October – December 2022.

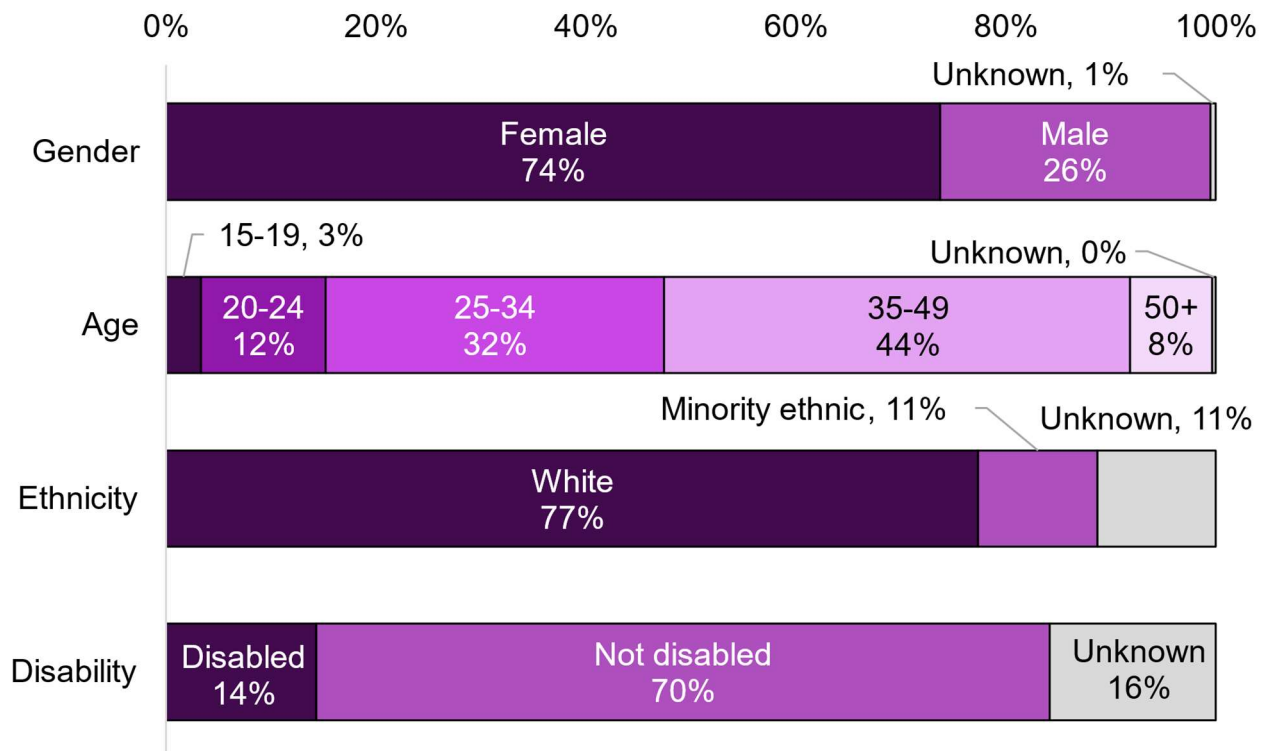
## Ethnicity

Of parents accessing support through No One Left Behind, 11% (905) were from minority ethnic groups. This has fluctuated greatly across time periods and caution is required as some percentages are based on very small numbers and the proportion of unknowns can vary across time periods.

## Disability

Overall, 14% (1,140) of parents reported having a disability. The proportion of parents reporting a disability has remained fairly stable over years 2 (11%) and 3 (12%) increasing to 17% during year 4. It was 21% in the most recent quarter.

**Figure 5: Percentage of parents supported through No One Left Behind, broken down by equality characteristic group, April 2020 – March 2023**



## Priority Family Groups

There were 1,224 parents in the most recent quarter (January – March 2023). Of these, the following groups were observed in terms of parents and those from families at highest risk of being affected by child poverty (some adults may appear in one or more of these family groups):

- 254 (21%) were disabled,
- 690 (56%) were lone parents,
- 103 (8%) were mothers aged under 25 and 28 (2%) were fathers aged under 25,
- 256 (21%) were parents with three or more children,
- 90 (7%) had a child aged under 12 months, and,
- 216 (18%) had a disabled child or adult within the family (this refers to any other disabled adult within the family, not adults who are participants).

Overall, of the 7,967 parents receiving support since year 2:

- 1,140 (14%) were disabled,
- 4,758 (60%) were lone parents,
- 857 (11%) were mothers aged under 25 and 352 (4%) were fathers aged under 25,
- 1,867 (23%) were parents with three or more children,
- 766 (10%) had a child aged under 12 months, and,
- 975 (12%) had a disabled child or adult within the family (this refers to any other disabled adult within the family, not adults who are participants).

The proportion of lone parents has remained consistent across year 3 (59%) and year 4 (59%), after an initial reduction from year 2 (63%). The proportion of parents that are mothers under 25 has been decreasing across years, from 15% in year 2 to 8% in year 4.

Please see [Tackling Child Poverty Priority Families Overview \(opens in a new window\)](#) for further information on the priority family groups and their definitions. Information has been collected based on these family groups.

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

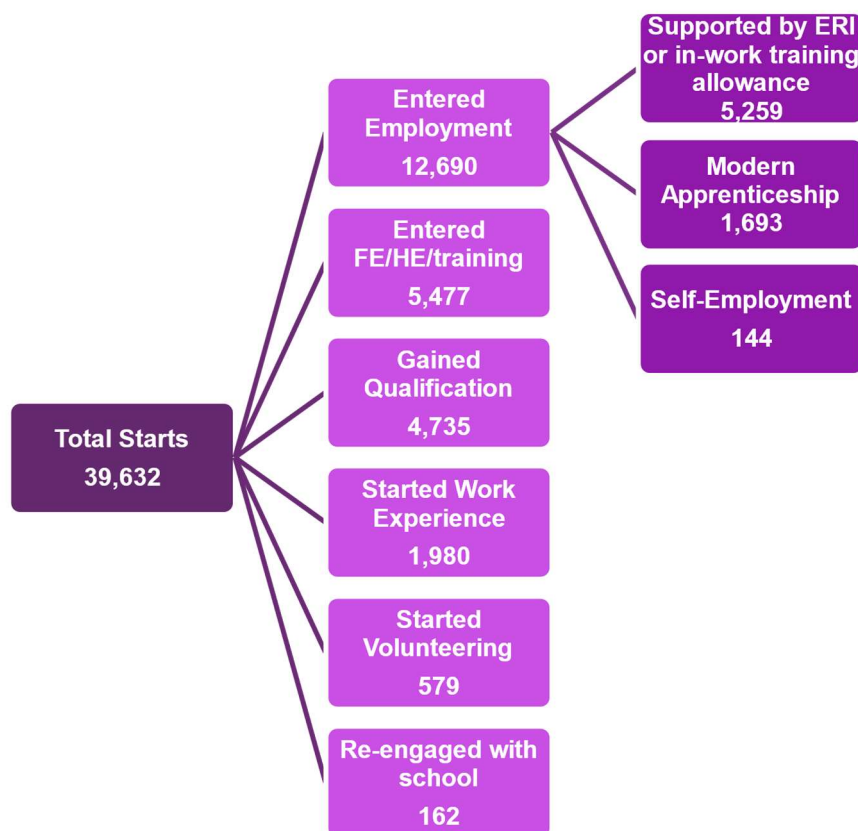
**SMF Theme 2 - Progression: To enable an individual's progression towards fair work and sustained employment. Considering aspects such as improving well-being, confidence and motivation, maintaining or re-engaging with support, and developing aspirations and skills.**

### All Participants

Of the 39,632 people supported under the No One Left Behind approach between April 2019 and March 2023, 12,690 people (32%) entered employment. Of those that entered employment; 5,259 people (41%) were supported by a subsidy to do so, 1,693 people (13%) started modern apprenticeships and 144 people (1%) entered self-employment.

Additionally, 5,477 people supported (14%) entered further or higher education or training, 4,735 people (12%) gained a qualification, 1,980 people (5%) started work experience opportunities, 572 people (1%) started volunteering and 162 people (less than 1%) re-engaged with school.

**Figure 6: Outcomes achieved by No One Left Behind participants, April 2019 – March 2023**



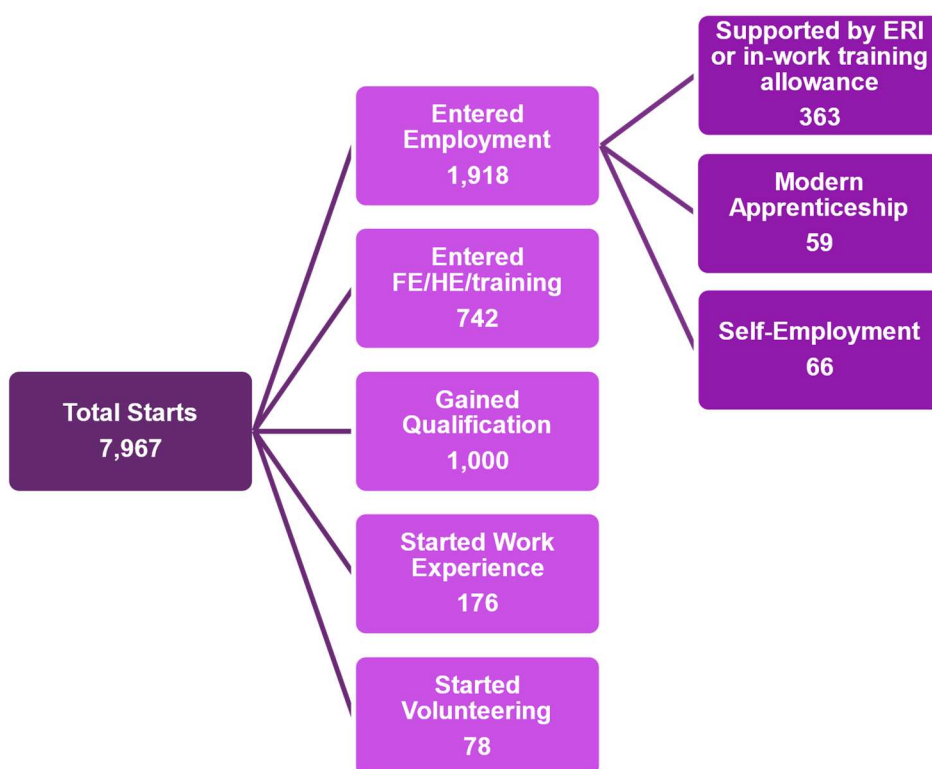
Please see [background information](#) for more detail on outcome definitions and criteria.

## Parents

Please note, the following statistics on parents are from year 2 (April 2020) onwards. Of the 7,967 parents supported under the No One Left Behind approach, 1,918 parents (24%) started employment. Of those that started employment; 363 parents (19%) were supported by a subsidy to do so, 59 parents (3%) started modern apprenticeships and 66 parents (3%) entered self-employment.

Additionally, 742 parents supported (9%) entered further or higher education or training, 1,000 parents (13%) gained a qualification, 176 parents (2%) started work experience opportunities and 78 parents (1%) started volunteering.

**Figure 7: Outcomes achieved by No One Left Behind participants identified as parents, April 2020 – March 2023**



Please see [background information](#) for more detail on outcome definitions and criteria.

## Age

Progression split by age is reported in this publication for the first time.

A total of 9,332 people aged under 25 entered employment. This is 36% of all under 25 participants. For those aged 25 and over, 3,417 entered employment. This is 25% of all participants aged 25 and over.

Of those people aged under 25 entering employment, 4,340 (47%) were supported by a subsidy to do so, while this was the case for 916 (27%) of those aged 25 and over entering employment. A higher proportion of people aged under 25 also started a modern

apprenticeship (18%) compared to 2% for 25 and over or entered further or higher education or training (17% compared to 7% for 25 and over).

Whilst the proportion of people aged 25 or over that entered self-employment (3%) was higher than the proportion of those aged under 25 (less than 1%), the difference proportionally between the under 25 and 25 and over age groups for gaining a qualification was negligible (12% and 11%, respectively).

# Fair Start Scotland (Official Statistics)

## Introduction

FSS is Scotland's devolved employability support service, and aims to help those further from the labour market move into and sustain fair work. FSS launched on 3 April 2018 ([Fair Start Scotland Statement - opens in a new window](#)) with funding to support a minimum of 38,000 people into work over an initial three year period. The service has been extended to March 2024.

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, minority ethnic groups, and people who live in some of the most deprived areas in Scotland. More information about the service can be found on [mygov.scot - find a job \(opens in a new window\)](#).

FSS is delivered by a mixed economy of public, private and third sector providers across nine geographical areas throughout Scotland. Potential participants can engage with FSS 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 FSS 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 FSS.

Following the extension of FSS beyond the initial three year period, people who have previously received support can re-join the service. As a result, the total number of starts in years 1 to 3 equals the number of people but from year 4 onwards and thus overall, the total number of starts is not the same as the number of people who have received support.

This report refers to the following groups throughout:

- **People** – unique individuals counted only once. If a participant has joined the service more than once, they will only be counted once under the people metric.
- **Starts** – number of starts on the service. As people can now re-join, the number of starts may not equal the number of unique people. For example, if a participant has joined the service on two separate occasions, this will be counted twice under starts but only once under people.
- **Re-joins** – refers to starts that are not first time starts. It should also be noted people may re-join more than once. The sum of the people metric and re-joins equals the number of starts on the service.

Most of the statistics in this report cover the period since FSS was launched in April 2018 up until the most recent quarter (January – March 2023). However, for some data items such as job outcomes, it is more appropriate to only consider those participants where enough time has passed that we have complete data. This varies depending on the metric but is noted within the relevant sections of the report.

See [Fair Start Scotland background section](#) for further details.

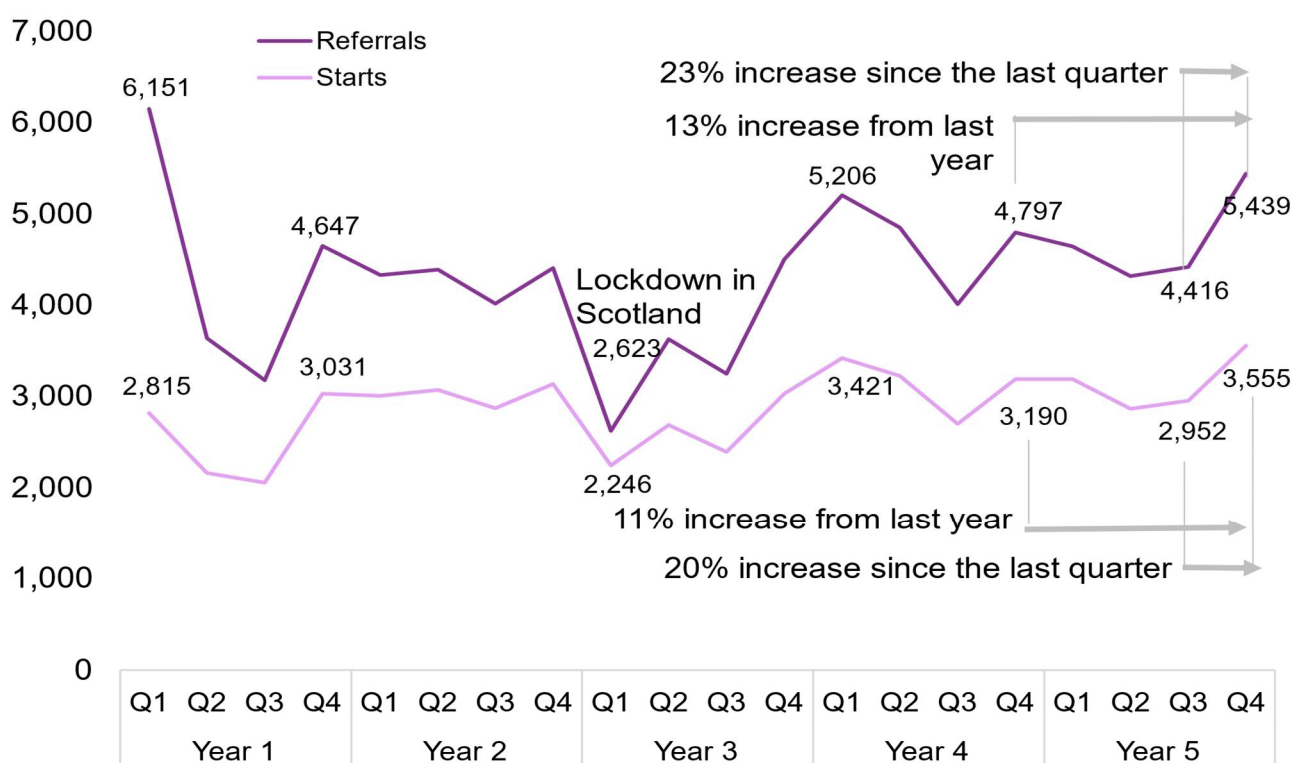
## How many FSS referrals and starts have there been?

There were 86,431 referrals to FSS between its launch in April 2018 and the end of March 2023. Of the total referrals to FSS, 57,601 started receiving employability support. This includes 4,495 re-joins to the service by participants that have previously been supported by FSS.

Referrals and starts had peaked in April – June 2021 following the lows observed during lockdown. While there had subsequently been a decrease from this peak, referrals and starts had returned to similar levels observed pre-pandemic (see [Impact of COVID-19 on FSS in background information](#)).

In the most recent quarter, referrals have risen by 23% from 4,416 last quarter to 5,439 this quarter, the second highest on record. Starts have increased by 20% from 2,952 last quarter to 3,555 this quarter. Compared to the equivalent quarter in 2022, referrals have increased by 13% and starts by 11%.

**Figure 8: Number of referrals and starts to FSS by quarter, April 2018 to March 2023**



## Who are the people that have joined FSS?

Of the 57,601 FSS starts, 53,105 people have started on the service, with the difference reflecting participants re-joining the service. The following breakdown of equality groups are based on the characteristics of those 53,105 people when they first joined FSS.

### Gender

Most people joining FSS are male (62%; 32,707) while 38% (20,275) are female. However, there is evidence this gap is narrowing. The proportion of females in FSS has increased from 35% in year 1 to 39% in year 5. In the most recent quarter (January – March 2023), 38% of participants were female, lower than the record high of 44% observed in the previous quarter.



## Age

The most common age group of people joining FSS is 35-49 years (29%; 15,455), followed by 50 years old and over (25%; 13,197) and 25-34 years (25%; 13,153). The lowest proportion of people are in the 16-24 years old age group (19%; 10,338).

Over the course of years 1 to 3, there was an increase in the proportion of participants from the youngest age group (16-24), from 16% to 25%. In year 4 however there was a reversal, with the proportion falling to 16% before increasing again in year 5 to 19%. In the most recent quarter, the proportion was 17%.

For the oldest age group, 50 years old and over, the proportion has followed a reversed trend compared to the youngest age group. In years 1 to 3, it decreased from 30% to 20% but increased in year 4 to 27% before falling again to 23% in year 5. In the most recent quarter, the proportion was 23%.

## Ethnicity

Overall, 6% (3,451) of people joining FSS were from minority ethnic backgrounds and 74% (39,152) were white with ethnicity unknown for the remaining 20% (10,502) of participants.

In the most recent quarter 13% of participants were from a minority ethnic group and 82% of participants were white.

Monitoring changes to the proportion of minority ethnic participants over time is difficult due to the high proportion of unknowns. During the first Covid-19 lockdown, FSS service delivery moved to over the phone or online which impacted on the collection of equalities data. There has been subsequent work with FSS service providers to maximise response rates. Please see [Data Quality in background information](#) for more details.

In year 5, the proportion of unknowns was 7% and was 5% in the most recent quarter. This has followed improvements observed in year 4 where unknowns were at 13% compared to higher proportions in the earlier years of the service (year 1: 17%, year 2: 31%, year 3: 29%).

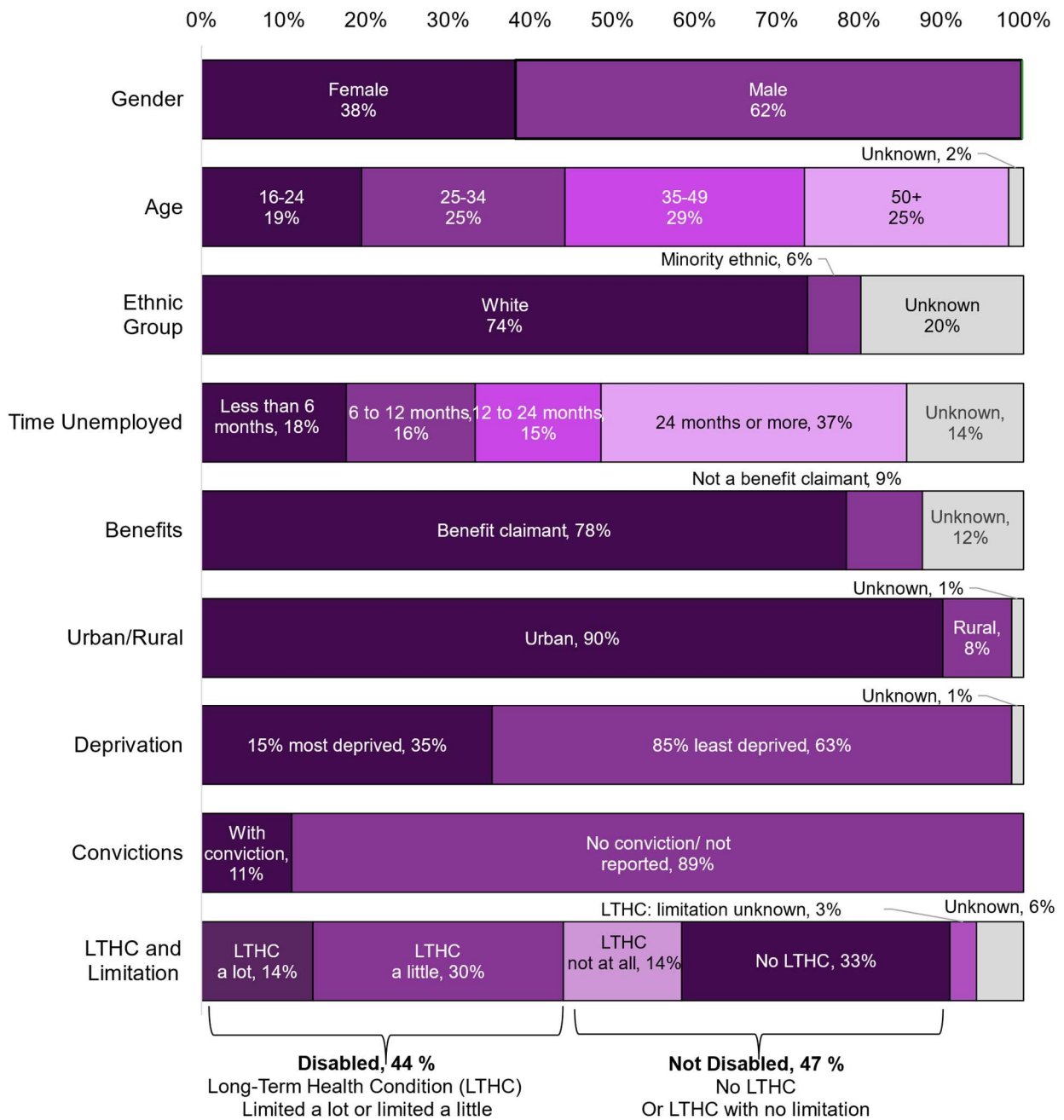
## Disability

Disability is defined based on answers to two questions related to long-term health condition (LTHC) and ability to carry out activities. Please see [Methodology in background information](#) for more details.

Overall, a similar proportion of FSS participants have reported a disability (44%; 23,374) as reported not having a disability (47%; 24,973), while this was unknown for the remaining 9% of participants.

The proportion of disabled people has varied across years with the highest proportion (55%) in year 1 and the lowest (32%) in year 3, where an impact on the collection of equalities data in general was observed following the move away from face to face service delivery due to Covid-19. There may also have been a direct impact from Covid-19 policies such as shielding. In year 4, the proportion of disabled people increased to 47% but has decreased to 43% in year 5. In the most recent quarter, 39% of people reported a disability.

**Figure 9: Breakdown of people starting FSS by equality characteristic group, April 2018 to March 2023**

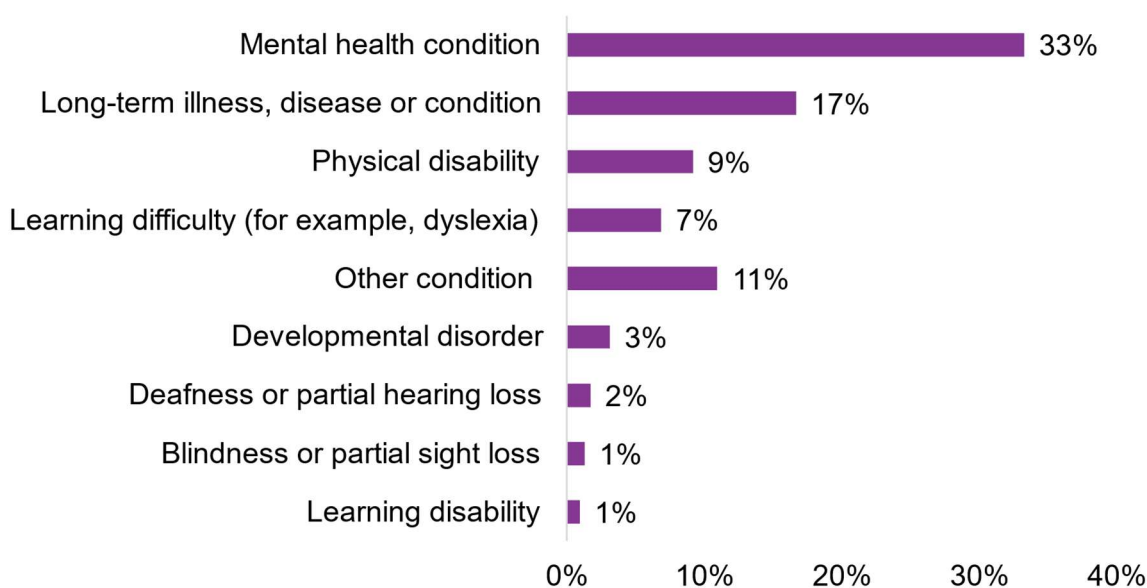


### Long-Term Health Condition

Overall, 62% (32,762) of people joining FSS reported having a LTHC, 33% (17,305) reported no LTHC, with 6% (3,038) unknown. In year 5, 55% of people have reported a LTHC, continuing a decreasing trend in the proportion of people reporting a LTHC. In the most recent quarter, the proportion was 51%, the joint lowest proportion in any quarter to date.

There are many LTHC that may impact upon a person's ability to gain and maintain employment without additional support and participants may have more than one LTHC. The most commonly reported LTHC by participants joining FSS was a mental health condition (33%; 17,669), followed by a long-term illness, disease or condition (17%; 8,856). Please note participants can report more than one LTHC.

**Figure 10: Percentage of people starting on FSS reporting long-term health conditions, April 2018 to March 2023**



## Parents

Annual data on FSS participants that are parents was first published in May 2021. From August 2022, quarterly parent data covering year 5 onwards has been published.

Of people joining FSS for the first time 11,285 were parents, while there has been 12,260 total parent starts on the service since its launch in April 2018, including re-joins.

Cumulative totals should be interpreted with caution and comparison of data between years is not advised due to the way the collection has developed over time. Please see [Methodology in background information](#) for more details.

In the latest quarter, of the 1,005 parent starts on FSS there were 884 people who were parents accessing FSS support for the first time. These 884 parents represented 30% of all 2,958 people accessing FSS support for the first time in this quarter. This is the highest quarterly proportion in year 5.

Of the 884 parents in the most recent quarter, the following groups were observed in terms of parents and those from families at highest risk of being affected by child poverty (see background information for more detail):

- 37% were disabled,
- 32% were lone parents,
- 2% were mothers aged under 25,
- 20% were parents with three or more children,
- 38% had a child aged under 12 months, and,
- 16% were from a minority ethnic background.

Please note, the following breakdowns are reported in this publication for the first time.

## **Convictions**

People with a conviction may find it harder to find employment. There has been 5,835 people (11%) joining FSS that reported having a conviction. This has remained fairly consistent across years with the highest proportion (13%) in year 4 and the lowest proportion (8%) in year 5. In the most recent quarter, 234 (8%) of people reported a having a conviction.

## **Benefit Claimants**

The majority of people (78%; 41,674) joining FSS are benefit claimants. This has fluctuated across years with the highest proportion (87%) in year 4 and the lowest (74%) in year 1. It should be noted that proportion of unknowns has improved since the first few years. In the most recent quarter, 2,360 (80%) people reported claiming benefits.

## **Length of Time Unemployed**

People who have been out of the labour market for a longer period of time may find it more difficult to find employment. Most people (37%; 19,750) joining FSS have been unemployed for 24 months or more. A similar proportion have been unemployed for less than 6 months (18%; 9,352), between 6 – 12 months (16%; 8,341) and 12 – 24 months (15%; 8,133). This information is unknown for the remaining participants (14%; 7,529). In the most recent quarter, 930 people (31%) reported being unemployed for 24 months or more.

## **Deprivation**

There has been 18,786 people (35%) joining FSS who lived in one of the 15% most deprived areas. This has remained consistent across years with the highest proportion (38%) in year 1 and the lowest proportion (33%) in years 3 and 5. In the most recent quarter, 953 people (32%) lived in one of the 15% most deprived areas. Geographic information was unavailable for 1% of participants.

See [background information](#) for more detail on deprivation.

## **Urban/Rural**

People living in rural areas may be more limited for job opportunities compared to those living in urban areas. There has been 4,459 people (8%) joining FSS who live in a rural area, while 47,890 people (90%) live in an urban area. This has remained consistent across years with the highest proportion (91%) in years 1 and 4 and the lowest proportion (88%) in year 3. In the most recent quarter, 247 people (8%) reported living in a rural area. Geographic information was unavailable for 1% of participants.

See [background information](#) for more detail on Urban Rural classification.

## **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 but can last up to 18 months in some cases. However this has only applied to a small number of people to date.

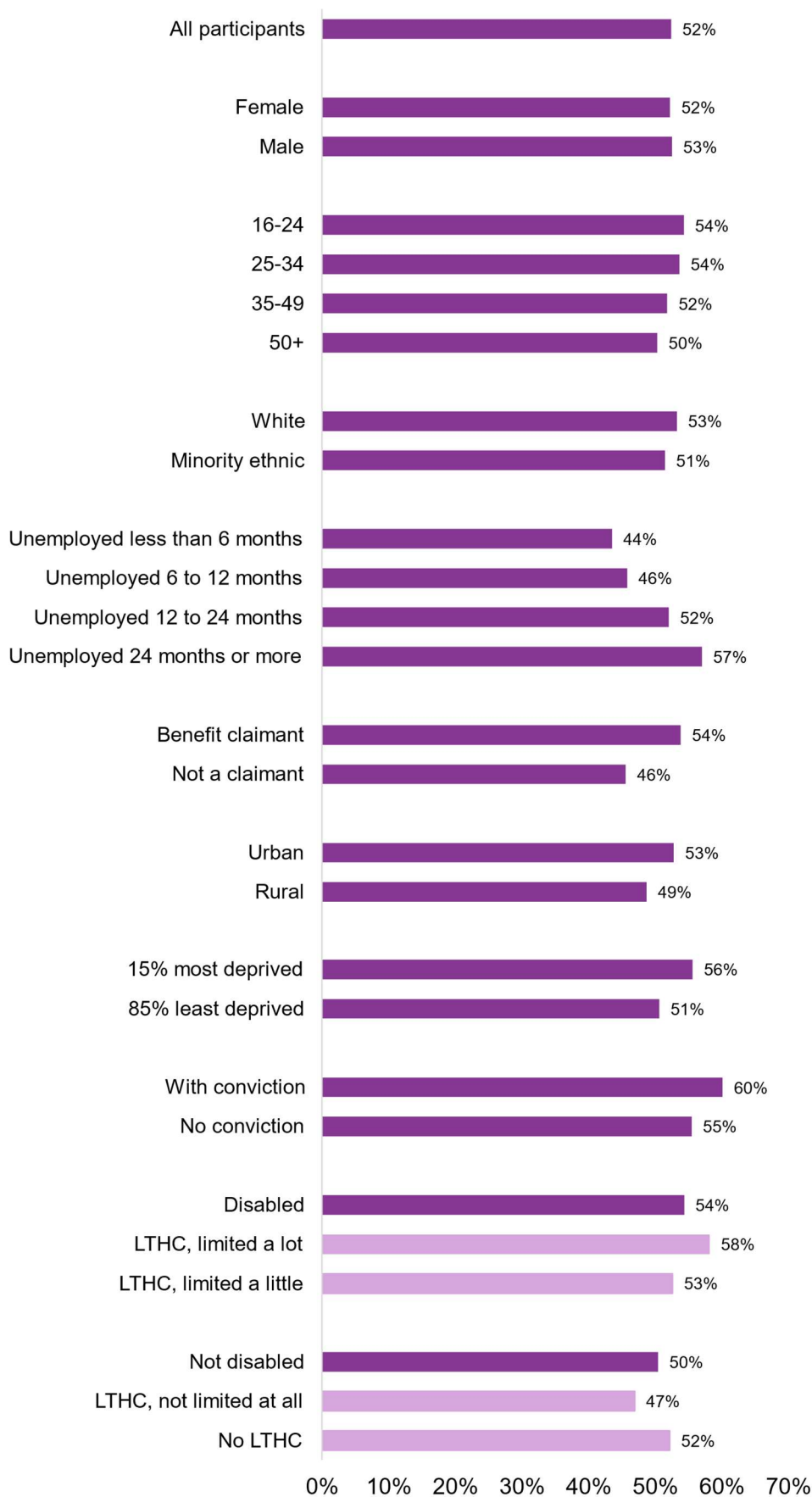
There have been 27,171 early leavers from the 57,601 FSS starts (including 4,495 re-joins). As time passes, there is a more complete picture of the proportion of starts on the service that stay on FSS or leave early.

Where we have a complete picture, based on participants with a start date one year or longer, 23,600 (52%) of starts have left early. This rate is based on a cohort of 45,040 starting between the period April 2018 and March 2022 (including 2,450 re-joins). There was a reduction in early leavers between years 1 and 2 from 53% to 46%, however in year 3 this increased to 52% and in year 4, 58% of participants left FSS early.

The percentage of early leavers was higher for those reporting a disability, particularly for those who have a LTHC that limits daily activities a lot (58%); compared with those with a LTHC that did not limit daily activities at all (47%). Younger participants also had higher early leaver rates: 54% of those aged 16-24, compared with 50% of those aged 50 and over.

Participants with a conviction have the highest rates of leaving early (60%). Those participants who lived in one of the 15% most deprived areas had higher early leaver rates (56%) than those who lived in one of the 85% least deprived areas (51%). Participants unemployed for 24 months or more also have higher rates of leaving early (57%) compared to those unemployed less than 6 months (44%), 6 – 12 months (46%) and 12 – 24 months (52%).

**Figure 11: Percentage of FSS starts that leave the service early, broken down by equality characteristic group, April 2018 to March 2023**

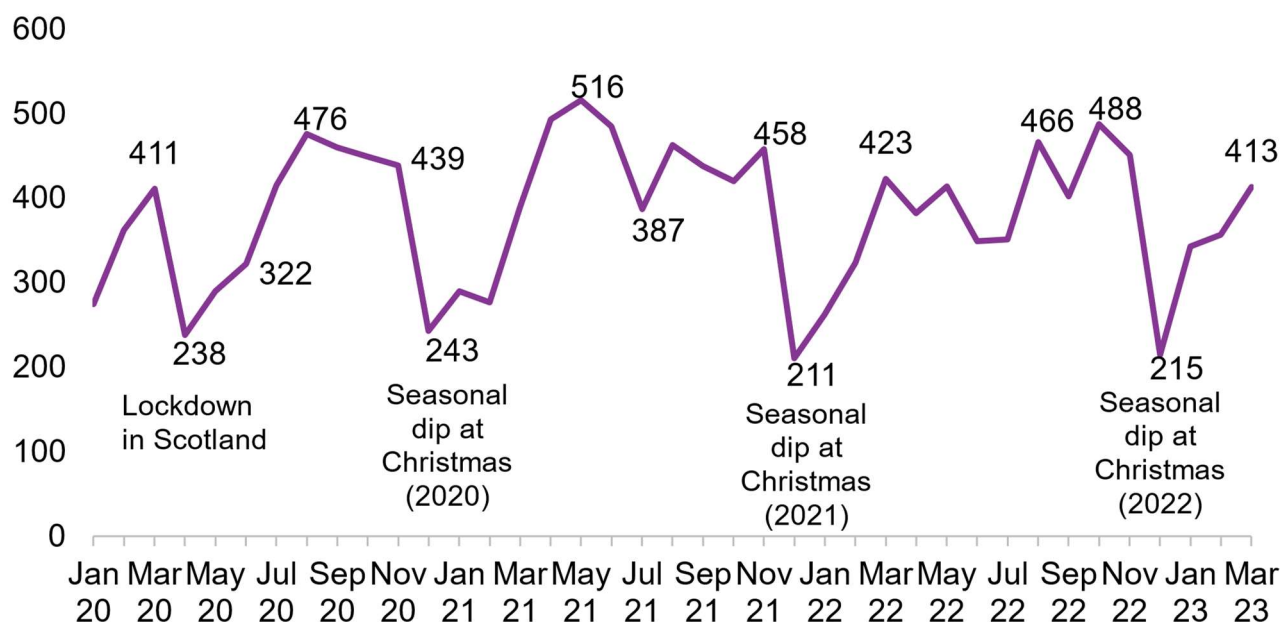


## How many FSS starts entered and sustained employment?

There has been a total of 20,013 job starts from the 57,601 FSS starts, including the 4,495 re-joins to the service, since the launch of FSS.

Figure 12 shows both the impact of Covid-19 restrictions beginning in March 2020 and the regular seasonal decline observed each Christmas with subsequent increases in the new year. There can be significant variation in the number of job starts by month with the highest number of job starts in any one month in May 2021 (516), the only time monthly job starts have surpassed 500. In the latest quarter, job starts increased from 343 in January 2023 to 413 in March 2023. It is important to be cautious when interpreting data for the most recent months as there can be delays between a participant starting a job and it being recorded by service providers.

**Figure 12: Number of FSS starts entering employment after joining the service, by the month job was started, January 2020 to March 2023**



Of the 20,013 job starts, so far 13,664 had sustained employment for at least 3 months (13 weeks), 10,482 at least 6 months (26 weeks), and 7,023 at least 12 months (52 weeks), as of March 2023.

When considering job outcomes rather than total numbers, this should only be calculated for participants where enough time has passed in pre-employment support and for individual outcomes to be achieved. The following table summarises this for each outcome type.

**Table 1: Outcome type and respective service start time period and number of participants covered in each outcome**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Time Required to Pass</b>	<b>Time period of starting on service</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Re-joins</b>
<b>Job Starts</b>	12 month support	April 2018 to March 2022	45,040	2,450
<b>3 month job outcome</b>	12 month support + 3 months	April 2018 to December 2021	41,850	1,864
<b>6 month job outcome</b>	12 month support + 6 months	April 2018 to September 2021	39,151	1,339
<b>12 month job outcome</b>	12 month support + 12 months	April 2018 to March 2021	32,507	0

For start cohorts where enough time has passed in pre-employment support and for outcomes to be achieved, job outcomes show:

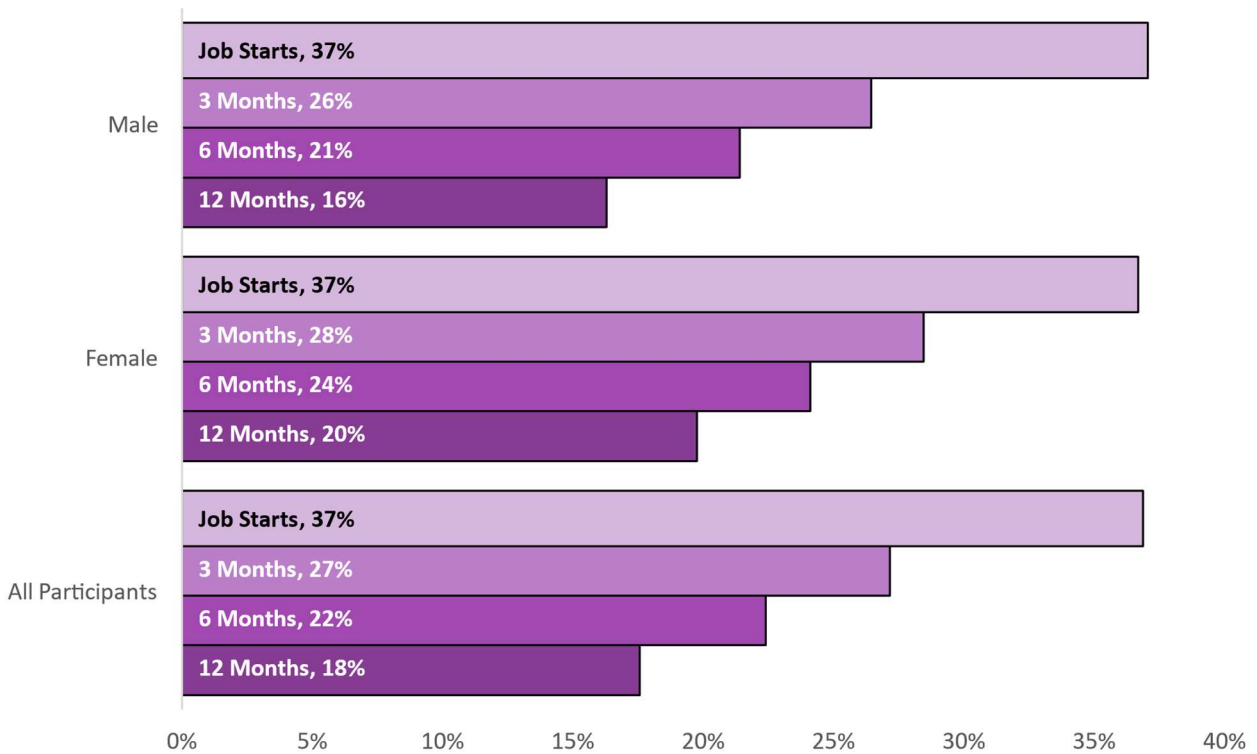
- Most FSS starts did not enter work or go on to sustain employment: 37% started a job, 27% sustained employment for 3 months, 22% sustained employment for 6 months, and 18% sustained employment for 12 months however,
- a high percentage of job starts are sustained: 73% of FSS starts that entered employment went on to sustain employment for 3 months, 82% of those who sustained employment for 3 months went on to reach 6 months, and 78% of those who sustained employment for 6 months went on to reach at least 12 months.



## Gender

Whilst the job start rate is the same for males and females at 37%, female participants achieve higher rates for each job outcome compared to male participants, with the gap increasing slightly for each outcome. For 3 month job outcomes; 28% of female starts compared with 26% of male starts. For 6 month job outcomes; 24% of female starts compared with 21% of male starts and for 12 month job outcomes; 20% of female starts compared with 16% of male starts.

**Figure 13: Employment outcomes after joining the service, for all FSS participants and split by gender, April 2018 to March 2023**

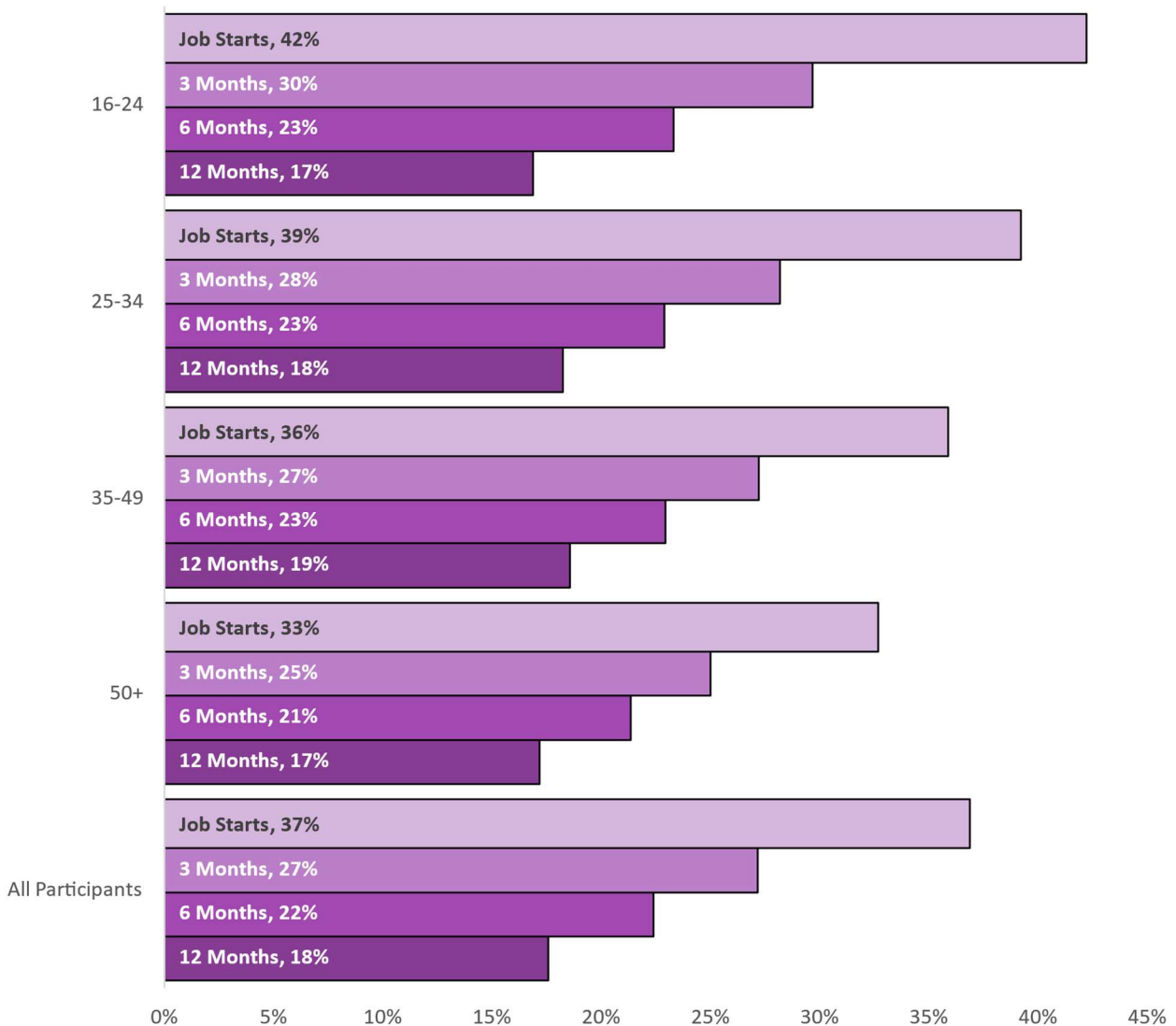


## Age

While the youngest age group (16-24) made up the lowest proportion of FSS participants, this group achieved the highest rates of job starts (42%) and 3 month job outcomes (30%) compared to other age groups. However this difference disappears at 6 and 12 month job outcomes, with this group achieving the joint lowest rate for 12 month job outcomes (17%).

Those in the oldest age group (50 years and older) had the lowest outcome rates for job starts (33%), 3 month job outcomes (25%), and 6 month job outcomes (21%) and joint lowest for 12 month job outcomes (17%).

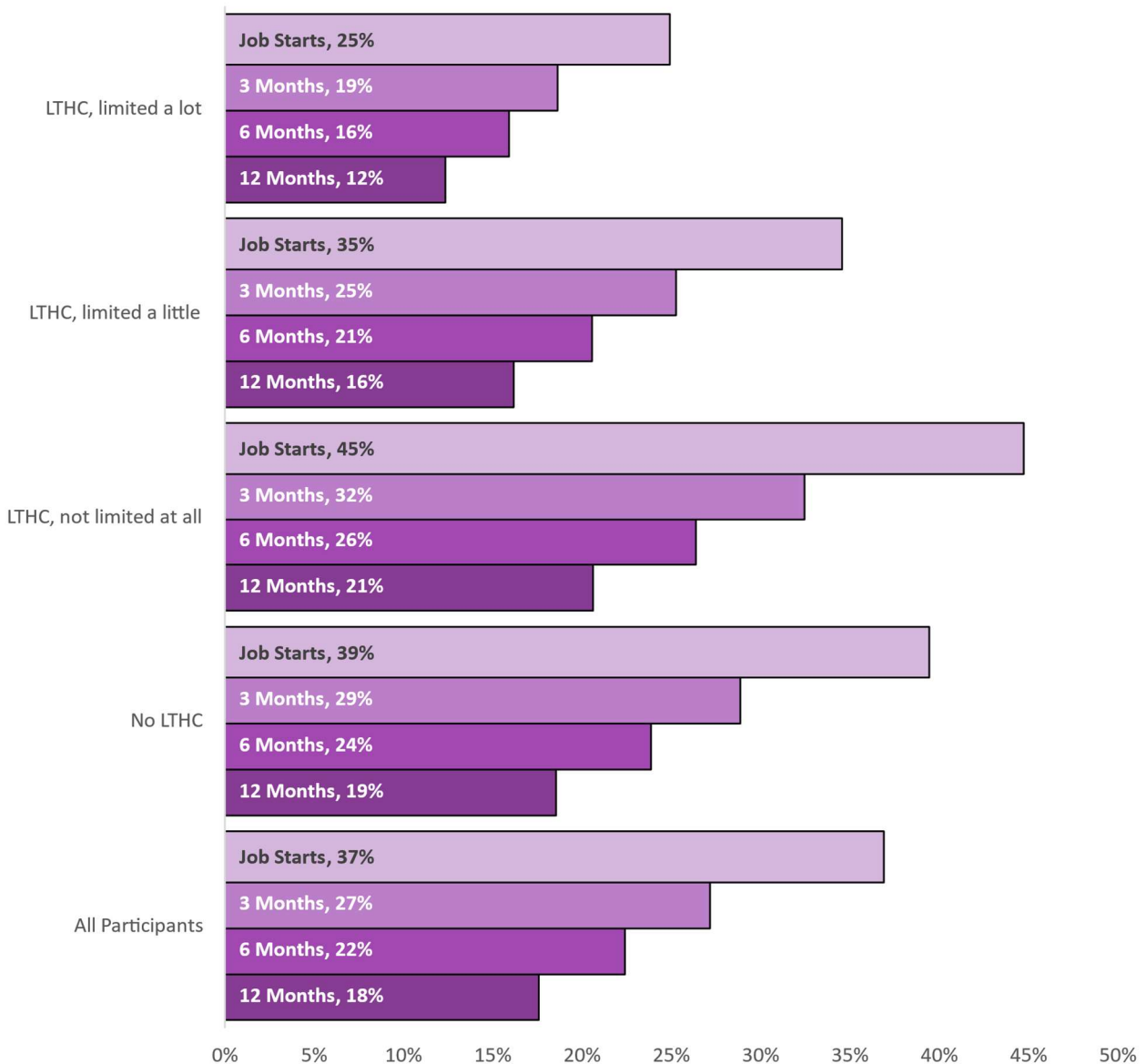
**Figure 14: Employment outcomes after joining the service, for all FSS participants and split by age group, April 2018 to March 2023**



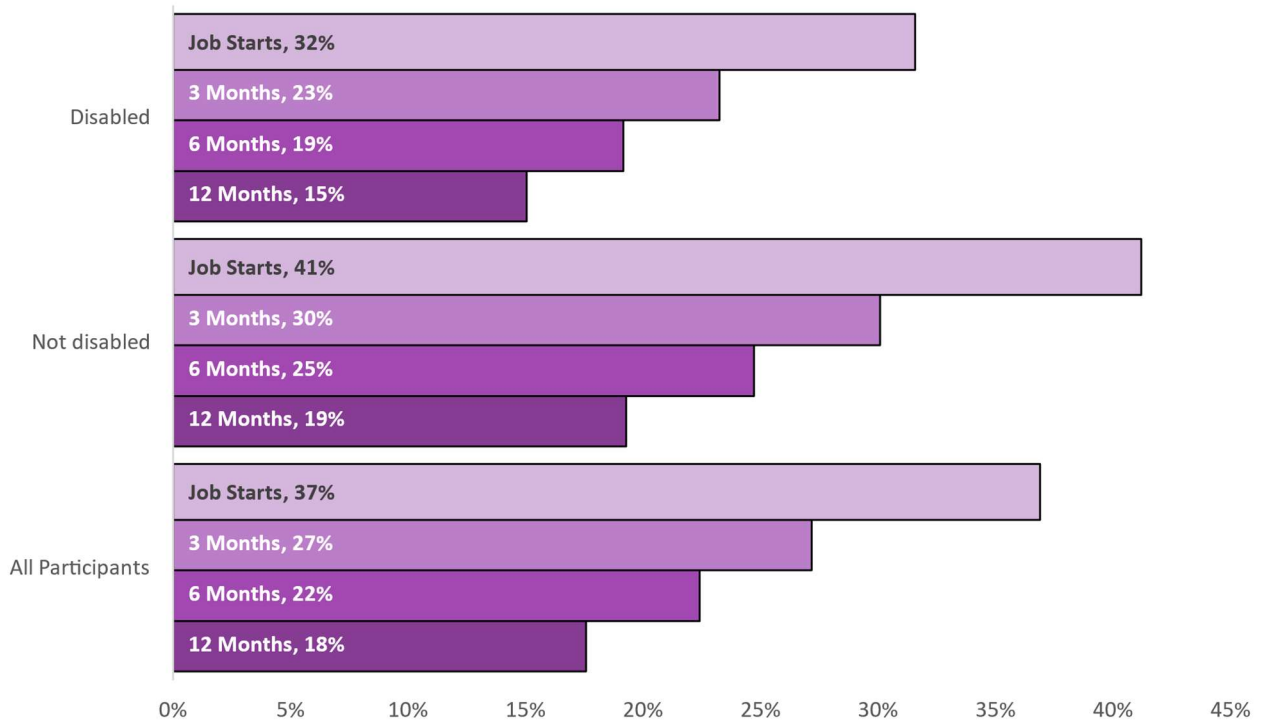
### Long-Term Health Condition and Disability

Of the FSS starts with a long-term health condition that limited daily activities a lot, 25% went on to start work, compared to 45% of starts that had a health condition that did not limit daily activities. Differences between these groups was also observed in the proportions sustaining employment at 3 months (19% for those limited a lot; 32% for those not limited at all), 6 months (16% for those limited a lot; 26% not limited at all) and 12 months (12% for those limited a lot; 21% not limited at all).

**Figure 15: Employment outcomes after joining the service, for all FSS participants and split by long-term health condition, April 2018 to March 2023**



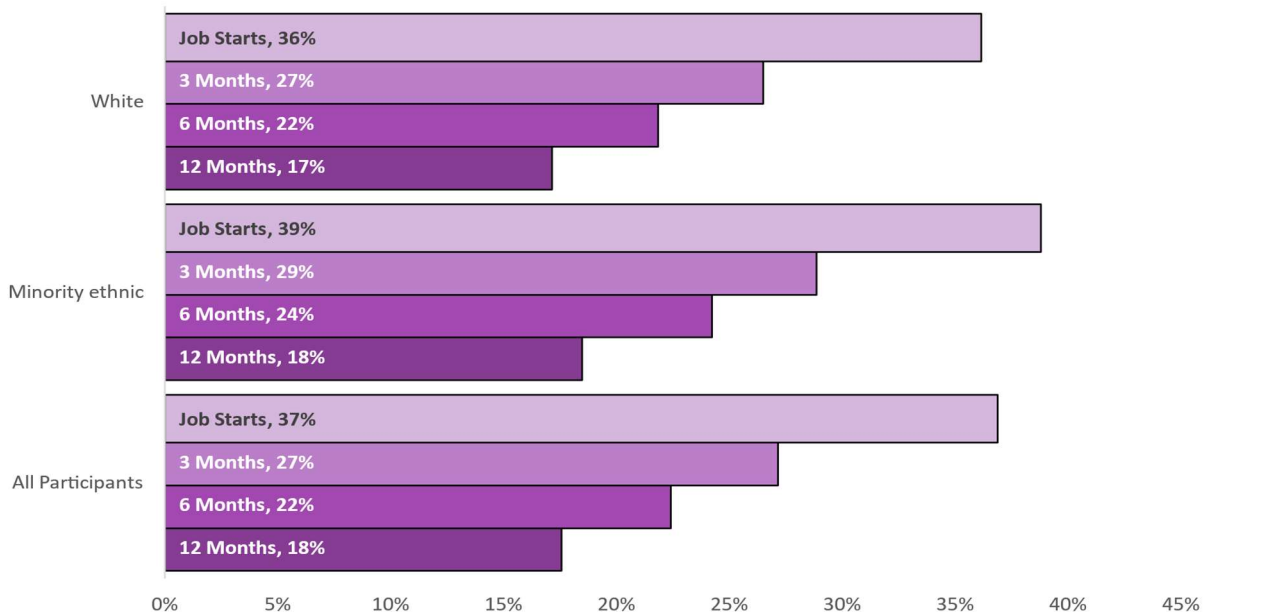
**Figure 16: Employment outcomes after joining the service, for all FSS participants and split by disability, April 2018 to March 2023**



**Ethnicity**

Of the FSS starts that were from minority ethnic backgrounds, 39% went on to start work, compared to 36% of white participants. This difference remained similar for each of the job outcomes. For 3 month outcomes (29% for minority ethnic participants; 27% for white participants), 6 month outcomes (24% for minority ethnic participants; 22% for white participants), and 12 month outcomes (18% for minority ethnic participants; 17% for white participants).

**Figure 17: Employment outcomes after joining the service, for all FSS participants and split by ethnicity, April 2018 to March 2023**

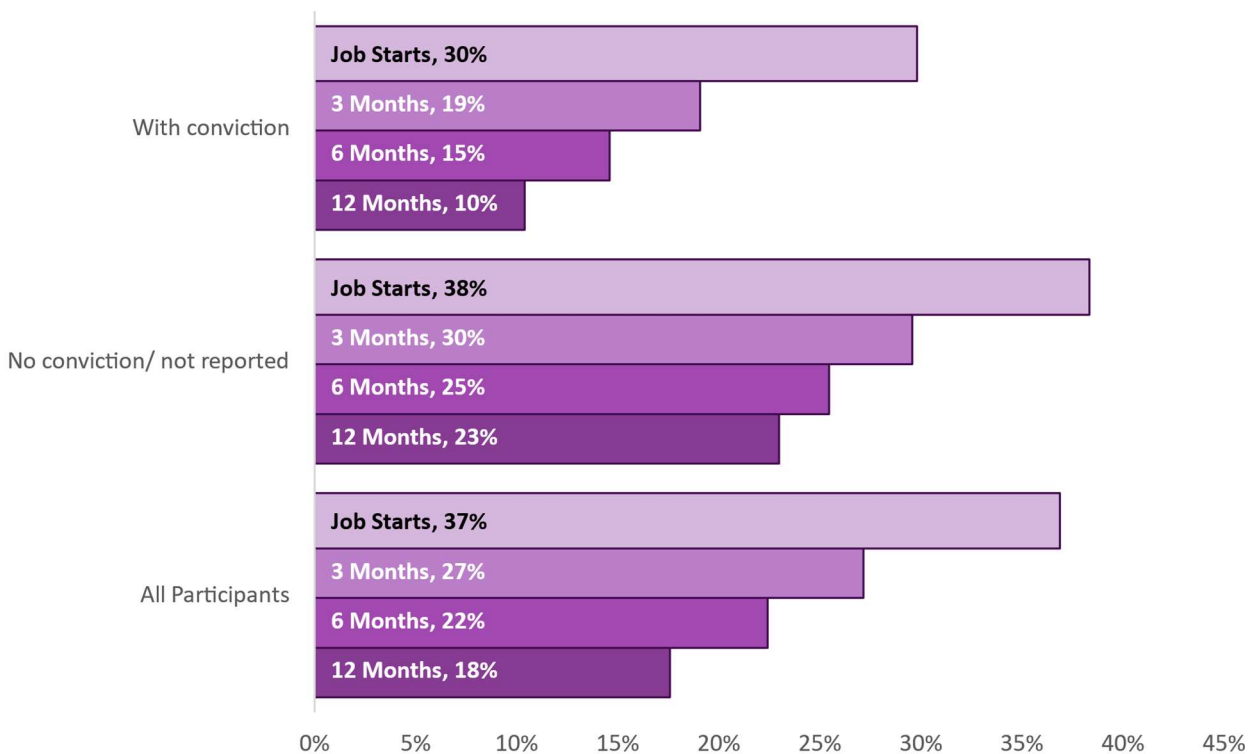


Please note, the following breakdowns are reported in this publication for the first time.

### Convictions

Of the FSS starts that reported a conviction, 30% went on to start work compared to 37% for all participants. The rate of achieving job outcomes for participants with a conviction is low compared to all participants. For job outcomes, 19% of participants with a conviction achieved a 3 month job outcome (27% for all participants), 15% achieved a 6 month job outcome (22% for all participants) and 10% achieved a 12 month job outcome (18% for all participants).

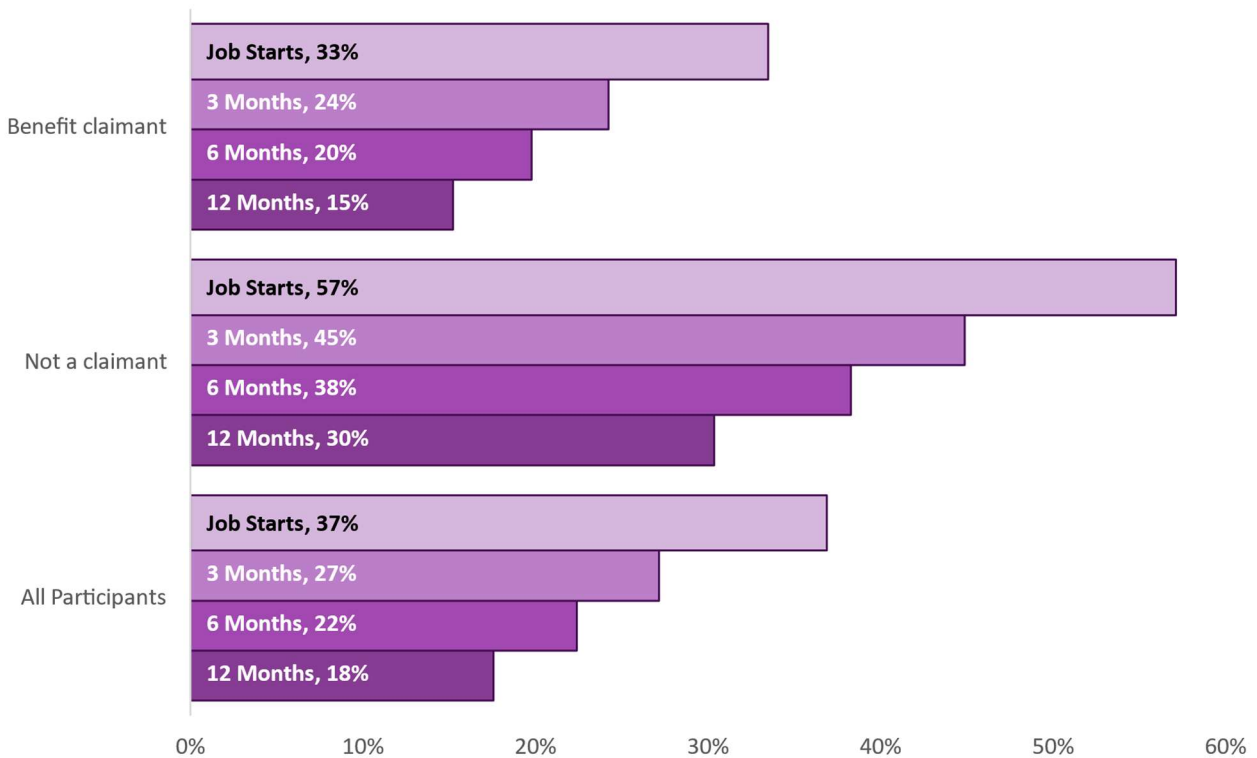
**Figure 18: Employment outcomes after joining the service, for all FSS participants and split by reported conviction, April 2018 to March 2023**



## Benefit Claimants

Of the FSS starts that reported claiming a benefit, 33% went on to start work, compared to 57% of participants not claiming a benefit. This gap remains for each of the job outcomes, 3 month outcomes (24% for claiming benefit; 45% for not claiming benefit), 6 month outcomes (20% for claiming benefit; and 38% for not claiming benefit), and 12 month outcomes (15% for claiming benefit; and 30% for not claiming benefit).

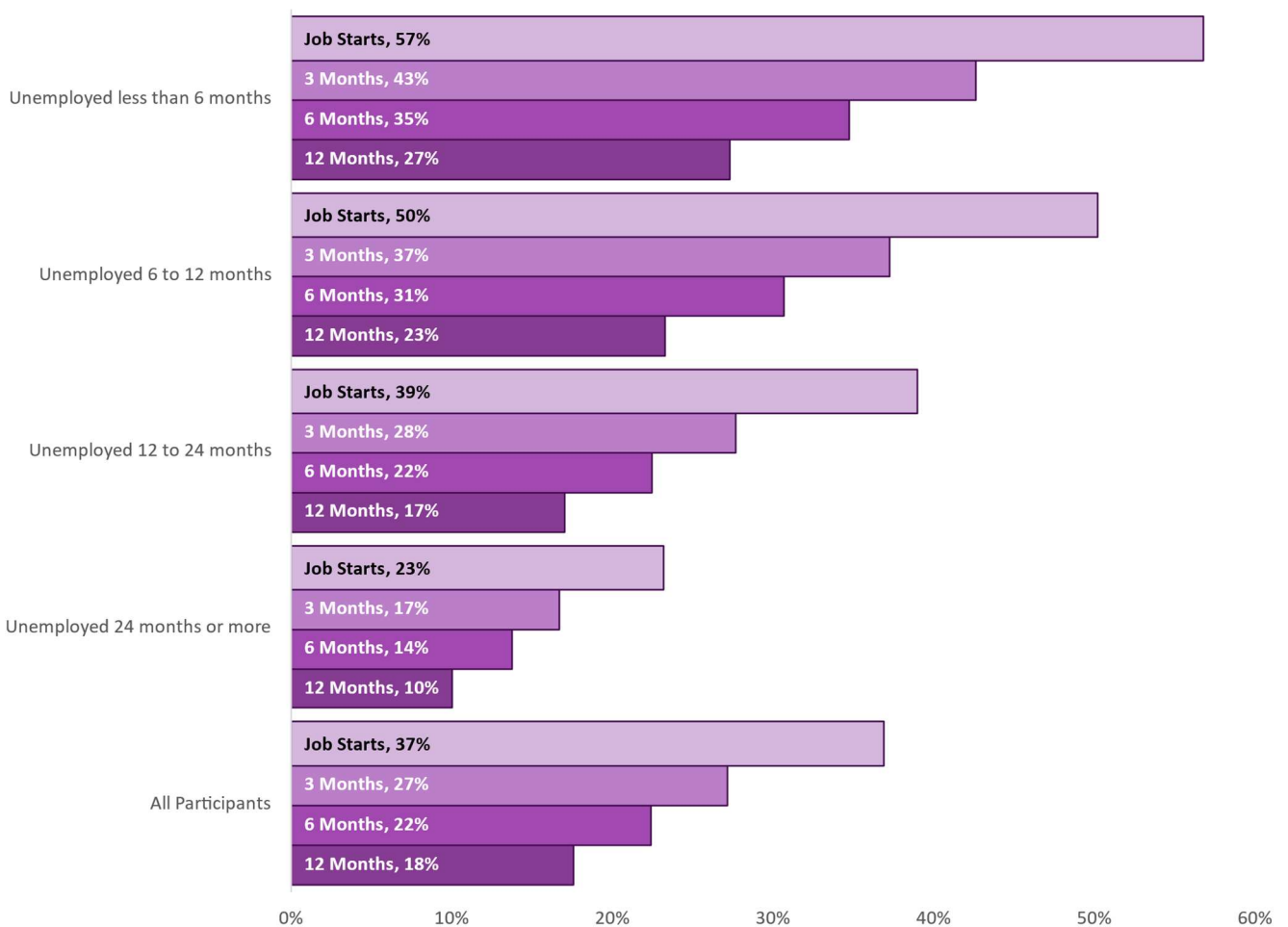
**Figure 19: Employment outcomes after joining the service, for all FSS participants and split by reporting benefit claim, April 2018 to March 2023**



## Length of Time Unemployed

Of the FSS starts that have been unemployed for less than 6 months, 57% went on to start work, compared to 23% for those unemployed for 24 months or more. For 3 month job outcomes, this was achieved for 43% of those unemployed for less than 6 months compared to 17% for those unemployed for 24 months or more. For 6 month job outcomes, this was achieved for 35% of those unemployed for less than 6 months compared to 14% for those unemployed for 24 months or more. For 12 month job outcomes, this was achieved for 27% of those unemployed for less than 6 months compared to 10% for those unemployed for 24 months or more.

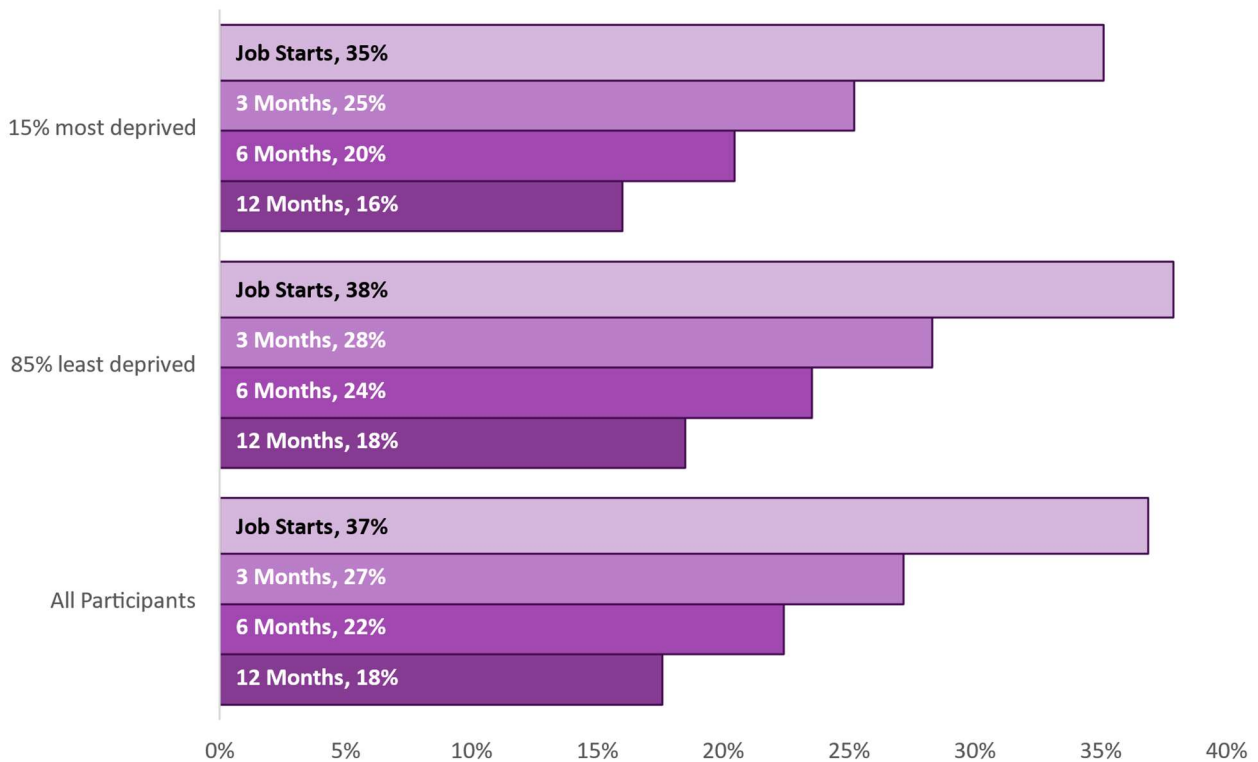
**Figure 20: Employment outcomes after joining the service, for all FSS participants and split by length of time unemployed, April 2018 to March 2023**



## Deprivation

Of the FSS starts that lived in the 15% most deprived areas, 35% went on to start work, compared to 38% of participants living in the 85% least deprived areas. A similar gap was observed for a 3 month job outcome (25% for 15% most deprived areas; 28% for 85% least deprived areas), 6 month outcomes (20% for 15% most deprived areas; 24% for 85% least deprived areas), and 12 month outcomes (16% for 15% most deprived areas; 18% for 85% least deprived areas).

**Figure 21: Employment outcomes after joining the service, for all FSS participants and split by reporting deprivation, April 2018 to March 2023**

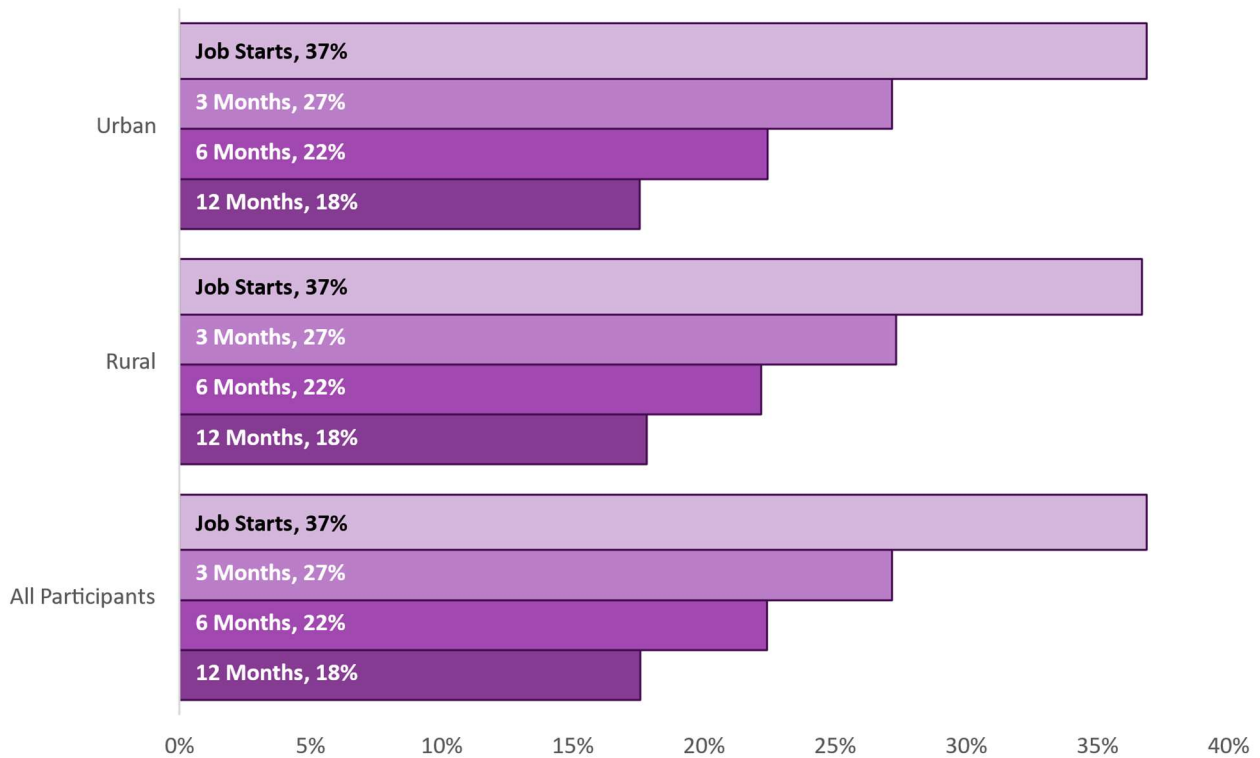




## Urban/Rural

Of the FSS starts that lived in a rural area, 37% went on to start work, the same proportion for those that lived in an urban area. For each job outcome, the rate of those that lived in a rural area was the exact same as for those that lived in an urban area; 3 month job outcome; 27%, 6 month outcome; 22% and 12 month outcome; 18%.

**Figure 22: Employment outcomes after joining the service, for all FSS participants and split by reporting urban/rural area, April 2018 to March 2023**



## How many parent starts on FSS entered and sustained employment?

For the 12,260 FSS starts that were parents, job outcome rates can only be reported for cohorts where enough time has passed in pre-employment support (12 months) and for outcomes to be achieved, therefore the number of parents and time periods included differ by outcome. The following table summarises this for each outcome type.

**Table 2: Outcome type and respective service start time period and number of parents covered in each outcome**

Outcome	Time Required to Pass	Time period of starting on service	Parents Included	Parent Re-joins
<b>Job Starts</b>	12 month support	April 2018 to March 2022	8,891	543
<b>3 month job outcome</b>	12 month support + 3 months	April 2018 to December 2021	8,052	418
<b>6 month job outcome</b>	12 month support + 6 months	April 2018 to September 2021	7,305	309
<b>12 month job outcome</b>	12 month support + 12 months	April 2018 to March 2021	5,401	0

For start cohorts where enough time has passed in pre-employment support and for outcomes to be achieved, job outcome rates show:

- Most parent FSS starts did not enter work or go on to sustain employment: 37% started a job, 28% sustained employment for 3 months, 24% sustained employment for 6 months, and 19% sustained employment for 12 months.

### Job Starts

The proportion of parents (37%) starting a job after joining the service is similar to the proportion of participants overall at 37%. This was lower for disabled parents (31%) starting a job and disabled participants not reported to be parents (32%) and lower than the 41% of FSS starts who were not disabled and not reported to be parents. A job start was achieved by 32% of lone parent starts, 35% of parent starts that were mothers under 25, 36% of parent starts with three or more children, 36% of parent starts that had a child aged under 12 months and 38% of FSS starts that were minority ethnic parents.

### 3 month job outcome

A similar proportion of parents (28%) achieved a 3 month job outcome compared to FSS participants overall (27%). However, this was again lower for disabled parents (24%) and disabled participants who were not reported to be parents (23%). The highest rates were observed in those participants who were not disabled and not reported to be parents (30%). Three months sustained employment was achieved by 24% of lone parent starts, 24% of parent starts that were mothers under 25, 28% of parent starts with three or more children, 26% of parent starts that had a child aged under 12 months and 29% of FSS starts that were minority ethnic parents.

### 6 month job outcome

A similar proportion of parents (24%) achieved a 6 month job outcome compared with all FSS participants (22%). This was lower for disabled parents and disabled participants not

reported to be parents (both 19%). Six months sustained employment was achieved by 20% of lone parent starts, 17% of parent starts that were mothers under 25, 23% of parent starts with three or more children, 21% of parent starts that had a child aged under 12 months and 24% of FSS starts that were minority ethnic parents.

### **12 month job outcome**

The proportion of parents achieving a 12 month job outcome was 19%, similar to the proportion of FSS participants overall at 18% and for disabled parents (16%) and disabled participants who were not reported to be parents (15%). Twelve months sustained employment was achieved by 16% of lone parent starts, 12% of parent starts that were mothers under 25, 19% of parent starts with three or more children, 19% of parent starts that had a child aged under 12 months and 18% of FSS starts that were minority ethnic parents.

All outcome rates for parents should be used with caution as some percentages are based on very small numbers.

# 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: [UK Statistics Authority - Types of official statistics \(opens in a new window\)](#).

## 2. Reporting Periods

- **No One Left Behind:** This publication reports on all participants who received support from 1 April 2019 to March 2023 except for parents, where data covers the period from 1 April 2020 to March 2023.
- **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 2023). The service was launched on 3 April 2018. 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.

## 3. 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.

Statistics on No One Left Behind outcomes were first published in February 2021 for year 1 participants, derived from the aggregate data that was collected during that period. Since then year 1 data has been developed and combined with data currently collected for subsequent periods, which has allowed more detailed information for year 1 participants, including their achievements to be released.

Scottish Government carry out quality assurance on data returned, for example ensuring values are returned in the correct range and comparisons are made over time and between Local Authorities. There are specific areas of data quality which Scottish Government is working on improving with Local Authorities as shown in the table below.

## Data quality

Potential source of risk or error	Description	Mitigation
Start dates	<p>Participants can disengage and re-engage for support as often as they need, potentially with a long period of time between engagements. While Local Authorities are encouraged to always report a participant's initial start date and not to update when a participant re-engages, start dates have been updated in some cases. This leads to participants shifting between quarters and leads to variations in both overall numbers, as well as those reported for each characteristic, between quarters.</p>	<p>We are working closely with all 32 Local Authorities to rectify this issue. The importance of not updating start dates when a participant re-engages is written in the corresponding data guidance.</p> <p>We quality assure individual Local Authority reports and go back to specific Local Authorities when needed.</p> <p>Issue discussed at Scottish and Local Government Data and Reporting Group which meets every 6 weeks to discuss data collection.</p>
Unique IDs	<p>Unique IDs should be unique to each participant, and should remain the same for their duration of support. However, Local Authorities might have more than one ID per person on their system, depending on their stage of support, or might potentially give a participant a new ID if they have been disengaged for a long time. This could lead to IDs changing over time and artificially inflate numbers. It also means we cannot link back to previous data recorded on our old template, and makes it difficult for us to identify if someone has achieved more than one outcome of the same type.</p>	<p>We are working closely with all 32 Local Authorities to rectify this issue. The importance of unique ID remaining the same for each participant is written in the corresponding data guidance.</p> <p>We quality assure individual Local Authority reports and go back to specific Local Authorities when needed.</p> <p>The introduction of National Insurance number can help identify unique individuals.</p>
Reporting of participants	<p>Each quarter, we ask Local Authorities to report all new participants for the new quarter, in addition to all previously reported participants, providing updated information where appropriate. While some details can be updated (e.g. disability status and outcome details), the actual individuals reported should remain the same as previous quarters. However, in some cases participants disappear from previous quarters, or new ones appear. This leads to variations in both overall numbers, as well as those reported for each characteristic, between quarters.</p>	<p>We are working closely with all 32 Local Authorities to rectify this issue. Guidelines of the data that Local Authorities need to provide is written in the corresponding data guidance.</p> <p>We quality assure individual Local Authority reports and go back to specific Local Authorities when needed.</p>

General	<p>When comparing current data with previous quarters, we sometimes find numbers of certain groups (parents, under 25, and 25 and over) appear to decline or see minimal change. There are a number of potential reasons for this:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Changes and upgrades to management information systems. This can lead to issues, for example, participants being missed where they have been reported from external delivery partners. This should improve over time.</li> <li>2. Updated information on parental status, for instance, whether a participant lives with dependent children. Only parents still living with dependent children are counted in the total for parents.</li> <li>3. Duplicated entries from earlier reports have been fixed and removed from the current report.</li> <li>4. Participants incorrectly being removed when they reach the end of their 52 week sustainment period. As there are no more updates for these individuals, some Local Authorities might incorrectly remove them.</li> <li>5. Between quarters 3 (Oct-Dec) and 4 (Jan-Mar), changes might be small due to it being quieter over the Christmas period.</li> </ol>	<p>We are working closely with all 32 Local Authorities to rectify these issues. Guidelines of the data that Local Authorities need to provide is written in the corresponding data guidance.</p> <p>We quality assure individual Local Authority reports and go back to specific Local Authorities when needed.</p>
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### Starts

People are registered to start receiving support by a Local Authority Key Worker.

### Ethnicity

The No One Left Behind data template collects ethnic group data as defined by the Scottish Government's recommended question (2022 Census) on ethnic group using the question: What is your ethnic group?

The following options are available:

- A. White – (Scottish), (Other British), (Irish), (Gypsy Traveller), (Polish), (Roma), (Showman / Showwoman), (Other)
- B. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- C. Asian/Asian Scottish/Asian British – (Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish, Pakistani British), (Indian, Indian Scottish, Indian British), (Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish, Bangladeshi British), (Chinese, Chinese Scottish, Chinese British), (Other)
- D. African/Scottish African/British African – (African Scottish, African British), (Other)
- E. Caribbean or Black – (Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish, Caribbean British), (Black, Black Scottish, Black British), (Caribbean or Black – Other)
- F. Other Ethnic Group – (Arab, Arab Scottish, Arab British), (Other ethnic group)

- G – (Prefer not to say), (Not recorded)

It is important that results should be presented in as much detail as possible but this is often not possible due to small numbers, therefore categories are often combined. While this may hide inequalities that occur between separate ethnic groups, it allows some analysis by ethnicity to be carried out.

For the purposes of this report, category A is presented as White, and categories B, C, D, E, and F are presented as Minority Ethnic. Category G is categorised as Unknown. The term “Minority Ethnic” aids narrative and provides a concise terminology. The terminology used aligns with [Scottish Government guidance \(opens in a new window\)](#).

More detailed breakdowns by ethnicity will be included in future editions when sample sizes allow.

### **Disability**

The guidance for collecting data issued to Scottish Local Authorities specifies that disability status should be recorded as defined by the Equality Act (2010). Further information can be found here: [Definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 \(opens in a new window\)](#).

### **Employment**

In general, anybody who carries out at least one hour’s paid work in a week, or is temporarily away from a job (e.g. on holiday) is in employment. Also counted as in employment are people who are on government supported training schemes and people who do unpaid work for their family’s business.

Only Employer Recruitment Incentives (ERIs), in-work training allowances and Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) opportunities paid directly to the employer count toward the total of entering employment. Other subsidies such as Long Term Unemployed opportunities, Young Person’s Training Allowance and ILM opportunities not paid directly to the employer are not counted towards employment.

Modern apprenticeships and self-employment count towards entering employment. Participants may be counted as starting a modern apprenticeship or entering self-employment and as receiving a subsidy such as ERI or in-work training allowance.

### **Further/Higher Education Outcomes**

Courses expected to achieve a minimum qualification of National Certificate (NC), or equivalent. NCs are designed for full-time delivery over one year (or part-time over two years). They are aimed at 16-18 year olds or adults in full-time education and are at SCQF Levels 2-6. For more information see: [National Certificates \(NCs\) and National Progression Awards \(NPAs\) - SQA \(opens in new window\)](#).

### **Comparisons with other employment services’ data**

No One Left Behind and Fair Start Scotland are different approaches to employability support and can vary in what support is offered and what groups are targeted. This is likely to impact on both the demographics and outcomes of participants across both approaches. It is therefore not recommended to make direct comparisons.

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.

## 4. Fair Start Scotland 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 16 to 29. The caveats that apply to national data also apply to Local Authority data.

### Data sources

The Scottish Employability Tracking System (SETS) is the Scottish Government referrals tracking system for FSS. 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 24 April 2023.

### 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 using SG recommended questions and published using related output classifications.

### Methodology

#### Referral

The referral numbers published in this release are net figures, which excludes 2,951 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 onwards 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 any subsequent periods on the service.

## 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).

## Disability

Disability is defined by two questions: i) Do you have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more? ii) Does your condition or illness reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?

If the answer to the first question is "yes", and the answer to the second is either "yes, a lot" or "yes, a little" then the participant is disabled as defined by the Equality Act (2010).

## Ethnicity

The Fair Start Scotland data template collects ethnic group data as follows:

- A. White – (Scottish), (Other British), (Irish), (Gypsy Traveller), (Polish), (Other white ethnic group)
- B. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- C. Asian/Asian Scottish/Asian British – (Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish, Pakistani British), (Indian, Indian Scottish, Indian British), (Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish, Bangladeshi British), (Chinese, Chinese Scottish, Chinese British), (Other)
- D. African – (African, African Scottish, African British), (Other)
- E. Caribbean or Black – (Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish, Caribbean British), (Black, Black Scottish, Black British)

- F. Other Ethnic Group – (Arab, Arab Scottish, Arab British), (Other)
- G. – Not Recorded – (Not recorded)

It is important that results should be presented in as much detail as possible but this is often not possible due to small numbers, therefore categories are often combined. While this may hide inequalities that occur between separate ethnic groups, it allows some analysis by ethnicity to be carried out.

For the purposes of this report, category A is presented as White, and categories B, C, D, E, and F are presented as Minority Ethnic. Category G is categorised as Unknown. The term “Minority Ethnic” aids narrative and provides a concise terminology. The terminology used aligns with [Scottish Government guidance \(opens in a new window\)](#).

More detailed breakdowns by ethnicity will be included in future editions when sample sizes allow.

## Parents

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.

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 \(opens in a new window\)](#).

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.

## Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

The [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation \(SIMD - opens in a new window\)](#) is a relative measure of deprivation across 6,976 small areas (called data zones). If an area is identified as ‘deprived’, this can relate to people having a low income but it can also mean fewer resources or opportunities. People living in areas with higher levels of deprivation may find it more difficult to find employment.

## Urban Rural Classification

The [Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification \(opens in a new window\)](#) provides a consistent way of defining urban and rural areas across Scotland. The classification is based upon population, as defined by the National Records of Scotland, and accessibility, based on drive time analysis to differentiate between accessible and remote areas in Scotland. The classification is available in multiple forms, including 2-fold as used in this publication, as well as 3-fold, 6-fold and 8-fold classifications.

## **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:

- 5,560 starts answered the second question on extent of limitation (128 yes, a lot; 577 yes, a little; 4,855 not at all). These responses were excluded from the totals.
- 3,000 starts reported one or more long-term health condition (3,555 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 opportunities.

## **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 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 data 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.

## 5. Previous editions of this publication

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 ([Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary - February 2020 \(opens in a new window\)](#)), and the final statistics for the Health & Work Support pilot were published 27 May 2020 ([Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary - May 2020 \(opens in a new window\)](#)).

Other services operate within Scotland, including those run by Local Authorities and third sector providers, and these are not included in this publication.

## 6. Coherence

Links to other relevant documents and published collections:

- [Fair Start Scotland Year Three Evaluation Report \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [Fair Start Scotland Year Two Evaluation Report \(opens in a new window\)](#)
- [Fair Start Scotland Year One Evaluation Report \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [Fair Start Scotland: Year 4 Annual Report \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [Fair Start Scotland: Year 4 Annual Report Accompanying Statistics \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [A range of Labour Market Statistics for Scotland are published by the Scottish Government: Labour market statistics \(opens in new window\)](#)

## 7. Glossary of Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ERI	Employment Recruitment Incentives
FSS	Fair Start Scotland
ID	Identification
ILM	Intermediate Labour Market
JCP	Jobcentre Plus
LTHC	Long-term Health Condition
NC	National Certificate
NOLB	No One Left Behind
ONS	Office for National Statistics
SETS	Scottish Employability Tracking System
SG	Scottish Government
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SMF	Shared Measurement Framework
UK	United Kingdom
WAS	Work Able Scotland
WFS	Work First Scotland

## 8. Tell us what you think

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## 9. Correspondence and enquiries

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### **Next Update**

25 October 2023