



ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET

Labour Market Statistics for Young People (16 to 24 year olds): Scotland and UK

Statistics from the Annual Population Survey,
January to December 2020 dataset, 24 March 2021

About this publication

This publication contains the latest estimates of the level and rate of employment, ILO unemployment and economic inactivity for young people (16 to 24 year olds) for Scotland and the UK for January to December 2020. Estimates are sourced from the Annual Population Survey (APS) dataset publicly released today by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The APS combines the results from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the English, Welsh and Scottish Labour Force Survey boosts to provide a larger annual sample of households in Scotland and the UK. Compared with the main quarterly LFS, these annual datasets provide more statistically robust labour market estimates for local areas and smaller groups of the population (including those aged 16 to 24 years).

The Annual Population Survey is the National Statistics source for labour market indicators by region and age.

For information, Annex A contains the most recent employment, unemployment and inactivity levels and rates for 16 to 24 year olds from the LFS dataset, November 2020 – January 2021 (at the time of this publication). These are published as Official Statistics.

Government policies introduced in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic were implemented during the last nine months of the period the latest APS estimates cover and this impact will be shown in the estimates. LFS estimates in Annex A also cover the period since policies were introduced; however, smaller sample sizes may result in less reliable estimates. Consistent with labour market definitions outlined by [ONS](#), employees who are furloughed will be classified as employed, but temporarily away from work.

IMPORTANT NOTE: LFS and APS responses are weighted to official population projections. As the current projections are 2018-based they are based on demographic trends that pre-date the COVID-19 pandemic. ONS are analysing the population totals used in the weighting process and intend to make adjustments where appropriate. Rates published from the LFS and APS remain robust; however, levels and changes in levels should be used with caution. This will particularly affect estimates for country of birth, nationality, ethnicity and disability.



ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET

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Key Results

Headline Employment

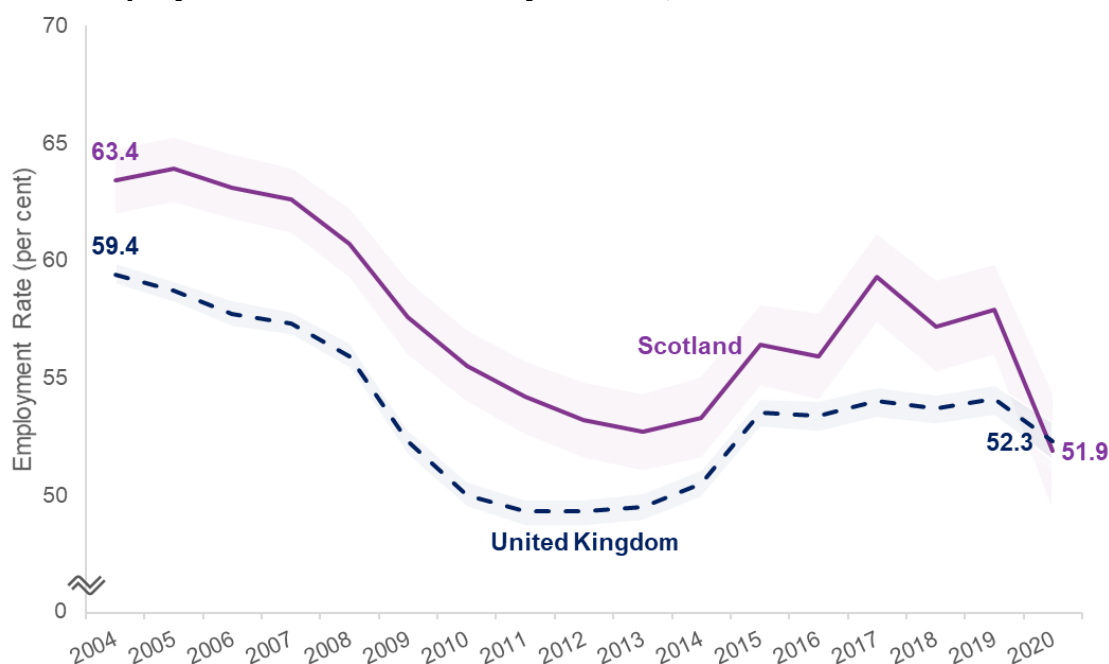
In January – December 2020, the employment rate for young people (16 to 24 year olds) in Scotland was 51.9 per cent, 6.0 percentage points lower than a year ago (57.9 per cent), which represents a statistically significant change.

The employment rate for 16 to 24 year olds is now the lowest since the series began in 2004. The employment rate for young people had been gradually increasing since 2013 but has decreased over the last year, the largest decrease seen in a single year.

For the UK as a whole, the employment rate for young people (16 to 24 year olds) was 52.3 per cent, 1.8 percentage points lower than a year ago (54.1 per cent) which represents a statistically significant change.

Chart 1 shows the long-term trend in the employment rate of young people (16 to 24 year olds) for Scotland and the UK from the Annual Population Survey, ONS.

Chart 1: Employment rate for 16 to 24 year olds, Scotland and the UK



Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec datasets, ONS

Note: Shaded area represent 95 per cent confidence interval

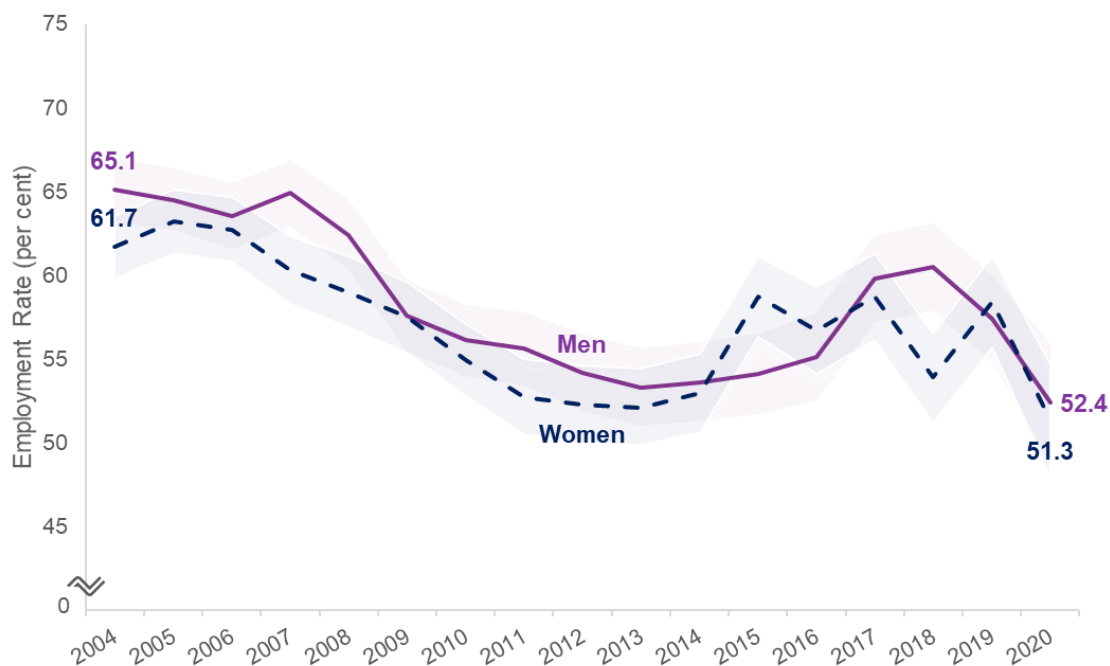
Employment by Gender

In January – December 2020, the employment rate for young men (16 to 24 year olds) in Scotland was 52.4 per cent, 4.9 percentage points lower than a year ago, which represents a statistically significant change.

The employment rate for young women (16 to 24 year olds) in Scotland in 2020 was 51.3 per cent, 7.1 percentage points lower than a year ago, which represents a statistically significant change.

Chart 2 shows the long-term trend in the employment rate of young men and women (16 to 24 year olds) from the Annual Population Survey, ONS.

Chart 2: Employment Rate for 16 to 24 year olds, by gender, Scotland



Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec datasets, ONS

Note: Shaded area represent 95 per cent confidence interval

Headline Unemployment

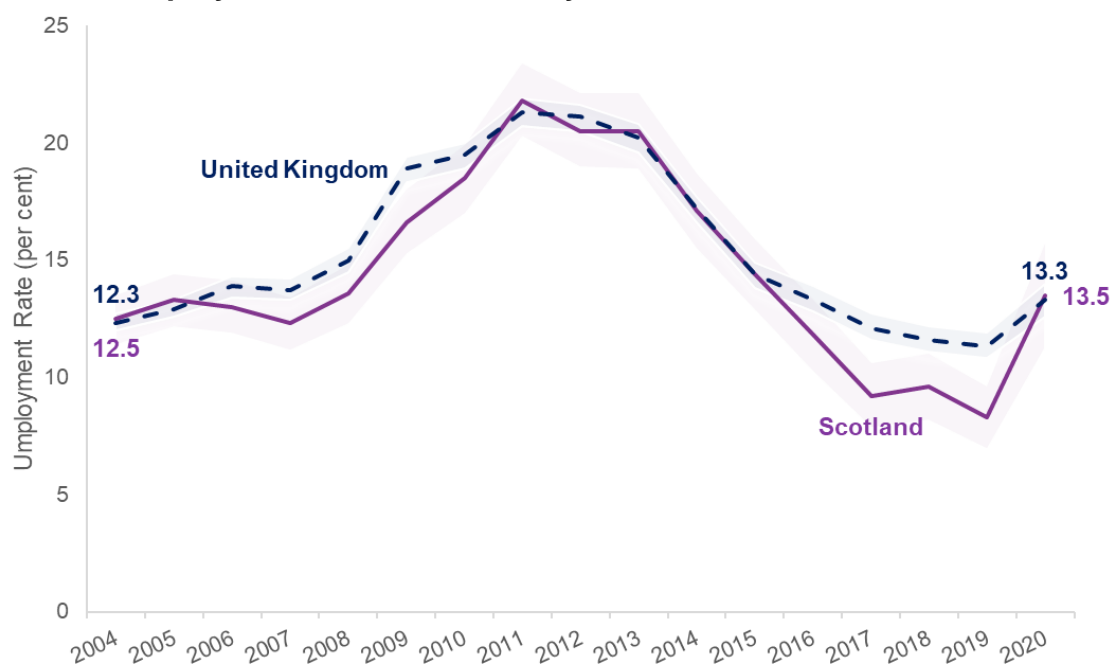
In January – December 2020, the unemployment rate for young people (16 to 24 years) in Scotland was 13.5 per cent, 5.2 percentage points higher than the year before (8.3 per cent), which represents a statistically significant change.

The last time the unemployment rate for young people was higher was in 2015 (14.4 per cent). The unemployment rate for young people had been gradually decreasing over time from the peak (21.8 per cent) in 2011 to the lowest in the series, 8.3 per cent in 2019. The increase over the year to 2020 has been the largest increase seen in a single year.

For the UK, the unemployment rate for young people (16 to 24 years) was 13.3 per cent, 2.0 percentage points higher than the year before (11.3 per cent) which represents a statistically significant change.

Chart 3 shows the long-term trend in the unemployment rate of young people (16 to 24 year olds) for Scotland and the UK from the Annual Population Survey, ONS.

Chart 3: Unemployment rate for 16 to 24 year olds, Scotland and the UK



Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec datasets, ONS

Note: Shaded area represent 95 per cent confidence interval

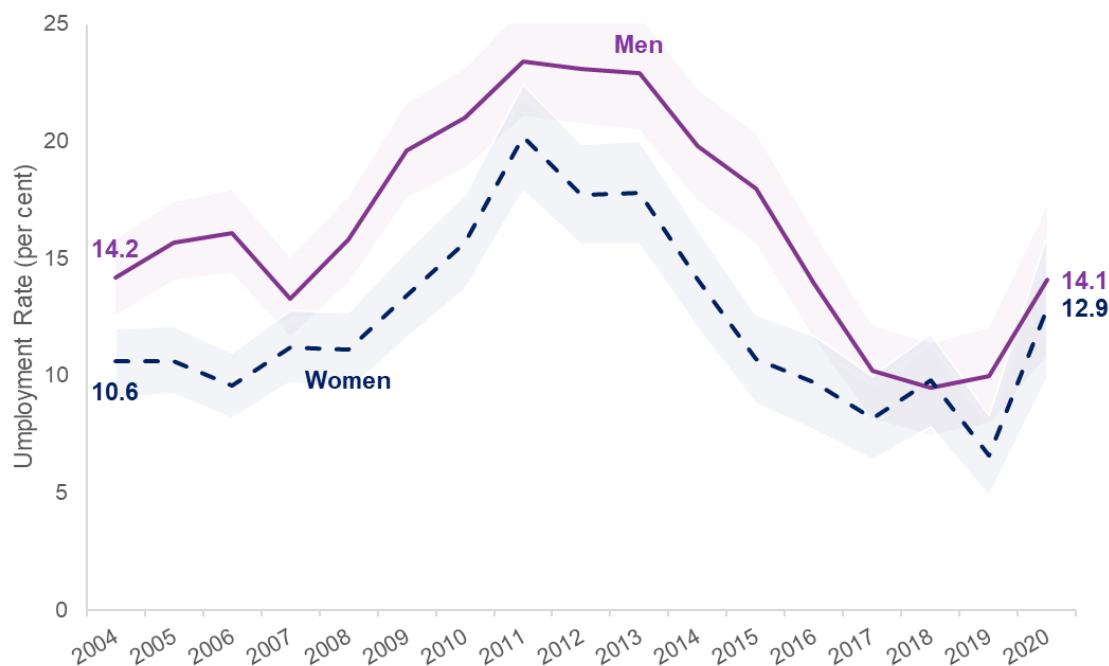
Unemployment by Gender

In January – December 2020, the unemployment rate for young men (16 to 24 year olds) in Scotland was 14.1 per cent, 4.1 percentage points higher than a year ago, which represents a statistically significant change.

The unemployment rate for young women (16 to 24 year olds) in Scotland in 2020 was 12.9 per cent, 6.3 percentage points higher than a year ago, which represents a statistically significant change.

Chart 4 shows the long-term trend in the unemployment rate of young men and women (16 to 24 year olds) from the Annual Population Survey, ONS.

Chart 4: Unemployment Rate for 16 to 24 year olds, by gender, Scotland



Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec datasets, ONS

Note: Shaded area represent 95 per cent confidence interval

Headline Economic Inactivity

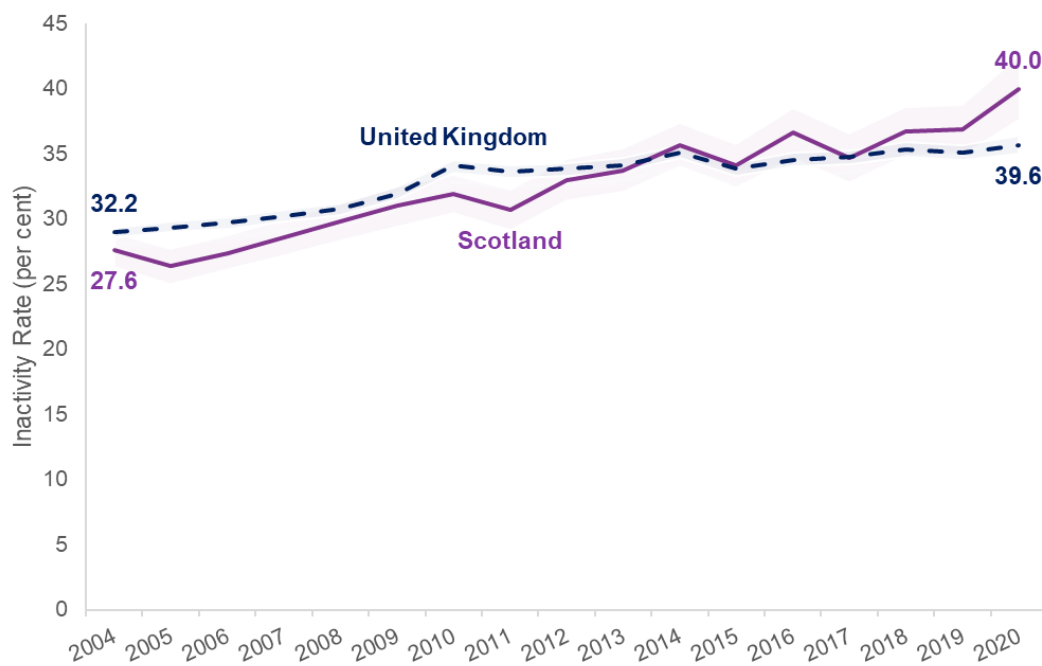
In January – December 2020, the inactivity rate for young people (16 to 24 year olds) in Scotland was 40.0 per cent, 3.2 percentage points higher than the year before (36.9 per cent), which represents a statistically significant change.

Since the series began, the inactivity rate has been steadily rising from a series low of 26.4 per cent in 2005 to a series high of 40.0 per cent in 2020. Nearly three quarters (74.9 per cent) of young people (16 to 24 year olds) in 2020 who were economically inactive were in full-time education.

For the UK, the inactivity rate for young people (16 to 24 year olds) was 39.6 per cent, 0.6 percentage points higher than the year before (39.0 per cent).

Chart 5 shows the long-term trend in the inactivity rate of young people (16 to 24 year olds) for Scotland and the UK from the Annual Population Survey, ONS.

Chart 5: Inactivity Rate for 16 to 24 year olds, Scotland and the UK



Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec datasets, ONS

Note: Shaded area represent 95 per cent confidence interval

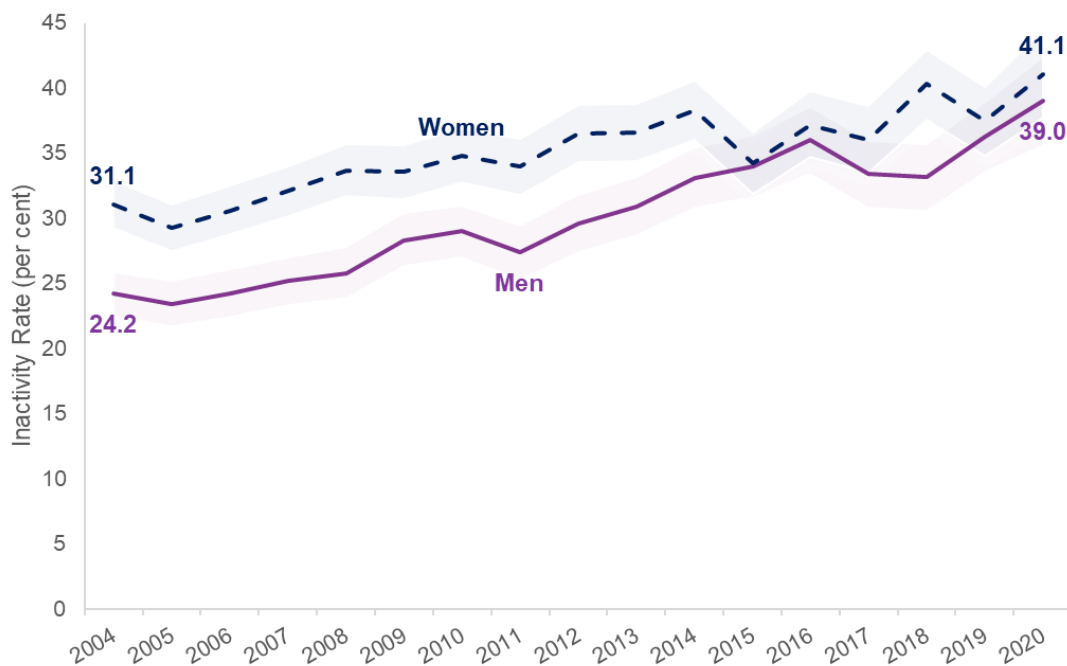
Economic Inactivity by Gender

In January – December 2020, the inactivity rate for young men (16 to 24 year olds) in Scotland was 39.0 per cent, 2.7 percentage points higher than a year ago (36.3 per cent).

The inactivity rate for young women (16 to 24 year olds) in Scotland in 2020 was 41.1 per cent, 3.6 percentage points higher than a year ago (37.5 per cent).

Chart 6 shows the long-term trend in the inactivity rate of young men and women (16 to 24 year olds) from the Annual Population Survey, ONS.

Chart 6: Inactivity Rate for 16 to 24 year olds, by gender, Scotland



Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec datasets, ONS

Note: Shaded area represent 95 per cent confidence interval

IMPORTANT NOTE: LFS and APS responses are weighted to official population projections. As the current projections are 2018-based they are based on demographic trends that pre-date the COVID-19 pandemic. ONS are analysing the population totals used in the weighting process and intend to make adjustments where appropriate. Rates published from the LFS and APS remain robust; however, levels and changes in levels should be used with caution. This will particularly affect estimates for country of birth, nationality, ethnicity and disability.

Levels presented in Tables 1 to 3 should be used with caution.

Table 1: Employment, ILO unemployment and economic inactivity levels and rates for 16 to 24 year olds, Scotland

	All	Employment		Unemployment			Inactivity		
	Level	Level	Rate (per cent)	Level	Rate (per cent)		Level	Rate (per cent)	
2004	583,000	370,000	63.4 ± 1.3	53,000	12.5 ± 1.1		161,000	27.6 ± 1.2	
2005	589,000	376,000	63.9 ± 1.3	58,000	13.3 ± 1.1		155,000	26.4 ± 1.2	
2006	593,000	374,000	63.1 ± 1.4	56,000	13.0 ± 1.1		163,000	27.4 ± 1.3	
2007	599,000	375,000	62.6 ± 1.4	53,000	12.3 ± 1.1		172,000	28.6 ± 1.3	
2008	606,000	368,000	60.7 ± 1.5	58,000	13.6 ± 1.2		180,000	29.8 ± 1.4	
2009	612,000	352,000	57.6 ± 1.5	70,000	16.6 ± 1.4		190,000	31.0 ± 1.4	
2010	618,000	343,000	55.5 ± 1.5	78,000	18.5 ± 1.5		197,000	31.9 ± 1.4	
2011	625,000	339,000	54.2 ± 1.6	95,000	21.8 ± 1.6		192,000	30.7 ± 1.5	
2012	623,000	331,000	53.2 ± 1.6	86,000	20.5 ± 1.6		206,000	33.0 ± 1.5	
2013	618,000	326,000	52.7 ± 1.6	84,000	20.5 ± 1.6		209,000	33.7 ± 1.5	
2014	612,000	326,000	53.3 ± 1.7	67,000	17.1 ± 1.6		219,000	35.7 ± 1.6	
2015	609,000	344,000	56.4 ± 1.7	58,000	14.4 ± 1.5		208,000	34.1 ± 1.6	
2016	602,000	336,000	55.9 ± 1.8	45,000	11.8 ± 1.5		220,000	36.6 ± 1.8	
2017	588,000	348,000	59.3 ± 1.8	35,000	9.2 ± 1.3		204,000	34.7 ± 1.8	
2018	577,000	330,000	57.2 ± 1.9	35,000	9.6 ± 1.4		212,000	36.7 ± 1.8	
2019	566,000	328,000	57.9 ± 1.9	30,000	8.3 ± 1.3		209,000	36.9 ± 1.8	
2020[†]	558,000	289,000	51.9 ± 2.4	45,000	13.5 ± 2.2		223,000	40.0 ± 2.4	
Change since:									
2019	-8,000	-38,000	-6.0	15,000	5.2		15,000	3.2	
2010	-61,000	-54,000	-3.6	-32,000	-4.9		26,000	8.1	

Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec datasets, ONS

Notes:

1. Levels and rates are based on those aged 16 to 24.
 2. Levels rounded to the nearest thousand.
 3. Rates are based on unrounded figures.
 4. Employment and Inactivity rates are based on those aged 16 to 24. Denominator is all persons aged 16 to 24.
 5. Unemployment rates are based on those aged 16 to 24. Denominator is all those aged 16 to 24 who are economically active (employed and unemployed).
 6. Changes over time are based on unrounded figures.
 7. Confidence limits are calculated for the 95th percentile.
- † Rates published from the APS remain robust; however, levels and changes in levels should be used with caution.

Table 2: Employment, ILO unemployment and economic inactivity levels and rates for 16 to 24 year olds, UK

	All	Employment		Unemployment			Inactivity		
	Level	Level	Rate (per cent)	Level	Rate (per cent)	Level	Rate (per cent)	Level	Rate (per cent)
2004	6,809,000	4,047,000	59.4 ± 0.4	570,000	12.3 ± 0.3	2,191,000	32.2 ± 0.4		
2005	6,929,000	4,064,000	58.7 ± 0.4	604,000	12.9 ± 0.4	2,261,000	32.6 ± 0.4		
2006	7,025,000	4,055,000	57.7 ± 0.5	653,000	13.9 ± 0.4	2,316,000	33.0 ± 0.5		
2007	7,154,000	4,100,000	57.3 ± 0.5	653,000	13.7 ± 0.4	2,401,000	33.6 ± 0.5		
2008	7,231,000	4,044,000	55.9 ± 0.5	714,000	15.0 ± 0.5	2,472,000	34.2 ± 0.5		
2009	7,253,000	3,793,000	52.3 ± 0.5	883,000	18.9 ± 0.5	2,577,000	35.5 ± 0.5		
2010	7,311,000	3,658,000	50.0 ± 0.5	885,000	19.5 ± 0.6	2,768,000	37.9 ± 0.5		
2011	7,373,000	3,634,000	49.3 ± 0.6	983,000	21.3 ± 0.6	2,756,000	37.4 ± 0.5		
2012	7,355,000	3,624,000	49.3 ± 0.6	967,000	21.1 ± 0.6	2,764,000	37.6 ± 0.5		
2013	7,313,000	3,621,000	49.5 ± 0.6	918,000	20.2 ± 0.6	2,774,000	37.9 ± 0.6		
2014	7,286,000	3,680,000	50.5 ± 0.6	763,000	17.2 ± 0.6	2,843,000	39.0 ± 0.6		
2015	7,260,000	3,883,000	53.5 ± 0.6	651,000	14.4 ± 0.5	2,727,000	37.6 ± 0.6		
2016	7,189,000	3,836,000	53.4 ± 0.6	590,000	13.3 ± 0.5	2,763,000	38.4 ± 0.6		
2017	7,086,000	3,823,000	54.0 ± 0.6	527,000	12.1 ± 0.5	2,735,000	38.6 ± 0.6		
2018	6,993,000	3,752,000	53.7 ± 0.6	495,000	11.6 ± 0.5	2,746,000	39.3 ± 0.6		
2019	6,907,000	3,736,000	54.1 ± 0.7	477,000	11.3 ± 0.5	2,694,000	39.0 ± 0.6		
2020[†]	6,864,000	3,592,000	52.3 ± 0.8	552,000	13.3 ± 0.7	2,720,000	39.6 ± 0.8		
Change since:									
2019	-43,000	-143,000	-1.8	74,000	2.0	26,000	0.6		
2010	-447,000	-65,000	2.3	-333,000	-6.2	-48,000	1.8		

Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec datasets, ONS

Notes:

1. Levels and rates are based on those aged 16 to 24.
2. Levels rounded to the nearest thousand.
3. Rates are based on unrounded figures.
4. Employment and Inactivity rates are based on those aged 16 to 24. Denominator is all persons aged 16 to 24.
5. Unemployment rates are based on those aged 16 to 24. Denominator is all those aged 16 to 24 who are economically active (employed and unemployed).
6. Changes over time are based on unrounded figures.
7. Confidence limits are calculated for the 95th percentile.
- †. Rates published from the APS remain robust; however, levels and changes in levels should be used with caution.

Table 3: Employment, ILO unemployment and economic inactivity levels and rates for 16 to 24 year olds by gender, Scotland and UK

Scotland											
	Level					Rate (per cent)					
	2020[†]	Change since 2019		Change since 2010		2020[†]	Change since 2019 (percentage points)	Change since 2010 (percentage points)			
Employment											
Men	147,000	-16,000	↓	-26,000	↓	52.4	± 3.4	-4.9	↓	-3.7	↓
Women	142,000	-22,000	↓	-28,000	↓	51.3	± 3.4	-7.1	↓	-3.7	↓
ILO unemployment											
Men	24,000	6,000	↑	-22,000	↓	14.1	± 3.1	4.1	↑	-7.0	↓
Women	21,000	9,000	↑	-11,000	↓	12.9	± 3.0	6.3	↑	-2.7	↓
Inactivity											
Men	109,000	6,000	↑	20,000	↑	39.0	± 3.3	2.7	↑	10.0	↑
Women	114,000	8,000	↑	6,000	↑	41.1	± 3.4	3.6	↑	6.2	↑
United Kingdom											
	Level					Rate (per cent)					
	2020[†]	Change since 2019		Change since 2010		2020[†]	Change since 2019 (percentage points)	Change since 2010 (percentage points)			
Employment											
Men	1,814,000	-84,000	↓	-52,000	↓	51.7	± 1.1	-2.0	↓	0.9	↑
Women	1,779,000	-60,000	↓	-13,000	↓	53.0	± 1.1	-1.5	↓	3.7	↑
ILO unemployment											
Men	309,000	21,000	↑	-218,000	↓	14.6	± 1.0	1.4	↑	-7.5	↓
Women	242,000	53,000	↑	-116,000	↓	12.0	± 1.0	2.7	↑	-4.7	↓
Inactivity											
Men	1,384,000	40,000	↑	103,000	↑	39.5	± 1.1	1.4	↑	4.6	↑
Women	1,336,000	-14,000	↓	-152,000	↓	39.8	± 1.1	-0.2	↓	-1.1	↓

Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec datasets, ONS

Notes:

1. Levels and rates are based on those aged 16 to 24.
 2. Levels rounded to the nearest thousand.
 3. Rates are based on unrounded figures.
 4. Employment and Inactivity rates are based on those aged 16 to 24. Denominator is all persons aged 16 to 24.
 5. Unemployment rates are based on those aged 16 to 24. Denominator is all those aged 16 to 24 who are economically active (employed and unemployed).
 6. Changes over time are based on unrounded figures.
- †. Rates published from the APS remain robust; however, levels and changes in levels should be used with caution.

Further Information

Reliability of estimates

Information from the Annual Population Survey for January – December 2004 to January – December 2020 is presented.

As the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Population Survey (APS) are sample surveys, these estimates are subject to an associated sampling error that decreases as the sample size increases. It is the nature of sampling variability that the smaller the group whose size is being estimated, the (proportionately) less precise the estimate is. ONS have published a detailed guidance note on [this](#). Shading is one method used by ONS to indicate where estimates should be used with caution. However, the National Statistics marking for the Annual Population Survey reflects the larger sample size for headline estimates of Labour Market indicators by age for Scotland.

Access the data in this publication

Results are provided for January – December 2004 to January – December 2020, based on the data released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 24 March 2021.

The tables and the charts contained in this publication are also available in excel format web tables.

Annual Population Survey data for employment and economic inactivity by age for Scotland, alongside a range of other labour market indicators, are also made available on the Scottish Government Open Data Platform:

<http://statistics.gov.scot/home>

ONS also release rolling quarterly Annual Population Survey datasets covering the periods April – March, July – June, and October - September. The data for these time periods have not been used or presented within this publication. The data for these are available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

Confidence Intervals

Confidence limits can be used to assess the range of values that the true value lies between. 95 per cent confidence intervals are included in all tables and charts.

What does the 95 per cent confidence limit mean?

If, for example, we have an APS estimate and confidence limit of 63 per cent \pm 0.27 per cent, this means that 19 times out of 20 we would expect the true rate to lie between 62.73 per cent and 63.27 per cent. Only in exceptional circumstances (1 in 20 times) would we expect the true rate to be outside the confidence interval around the APS estimate. Thus the smaller the confidence limits, the more reliable the estimate.

The confidence limits use a design factor of 1, which may not be likely in some cases but given the lack of further information an average design factor of 1 is assumed to

be reasonable. Further information on estimating confidence intervals can be found in the [LFS user guidance](#).

Statistical Significance

Statistical significance is based on 95 per cent Confidence Intervals. Statistical significance means that the change was large enough that it is unlikely to have resulted only from the variable nature of the sample.

Concepts and Definitions

Employment: There are two main ways of looking at employment: the number of people with jobs or the number of jobs. These two concepts represent different things as one person can have more than one job. People aged 16 or over are classed as in employment (as an employee or self-employed) by the Labour Force Survey (LFS), if they have done at least one hour of paid work in the week prior to their LFS interview or if they have a job that they are temporarily away from. People who do unpaid work in a family business and people on Government-supported training and employment programs are also included according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition.

Employment rate: The number of people in employment expressed as a percentage of the relevant population.

Unemployment: The ILO definition of unemployment covers people who are: not in employment, want a job, have actively sought work in the previous four weeks and are available to start work within the next fortnight, or, out of work and have accepted a job which they are waiting to start in the next fortnight.

Unemployment rate: The number of unemployed people expressed as a percentage of the relevant economically active population.

Economically inactive: Economically inactive people are not in employment, but do not satisfy all the criteria for unemployment. This group is comprised of those who want a job but who have not been seeking work in the last four weeks, those who want a job and are seeking work but not available to start and those who do not want a job. For example, students not working or seeking work and those in retirement are classed as economically inactive.

Economic inactivity rate: The number of economically inactive people expressed as a percentage of the relevant population.

Rates: Rates represent the proportion of the population or subgroup of the population with a certain characteristic. They allow changes in the labour market to be interpreted in a wider context, allowing for changes in the overall population or the number of people who are economically active. Rates can be calculated for different age groups. For employment, economic activity and economic inactivity, the most widely quoted rates are those for the 16 to 64 population. For unemployment, headline rates are expressed as a percentage of the economically active population aged 16 and over. Those over retirement age who continue to be economically active will therefore be included in the base while those who are economically inactive will not.

Annex A

Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Table A1 provides the employment, unemployment and inactivity levels and rates for all 16 to 24 year olds based on results from the most recently available Labour Force Survey, ONS (Nov 2004-Jan 2005 to Nov 2020-Jan 2021).

The Annual Population Survey (APS) has a larger sample size than the LFS and therefore provides more robust information for smaller groups. However, the results from both the APS and LFS show broadly similar long-term trends in labour market statistics for those aged 16 to 24 in Scotland.

Table A1: Employment, Unemployment and Economic Inactivity Levels and Rates for 16-24 year olds, Scotland

	All	Employment		Unemployment		Inactivity	
	Level	Level	Rate (per cent)	Level	Rate (per cent)	Level	Rate (per cent)
Nov 2004-Jan 2005	586,000	373,000	63.6	58,000	13.6	155,000	26.4
Nov 2005-Jan 2006	591,000	383,000	64.8	47,000	10.9	161,000	27.2
Nov 2006-Jan 2007	596,000	388,000	65.1	44,000	10.2	164,000	27.5
Nov 2007-Jan 2008	603,000	365,000	60.6	57,000	13.6	180,000	29.9
Nov 2008-Jan 2009	609,000	367,000	60.2	50,000	12.0	192,000	31.6
Nov 2009-Jan 2010	615,000	336,000	54.7	68,000	16.8	211,000	34.3
Nov 2010-Jan 2011	622,000	354,000	57.0	78,000	18.0	190,000	30.5
Nov 2011-Jan 2012	624,000	324,000	52.0	106,000	24.7	193,000	31.0
Nov 2012-Jan 2013	621,000	349,000	56.2	71,000	16.9	200,000	32.3
Nov 2013-Jan 2014	615,000	324,000	52.6	76,000	19.1	215,000	35.0
Nov 2014-Jan 2015	611,000	342,000	56.1	62,000	15.3	206,000	33.8
Nov 2015-Jan 2016	605,000	360,000	59.5	67,000	15.7	178,000	29.4
Nov 2016-Jan 2017	595,000	343,000	57.7	32,000	8.5	219,000	36.9
Nov 2017-Jan 2018	582,000	342,000	58.8	35,000	9.2	205,000	35.3
Nov 2018-Jan 2019	571,000	338,000	59.1	27,000	7.4	206,000	36.1
Nov 2019-Jan 2020	562,000	319,000	56.7	26,000	7.4	217,000	38.7
Nov 2020-Jan 2021 [†]	553,000	310,000	56.1	29,000	8.6	214,000	38.6
Change since:							
Nov 2019-Jan 2020	-8,000	-8,000	-0.6	4,000	1.2	-4,000	-0.1
Nov 2010-Jan 2011	-68,000	-44,000	-0.9	-48,000	-9.4	24,000	8.1

Source: Labour Force Survey, Nov-Jan datasets (not seasonally adjusted), ONS

Notes:

Shaded estimates are based on a small sample size. This may result in less precise estimates, which should be used with caution.

1. Levels and rates are based on those aged 16 to 24.
 2. Levels rounded to the nearest thousand.
 3. Rates are based on unrounded figures.
 4. Employment and Inactivity rates are based on those aged 16 to 24. Denominator is all persons aged 16 to 24.
 5. Unemployment rates are based on those aged 16 to 24. Denominator is all those aged 16 to 24 who are economically active (employed and unemployed).
- † Rates published from the LFS remain robust; however, levels and changes in levels should be used with caution.

These estimates were published on 23 March 2021 by ONS as part of the [Labour Market Statistics in the Regions of the UK](#) monthly publication as Official Statistics.

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

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