

Scottish Secretary responds to June Labour Market Statistics

News story

As new ONS figures show low unemployment and more people on the payroll, the UK Government is continuing to help people into work



Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

With more Scottish workers on the payroll than before the pandemic and unemployment at historically low levels, today's figures show a strong Scottish labour market.

The UK Government has always supported people across the UK when they've needed it. During the pandemic, UK Government loans to businesses saved up to 500,000 UK businesses and 2.9 million jobs. Now, as global issues put pressure on the cost of living, we are helping people into work and to progress in work, and to keep more of what they earn. We are also putting in place a £37bn financial support package.

This sits alongside the UK Government's focus on growing our economy, by investing in communities across the UK, and creating more well-paid and highly-skilled jobs.

Background

Figures from the ONS show a robust fall in unemployment in Scotland, with the rate down by 1.2 p.p. compared to the previous year. Employment in Scotland has increased by 1.6 p.p. since last year, to a rate of 75.5 per cent.

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UN Human Rights Council 50: Joint Statement on the Human Rights Situation in China

Statement on behalf of the following countries: Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Belize, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Eswatini, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States.

“Madam High Commissioner,

We continue to be gravely concerned about the human rights situation in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Numerous extensively researched and credible reports indicate that over a million people have been arbitrarily detained. Furthermore there are reports of ongoing widespread surveillance, discrimination against Uyghurs and other persons belonging to minorities as well as of severe restrictions on Uyghur culture and the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to freedom of religion or belief. We are also concerned about reports of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, forced sterilization, sexual and gender-based violence, forced labour, and forced separation of children from their parents by authorities.

We repeat our call on China to urgently address these concerns and implement the CERD’s eight recommendations relating to Xinjiang from August 2018, as well as the concerns raised by numerous Special Procedures since that time, including to end the arbitrary detention of Muslim Uyghurs and persons belonging to other minorities.

We also continue to be gravely concerned about the deterioration of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong and the human rights situation in Tibet.

We urge China to ensure full respect for the rule of law, to comply with obligations under national and international law with regard to the protection of human rights and to ratify the ICCPR. In addition, we urge the Chinese government to provide meaningful and unfettered access for independent observers to Xinjiang, including Special Procedures. In view of the severity of the situation in Xinjiang, we call on all countries to respect the principle of non-refoulement.

Finally, we acknowledge your recent visit to China, including Xinjiang, which

provided an opportunity for dialogue with the Chinese authorities on various human rights related concerns, and your statement of 28 May. We are interested in more detailed observations, including on the restrictions the Chinese authorities imposed on the visit as well as on your access to members of civil society and to places of your choice.

Madame High Commissioner, recalling your announcement at HRC48 that your Office would release a report on human rights in Xinjiang, we look forward to its prompt release. Could you provide the Council with further information on the timeline?

Thank you.”

YolanDa Brown, William Bush, Jamie Njoku-Goodwin, Abigail Pogson, Deborah Shaw and Veronica Wadley (Baroness Fleet) have been appointed as National Council Members for Arts Council England

YolanDa Brown

YolanDa Brown wears many hats, musician, broadcaster, author and philanthropist. She is a double MOBO Award-winning artist, her music is a delicious fusion of reggae, jazz and soul. She is currently composing music for the iconic Sesame Street and an animated series called Bea's Block.

A champion for the importance of music education, YolanDa is Chair of Youth Music, a trustee of the PRS Foundation, an ambassador for the Prince's Trust and London Music Fund and sits on the advisory board of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of East London.

During the pandemic with Sony Music and Twinkl, YolanDa rolled out her bespoke online music lesson plans for teachers, parents and pupils in primary schools nationwide, an estimated 30 000 children have used the resources. In 2018 with James JP Drake, she launched the “Drake YolanDa Award” offering grants to emerging artists.

A broadcaster too working across TV and Radio, including her eponymous series for CBeebies, “YolanDa's Band Jam”, which won the RTSNW award as Best

Children's Programme. Over on the airways, she hosts YolanDa Brown on Saturday on Jazz FM and co hosts 'Loose Ends' on BBC Radio 4.

YolanDa loves to drive fast cars around race tracks in her spare time and can even rattle off a Rubik's Cube in around five minutes (on a good day).

William 'Bill' Bush

During Bill's 17 years at the Premier League, as Executive Director and now Senior Adviser, he has led areas including intellectual property, public policy, relations with government and the EU, relations with fans, communications and the community programme.

He is currently the Chair of the Alliance for Intellectual Property, Board member of English Touring Opera, and Board member of the Football Foundation

Before joining the Premier League, Bill worked as a Special Advisor to the Prime Minister (1999-2001) and to Tessa Jowell at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2001-2005), and was Head of Research for BBC News 1991-1999. Early in his career, as a local government officer he ran the Office of the Leader of the Greater London Council (Ken Livingstone) from 1981-1986.

Jamie Njoku-Goodwin

Jamie is the Chief Executive of UK Music, the collective voice of the UK music industry. Jamie is an experienced campaigner, a communications specialist and a former political adviser who has held senior roles at the highest levels of Government. He previously worked as a special adviser at DCMS and the Department of Health and Social Care and regularly appears in print and broadcast media.

Jamie was born in London in 1991. He studied Music at the University of Nottingham and also holds a Masters in International Relations. He sits on the board of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, is a trustee of Britten Pears Arts, and is a member of the Council of the Royal College of Music.

Jamie regularly acts as a sector representative to Government and is on the expert advisory panel for the Government's National Plan for Music Education, the expert advisory panel for UK City of Culture 2025, and the Creative Industries Council.

Abigail Pogson

Abigail was born and grew up in Yorkshire. She has been Managing Director of Sage Gateshead since May 2015. She combines a commitment to developing artists and supporting them to create great work with a passion for ensuring that the arts can be accessed by as many people as possible.

Following a degree in Modern and Mediaeval Languages at Cambridge University and an MA in Cultural Management at City University, she began working in the arts. She joined Sage Gateshead from Spitalfields Music, a charity based in

east London with an international reputation for its quality, reach and innovation. She previously worked at English National Opera, Music Theatre Wales and SPNM. In 2007/8 she was a Fellow of the Clore Leadership Programme.

Abigail serves as a Trustee for V&A Dundee, as a Director for North East England Chamber of Commerce and as Chair of Sunderland Empire Theatre Trust.

Deborah Shaw

Deborah is Chief Executive of The Marlowe, Canterbury – Theatre of the Year in the 2022 Stage Awards (with Battersea Arts Centre).

She has worked as a director and producer in regional, national and international theatre for over 25 years, including 8 years as Associate Director with the Royal Shakespeare Company, where she directed the World Shakespeare Festival for London2012, commissioning work from across the world and collaborating with 30 UK theatre companies, festivals and venues.

She spent 5 years working in heritage as Creative Director at Historic Royal Palaces, commissioning artistic interventions including the Sky/South Bank Award-winning Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red at the Tower of London in 2014- which reached over 5 billion people worldwide – and East Wall, a collaboration with Hofesh Shechter Company, East London Dance and LIFT in 2018, one of the Guardian's top 10 dance productions of the 21st century.

She read History at Cambridge and holds an honorary doctorate from Oxford Brookes for services to theatre and was named one of the UK's ten most influential creatives in Art and Design in the H-100 Awards 2015. She chairs Creative Kent and Medway, co-chairs The Touring Partnership and is a founder-member of the Iraqi Theatre Company in Baghdad.

Veronica Wadley (Baroness Fleet)

Baroness Fleet is currently Chair of the Advisory Panel for the new National Plan for Music Education and chaired the Expert Panel for the Model Music Curriculum, published in 2021. She was a Council Member of Arts Council England and Chair of London Area Council from 2010-2018. From 2012-2016. She was a Senior Advisor to the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson.

In 2011 Veronica co-founded the Mayor of London's Fund for Young Musicians, now the London Music Fund. The charity, which she chairs, has funded over 600 scholarships for young musicians from disadvantaged backgrounds and provides opportunities for them to learn from and play alongside professional musicians, composers and conductors. In 2021, the London Music Fund won the Music & Drama Award for the most outstanding music initiative.

She is also a trustee and governor of a number of arts and education organisations including the Royal College of Music, ABRSM and Shoreditch Park Academy. She was previously a trustee of Northern Ballet and governor of the Yehudi Menuhin School.

As Editor of the London Evening Standard from 2002–2009, she chaired the Evening Standard Theatre Awards and Evening Standard Film Awards.

Veronica received a CBE in the 2018 Queen's New Year Honours List for Services to the Arts and was appointed to the House of Lords in July 2020.

Arts Council England roles are not remunerated. These appointments have been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's [Governance Code on Public Appointments](#). The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Under the Code, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election.

YolanDa Brown, Abigail Pogson and Deborah Shaw declared no such political activity.

William Bush declared having served as Chair, Treasurer and Secretary at Ward Level in the Labour Party in the 1980s – the last date of his posts being in 1989. He was also a local government officer, Head of Office to three successive leaders of the Labour Group of the Greater London Council. He was appointed as a Special Adviser to former Prime Minister Tony Blair and former Secretary of State for the Department of Digital Culture, Media and Sport Tessa Jowell.

Veronica Wadley (Baroness Fleet) has declared having been a Senior Advisor to former Mayor of London Boris Johnson, Canvassing for the Conservative Party in 2010 and being appointed to the House of Lords as a Conservative Peer in 2020.

Jamie Njoku-Goodwin declared having worked as a spokesperson for a Conservative Secretary of State, having worked for the Conservative party as a press spokesperson and previously canvassed for them.

[The PM has appointed four trustees to the Science Museum Group](#)

Stephen Belcher

Professor Stephen Belcher became Met Office Chief Scientist in 2016. As Chief Scientist he leads a team of approximately 800 technical and scientific staff, which includes research into processes and predictability of weather systems, research into the physics of climate change within the Met Office Hadley, and development of innovative technology to translate this research into operational systems.

Stephen also represents the Met Office nationally and internationally, for example by serving as a member of the Government Chief Scientific Advisors network and by serving on the World Meteorological Organisations Science Advisory Panel. Stephen obtained a PhD in fluid dynamics from the University of Cambridge in 1990 and has subsequently published over 100 peer-reviewed papers on the fluid dynamics of atmospheric and oceanic turbulence. Having completed his PhD he became a research fellow at Stanford and Cambridge Universities. In 1994 he moved to the Department of Meteorology at the University of Reading, where he worked for nearly 20 years. Motivated by a desire to see his research move into actionable advice, in 2012 he joined the Met Office as Director of the Met Office Hadley Centre.

Tim Dugher

Tim is a career railwayman who has spent 45 years in the rail industry, progressing from Engineering Apprentice to Chief Operating Officer of Angel Trains Limited via a whole range of technical and management positions throughout the UK. In 2011, after 34 years in full time roles, he made the transition to non-executive status to serve on other Boards including the Rail Safety and Standards Board, Vossloh Kiepe uk, Network Certification Body where he was Chairman, and Porterbrook Leasing where he is currently a shareholder representative Director. He also manages his own management consultancy company, and has served in an Advisory capacity to a number of other companies .

Tim is a Chartered Engineer, having graduated from Aston University, and is a Fellow of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and former Chairman of its Railway Division Board. His other voluntary activities include being an active committee member of the local Institution of Mechanical Engineers Railway Division branch which exists to promote knowledge of engineering developments, as well as a local Parish Councillor.

James Bilefield

James serves on a range of public, private and not-for-profit boards across the technology, services and charitable sectors. He is also an advisor to the UK Cabinet Office, McKinsey & Company and SystemIQ, and has chaired the Digital Advisory Board of the Science Museum Group since 2015. James was previously a serial digital entrepreneur and chief digital officer following a successful career in investment banking at JP Morgan Chase.

Washington Ochieng

Professor Washington Yotto Ochieng, FREng, is Head of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Chair in Positioning and Navigation Systems, and Senior Security Science Fellow at Imperial College London. Formerly, he was Head of the Centre for Transport Studies and Co-Director of the Institute for Security Science and Technology at Imperial.

Ochieng is a Chartered Engineer and Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng). He is also a Fellow of the UK Institution of Civil

Engineers, Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation, Royal Institute of Navigation (RIN) and Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors. His research interests include critical infrastructure resilience, user-centric mobility solutions and positioning, navigation and timing systems. In 2013, Ochieng was elected RAEng Fellow in recognition of exceptional and sustained contribution. In 2019, he received highest award from the RIN – Harold Spencer-Jones Gold Medal – in recognition of ‘extensive valued advice to policy makers and for pioneering research in safety-critical navigation and positioning systems’. He is Vice President and Trustee of the RIN. He is Chair and Sub-Panel Chair respectively of the RAEng’s Africa Engineers programme and Global Talent Visa Panel. Ochieng is a Member of the UK-Kenya Challenge Board on Science, Technology and Innovation.

Science Museum Group roles are not remunerated. These appointments have been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office’s [Governance Code on Public Appointments](#).

The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Under the Code, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election. Professor Stephen Belcher, James Bilefield, Tim Dugher and Professor Washington Ochieng have declared no activity.

[Animal medicine seizure notice: Parcel shipped from Canada addressed to premises in Belfast](#)

News story

Details of seizure notice served following a parcel addressed to premises in Belfast was stopped at a Belfast deport.



The following veterinary medicines were identified by a courier company based at a Belfast depot. The products were detained and subsequently seized by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

This parcel was addressed to residential premises in Belfast and was shipped from Canada.

The parcel contained bottles/packages labelled:

- B2 Splint remover 1 medium bottle and 2 small bottles
- Clotor concentrate splint remover 2 small bottles
- Cobolt 100 splint remover 3 medium bottles
- Pre Ferrin splint remover 3 medium bottles
- RBC-RL 2 large bottles
- 11 packages splint remover gold powder

These products were seized as they purport to be veterinary medicines intended for use in horses.

The medicines were seized under Regulation 25 (Importation of unauthorised veterinary medicinal products) of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013.

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