

Scottish Secretary comments on July 2021 Labour Market Statistics

News story

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



Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

It's encouraging to see a decrease in unemployment in today's statistics, but there are still big challenges ahead of us in getting our economy back on track.

From the very start of the pandemic the UK Government took decisive action to support lives and livelihoods right across the UK. We are continuing to support more than 173,000 Scottish jobs through our furlough scheme, which will run until the end of September.

As the UK Government-funded vaccine rollout allows all parts of the UK to further ease lockdown restrictions, our focus remains wholly on recovery. The UK Government's Plan for Jobs is helping get people into work as we build back better from the pandemic.

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 (-0.2%). Scotland's performance continues to be slightly stronger than the rest of the UK as a whole at 4.4% (compared to 4.8% UK rate).

The employment rate for those aged 16-64 in Scotland was 74%, a decrease of 0.4 percentage points.

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