



Highland Employability Partnership 3-year Strategic Plan

Com-pàirteachas So-fhastachd na Gàidhealtachd Plana ro-innleachdail 3-bliadhna

2025-2028

2025/26 iteration

*Our aim is to help lift people out of poverty
across the Highlands through enabling access
to sustainable and fair work.*

Introduction

No One Left Behind (NOLB) aims to improve Scotland's employability system by encouraging collaboration among partners and making changes to how services are designed, delivered, and funded. It also focuses on increasing local control to make the system more flexible, responsive, and centred on people's needs.

In Highland, this is done through the Highland Employability Partnership (HEP) and three Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs), operating under the Work. Life. Highland brand name.

This 3-year Strategic Plan outlines employability priorities in Highland through to 31st March 2028. It reflects national priorities, and those of local partners and clients.

Along with this plan are 5 appendices which support the main document and provide additional context where appropriate. These are as follows:

Appendix 1: Plan on a page summarising the key elements of this document.

Appendix 2: Operational Plan 2025/26 outlining the key actions planned between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026, organised under the 4 HEP Operational Workstream headings.

Appendix 3: Investment Plan 2025/26 gives a high-level summary of how No One Left Behind funding in Highland will be allocated in the 2025/26 financial year, with an indication of the activities that will be delivered under each heading.

Appendix 4: Highland Data is a summary of selected key Highland employability related data.

Appendix 5: Highland Policy Context provides a summary of other key policies which help to set the employability context across Highland.

The intention is that the Strategic Plan and the Appendices will be updated annually to stay flexible and responsive to local needs and changing circumstances.

In addition to NOLB, this Strategic Plan aligns with wider efforts across Highland to help meet the Scottish Government's child poverty reduction targets.

No One Left Behind (NOLB)

NOLB Priorities

In September 2024 the Scottish Government published the NOLB: Employability strategic plan 2024 to 2027.¹ This plan outlines the key priorities for employability and identifies the action that Scottish and Local Government will take to deliver the next phase of NOLB.

This document lays out 5 priorities as follows:

- Continue to improve the employability system
- Increase awareness and uptake of employability support
- Tackling child poverty by increasing parental income from employment
- Supporting disabled people and those with a long-term health condition
- Delivering jointly with wider public services

It also laid out two emerging priorities:

- Working with employers to improve outcomes
- Supporting a just transition and net zero

NOLB Principles

The NOLB approach is underpinned by 6 principles:

- Provides flexible and person-centred support
- Straightforward for people to navigate
- Integrated and aligned with other services
- Provides pathways into sustainable and fair work
- Driven by evidence including data and the experience of users
- Support more people to move into the right job at the right time

NOLB National Products Handbook

In October 2024 the Scottish Government published the NOLB – National Products Handbook.²

The handbook is for employability providers in Scotland and combines all NOLB resources in one place, explaining what they are, how they fit together, and how to use them. Partners are encouraged to adapt these resources to meet local needs.

The goal is to ensure clear expectations, standards, and commitments for employability services, delivering consistency while allowing flexibility to meet local needs and improve outcomes.

The handbook was created by Scottish and Local Government and is part of a shared continuous improvement agenda.

¹ [No One Left Behind: employability strategic plan 2024 to 2027](#)

² [No One Left Behind: National Products Handbook](#)

Introduction

The Highland Council covers one-third of Scotland's land area and 11.4% of the UK, including the most remote and sparsely populated parts of mainland UK. The Highlands has the 7th highest population of the 32 authorities in Scotland (236,330³) while having the lowest population density at 8 persons per square kilometre.

Other key data:

- From 2001 to 2023, Highland's population increased by 13.1%, the 7th highest growth among council areas, while Scotland's population grew by 8.4%.
- From 2001 to 2023, the 0 to 15 age group saw a 9.6% decrease, while the 75 and over age group saw a 71.9% increase.
- Between 2018 and 2028, Highland's population is projected to grow by 0.5%, compared to Scotland's projected growth of 1.8%.

Geography

In a large geography with a dispersed population and several localised job markets, it can be hard to provide all the services people need to find and prepare for work. Employability support provision varies across Highland, making it challenging to deliver a comprehensive approach for all ages and stages.

The availability and range of employability support services and job opportunities by occupation and sector, and the availability and accessibility of specialised services will vary depending on where a person is based and can reasonably commute to. Travel to work areas can be quite significant, impacting on the ability of some clients to travel long distances to work, particularly those facing long-term unemployment who may be more reluctant to travel.

Seasonal jobs also pose challenges during the winter, potentially leading to isolation, loneliness, and mental health issues for some people.

³ [NRS, Mid-2023 Population Estimates by Council Area in Scotland – Highland Council Area Profile](#)

A unique structure for Highland geography

The Highland Council area includes urban settlements around the Inner Moray Firth and some of the most remote parts of mainland UK. To address this, a unique structure is in place:

- The Highland Employability Partnership (HEP) provides strategic direction across Highland.
- Three sub-Highland Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) co-ordinate operations in North Highland, Inner Moray Firth, and West Highland.

Highland Employability Partnership (HEP)

The HEP is a partnership of public, private, and third sector organisations working together to provide easy-to-access, high-quality, and responsive services to individuals and employers in Highland.

HEP promotes a strategic approach, maintaining ongoing dialogue with various stakeholders, including service users, providers, employers, local partnerships, and national agencies. HEP members include representatives from:

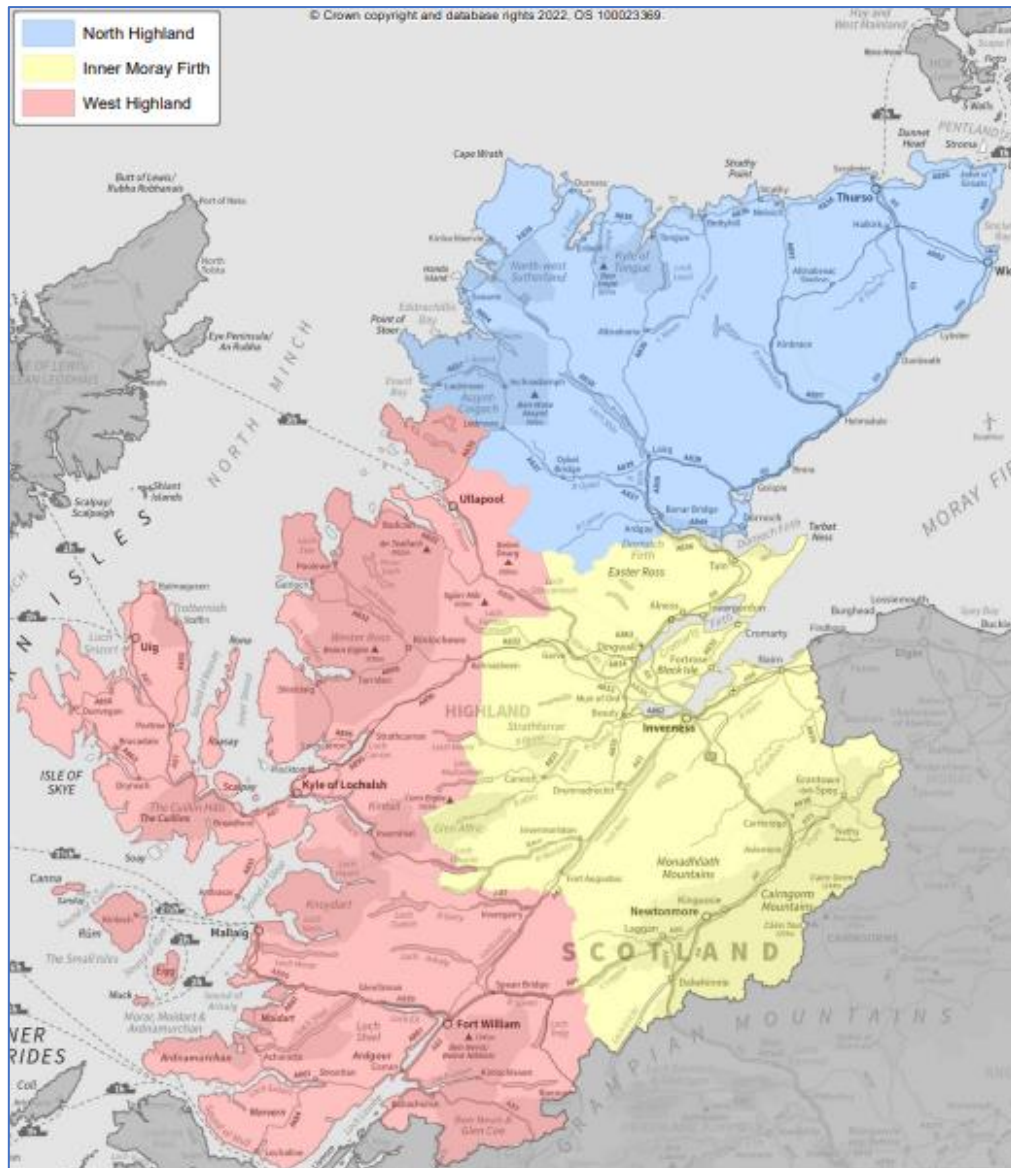
- Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)
- Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)
- Highland Council (THC)
- Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI)
- NHS Highland
- Skills Development Scotland (SDS)
- University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI)

Highland Council, as the lead accountable body, chairs the HEP.

Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs)

The 3 LEPs (shown below) focus on local operations, supporting clients as they move towards, into, and within work. They will ensure that services meet local job market needs and opportunities, considering the unique characteristics of each area. LEP members generally include area representatives from each of the organisations represented on the HEP, plus some additional local third sector representatives where required

LEP chairs are chosen by partners each year.



HEP Operational Workstreams

The HEP has established four workstreams to progress strategic tasks and the Annual Operational Plan (Appendix 2) is laid out under these workstreams as follows:

- Service Delivery – ensuring that the services being delivered align with the needs of clients and employers
- Communication and Engagement – ensuring that clients, employers, delivery partners and community organisations know about the services on offer across the partnership
- Performance – ensuring that the partnership is making progress and is making a difference to clients and employers across Highland
- Continuous Improvement - ensuring that the partnership is collecting and acting on stakeholder feedback as the basis for improving how we work

Highland Community Planning Partnership

The graph below explains the relationship between the Highland Community Planning Partnership and the HEP structures at both the strategic and local levels. The arrows show the two-way communication needed between these levels. Each partner is accountable to their own governance structures while ensuring that Highland-wide and local priorities are advanced.



Work. Life. Highland



Work. Life. Highland (WLH) is the brand name for the HEP and is designed to be a simple and clear entry point for potential clients and employers to learn about the help and support available. Encouraging people to get in touch is the key call to action behind WLH.

The brand includes the website www.worklifelhighland.co.uk and social media channels. Both Gaelic and English language branding are used across all our materials.

Strategic Priorities

HEP Aim

The HEP aim is to help lift people out of poverty across the Highlands through enabling access to sustainable and fair work.

Strategic outcomes

HEP partners have set 4 strategic outcomes that will be monitored regularly to ensure that the partnership is making progress and is making a difference to clients and employers across Highland. These are shown below:

1. More people with multiple barriers are moving towards, into, and within paid employment.
2. More young people engage with services to support their journey to work
3. More people have the skills and experience needed for new and replacement jobs
4. Individuals and employers receive services in a co-ordinated manner

Priority Groups

HEP partnership services are available to everyone in Highland who needs support towards achieving the aim of raising as many Highland residents as possible out of poverty through sustainable and fair work.

In addition to the overarching objectives of NOLB to help people of all ages into and within work, the HEP partnership will prioritise engagement with the following groups:-

- Young people aged 16 to 24, and up to 26 for care experienced young people.
- People with disabilities or long-term health conditions
- Long-term unemployed people (12 months and over)
- Priority family groups as defined in the Best Start, Bright Futures⁴ delivery plan as being at higher risk of experiencing poverty
 - Lone parents
 - Disabled parents or parents of disabled children
 - Families with 3 or more children
 - Minority Ethnic
 - Youngest child under 1
 - Mothers under 25 years
- Employers across the Highlands to help them secure the skilled and qualified staff they need whilst achieving the aim of reducing poverty through sustainable and fair work.

As local and national priorities change, there may be some additional specific targeting of client groups or communities, and it is important to ensure services are inclusive and accessible for individuals requiring additional support to secure sustainable outcomes.

⁴ [Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022 to 2026](#)

Operational Strategy

Strategic Actions

Over the course of the coming three years, HEP partners will prioritise the following actions to help progress the 4 strategic outcomes.

- Promote Work. Life. Highland as the gateway to services
- Deliver a tailored employability service, accessible across Highland
- Offer targeted employability support for our priority groups
- Develop an employability toolkit to support career & employment pathways
- Analyse labour market intelligence & stakeholder feedback to inform service design
- Adopt a co-ordinated approach to employer engagement

Annual Operational Plan

Included within this plan is the Annual Operational Plan (Appendix 2). Planned actions for the coming 12 months are outlined, arranged per the 4 HEP Operational Workstreams.

- Service Delivery
- Communication and Engagement
- Performance
- Continuous Improvement

The Operational Plan is updated annually to reflect both National and Local Priorities. This approach also allows partners to adopt a flexible approach, suited to meet the needs of clients, employers, partners and funders.

Delivery Model

We aim to deliver an employability service across the Highlands to help people have the best chance to move out of poverty through sustainable and fair work opportunities. Our hybrid approach aims to enable capacity building across public, private and third sector organisations. The three elements are:

1. Partner Direct Delivery: HEP partners will continue to commit resources to deliver employability support to clients and employers in communities across Highland as part of their day-to-day operations.
2. Competitive Grant: Individual organisations and / or consortia can apply for funding to offer employability services in Highland communities.
3. Procured Framework: Individual delivery partners will be invited to join a Highland-wide framework as a mechanism to quickly and efficiently provide the services for people to follow person-centred employment pathways.

Resources

HEP partners will continue to commit core staff and funding to help resource the delivery of this delivery plan. In addition, Scottish and UK Government funding allocated to the Highland area to support employability work will be used to help progress the priorities set by HEP partners.

Annual Investment Plan

Included within this plan is the Annual Investment Plan (Appendix 3) arranged under 4 categories:

- Key Worker Service
- Community Engagement
- Training for Employment

➤ Employment

The Investment Plan will be updated annually to reflect both National and Local Priorities, the funding available and the emerging needs of clients, employers, partners and funders.

Appendix 1 – Plan on a page

Highland Employability Partnership

- Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)
- Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
- Highland Council (THC)
- Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI)
- Highlands & Islands Enterprise (HIE)
- NHS Highland (NHS)
- Skills Development Scotland (SDS)
- University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI)

Priorities? – No One Left Behind Approach

Employability strategic plan 2024 to 2027

1. Continue to improve the employability service
2. Increase awareness & uptake of employability support
3. Tackling child poverty by increasing parental income from employment
4. Supporting disabled people & those with a long-term health condition
5. Delivering jointly with wider public services

Emerging Priorities:

6. Working with employers to improve outcomes
7. Supporting a just transition & Net Zero

Performance? – Standards

NOLB National Products Handbook

- Service Standards
- Customer Charter
- Shared Measurement Framework
- Service Design Toolkit
- Continuous Improvement Toolkit
- Local Employability Partnership Framework
- Local Delivery Plan Framework
- NOLB Data Products
- NOLB Data Toolkit

How? – Resource

- Partner core staffing and funding resources
- Scottish & UK Government resources



Work.Life.Highland

- ✓ Person-centred
- ✓ Place-based
- ✓ Partnership

Highland Employability Partnership Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Operational Workstreams:

- Service Delivery
- Communication & Engagement
- Performance
- Continuous Improvement

Governance Structure

Strategic	Highland CPP	HEP
Operational	9 x CPs	3x LEPs: North, West, Inner Moray Firth

How? – Delivery Model

Hybrid approach enabling capacity building across public, private and third sector organisations:

- Partner Direct Delivery
- Competitive Grant
- Procured Framework

What? – Strategic Actions

- Promote Work. Life. Highland as the gateway to services
- Deliver a tailored employability service, accessible across Highland
- Offer targeted employability support for our priority groups
- Develop an employability toolkit to support career & employment pathways
- Analyse labour market intelligence & stakeholder feedback to inform service design
- Adopt a co-ordinated approach to employer engagement

Why? – Aim

Our core aim is to help lift people out of poverty across the Highlands through enabling access to sustainable and fair work.

Core Values? – Underlying Principles

1. Provides flexible and person-centred support
2. Straightforward for people to navigate
3. Integrated and aligned with other services
4. Provides pathways into sustainable and fair work
5. Driven by evidence including data and the experience of users
6. Support more people to move into the right job at the right time

Performance? – Outcomes

1. More people with multiple barriers are moving towards, into, and within paid employment.
2. More young people engage with services to support their journey to work.
3. More people have the skills and experience needed for new and replacement jobs
4. Individuals and employers receive services in a coordinated manner

Who? – Priority Groups

- Young people 16 - 24 (up to 26 for CEYP)
- People with disabilities or long-term health conditions
- Long-term unemployed people
- Priority family groups:
 - Lone parents
 - Disabled parents or parents of disabled children
 - Families with 3 or more children
 - Minority ethnic
 - Youngest child under 1
 - Mothers under 25 years
- Employers

Appendix 2 – Operational Plan 2025/26

Service Delivery Workstream

- Deliver a flexible, Highland-wide, universal and specialist person-centred Key Worker service
- Grow the range of client progression products to populate an employability toolkit
- Increase outreach via targeted Community Engagement and Employability Hub activity
- Address labour market demand by designing an offer which captures Employer Engagement and Job Brokering activity supporting pathways to work
- Enable a hybrid delivery model to support capacity building across public, private and third sector

Continuous Improvement Workstream

- Identify value added contribution to service delivery resulting from shared resources
- Collate regular feedback from clients, partners, employers and service providers to inform service design
- Access national products to support quality control across service delivery
- Establish a programme of CPD to support the development of Employability Key Workers across the public, private and third sectors
- Enable the continued development of a mixed economy of provision to respond to local labour market challenges

Highland Employability Partnership Operational Plan 2025/26



Why?

To help lift people out of poverty across the Highlands through enabling access to sustainable and fair work.

Our Priority Groups

- Young people 16 - 24 (up to 26 for CEYP)
- People with disabilities or long-term health conditions
- Long-term unemployed people
- Priority family groups:
 - Lone parents
 - Disabled parents or parents of disabled children
 - Families with 3 or more children
 - Minority ethnic
 - Youngest child under 1
 - Mothers under 25 years
- Employers

Communication and Engagement

- Promote Work. Life. Highland as the gateway to partner Employability Services
- Prepare a targeted approach to communication and engagement to continue to develop new referral pathways and increase flow of clients
- Improve integration and alignment of partner activity to promote holistic, wrap around support
- Co-ordinate approach to Employer Engagement to address current and emerging labour market opportunities to improve outcomes
- Align strategic approach with Workforce for the Future policy development

Performance Workstream

- Develop baselines and shared methodologies to identify added value through partner collaboration
- Present robust quarterly data to enable performance monitoring and build evidence base
- Utilise Highland employability data at both HEP and sub-Highland LEP levels to inform locally-based employability solutions
- Develop approach to evaluate wider economic impact of collaborative service delivery outcomes
- Implement LEP Maturity Assessment recommendations

Appendix 3 – Investment Plan 2025/26

Key Worker Service (37%) £1,300,000

- Delivery of a universal and specialist key worker service via hybrid model of public sector, contracted third and/or private sector operators
- Development of a suite of employability activities to support a client's journey towards employment
- Allowances to enable young people to undertake training for employment
- Training, development, service standards and quality assurance

Community Engagement (10%) £350,000

- Development and promotion of Work.Life.Highland brand as single gateway entry onto Highland Employability Service
- Client identification and engagement (all ages) through HEP partner collaborative working and third / private sector commissioned services
- Community engagement activity to establish new referral routes for unemployed people and working parents to access support from the Highland Employability Service
- Local third sector capacity building resource to address cost-effectiveness of service delivery provision across Highland geography

Highland Employability Partnership Investment Plan 2025/26



Management (5%) £175,000

Lead accountable body management of No One Left Behind, Tackling Child Poverty and UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Partnership Facilitation (4%) £140,000

Facilitation and co-ordination of the Highland Employability Partnership and the three area Local Employability Partnerships.

Training for Employment (15%) £520,000

- Commissioned services from public, third and/or private sector providers to help people of all ages progress along the employability pipeline and into work including:
 - Group work sessions/Courses
 - Vocational qualifications
 - Accredited training
 - Industry recognised certification
 - Sector Based Work Academies
 - Apprenticeship opportunities
 - Self-employment business start-up training
 - Access to training to upskill parents to support in-work career progression

Employment (29%) £1,000,000

- Employer engagement and job brokerage
- Volunteering opportunities
- Work experience placements for priority client groups within public and third sector organisations
- Self-employment business start-up support
- Employer Recruitment Incentives

Appendix 4 – Highland Data

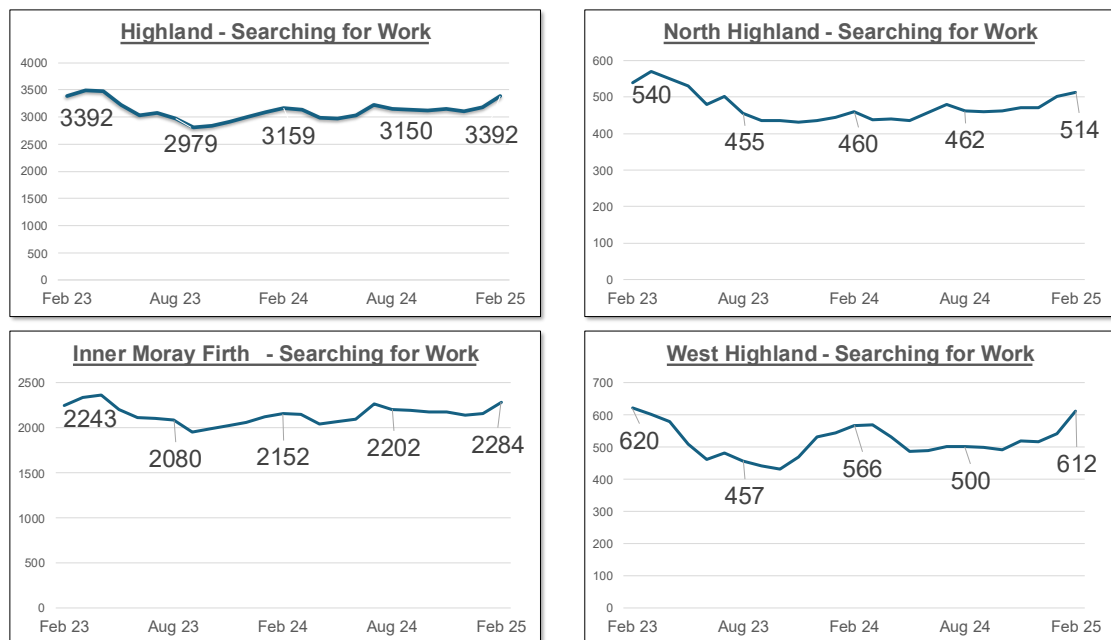
Unemployment

The latest ONS figures covering the period from January 2024 to December 2024 estimated that 2.2% of the population aged 16 to 64 in the area were Searching for Work. This percentage was lower than the Scottish rate of 3.2% and the Great Britain rate of 4.0%.

DWP figures for February 2025 show that approximately 3,400 people in Highland were searching for work. Approximately 67% of Highland people looking for work live in the Inner Moray Firth area, 15% are in North Highland and 18% are in West Highland.

The charts below illustrate the Searching for Work trends over the last 2-years for Highland plus North Highland, Inner Moray Firth and West Highland.

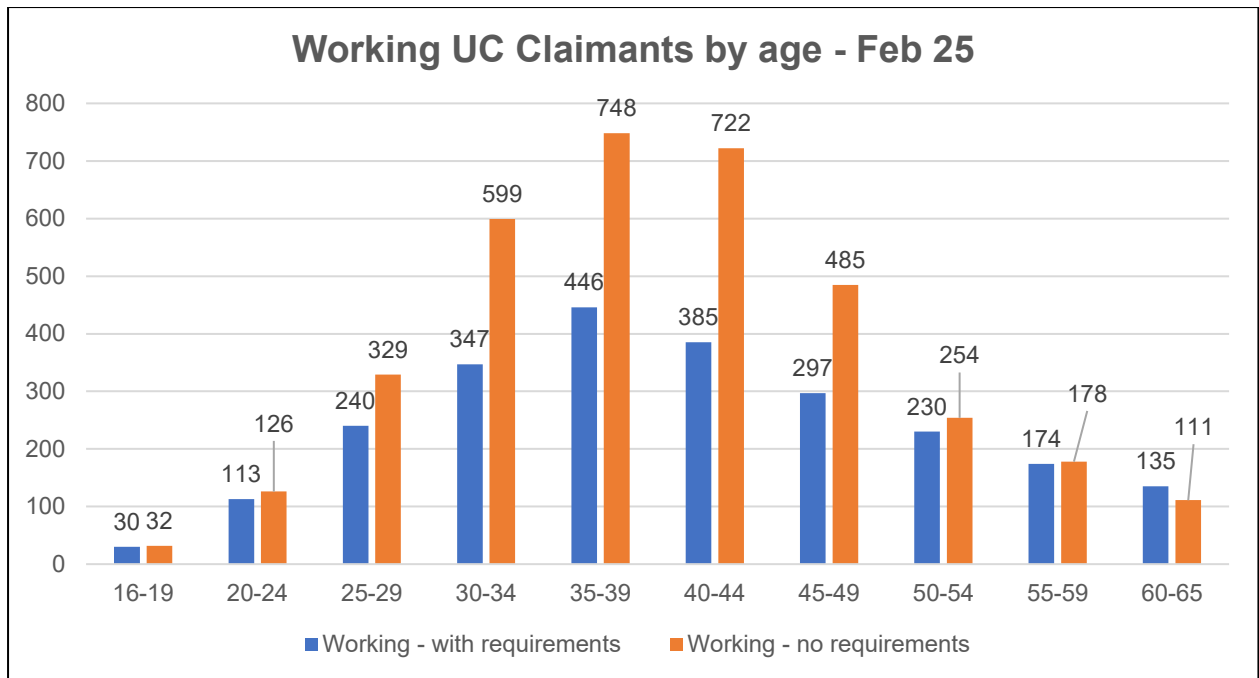
Source: Stat-Xplore



In-work support

The most recent data from February 2025 showed that 2,411 people working people in Highland were receiving Universal Credit to top-up their income plus a further 3,590 who are earning above the Universal Credit threshold, but who are at risk of falling below it if their circumstances were to change.

The table below shows these two categories, broken down by age. Worth noting is that just over 54% of the total number of people receiving in-work support or are a risk of falling below the income threshold are in the 30-44 age range.



Source: Stat-Xplore

Economically inactive

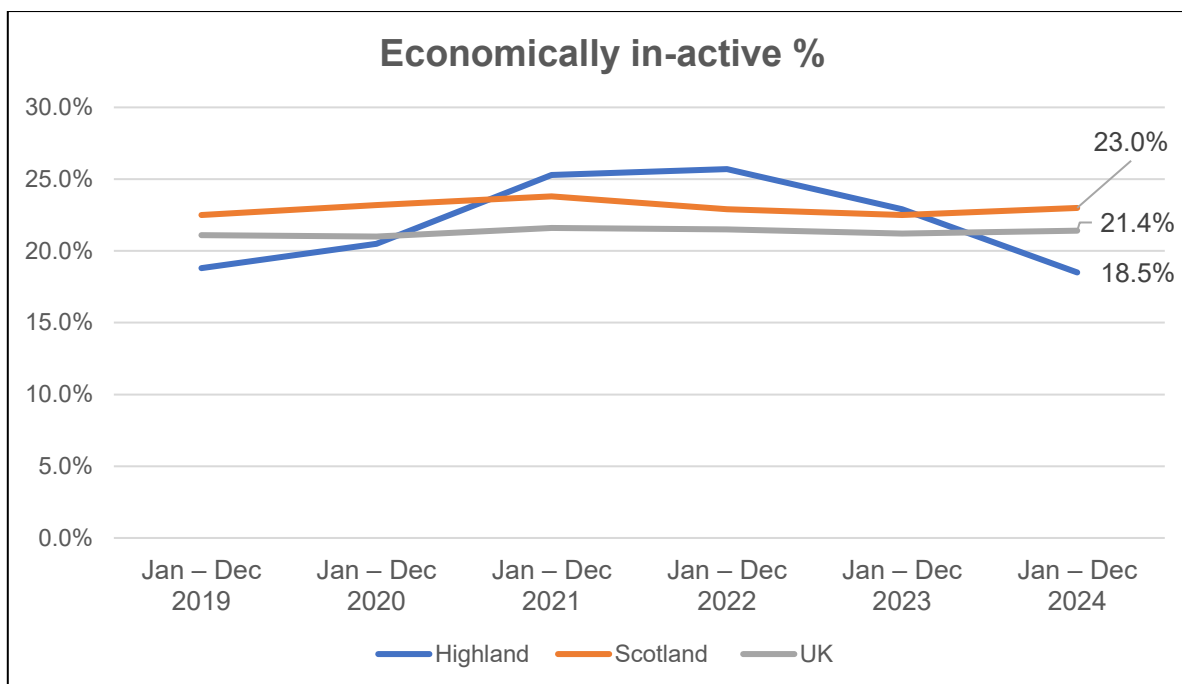
Economically inactivity is defined by the Office for National Statistics as “People not in employment who have not been seeking work within the last 4 weeks and / or are unable to start within the next 2 weeks.”

This includes the following categories:

- Students
- Looking after family / home
- Temporary sick
- Long-term sick
- Discouraged
- Retired
- Other

According to NOMIS statistics produced by the Office for National Statistics, the estimated number of economically inactive people aged 16-64 in Highland for the period January 2024 to December 2024 was 26,600.

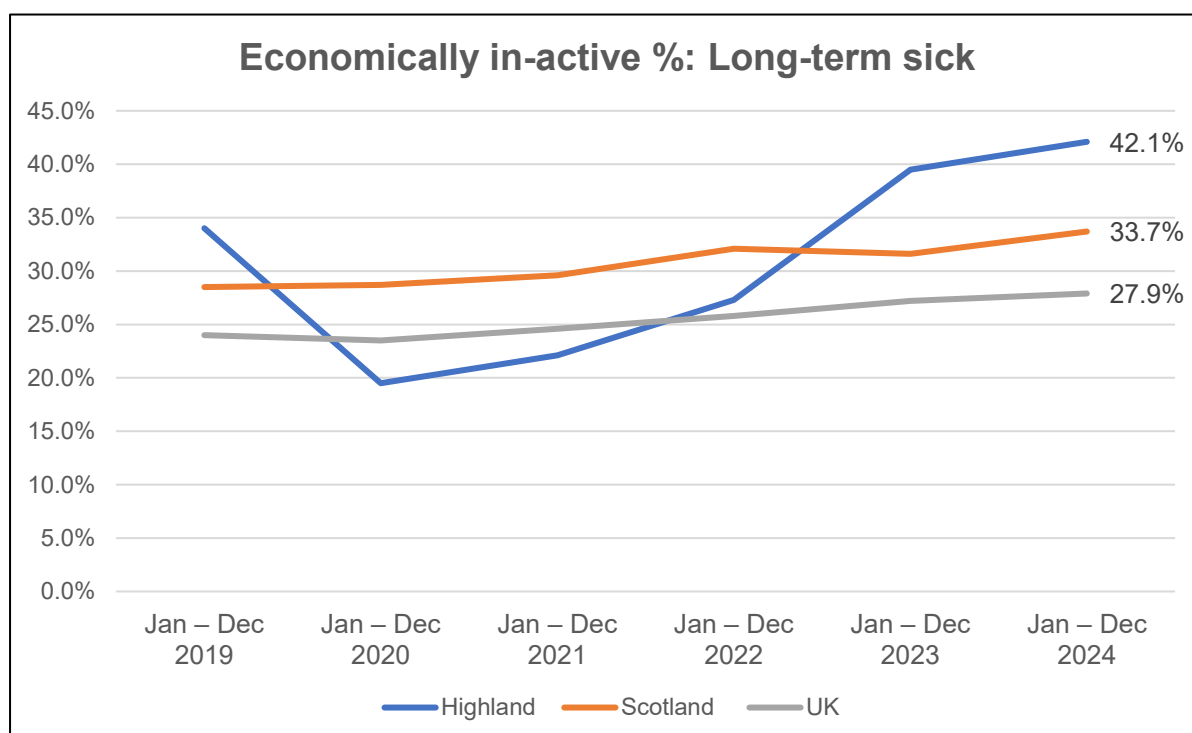
The table below shows the total estimated percentage of economically inactive people in Highland over time and compared to the Scotland and UK percentages.



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey via NOMIS

Notes: % is a proportion of all those aged 16-64

Long-Term Sickness is currently the single biggest category of economically inactive people in Highland and is proportionally higher than the Scotland and UK levels. The table below show a breakdown over time of the estimated numbers and percentages of people economically inactive and categorised as Long-Term Sick.

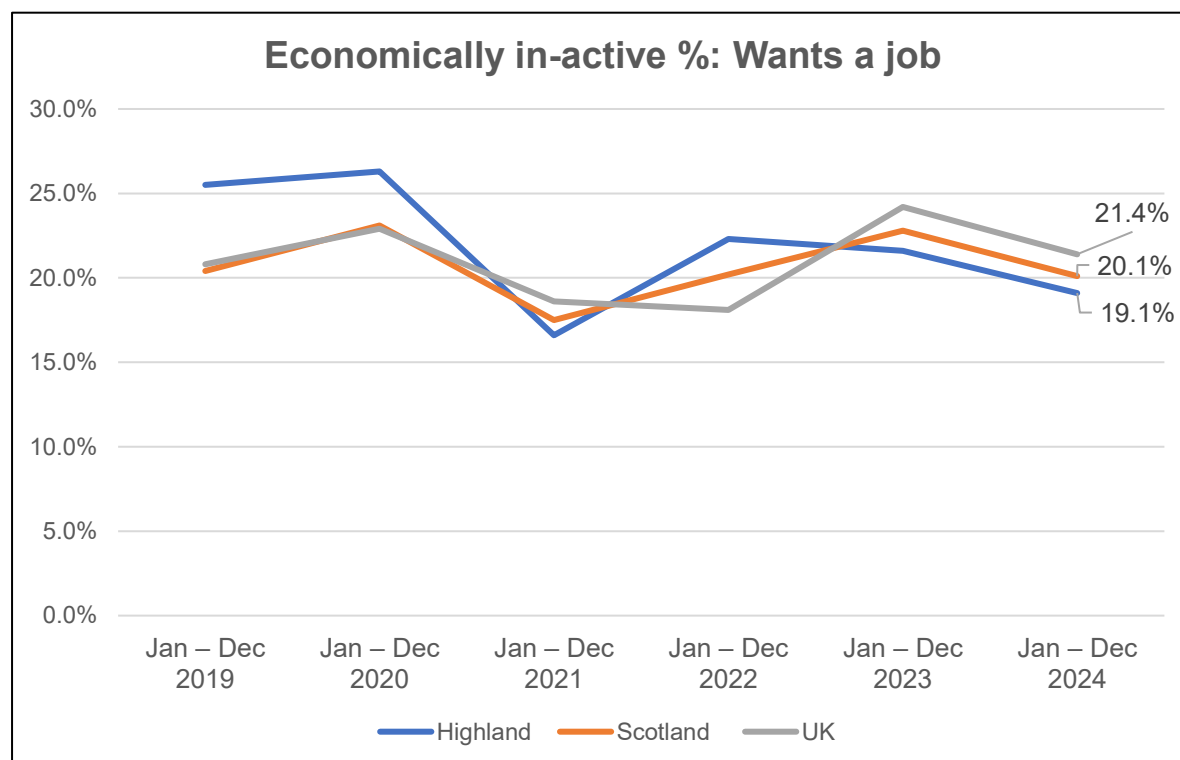


According to NOMIS the estimated number of economically inactive people aged 16-64 in Highland for the period January 2024 to December 2024 categorised as long-term sick was 11,200.

The table below shows the estimated number of economically inactive people in Highland who indicated that they want a job over the last five years.

It is important to note that the most recent estimates (Jan – Dec '23 and Jan – Dec '24) is derived from the total number of economically inactive people minus those who don't want a job.

The estimated number of economically inactive people in Highland who want a job is 6,900.



Annual Participation Measure

The Annual Participation Measure (APM) is the percentage of young adults (16–19-year-olds) participating in education, training, or employment.

The headline statistics for Highland from the most recent report ⁵(August 2024) are shown below, with the Scotland percentages for comparison.

	Highland	Scotland
Total cohort	10,003	
Participating	93.8% (count: 9,386)	92.7%
Not participating	2.9% (count: 292)	3.7%
Unconfirmed	3.2% (count: 325)	3.6%

⁵ [Annual Participation Measure - Skills Development Scotland](#)

Child Poverty

Data⁶ from 2023 showed that 19.3% of children under 16 in Highland lived in relative poverty (2022: 18.8%) equating to 7,355 young people (2022: 7,174). The comparable percentage for Scotland is 21.3% and for the UK 20.1%.

Relative poverty refers to people living in households with income below 60% of the median in that year. According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies the UK median household income as of financial year 2024 was £36,700⁷.

Employers

Source: HIE Business Panel Report, March 2025⁸

Notes: The survey was carried out in November and December 2024 amongst just over 1,000 businesses and social enterprises across the Highlands and Islands.

In terms of workforce, the following are the most relevant points highlighted in the executive summary:

- Just under half of employers (47%) had a skills gap (either a lack of staff or a lack of the right level of skills). For employers, temporary or seasonal roles were more of a challenge than permanent roles in terms of securing staff: a third of employers (34%) did not have enough staff to fill temporary or seasonal roles, while a quarter did not have enough staff to fill permanent roles.
- On skills, 29% of employers did not have the right level of skills for temporary or seasonal roles, compared with 24% for permanent roles.
- The top three barriers preventing businesses from getting skilled staff were: required skills being in short supply (65%), location of the business (49%) and lack of accommodation (42%).
- Most employers (80%) were taking some form of action in relation to their workforce. The top action was training (61%), followed by offering flexible working (44%), and making pay and rewards more competitive (42%).
- More than half of employers (55%) planned to increase prices in response to upcoming increases associated with staff costs, while 46% planned to absorb the additional cost, and 25% to pause or stop recruitment. Fewer were planning to reduce or stop pay increases or benefits (21%) or reduce the number of staff (16%). Just under two-fifths planned to reduce costs some other way (37%) and around three in ten felt it was too soon to say (31%).

⁶ [children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2023.ods](#)

⁷ [Average household income, UK Financial Year Ending 2024 \(2\).pdf](#)

⁸ [Business Panel | Highlands and Islands Enterprise | HIE](#)

Appendix 5 – Highland Policy Context

This section summarises the Highland strategic context within which the Highland Employability Partnership delivery plan operates. Links to relevant plans are included where available.

Highland Outcome Improvement Plan 2017-27

The 2017 – 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP) was the original strategic plan for the Highland CPP. Published in 2017, in response to the duties within the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Following a significant period of engagement the [2024–2027 HOIP](#) is now available, which includes the updated Vision: Maximise Opportunities and Tackle Inequality to Build a Thriving Highlands For All

To support delivery of the 2024 – 2027 HOIP, the CPP Board has agreed a [Delivery Plan](#).

Our Future Highland 2024-2027

Our Future Highland sets out the programme of Highland Council through to 2027. It makes commitments to secure social and economic transformation on behalf of Highland communities.

The operational [Delivery Plan](#) shows how Highland Council will deliver on these commitments and shows how it will work with others to implement commitments expressed in the Community Planning Partnership's Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP).

Inverness and Highland City-Region

The vision behind the [Inverness and Highland City-Region Deal](#) is to position Inverness and the Highlands as a region of digital opportunity. The deal formalised the commitment of £315 million worth of funding - £135m from the Scottish Government, supported by £127m from The Highland Council and its partners, and another £53m from the UK Government.

The Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership (HIREP)

The [Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership](#) (HIREP), formed in 2021, aims to promote inclusive growth through collaboration across sectors and member organisations.

Several HEP members – Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, FSB and University of the Highlands and Islands – are also members of HIREP.

The Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Strategy focuses on harnessing growth opportunities, fostering innovation, improving infrastructure, and advancing a just transition to net zero.

Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport

January 2023 saw the announcement of Green Freeport status for Inverness and Cromarty Firth. The vision for [Inverness & Cromarty Firth Green Freeport](#) is to be a global hub for green investment, with the purpose of delivering growth, jobs and thriving communities – now and for the future.

Child Poverty in Highland

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 places a duty on local authorities and regional health boards in Scotland to produce annual, joint Local Child Poverty Action Reports (LCPARs) describing ongoing and planned action to tackle child poverty at local level.

In line with this legislation Highland Council and NHS Highland have produced a [Highland Local Child Poverty Action plan](#), with updates available annually.

Highland Children's Service Plan

The [Highland Children's Service Plan](#) sits within a context of the Community Planning Partnership and the Integrated Children's Service Planning Board.

The plan articulates how partners work together to provide services which are organised, equipped to deliver high-quality, joined-up, trauma-informed, responsive and preventative support to children and families.

Highland Whole Family Wellbeing Programme

The [Whole Family Wellbeing Programme](#) sits within the structure of the Integrated Children's Service Planning Board and ultimately the Community Planning Partnership. Delivered by a team of Locality Co-ordinators, implementation of the programme aims to provide holistic whole family support, readily available across Highland to families that need it.

Whole Family Wellbeing aims to tackle inequalities and improve the wellbeing of all family members, reducing the likelihood of families reaching a point of crisis or breakdown.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#) (UKSPF) supports the UK government's wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK by delivering on each of the levelling up objectives:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency

Highland has been allocated £3,087,358 for [financial year 2025/26](#) made up of £878,243 in capital and £2,219,116 in revenue funding.

Community Wealth Building

Community Wealth Building provides an alternative approach to economic development and a practical response that aims to keep wealth within a local area. It is often described as a people centred approach to economic development and aims to ensure every area and community can participate in, and benefit from, economic activity.

[A Community Wealth Building Strategy](#) was agreed by Highland Council in September 2024.