

# Scottish Secretary comments on August Labour Market Statistics

News story

As the August 2021 employment figures are published Secretary of State for Scotland Alister Jack says the UK Government remains wholly focused on recovery.



Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

There are some encouraging signs in the figures published today, but we know there's still a long way to go to get people back into good jobs, businesses back on their feet and our economy prospering again.

As the success of the UK Government-funded vaccine rollout has allowed all parts of the UK to remove the most restrictive lockdown measures, the UK Government remains focused on recovery from the pandemic.

Our furlough scheme is continuing to support 141,500 Scottish jobs and our Plan for Jobs is helping people back to work, while our Kickstart initiative is creating high-quality jobs for young people at risk of long-term unemployment.

## **Background points:**

- The UK Government's furlough and self-employed schemes will run till the end of September 2021. At their peak, these schemes supported more than 900,000 Scottish jobs.
- More than 100,000 Scottish businesses have benefitted from £4 billion of UK Government loans.
- The UK Government has provided billions in extra funding for the welfare system for those unable to access other forms of support. This includes the £20 Universal Credit uplift which will run until the end of

September 2021.

- This direct support is on top of the additional £14.5 billion provided to the Scottish Government since the start of the pandemic.
- The UK Government is investing billions to help people of all ages back into work, including our £2 billion Kickstart scheme for young people, sector-based work programmes and recruitment of thousands of additional work coaches.
- The UK Government is funding the UK-wide vaccine programme, and continues to provide all Covid testing in Scotland outside of the NHS.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) showed unemployment in Scotland fell slightly since last quarter (-0.1%). The rate of employment in Scotland increased slightly (+0.04%), which is a stronger position than the UK average.

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