

EMPLOYABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR SCOTLAND

Final Report

Workstream A: Workless client groups

MAY 2005

The contents of this report form the evidence for, and recommendations to, the Scottish Executive on what the Employability Framework should contain. Publication is not an undertaking that the Scottish Executive will implement its recommendations. The findings of this report will be addressed by the Framework document when it is published later in the year.

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1 Introduction

At the invitation of the Scottish Executive, policy makers and practitioners formed a series of short term working groups for the period January to March 2005 to examine various issues that would assist in the development of a Scottish employability framework. The remit of Workstream A was to develop a clear picture of workless client groups, the opportunities available to enable them to enter the labour market, and the barriers facing them and to make recommendations on the basis of this picture.

Workstream Members

The membership of Workstream A was broadly agreed by December 2004. Core group members included representatives from 8 Scottish Executive and Government departments and agencies involved in the delivery of employment and training services to jobless people. Members were also drawn from a range of external organisations representing groups of people who experience severe disadvantage in the labour market. A list of core and reference group members is at appendix A.

Our Approach

Employability has been understood by Workstream A as the ability to both gain and sustain an unsubsidised job. The working group has focused on those with the greatest risk of not achieving this transition, either because they face multiple barriers that put them furthest from the labour market or make it difficult for them to sustain such employment. It is recognised that addressing the needs of these groups is crucial for two reasons: to ensure equity for individuals in our society and to contribute to Scotland's future prosperity. In addition analysis by the Social Exclusion Unit in England and the Scottish Executive's own Development Department suggests that sustained improvement in employability for those living in deprived neighbourhoods can contribute to successful area regeneration.

Throughout our work, we have viewed employment overwhelmingly as a positive experience for both individuals and society. In particular, employment is an essential component of an individual's well being and self-worth. Improving an individual's employability, and eventually securing them sustained work, can have a variety of benefits for an individual's wider circumstances, and vice versa. As Durie¹ notes:

"For most people, work forms a central part of their lives. We work for money, but also for other less tangible benefits. Through work we develop friendships, a sense of purpose and a feeling of usefulness. Work contributes to mental health and well-being, as well as sometimes undermining it, but there is a wide acceptance that work helps define us, binds us to others and that its positive effects outweigh the negative impact that unemployment has on confidence and self-esteem".

Underpinning much of the discussion has been the view that explanatory models and mapping of groups are both important issues when developing policy. The idea that developing employability and overcoming social exclusion are processes of transition and change that need to be incorporated into

¹ Durie, S. (2003). *Mental Health and Employment policy for Scotland*. Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health, Edinburgh.

longer term policy initiatives has featured strongly in our discussions. Without sustained support we felt that those most disadvantaged before they even enter the labour market are unlikely to stay in work and progress to better jobs.

Organisation of work

In taking its work forward the Workstream identified a number of issues on which it wanted to gather evidence and form views. In essence this meant examining:

- The number and social distribution of people that are workless and who could benefit from employability measures.
- What is known about the barriers to sustainable employment and whether these varied between different disadvantaged groups – in essence what keeps people out of jobs and helps them into jobs.
- What is known about effective ways of re-engaging these groups in the labour market and what does this tell us about the direction future policy should take.

We engaged the help of Analytical Services within the Scottish Executive to examine the size and distribution of the workless population. They carried out an analysis of census and labour force data. A summary of their findings is at Appendix B.

We carried out a short review of existing research and literature into barriers to employment and routes into work. This was supplemented by a review of literature provided by 'Core' and 'Reference' group members.

We took the opportunity to consult a number of organisations that could offer an insight into the issues we were considering. Core group members used a semi-structured questionnaire to consult 'reference group' members about the issues. We carried out an e-mail consultation exercise in which we invited organisations and key individuals engaged in academic research or consultancy to comment on the issues we were considering through the same questionnaire. A summary of findings is at Appendix C.

A more in depth consultation was carried out at a meeting of 'Core' and 'Reference' group members on February 19th. This took the form of a workshop where we explored members views on current and preferred directions of intervention to reduce barriers to work for a range of specific groups.

A small consultation was also undertaken with 'service users'/workless people by the Poverty Alliance on our behalf. A summary of the discussion at the focus group is attached at Appendix D.

Throughout our consultations we have gained a great deal of information and insight into the wide range of factors that impact on the employment prospects of people from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds. We got a clear message that:

- Barriers are structural, attitudinal and personal;
- Barriers do vary for different groups but there is a wide range of common barriers to employment for many of the groups we examined;
- Employability is not a 'once and for all' issue for those not in employment. Routes into work are varied;

- This suggests there is much learning that can be done across sectors and organisations;
- There is evidence of much good practice that can be drawn on when developing employability services;
- There is a shared agenda and enthusiasm for change amongst organisations working in the field; and
- There is a sense that closer integration of interventions at national to local level, between statutory and non statutory agencies would improve the chances of success and reduce the risks of exclusion at all points along the transition to sustainable employment.

Our report distils the learning process that we have gone through and makes recommendations concerning the groups within the workless population that should be the focus of an employability framework and the principles of intervention that should be adopted by both policy makers and those working with clients on the ground.

2 The size and characteristics of the workless population?

This section seeks to summarise what is known about the workless population. It draws upon a range of statistical and other sources (e.g. administrative data and secondary sources such as research reports) to build up a detailed picture of the workless group. It seeks to answer questions such as: How many of them want to work? What is their gender, age and ethnic make-up? What qualifications do they have? And how many of them are members of particular 'client' groups that may face particular problems in moving towards and into employment? Importantly, we also consider geographical patterns of worklessness to identify concentrations.

It should be noted however, that drawing a complete picture of the workless client group and its component parts is extremely difficult due to data limitations. The Labour Force Survey (the primary source of data on the working age population) and the 2001 census only provide information on certain 'client' groups. Data on some groups has had to be drawn from administrative data and secondary sources and there are some problems with consistency and reliability. In some instances there are also discrepancies between different sources that make it difficult to identify the most accurate figure. Where relevant our commentary identifies the source of the data quoted and highlights any problems that are evident.

Nevertheless, the data available does enable us to undertake a good deal of analysis of the workless population and its component parts and to highlight key groups and some of their characteristics.

Defining the Overall Workless Group

Our primary source of data on the workless group is the Labour Force Survey (LFS)². This enables us to get a measure of the five different types of economic activity measured by the LFS:

- I. In employment
- II. Unemployed
- III. Economically inactive – Seeking employment but currently unavailable
- IV. Economically inactive – Not seeking employment but would like to work
- V. Economically inactive – Not seeking employment and would not like to work

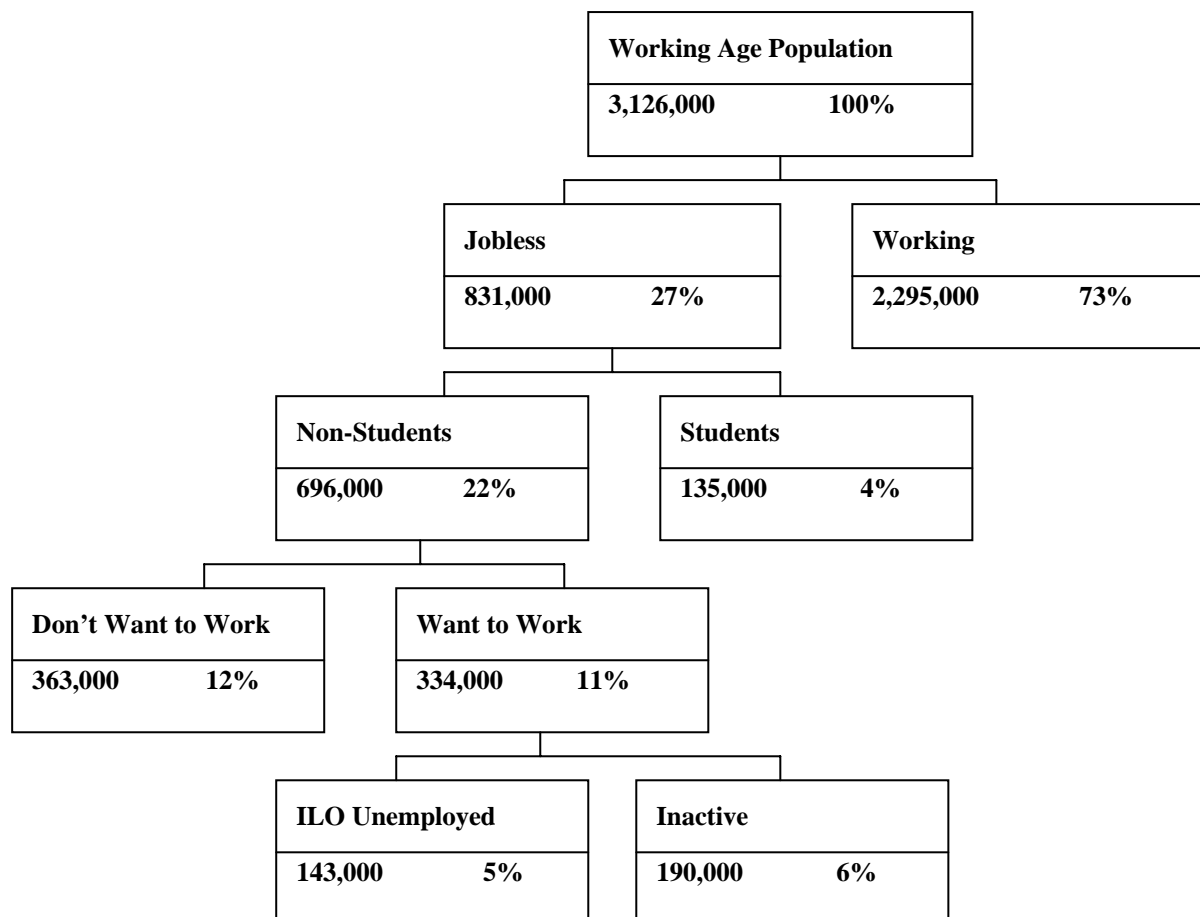
The workless group thus comprises categories ii) to v). Furthermore it is possible to break down the workless population into two broad groups:

- I. Inactive – don't want to work
- II. Workless – want to work

² Where possible students have been removed from the analysis of LFS data.

Using the LFS data we can therefore say that in 2003 **77%³ (2,295,000)** of the working age population⁴ were in employment, the workless want to work group made up around 11% of the working age population (**334,000** – in turn made up of **143,000** unemployed (**42.9%** of the workless want to work), **12,000** unavailable (**3.6%**) and **179,000** inactive (**53.5%**) but wanting to work), while just over **12% (363,000)** were inactive and did not want to work.

Figure 1: The Working-Age Population

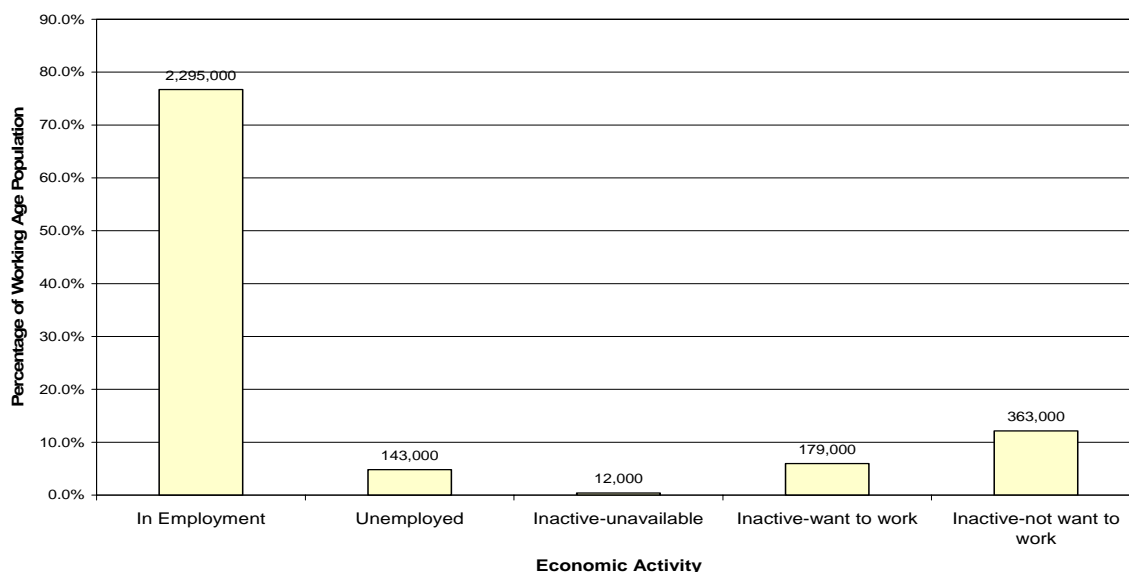


It should be noted, however, that the latest data shows that less people, approximately **641,000** working age people in Scotland were workless (Autumn 2004). This estimate is based on the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (LFS) data. In November 2004 the Annual Scottish Labour Force Survey 2003 (ASLFS) was published. This was the first Labour Force Survey to include a Scottish enhancement to the sample size. This allows much more detailed and accurate analysis than can be produced by the quarterly estimates. The data in this report is predominantly taken from the ASLFS to allow more detailed analysis. This will mean that the total figures used in the more detailed analysis below will not tie in with the latest available data. However the messages from the analysis of the data will still be relevant to the current situation.

³ Rate as a proportion of working age population, excluding students

⁴ The working age population is defined as males 16-64 and females aged 16-59

Chart 2.1 Economic Activity of Working Age Population, 2003



Source: Annual Scottish Labour Force Survey 2003

More recently the Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimated that in 2004 around **150,000** people were unemployed in Scotland and that a further **210,000** were economically inactive but wished to work. Over the last decade the number of people unemployed has reduced by over a third, while the number who are economically inactive but who want to work has remained unchanged.

Social and spatial factors

Gender

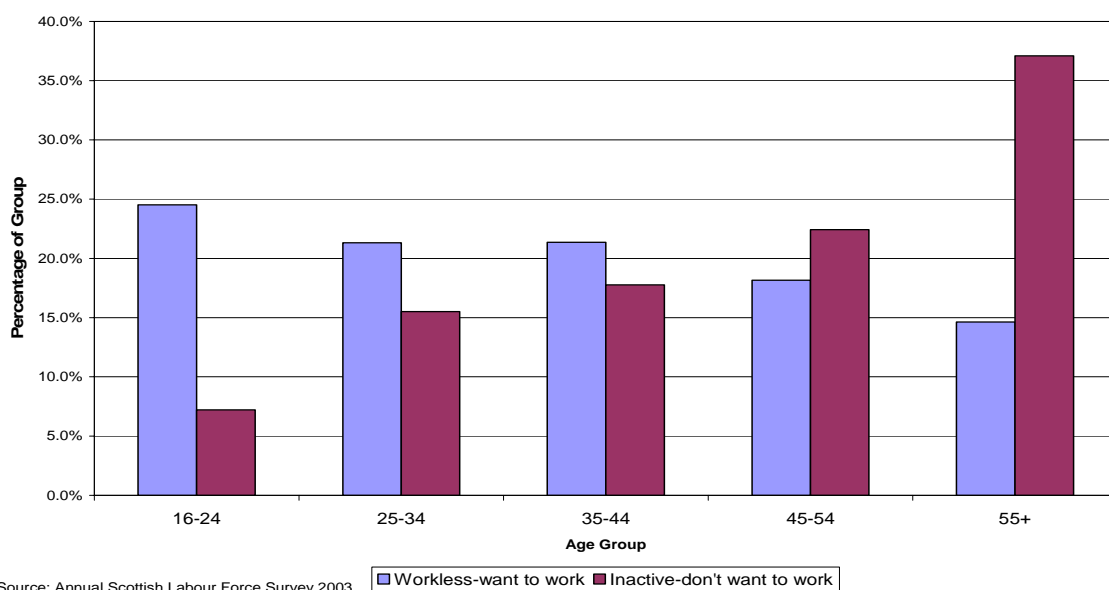
Worklessness is greater among females (**383,000, 26.2%** of the female working age population) than males (**314,000, 20.5%**). Women therefore comprise **55%** of the total Scottish workless population. The make-up of the workless group is also different for females and males. Almost **60% (220,000)** of the workless female population do not want to work. For males this drops to just over **45% (143,000)**.

There is a different mix of unemployment and inactivity between the genders with a smaller proportion of females who want to work (**30%, 53,000**) being unemployed (rather than inactive), when compared to males (**55%, 91,000**).

Age

Worklessness broadly **increases** with age. Excluding students, **108,000** of the 16-24 age population are workless, representing **15.5%** of the total workless population. This compares to **136,000** of the 35-44 age population (**19.4%** of the total) and **183,000** of the 55+ age group (**26.44%** of the total).

Chart 2.2 The Workless Client Group by Age Band



Willingness to work decreases with age. Almost **74%** (135,000) of the workless population who are aged over 55 report that they do not wish to work. This compares to only **24%** (26,000) of the workless 16-24 age group and **47%** (64,000) of the workless 35-44 age group.

These statistics echo recent research⁵ that found that older people in the UK were more likely to be long term unemployed and economically inactive. It also found that unemployment among older people is twice as high in Scotland as in England. Unemployment rates are particularly high in western and rural parts of Scotland, as well as parts of the Highlands and Islands. A large number of older workers face the combination of age discrimination, low skills, health problems and caring responsibilities. Forthcoming age discrimination legislation mean that this is a group that needs consideration in an Employability Framework.

Ethnicity

A limited analysis of the LFS by ethnicity is possible. However, because only 1.9% of the Scottish LFS sample is from a minority ethnic background analysis is only possible for Whites, Asian/Asian British, and All Other Minority Ethnic Groups. The figures show that a **higher proportion** of the Asian/Asian British group (around **35%**) are workless compared to Whites (**23%**). Minority ethnic groups represent **2.9% (10,000)** of the workless want to work group.

Expressed willingness to work is also **lower** among the Asian/Asian British group with around **18%** classed as inactive and not willing to work (compared to **12%** of Whites).

This limited analysis has recently been supplemented by an analysis of the 2001 census⁶. This shows that the employment rates of Asians compare unfavourably to those of Whites (around 70%). The rate for Bangladeshi's is **49%**, for Pakistanis **47%** and for Other South Asian/Other Ethnic Group **46%**. As

⁵ Scottish Economic Policy Network, Napier University (2003). *Older Workers in the Scottish Labour Market: A New Agenda*.

⁶ There is an ongoing review of ethnic identity/classifications used in ethnic monitoring and the census and a report is expected in June. Figures used here are based on the 2001 census classification.

a consequence rates of unemployment are also worse than those for Whites (around **7%**). Those for Africans and Black Scottish are **15%** and that for Other South Asian Groups is **14%**. When comparing like for like the risk of unemployment among ethnic minority males is therefore considerably higher for Indians (1.5), for Blacks (2.6) and for Bangladeshis/Pakistanis (2.7) than for Whites (1.0)⁷.

There are also differences in employment patterns when one considers ethnicity and gender. For example, less than 10% of Whites had never worked and there was little difference between sexes. There was also little difference between men and women of Caribbean, Black Scottish, Other Black and Mixed Ethnic Groups. However, a much higher percentage of Pakistani (**46%**) and Bangladeshi (**40%**) women had never worked, reflecting religious and cultural factors as well as factors such as discrimination which are external to the groups themselves.

In addition, patterns of occupation also vary considerably by ethnicity, with high rates of self-employment among Asian and Chinese groups and very high proportions of Pakistanis and Indians working in managerial or senior office roles. This lends weight to the Cabinet Office (2003)⁸ conclusions that it is no longer relevant to say that all minority ethnic groups have a distinct disadvantage in comparison to all white groups in every area of the labour market. It is a much more complex picture. Nevertheless, many still do suffer an 'ethnic penalty' in the UK/Scottish labour market and much more needs to be done to understand the differences and to encourage access to, and support in, the labour market for minority ethnic groups.

Family Circumstances

The number of dependent children people have has a large effect on whether they are able to, and wish to, take up employment. This is particularly so for lone parents.

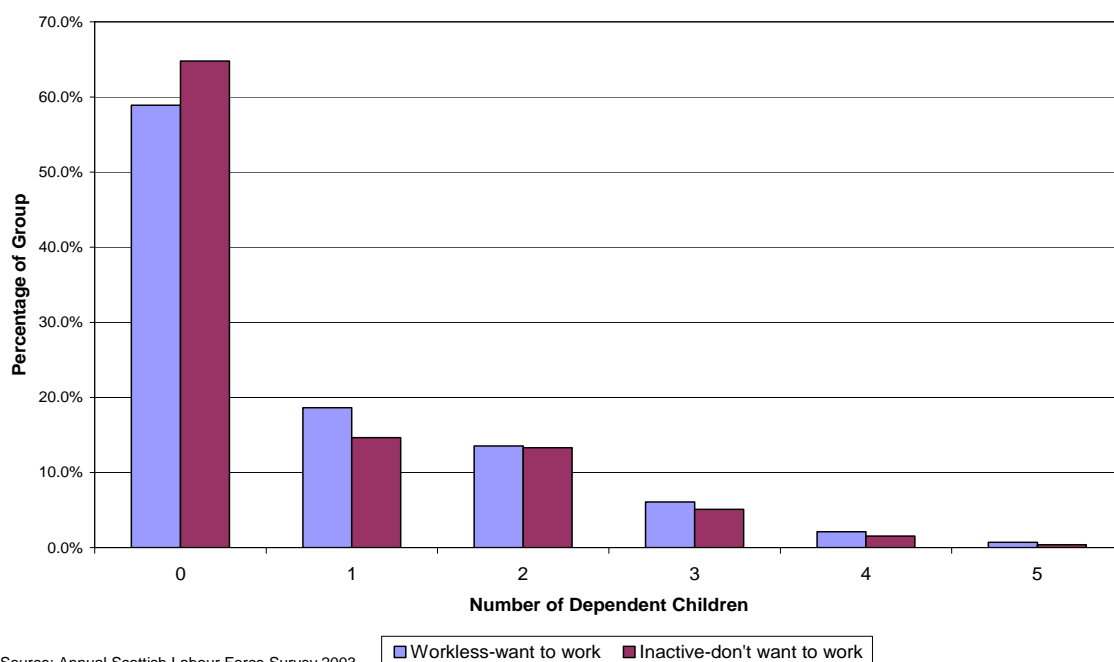
Chart 2.3 shows the workless client group by the number of dependent children The chart shows that almost **38% (264,000)** have one or more dependent children. Interestingly, the expressed willingness to work among those with children is greater than for those with no children, echoing the findings of John et al (2001)⁹ who concluded that lone parents were motivated to return to work to improve the health, well-being and quality of life of both themselves and their children. Only about **46% (197,000)** of those with no children report that they want to work. This contrasts to over **51% (136,000)** of those with one or more children expressing a desire to work.

⁷ Strategy Unit (2001). *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market*.

⁸ Cabinet Office (2003). *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market Final Report*.

⁹ John, K., Payne, S., and Land, H. (2001). *Training and Support for Lone Parents: An Evaluation of a Targeted Study Programme*.

Chart 2.3 Workless Client Group by number of dependent children



Source: Annual Scottish Labour Force Survey 2003

Lone parents face particular difficulties in obtaining employment and data from the LFS indicates that the employment rate among lone parents in 2003 was only **56%**. Data from the LFS estimates that around **12% (83,000)** of the workless population are lone parents. Around half of these (**40,000**) express a desire to work (representing **17%** of all those who want to work). It should be noted however, that research on the New Deal found that a much higher proportion (**77%**)¹⁰ indicated they would like to work at some point. Figures from August 2003 also found slightly higher numbers of lone parents, with just over **93,000** individuals claiming income support (IS) as a lone parent. **22% (16,600)** of those claiming IS as their sole benefit lived in Glasgow.

Qualifications

Qualifications have a very serious impact on the ability of an individual to obtain work and employment rates decline steadily as the level of highest qualification declines. Rates of worklessness peak in the 'no qualifications' group at **48.7% (247,000)**. Those with no qualifications therefore represent just over **35%** of the workless population.

There is no general trend in the pattern of willingness to work by level of qualification. For levels of qualifications of SVQ level 3 and above around half of all workless people express a desire to work. However, willingness to work rises considerably among the workless population with SVQ level 1 (**62%, 21,000**) or level 2 (**60%, 68,000**). On the contrary, willingness to work among the workless population with no qualifications is extremely low at around **38% (95,000)**.

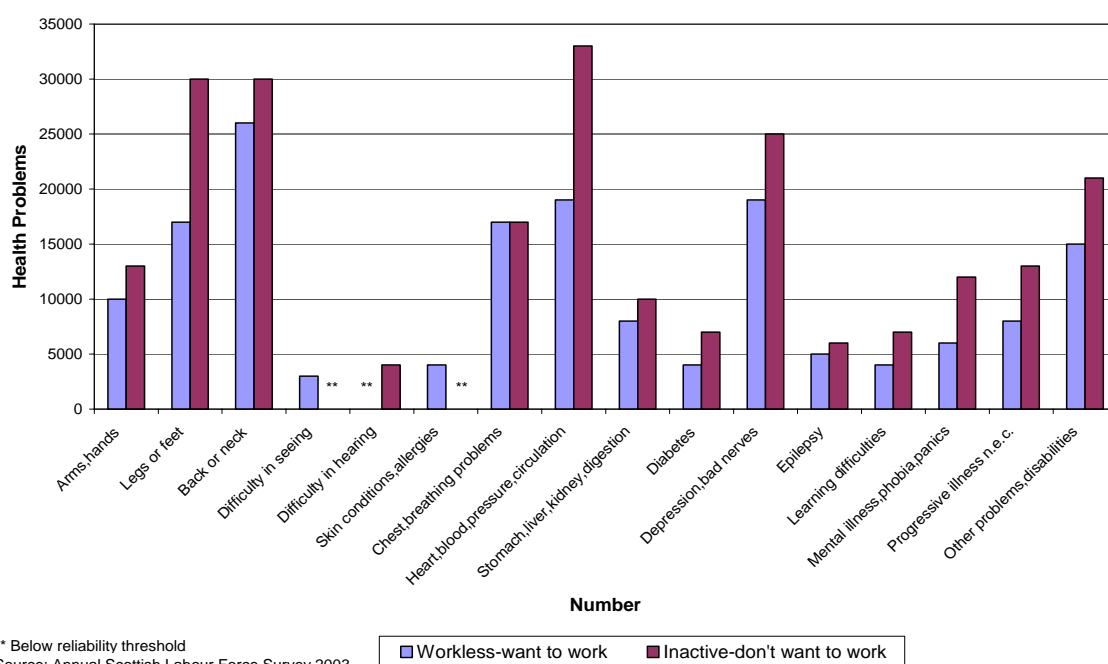
¹⁰ National Employment Panel's Steering Group on Lone Parents (2003). *Work Works: the Final Report of the NEP's Steering Group on Lone Parents*.

Limiting Long Term Illness and/or Disability

Illness and/or a disability also have a very serious impact on ability and willingness to work and those on incapacity benefit represent a significant proportion of the overall workless group. A recent study¹¹ found that only **30.9%** of those with a disability/Limiting Long Term Illness (LLTI) are economically active, compared to **83.2%** of those who do not have a LLTI. **Over half** of the workless client group (**398,000**) declare a health problem or a disability in the LFS. About **42%** (**166,000**) want to work, while **58%** (**232,000**) do not.

Chart 2.4 shows a breakdown of those declaring a health problem by type of problem. From this it can be seen that **26,000** people with back or neck problems, **27,000** with problems in their arms, hands, legs or feet, and a further **19,000** with depression or bad nerves express a willingness to work. Theoretically, this group may only need a small amount of help to be able to take on some form of employment. On the other hand those with heart, blood pressure or circulation problems represent **13%** (**52,000**) of those declaring a health problem or disability, but only **37%** (**19,000**) of them want to work.

Chart 2.4 Workless Client Group with self-declared health problem/disability by type of health problem/disability



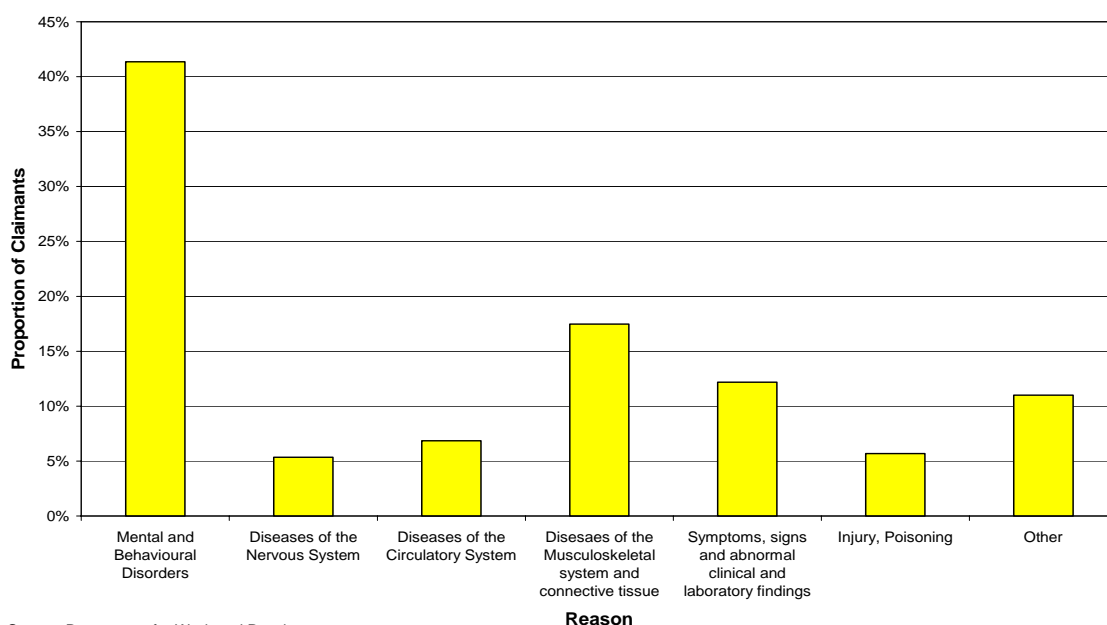
Mental Health

However, it is also interesting to note some discrepancies between the self-reporting of illness/disability in the LFS and the official reasons for claiming Incapacity Benefit (IB). About **290,000** people claimed IB in Scotland in May 2004 and chart 2.5 shows the declared reasons for claiming. It shows that over **40%** (**119,100**) are claiming due to mental and behavioural disorders. This compares to only **73,000 (18.5%)** declaring a mental illness or learning disability in the LFS. This mismatch may be caused by people not wishing to be stigmatised with certain health problems when being surveyed

¹¹ Scottish Executive (2005). *Disability and Employment in Scotland: A Review of the Evidence Base*.

and/or people originally being on IB for other reasons but then encountering mental health problems such as depression. Whatever the reason, those with mental health problems represent one of the most significant components of the workless population. In addition, mental health problems can be both a cause and a consequence of worklessness. As we shall demonstrate, mental health problems are often not the only barrier faced by workless clients, but rather can be a problem faced by many of the sub-groups within the workless population (for example, those with a physical health problem, experiencing homelessness or substance abusing).

Chart 2.5 Reasons for Claiming Incapacity benefit



Recent research by the Scottish Executive¹² found that those with learning disabilities and those with mental health problems have the lowest employment rates of people with disabilities, being **24% and 21%** respectively. People with mental health problems are almost three times as likely to be unemployed than all other disabled people¹³. In 2001 it was estimated that in Scotland around **72%** of people with mental health problems were not employed (compared to **30-40%** of disabled people in general)¹⁴.

Period Out of Work and Last Employment

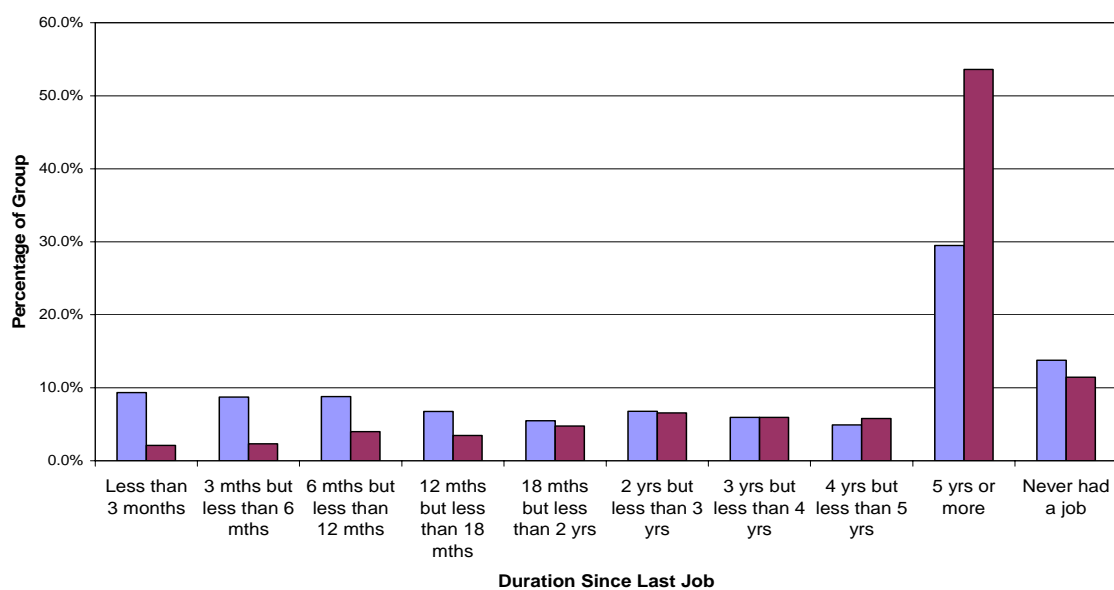
The amount of time since a workless person was employed (or whether they were ever employed) has a serious impact on willingness to work. Chart 2.6 below shows data from the LFS illustrating that the vast majority of the workless population have been out of work for over 3 years or have never worked. **Over half (180,000)** of those who want to work have been out of work for over 3 years or have never worked. The figure rises to over **three quarters (277,000)** of those who do not wish to work. About **two thirds (457,000)** of the workless population have therefore been out of work for over 3 years or have never worked.

¹² Scottish Executive (2005). *Disability and Employment in Scotland: A Review of the Evidence Base*.

¹³ Smith, A. & Twomey, B. (2002). *Labour Market Experiences of People with Disabilities*. Labour Market Trends, August 2002: 415-427.

¹⁴ Disability Rights Commission (2001). *Disability in Scotland*.

Chart 2.6 Workless Client Groups by duration since last job



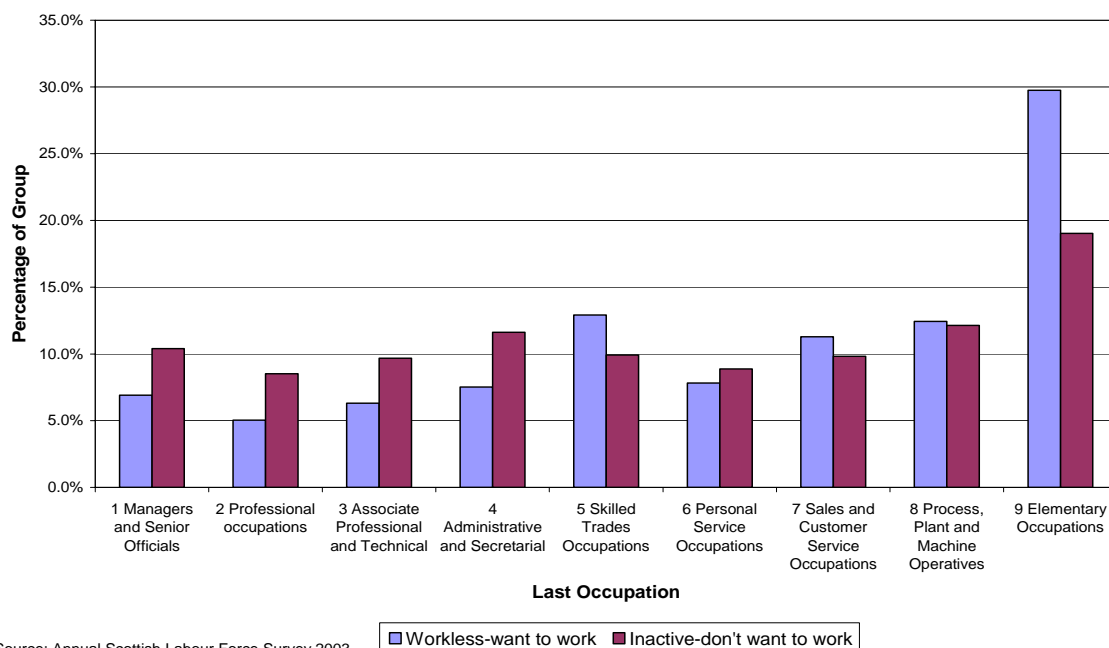
Source: Annual Scottish Labour Force Survey 2003

There is an inverse relationship between willingness to work and length of time out of employment. Figures from the LFS show that while around **66%** of those who have been out of work for less than a year want to work, that percentage declines steadily until only **33%** of those who have been out of work for more than 5 years express a willingness to work. Only those who have never worked buck the trend, with around **53% (46,000)** saying that they would like to work. This, and the data on LLTI and IB echo research by the DWP (2002)¹⁵ which found that almost 50% of IB claimants had been receiving benefit for over 5 years, compared with only **5%** of those who were unemployed (i.e. on Job Seekers Allowance) and **35%** of lone parents. Furthermore, the average length of claiming for those who have been on IB for more than 12 months was 8 years.

Chart 2.7 shows the last occupation of those in the workless client group who have previously worked. Nearly **30% (67,000)** of the workless-want to work group were previously employed in elementary occupations (such as labourers, packers and cleaners). A further **12% (29,000)** were employed in skilled trade occupations and **12% (28,000)** as process plant and machine operatives. These latter two are perhaps most likely to need re-training to work outwith their previous occupation as they are likely to mainly have skills which are relevant to their trade alone.

¹⁵ Department for Work and Pensions (2002). *Pathways to work: Helping People into Employment*.

Chart 2.7 Workless Client Groups by last occupation as percentage of total want to work or don't want to work group



Geographic Concentrations of Worklessness

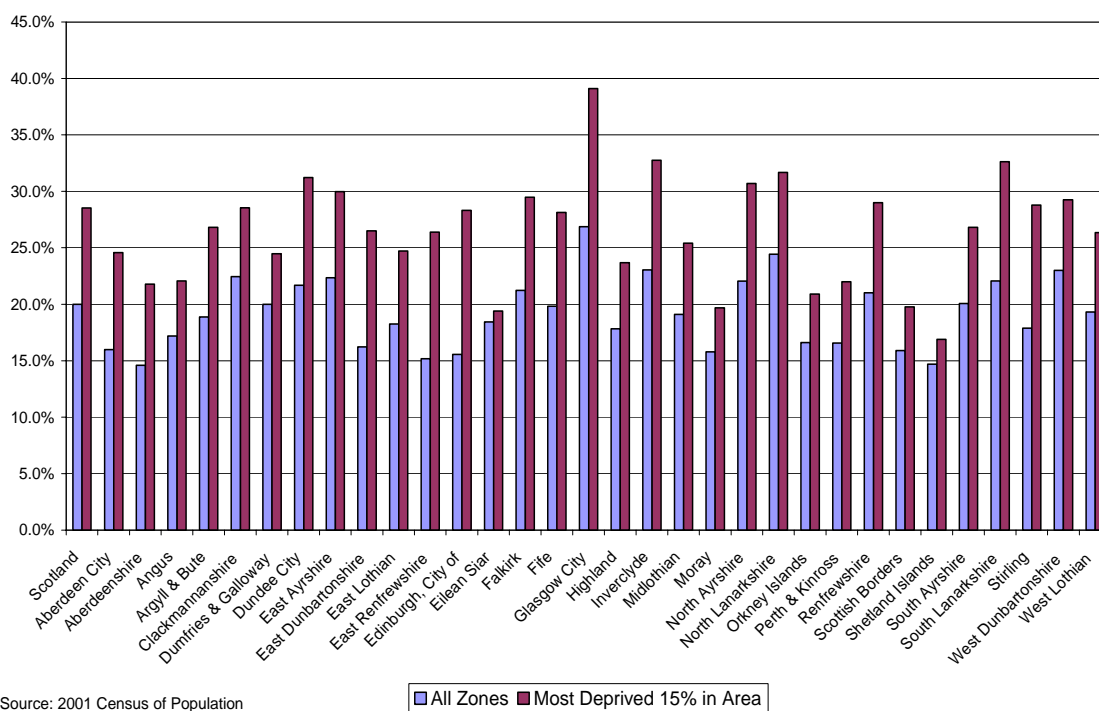
The workless group are concentrated in certain areas. For example, excluding students, **41% (286,000)** of the workless group is found in the 7 local authorities targeted by CtOG Target A, and Glasgow alone accounts for **15.7% (109,000)**.

In addition, the workless are concentrated in the most disadvantaged parts of Scotland. For example, data from the 2001 census allows us to examine worklessness rates among the 16-74 population by area. Rates of worklessness are around 35% across Scotland as a whole, but around **47%** in the 15% most deprived areas in each local authority¹⁶. Some LAs have even greater concentrations. In Glasgow for example, around **43%** of the working age population are workless, but this rate rises to **64%** in the most deprived parts of the city.

Certain components of the workless group are also concentrated geographically. For example, chart 2.8 shows that the majority of local authority areas have **less than 20%** of their population reporting a limiting long-term illness (LLTI). However, the proportion in Glasgow is nearly **27%** which reflects the high number of incapacity benefit claimants in the city. High rates are also found in Dundee, North Lanarkshire, Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire – all CtOG Target A areas. North & East Ayrshire also have high proportions.

¹⁶ As defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004.

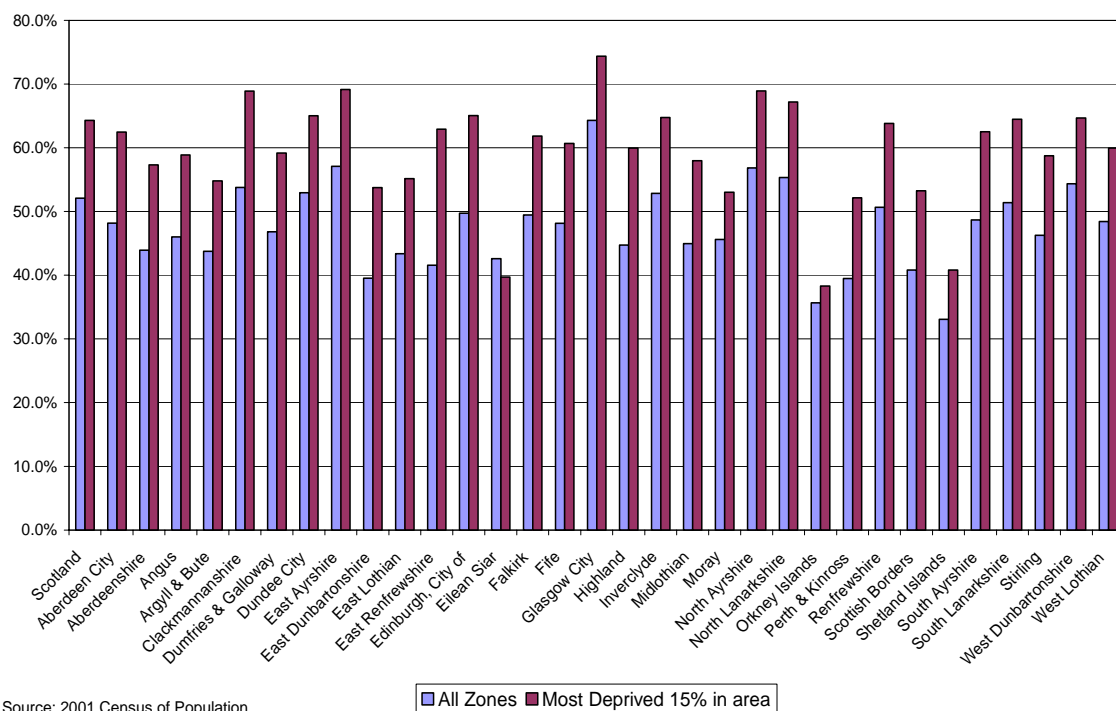
Chart 2.8 Proportion of 16-74 Population with an LLTI



The chart also shows that the proportion of the population reporting a LLTI in the 15% most deprived areas in each LA is generally considerably higher than for the population as a whole. Particularly high concentrations can be found in the most deprived parts of Glasgow, Inverclyde, Dundee, East & North Ayrshire, and North & South Lanarkshire. However, there is generally very little difference between the worklessness rates for those with a LLTI resident in the most deprived areas and the local authority as a whole. This suggests that having a LLTI in itself is a significant barrier to work and that there is no compounding 'area' effect for this part of the workless population.

On the contrary, lone parents are also concentrated in areas of deprivation (**33%** live in the most deprived 15% of areas), but rates of worklessness are much higher among the lone parent population in areas of deprivation than in the area as a whole (figure 2.9). This suggests that although being a lone parent is a barrier to employment in itself, problems are compounded for those living in deprived areas. Glasgow City has the highest proportion of lone parents in its population (**over 30%**). Dundee, Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire also have concentrations of **over 20%** and **44.6%** of the lone parent population reside in the 7 CtOG target A local authorities.

Chart 2.9 Worklessness Rates Amongst Lone Parents by LA area



The position is less clear for those with **low or no qualifications**. Those with low qualifications are not concentrated in the 15% most deprived areas in each LA, whereas those with no qualifications are. Rates of worklessness show a marked increase in the most deprived areas for those with low qualifications, but little increase for those with no qualifications. This suggests that living in a deprived area is a compounding barrier to employment if you have low qualifications but that having no qualifications is such a barrier in itself that there is little or no compounding area effect.

Other Sub-groups Within the Workless Population

It has not been possible to source information on certain client groups within the overall workless population from our primary data sources. For these groups we must therefore turn to administrative data and secondary sources.

Substance Abuse

Those with drug and alcohol addictions represent a small but growing group of IB claimants, especially among the under 35s (McCormick (2000)¹⁷). Estimates from the University of Glasgow show that prevalence rates of drug misuse vary considerably across Scotland, Glasgow having the highest rate at **3.3%**, with Dundee (**2.8%**) and Inverclyde (**2.6%**) close behind. Applying the overall prevalence rate to the Scottish population estimates that there are approximately **58,000** working age individuals with drug problems. Economic activity rates among drug treatment clients are very low.

¹⁷ McCormick, J. (2000). *On the Sick: Incapacity and Inclusion*. Scottish Council Foundation.

Table 2.1 shows that the employment rate of clients in contact with drug treatment services has actually decreased since 1999/00 to **10.1%** in 2003/04.

Table 2.1 Economic Activity of Patients/Clients in Contact with Drug Treatment Services in Scotland

Status	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Never Employed	14.6%	13.0%	13.6%	14.3%	14.6%
Unemployed (1 year or longer)	52.0%	52.7%	54.2%	57.8%	58.1%
Unemployed (less than a year)	17.5%	17.8%	15.9%	13.5%	12.0%
Employed ¹	12.4%	12.8%	11.2%	9.7%	10.1%
Student	1.9%	1.9%	3.0%	2.9%	3.8%
Other ²	1.6%	1.8%	2.1%	1.8%	1.5%

1 Employment includes training

2 Other includes: housewife/husband, retired and invalidity/sick.

Re/Ex-Offenders

It is difficult to obtain an accurate view of the number of ex-offenders among the workless population in Scotland, but research suggests that around 80% of prisoners claim benefits on release¹⁸. Over recent years the number of prisoners in Scotland's jails has been increasing and the average daily prison population in 2003/04 stood at **6,618**. At the same time research by the SEU¹⁹ shows that securing employment after release can reduce the risk of re-offending by between a third and a half. However, ex-offenders face considerable barriers to employment, including both their own personal characteristics and skill sets and the preconceptions and prejudices of employers. For example, only half of all prisoners are estimated to have the reading skills, one fifth the writing skills and less than one third the numeracy skills necessary for 96% of all jobs²⁰. The figures for ex-offenders on New Deal also show that they have lower qualifications than other participants. Offenders also commonly face problems of debt on release.

People Affected by Homelessness

It is not possible to obtain an accurate impression of rates of worklessness among people affected by homelessness, although a range of studies indicate that employment rates are low. The best guide to the number of people affected by homelessness in Scotland is the number of applications to Scottish Local Authorities for assistance under the Homeless Persons legislation. For the period July-Sept 2004, the total number of applications for Scotland was **13,977**. **2,764 (19.8%)** of these were in Glasgow, while Edinburgh, Fife and North & South Lanarkshire also had high numbers. Over **39%** of applications were made in the 7 CtOG Target A authorities.

The profile of the homeless population is predominantly male, single and young. **63%** of all applications are made by single people with **43%** of applications being made by single males. **35.8%** of all applications are made by people aged under 25 years old with this figure rising to nearly **40%** for single people

¹⁸ Social Exclusion Unit (2002). *Reducing Re-offending by Ex-prisoners*.

¹⁹ Social Exclusion Unit (2002). *Reducing Re-offending by Ex-prisoners*.

²⁰ Scottish Executive (2004). *Reduce, Rehabilitate, Reform: A Consultation on Reducing Re-offending in Scotland*.

People affected by homelessness are also more likely to experience some of the other problems which have been shown to increase the risk of worklessness. People affected by homelessness, particularly rough sleepers, are more commonly affected by substance misuse and more likely to have an offending background. Many may also suffer mental health problems. In addition, an evaluation of the New Futures Fund Initiative²¹ found that approximately half of homeless clients taking part in phase 1 had no qualifications, which, as we have already discovered, greatly reduces the chances of obtaining employment in itself.

Summary and Conclusions

In this section we noted that drawing a complete picture of the workless client group and its component parts is extremely difficult due to data limitations. Nevertheless we found that the overall figure is somewhere near 640,000 and risk factors include:

- Low or no qualifications. Rates of worklessness peak in the 'no qualifications' group at 48.7% (247,000). Those with no qualifications represent just over 35% of the workless population.
- Lack of employment experience. The longer an individual is unemployed the more likely it is that their worklessness will continue. There is a growing divide between work rich and work poor individuals and households. About two thirds of the workless group have been out of work for over 3 years or have never worked.
- Caring and parenting responsibilities. Lone parents remain one of the largest groups who are workless and want to work. They and others with caring responsibilities often face a combination of low skills, lack of work experience, poorer health and inflexibility in the hours available for them to work.
- Mental health, long term illness and disability. Measuring the numbers of people with mental health problems and/or a physical illness/disability who wish to work is difficult but they represent one of the main target groups that the DWP Pathways to Work Pilots policy are trying to address. The success of this pilot goes some way to demonstrating that people with an illness or disability are capable of, and willing to, work. Over half of the workless client group declare a health problem. Mental health problems represent a major risk factor amongst this group and health is the most significant secondary barrier for most of the client groups within the workless population.
- Location. While not totally related to locality, worklessness is concentrated in certain areas. For example, excluding students, 41% (286,000) of the workless group is found in the 7 local authorities targeted by CtOG Target A, and Glasgow alone accounts for 15.7% (109,000). In addition, the workless are further concentrated in the 15% most deprived areas in each local authority.
- Age. Worklessness increases with age and rates of inactivity within the over 55 age group are extremely high.
- Scotland also has a rate of youth unemployment that is higher than most European countries.

²¹ LDRP Ltd, Policy Research Institute & David Smart Consultancy Services (2001). *New Futures Fund Initiative: Evaluation of Management and Operation*.

- Smaller but significant groups amongst the workless include those with substance abuse problems, the homeless and ex offenders. Whilst relatively small in number they represent some of the hardest to reach for any employability programme.
- Ethnicity. When the employment levels of all ethnic minority groups are combined and measured against the level of Whites a gap is found. This is called the employment rate gap. In England this gap has persisted for over 15 years at around 16 percentage points. In Scotland, the gap is greater – it is 19 percentage points. The Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African/Black Scottish groups have the highest unemployment rates, and are comparable with rates in England.

Key issues that the workstream discussed as part of its overview included the difficulties of measurement and the need to recognise that political decisions will need to be taken over the groups that become the focus of the Employability framework. There are difficulties in measuring the exact size of the workless group and sub sections of that group. Different methods of measurement, for example, exist between the Census, Labour Force Survey, and for some sub groups there is simply no accurate way of estimating numbers involved. Decisions over priorities will therefore involve some element of political and value judgement. There are also decisions that will have to be taken over the extent to which resources should take into account the situation where some groups presently receive very limited support. Simply including the ‘workless who want to work’ may limit the possibility of reducing the more intractable barriers that discrimination and social exclusion generate and the lack of engagement with work that results.

At the same time focussing on the ‘workless’ as a whole may produce so wide a group as to make policy and resources too widely spread. Decisions over priorities will have to involve an assessment of the cost and benefit of including just the hardest to reach groups or those closest to the labour market in the short, medium and long term. In addition members of the group also felt that there was a need to complement initiatives currently being undertaken by Job Centre Plus with particular groups if Executive money is to add most value. At the same time members felt that it was important to recognise the additional groups that could be brought into a Scottish employability framework to ensure that it is not totally dominated by Job Centre Plus policy.

As a result the Workstream would like to recommend that:

- Improved baseline information is required for sub-groups of the workless population, if realistic targets are to be set for improvements in the rates of worklessness among particular groups.
- The national aspiration to halve the differential between employment and unemployment rates amongst the most and least disadvantaged wards be reaffirmed as part of the Employability Framework.
- The Employability Framework sets ambitious targets for a reduction in the differences in the employment rate between the working age population as a whole and lone parents, people in ethnic minorities, those with health problems, the homeless, ex offenders and those recovering from substance abuse.
- The CtOG target F, to improve the attainment of the lowest performing S4 pupils be incorporated into the Employability framework.

3 **Barriers to sustainable employment**

This section provides an analysis of the barriers that different workless clients encounter when trying to enter employment – both on the journey towards employment and in the first few months after they enter a job. It draws on the results of the questionnaire completed by core and reference group members and professionals in the field, as well as existing research about the needs of, and barriers facing, workless clients. After categorising the barriers faced it explores the extent to which barriers are common between different individuals and groups. It also explores the extent to which barriers are unique for particular groups within the workless population and examines the impact of multiple barriers.

Barriers to employment: – Structural; Attitudinal; Personal

In the previous chapter we noted how important it is to accurately characterise the dimensions and nature of the worklessness problem and have indicated that the focus of an employability framework is not only the long term ‘registered’ unemployment but also those amongst the economically inactive who are potentially capable of obtaining employment. Raising employment rates and activity rates are seen as an important way of reducing poverty and is central to the *Closing the Opportunity Gap* objectives. We have also highlighted the need to realize that there are real barriers that stand between the workless and employment opportunities. An assessment of the reasons for worklessness is a necessary underpinning to long-term success of the Framework and we have identified two main sets of causes²²: an overall shortage of job opportunities (requiring action to stimulate local job generation and bring more job opportunities into a particular local labour market); and a weak connection between the job opportunities that are available and the ability of workless people to access these opportunities (requiring action to tackle the particular barriers facing workless clients within a local labour market).

The first barrier faced by all workless clients relates to the nature of the local labour market itself and the opportunities available for employment within the area each client is willing/able to travel to. An overall shortage of jobs in the labour market can be a direct cause of worklessness and there are of course instances where local shortages create unemployment or economic inactivity. Nevertheless there is no guarantee that new jobs will be accessed by those who are workless. Whilst, in general, the performance of the Scottish economy has been positive in recent years (particularly in Edinburgh and Glasgow and their surrounding areas) there have been instances where, despite an expansion in local employment opportunities, levels of worklessness have remained high and employers have been unable to fill vacancies. Such ‘tight’ labour markets reflect a mismatch between the demands of employers and their job opportunities and the skillset and characteristics of the local workless population. In short, an increase in the employment opportunities available in a particular area is no guarantee that those opportunities will be filled by the local workless population unless particular efforts are made to match and prepare workless clients for the relevant opportunities. Despite an overall increase in employment in Scotland there is a growing divide between the work rich and work poor households, with an increase of more than 50% in household worklessness between 1992-

²² Dickens, R., Gregg, P. and Wadsworth, J. eds. (2003). *The Labour Market under Labour: State of Working Britain 2003*. Palgrave.

2002²³. Stimulating employment is therefore not a sufficient condition for tackling worklessness. We noted that this demand side of the workless equation is being dealt with by Workstream B (Employer demand)

Where local labour market conditions are such that employment opportunities exist that are potentially suitable to the available workless population, individual clients face many different types of barriers that must be overcome if they are to secure, and sustain, employment. In our exploration of barriers to employment with the core and reference group we have found that barriers to sustainable employment can be divided into:

- Structural: Barriers such as the cost, availability or ease of access to services and benefits, as well as the state of the local labour market.
- Attitudinal: Including the attitudes and recruitment practices of employers, or of carers and support workers (institutional or family) whose low expectations may lead to low levels of support or inappropriate support.
- Personal: The circumstances, skills and attitudes of the workless individual themselves, including fear of losing benefits, low self-esteem, an inability to self motivate, a lack of skills, poor health, caring responsibilities, poor employment record and/or a lack of mobility/willingness to travel.

Each workless individual faces a unique combination of barriers that prevent them from entering and sustaining employment and which must be overcome individually, or with the assistance of family and carers, employment service staff and/or employers, before they can move on. Individuals will pass through different stages on their journey towards work – and may, at the beginning of their journey, not even anticipate employment as an end outcome. The way in which individuals engage in the process of job preparation will vary considerably, depending on their personal characteristics (such as their past experience, their skills set and their self-confidence) and semi-external factors such as their caring responsibilities or their personal mobility.

The support that workless individuals receive on their transition to work must therefore be flexible enough to recognise and adapt to the different stages on their journey and the barriers that face them at any particular point. In addition, the barriers facing an individual may not all become evident at the beginning of their journey and may manifest themselves at different stages, and perhaps more than once. The key to success would therefore appear to be flexible support which enables support staff to identify the barriers to an individual entering employment, to monitor an individual's distance travelled towards sustained employment, and to broker the most appropriate support, training or advice for them at any point on their journey.

Barriers to and prospects for employment - specifics for particular groups

Although both core and reference group members were keen to emphasise that each individual faces a unique set of barriers, determined by their own personal experience, characteristics and

²³ See for example: Bell, D. & Jack, G. ((2002). *Worklessness and polarisation in Scottish households*. scotecon.net; and Turok, I. and Edge, N. (1999). *The Jobs Gap in Britain's Cities: Employment Loss and Labour Market Consequences*. The Policy Press.

circumstances, to enable us to draw some more general conclusions we examined some of the most common combinations of barriers that affect different groups within the workless population. We found that certain barriers are more prevalent among particular client groups and that, while by no means universal among the group, certain combinations of barriers are more common than others for particular groups.

For example, lone parents commonly encounter structural barriers such as the cost of childcare, the potential loss of passported benefits and the availability of work (perhaps on shift patterns) which enables them to fit work around school and/or childcare²⁴. Those with other caring responsibilities potentially face similar barriers.

On the other hand disabled people more commonly face attitudinal barriers, from both employers and carers/service providers, which mean that, despite the policies introduced in recent years to make employment more possible, they are on average still underemployed.

Those affected by substance abuse face a combination of attitudinal and personal barriers, including employer and support staff prejudices, low confidence and self-esteem and fear about the support they will receive during the transition to work. Similar issues apply to those with mental health problems.

Table 3.1 provides a summary of the most common barriers faced by some of the main client groups within the workless population. However, we would stress that this is intended to be indicative only of the most commonly identified barriers and that individuals within a particular group may face none, all, or any combination of these barriers.

Table 3.1 Barriers Commonly Encountered by Workless Client Groups

Client Group	Commonly Encountered Barriers		
	Structural	Attitudinal	Personal
Lone Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of childcare - Affordability of care - Benefits system/trap - Increased costs of housing, school meals etc - Availability of transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employers perceptions/prejudice (e.g. concern about unpredictable demands on lone parents) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self esteem - Self confidence - Low skills/qualifications - Lack of work experience
Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of respite care - Benefits system/trap - Availability of transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employers perceptions/prejudice (e.g. concern about unpredictable demands on carers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of work experience - Low skills/qualifications - Poor health
Homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing - Benefits system (inc. the cost of transition & a benefits 'culture') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suitability of training for those with chaotic lifestyles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-esteem - Substance addiction - Fear of benefit transition - Chaotic lifestyles
Physical Disability/Limiting Long Term Illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benefits system/trap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employers perceptions - Employer awareness (e.g. of scope for adjustment) - Support worker expectations/attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-confidence - Fear of benefit transition (inc. debt) - Ability to sustain employment

²⁴ Scott, G., Gillespie, M and Innes, S. (2003) *Breaking Barriers: Poverty, childcare and mothers' transitions to work*. Rosemount Lifelong Learning/ Scottish Poverty Information Unit.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low skills/qualifications - Health problems
Learning Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of support services working with employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low expectations of families & professionals - Employer attitudes - 'Fear' of supervision requirements among employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-confidence/esteem - Need for advocacy - Low skills/qualifications
Re/Ex-Offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing - Benefits system - Disclosure - Inappropriate common recruitment practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stigma (among employers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor literacy/numeracy - Self-confidence/fear - Substance addiction - Mental health problems - Debt - No/inappropriate labour market skills
Substance Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited availability of support services - Benefits system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stigma/Employer attitudes - An 'unemployable' assumption - Peer group pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-confidence/esteem - Ability to self-motivate - Possibility of relapse - Low skills/lack of work experience - Criminal record
Ethnic Minorities/ Refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of language training courses - Lack of job opportunities to match career aspirations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employer attitudes/discrimination - Lack of cultural awareness among support staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of qualifications/skills (inc. language skills) - Lack of relevant work experience - Lack of knowledge of labour market & in-work benefits - Self-confidence
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of health management services for in-work support - Limited employer support - Benefits system/trap - Limited appropriate training provision - Lack of ongoing support in the workplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stigma/Employer attitudes - Cultural attitudes - Low expectations of healthcare and employment support staff - Recovery/employment not built into condition management services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-confidence - Health problems - Lack of skills/qualifications (both formal and 'life' skills) - Anxiety over return to work and support in the workplace
Older Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benefits system/trap - Lack of training opportunities - Competition for vacancies from younger workers (especially women returning to work part-time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employer attitudes/discrimination - Cultural/peer group attitudes towards available opportunities - Advisor/support staff attitudes/discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health problems (inc. mental health) - Caring responsibilities - Lack of appropriate skills/qualifications/experience (particularly 'soft' skills) - Expectations of ageism/futility of job search

From this it can be seen that the barriers facing particular groups vary considerably, although some barriers are common among groups and appear more than others. Low self-confidence/esteem and a lack of skills (of all kinds) are particularly common, while issues around the transition from benefits to

work (and associated problems of debt and extra costs) also appear as problems for a range of groups. Health (including mental well-being) is a significant secondary barrier for a number of groups. The attitudes of both employers and support workers appears as a barrier to a number of the most marginalised, 'hard to reach' groups and must be addressed if these groups are to be successfully helped into meaningful employment.

Multiple barriers

The number of barriers an individual faces may crudely be thought of as an indication of their 'distance from the labour market'. The greater the number of barriers faced the further that individual will have to 'travel' to enter and sustain employment. The above 'client' groups are not mutually exclusive and individuals may commonly fall into 2 or more of the sub-groups. For example, people suffering from homelessness may also commonly encounter mental health or substance abuse problems. Such combinations of characteristics increase the likelihood of an individual facing more of the common barriers identified and compound the difficulties for that individual of obtaining and sustaining employment.

For example, an individual suffering from homelessness, who is also a methadone user and suffering mental health problems is likely to have to overcome a greater number of barriers to enter sustainable employment than someone encountering only one of these problems. Likewise, a disabled person from an ethnic minority group with children or other caring responsibilities will face greater barriers to employment than someone falling into only one of these groups.

Such combinations of barriers are not as uncommon as might be thought. For example, McGregor (2003)²⁵ found that more than half of those surveyed in Glasgow reported five or more barriers to work. Berthoud (2003)²⁶ concluded that the likelihood of remaining unemployed increased with the greater the number of disadvantages faced. He found that people who have the highest risk of non-employment tend to have one or more of the following risk factors/characteristics.

- Aged over 50 years of age;
- Living without a partner or a lone parent;
- Low skilled and having low educational qualifications;
- Physically or mentally impaired;
- Living in an area where the unemployment rate is over 9.5%;
- Belonging to a minority ethnic group.

At the extremes, only 4% of those who did not belong to any of these groups are not employed, while more than 90% of those who suffered all six were not employed. This seems to apply across all age groups²⁷.

²⁵ McGregor, A., Macdougall, L., Glass, A., Higgins, K., Hirst, A. and Sutherland, V. (2003). *The Glasgow Challenge: Realising the Potential of Glasgow's Hidden Unemployed*. Glasgow University.

²⁶ Berthoud, R. (2003). *Multiple Disadvantages in Employment: A Quantitative Analysis*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

²⁷ Lakey, J. Barnes, H. and Parry, J.(2002) *Getting a chance: Employment support for young people with multiple disadvantages*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Our work with the core and reference groups has highlighted the high degree of overlap between the different 'client groups' and has emphasised the considerable barriers that many workless individuals in Scotland potentially must be helped to overcome if they are to obtain and sustain employment.

Summary and Conclusions

Key points that we have made in this section are: -

- Worklessness may, in part, result from an overall shortage of job opportunities and requires action to stimulate local job generation but 'economic' development and 'employment' development are not automatically linked. There is no guarantee that new jobs will be accessed by those who are workless.
- Worklessness may reflect a weak connection between the job opportunities that are available and the ability of workless people to access these opportunities.
- We have identified a large number of barriers that affect a client's chances of obtaining and retaining a job. Each individual faces a unique set of barriers, although certain barriers are more prevalent among particular client groups. We concluded that the barriers to sustainable employment can be divided into:
 - Structural: Barriers such as the cost, availability or ease of access to services and benefits as well as the state of the local labour market.
 - Attitudinal: Including the attitudes and recruitment practices of employers, or of carers and support workers (institutional or family) whose low expectations may lead to low levels of support or inappropriate support.
 - Personal: The circumstances, skills and attitudes of the workless individual themselves, including fear of losing benefits, low self-esteem, an inability to self motivate, a lack of skills, poor health, caring responsibilities, poor employment record and/or a lack of mobility/willingness to travel.

Programmes that seek to address the barriers to employment facing individuals have tended to focus on facilitating the transition into work. However, it is important to recognise that worklessness is not a static condition. The way in which people return to work after a lengthy period out of work is an issue that needs to be addressed, as well as the type of jobs that are available for this group. Barriers to successful sustained employment change as an individual progresses along the route to employment. In the next chapter we examine the stages on an individual's journey into sustainable employment.

As a result the Workstream would like to recommend that:

- Full account of local labour market conditions is taken when developing local elements of the employability framework.
- Employers, carers and communities should be made more aware of the benefit of work and their potential role in implementing the recommendations of an Employability Framework.
- More should be done to reach people who currently slip past existing active labour market policies.

- A major emphasis of support for workless people should be on the enhancement of their skills and opportunities to engage with the existing labour market.
- The needs of specific groups of excluded people should be recognised and specialist support provided that moves them towards more generic employment provision and sustains them once they enter the labour market.

4 **Routes into work**

In this section an overview of current research on routes into work is provided. It highlights the need to understand the causes of worklessness that we have alluded to in the previous sections; how different individuals and groups exhibit different patterns of entry into sustainable employment; and how the routes into employment relate to longer term employment retention and advancement and poverty reduction.

The need for a longer view

Many programmes seeking to address barriers to employment have tended to focus on facilitating the transition into work. Kellard et al²⁸ comment that less emphasis has been placed on helping the formerly economically inactive retain the new jobs in the longer term. It is important to recognise that worklessness is not necessarily a static condition. Many of those currently unemployed, for example, will move into jobs in the next few months. The average length of time between jobs for those who become unemployed has reduced. Nevertheless, as we have shown, the numbers of people who have been out of work for a long period remain high and the way in which people return to work after a lengthy period out of work remains a problem, as well as the type of jobs that are available for this group. They often face an unacceptable risk of early exit from work into unemployment again, and repeated returns affect the likelihood of further spells of unemployment in the future. Employment, retention and advancement are therefore aspects of the return to work that the Employability Framework will have to address.

Routes into work

Drawing solely on approaches that focus on tackling the barriers facing individuals (rather than stimulating the labour market itself) it can be argued that certain stages on each individual's journey are recognisable: initial engagement, the development of skills (including soft skills), gaining appropriate work experience, readjusting other elements of an individual's life, changing client's attitudes/ambitions and developing an ability to make sense of Benefit rules and employers demands. However, each individual's journey will be unique, the order in which barriers are most appropriately tackled will vary, and some individuals may 'skip' some stages/barriers that are not relevant to them. Some clients may make the transition relatively easily while for others events outwith their control, or the control of support staff, may interrupt their progress and even create a need to repeat a stage.

However there are other issues that also stand out from the literature relating to routes into work amongst the disadvantaged. These include: evidence of a consistent desire to work, alongside varied levels of confidence and competence; limited availability of, and belief that there will be available, long term employment at the end of the route for many; changes in the barriers faced at different stages; variations in the profiles of employability amongst different groups; difficulties in progressing to a situation where work pays and current routes into employment impact positively on engagement and sustained interest in work.

²⁸ Kellard, K., Adelman, L., Cebulla, A. and Heaver, C. (2002) *From job seekers to job keepers: job retention, advancement and the role of in-work support programmes*. DWP Research Report No. 170.

A desire to work amongst many of the workless

Estimating the number and characteristics of the workless who wish, or potentially might wish, to make active progress towards work is difficult, and is not totally useful as discrimination and past experience will affect attitudes and confidence. Nevertheless, some evidence does exist for different groups:

- DWP studies report that 77% of lone parents say they would like to work at some point, if sufficient tailored support and skills development were available. This is supported by the increase of lone parent interviews carried out by Personal Adviser's (PA's) in Scotland since Work Focused Interviews were introduced.
- According to a recent IPPR report²⁹ there are well over one million disabled people missing from the labour market - people who want to work but are not working. This is reflected in the positive work aspirations of those making a claim to incapacity benefits (at the start of their claim 90 per cent fully expect and want to work again).
- Furlong and Cartmel's study³⁰ of vulnerable young men in fragile labour markets showed that despite extensive jobless periods, all remained committed to finding work.
- Interest in employment amongst groups such as the homeless and drug users is more difficult to measure. Drug users, for example, are not a homogenous population and the severity of employment barriers will vary. A recent survey of recovering drug users stabilized on methadone showed that only 20% currently felt ready to look for employment³¹. This does not necessarily reflect willingness to seek employment.

Availability of long term employment

It is important to recognize that entry into work does not automatically result in sustainable employment. Programmes aimed at supporting people into work have varied rates of success. Riddell et al³² report, for example, that programmes aimed at disabled people rarely succeed in placing more than one fifth of participants into work, whereas programmes aimed at lone parents tend to be more successful³³. In addition there is a high degree of churn at the lower ends of labour market. There is a high and increasing incidence of repeated spells of unemployment and those becoming unemployed often have a history of past unemployment³⁴. Two reasons exist for this. Firstly the type of jobs available and the training available in those jobs, and secondly the ability of various groups to sustain full time involvement in employment when they do enter the labour market (discussed below).

²⁹ Stanley, K. and Regan, S. (2003) *The Missing Million: supporting disabled people into work*. Institute of Public Policy Research.

³⁰ Furlong, A. and Cartmel, F. (2004) *Vulnerable young men in fragile labour markets*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

³¹ Richards, N., and Morrison, A. (2004) *Moving On: education, training and employment for recovering drug users: Research review*. Effective Interventions Unit, Scottish Executive.

³² Riddell, S. Banks, P., and Tinklin, T. (2005) *Disability and Employment in Scotland: A Review of the Evidence Base*. Scottish Executive.

³³ Marsh, A., McKay, S., Smith, A. and Stephenson, A. (2001) *Low-income families in Britain*, DSS Research Report No. 138.

³⁴ Dickens, R., Gregg, P. and Wadsworth, J. (2001). *Non-Working Classes: Britain's New Chronic Unemployed*. CentrePiece, Summer 2001.

The types of jobs that exist in the labour market in Scotland are characterised by contrast. Growing prosperity for those with high skills and secure jobs is balanced by greater numbers of people in relatively low paid jobs³⁵. A job by itself is insufficient to address exclusion among people of working age. Some jobs will continue to demand relatively few formal skills, and provide few immediate rewards, and the number of such jobs in Scotland may grow rather than diminish. Those with fewer skills are more likely to lose their jobs when the economy slows, and to have interrupted work patterns throughout working age. It results in some of the disadvantaged groups cycling between work and benefits³⁶.

As the Scottish Council Foundation also pointed out in 1999:

Welfare-to-work programmes in Britain, North America and Australia typically place greatest emphasis on getting people onto the first rung of the ladder. A combination of wage subsidies, bridging grants and tax breaks are used to encourage claimants and employers. Much less attention is given to supporting new employees in their jobs, particularly in the first few months after the transition back to work³⁷.

Barriers at different stages of distance from work

So far, we have tended to identify different barriers to work as structural, attitudinal and personal/individual. Marilyn Howard adds to this in her work on disability and employment for the IPPR³⁸. She highlights the importance of incorporating some idea of distance from the labour market and change into employability models. She argues, furthermore, that the 'barriers' model assumes that someone is at a distinct point away from work but the relative importance of different barriers could change depending on how distant someone is from work. For instance, Howard points to evidence from Rowlingson and Berthoud³⁹ that, amongst the disabled, benefit recipients who were considered most likely to find a job thought the main obstacle to work was external (i.e. not their personal attributes) whilst those least likely to work thought their impairment was the main barrier. Those who moved into work were more likely to have said that their main barriers were unemployment and employers' attitudes. Those not expecting to work tend to have been on benefits longer, and they are less likely to consider that the jobs available locally and lack of skills/experience were barriers. She goes further:

Disabled people may be less likely to see themselves as disadvantaged once they have a job. However, even when in work, barriers remain, including continuing impairments. Of people who started work after seeing a Personal Adviser, one in five subsequently left their job; those who had not disclosed their condition to their employer could experience recurrence of symptoms, which could be difficult to manage, or had financial problems. US evidence suggests that pre-existing barriers may emerge, or new problems may arise. Co-operation from employer was needed to help people with physical problems retain employment, and additionally for people with mental health problems, support from co-workers.

³⁵ See for example, the reports of the separate workstreams examining employer demand and low paid, low skilled work.

³⁶ Harkness, M., Arigoni, S., Ortiz, R. (2004) *Lone parents cycling between work and benefits*. DWP Research Report 217

³⁷ Scottish Council Foundation (1999) *Dynamic security, Skills and employability in Scotland*.

³⁸ Howard, M. (2003) *An interactionist perspective on barriers and bridges to work for disabled people*. Institute of Public Policy Research.

³⁹ Rowlingson, K. and Berthoud, R. (1996). *Disability, benefits and employment*. DSS Research Report 54.

Research relating to lone parents reports a similar situation of change and continuity in barriers across the transition⁴⁰. Jane Lewis and colleagues' work⁴¹ for DWP considered factors that might undermine the sustainability of work. Interviews she carried out with lone parents who moved into employment through the New Deal reveal that there were two main factors that may affect, or had undermined, sustained employment. These factors related to an inappropriate 'match' of work (or the work environment) to individuals, and employer attitudes and practices (such as changing requirements for hours worked). Other broader issues affecting whether employment is sustained or not by lone parents included difficulties in the transitional period following a move into work. These were typically financial difficulties, or a breakdown in childcare arrangements and the difficulty of balancing parental and employee responsibilities.

Flexible working arrangements (such as flexible hours worked, working from home, and the provision of workplace facilities and other support) may help employees to more successfully match the demands of work with their other responsibilities and, thus, contribute to sustaining employment. The prevalence of flexible working arrangements, however, varies according to industrial sector and occupation. Lone parents are more likely to be employed in sectors where flexible arrangements are commonly available (such as retailing, health and education). However, Hasluck (2000)⁴² shows that take-up of flexible working practices is often low, because lone parents in particular were concerned that taking advantage of flexible working arrangements could adversely affect their career prospects. Members of our workstream also suggested that an inflexible approach to benefits mitigated against flexibility in the workplace, particularly in relation to the transition back into paid employment. One conclusion from this is that inflexibility may well inhibit take-up of practices that would otherwise help employees to strike a balance between the demands of work and life.

This suggests that barriers do not invariably melt away as people go into work, but need to be anticipated and overcome. Key factors that Scottish researchers identify here for other groups include money management, benefits and tax credit issues during transition to work for those with mental

⁴⁰ Millar, J. and Rowlingson, K (Eds) (2001). *Lone Parents, Employment and Social Policy*. The Policy Press.

⁴¹ Lewis, J., Mitchell, L., Sanderson, T., O'Connor, W., and Clayden, M. (2001) *Lone Parents and Personal Advisors: Roles and Relationships. A Follow-up Study of the New Deal for Lone Parents Phase One Prototype*. DWP Research Report No. 170.

⁴² Hasluck, C. (2000). *The Net Economic and Exchequer Benefits of the New Deal for Lone Parents*. In Hasluck, C., McKnight, A. and Elias, P. (2000). *Evaluation of the New Deal for Lone Parents: Early Lessons from the Phase One Prototype – Cost-Benefit and Econometric Analyses*. DSS Research Report No. 110.

health problems⁴³; discrimination for recovering drug users and those with mental health problems⁴⁴; and a lack of race or disability awareness amongst employers⁴⁵.

Progression to a situation where work works

Whatever the route into work followed and point of entry into the labour market, it is not automatic that labour market entry will prove sufficient on its own to remove individuals and households from poverty. Recent research from the DWP suggests that movement into the labour force accounts for less than half of exits from poverty⁴⁶. The 2003 Save the Children research, in particular,⁴⁷ highlights:

'Children in households that underwent two or more income transitions between work/other income and benefit income were much more likely to be in persistent and severe poverty than children who did not experience these transitions'.

Similarly a review of routes out of poverty by Kemp et al⁴⁸ argued that:

Work is not always a route out of poverty because some jobs are low paid. For many people, low pay is not a transient experience: low-paid workers tend to remain low paid. Low-paid jobs often do not act as stepping-stones to better-paid ones; they are more likely to constitute dead ends from which there is relatively little prospect of escape. Low-paid jobs also tend to be more precarious than higher-paid ones. Indeed, there appears to be a 'low pay, no pay' cycle in which periods of low pay are interspersed with periods of unemployment. Being out of work appears to have a 'scarring' effect on future earnings, thereby helping to perpetuate low pay. Moreover, this wage penalty increases with length of time out of work..

One other important issue to mention here is the wider impact of employment. How do current routes into employment impact on engagement in the longer term? If work does not pay, in the short or long term, in financial or personal terms, or for a family as a whole then the level of long term engagement with the welfare to work agenda may be severely compromised.

⁴³ Gillespie, M. Mulvey, G. and Scott, G. (2005). *Advice Services And Transitions To Work For Disadvantaged Groups: Research report*. EQUAL and Glasgow Caledonian University. Gillespie, M. and Scott, G. (2004). *Advice Services And Transitions To Work For Disadvantaged Groups: A Literature Review*. EQUAL and Glasgow Caledonian University. Durie, S. (2004). *Mental health and employment policy for Scotland*. Scottish Executive. Dean, H. and Shah, A. (2002). *Insecure Families and Low-Paying Labour Markets: Comments on the British Experience*. Journal of Social Policy vol. 31, Jan 2002, pp 61-80.

⁴⁴ Richards, N., and Morrison, A. (2004). *Moving On: education, training and employment for recovering drug users: Research review*. Effective Interventions Unit, Scottish Executive. Alcock, J. and Howlin, P. (2003). *An evaluation of Prospects supported employment service for individuals with Asperger syndrome*. Department of Work and Pensions.

⁴⁵ Gosling, V. and Cotterill, L (2000). *An Employment Project as a Route to Social Inclusion for People with Learning Difficulties?*. Disability & Society, 15 (7): 1001-1018. Scottish Executive, Scottish Enterprise and CRE Scotland (2004). *Report of conference: Scottish Repercussions of the Strategy Unit Report – 'Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market*.

⁴⁶ Jenkins, S.P., Rigg, J.A., Devicienti, F. (2001). *Dynamics of Poverty in Britain*. DWP Research Report Number 157.

⁴⁷ Adelman, L., Middleton, S. and Ashworth K.(2002). *Britain's Poorest Children*. Save the Children

⁴⁸ Kemp, P., Bradshaw, J., Dornan, P., Finch, N. and Mayhew, E. (2004). *Routes out of poverty: A research review*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Different routes for different groups

Despite the variation in the different groups that make up the workless the growing body of experience in working with different client groups is beginning to make it easier to model the staging posts on the routes into work⁴⁹.

Engagement: Work is not an automatic choice for many of the most disadvantaged in the workless client group. Whatever the reason – previous lack of or negative experience of work, chaotic lifestyle, learned dependency – there is, therefore, often a stage in the move towards employability which involves developing an awareness of options and the confidence to take them and encouragement to take up employment support. In any voluntary programme it will be important to increase the numbers who view work as a positive choice, but this will have to be built alongside a confidence and stability relating to other areas of many individuals' lives as well as develop individuals' capacity to review the benefits and pitfalls of employment⁵⁰. For example, because many will have a limited understanding of their own difficulties and the impact these have on employment, they may focus on the things that they have difficulties with or that they cannot do at all, instead of demonstrating that with particular strategies they may be successful in carrying out the essential duties of a job. At this stage key issues that individuals are likely to be interested in are confidence building, personal and social skills development, debt counselling, anger management and basic skills training.

Towards job readiness. At this stage individuals are moving towards identifying the 'match' between their own skills, aptitudes and interests and the type of jobs available, or that could be available if their skills were developed, as well as preparing themselves for the world of work. This may need an introduction to the world of work, via work experience or job tasters. It may also include the development of personal and soft skills necessary to successfully gain and hold work. Being job ready calls for the following: having a viable occupational or career goal; having the education, training, skills and experience needed to achieve that goal acquiring necessary job application and job search skills; the ability to demonstrate that he or she can meet the requirements of the job; and the ability to keep the job, by working hard and satisfying the ongoing requirements. These requirements are unlikely to be developed quickly for a number of the groups within the workless category, but for a number this stage can be achieved fairly quickly.

Job readiness/job search stage: The evidencing of specific job related skills are an important part of this stage as are job search activities. It also involves developing the skills necessary to present to employers (overview of cv writing, job search skills and job interviews). For a number of the sub-groups the workstream is examining this will also involve decisions about disclosure and learning how to explain one's disability and offer workplace strategies to compensate for and accommodate a disability.

Entry into work in broad terms: This may not be a stage where a great deal of support is needed but success in the early days is a key indicator of longer term employment. Evidence from those delivering post-employment support point to the following as some of the issues that new employees from disadvantaged groups face:

⁴⁹ Considerable experience of staged progression can be drawn from the health field, in particular the health improvement model.

⁵⁰ National Employment Panel Steering Group on Lone Parents (2003). *Work Works - Final report of Recommendations of the National Employment Panel's Steering Group on Lone Parents.*

- Employers changing hours for which childcare has been established;
- Lack of understanding of what the individual can and cannot do at point of entry and their support needs;
- Negative attitudes from fellow staff if disclosure is made openly available;
- Money matters – Benefit and tax credit issues as well as coping with debt arrears with new sources of income;
- Problems associated with managing the daily commute to work (including dropping off children or other dependents at school or daycare);
- Difficulties in adjusting to work discipline and new time routines.

Both employee and employer may need support or mediation to field problems or to help an individual progress and counter discrimination in the workplace. People with multiple disadvantages travel longer and more complex paths from education to the labour market than their peers. Many will need flexible and intensive forms of support in order to achieve a stable position in the labour market. The long-term and incremental nature of the process of redressing labour market disadvantage should not necessarily end when somebody finds a job.

Progression and maintenance of employment. An important part of this stage may involve a movement from no pay to low pay and back. For some it may also prove difficult to get employment even if their 'employability profile' has increased. It will be important to ensure that long term unemployment does not occur if clients suffer a 'knock back' in the early stages after securing work. Resilience and ability to cope with rejection or redundancy is needed. It may also, for particular groups, demand access to a service that will allow the individual to retain an element of work within their life, albeit not unsupported employment. Many employers will not be prepared to take the risk of employing particularly disadvantaged groups. Different types of job provision such as 'social firms' and 'intermediate labour markets' may be a staging post for those who find it difficult to get a foothold in the labour market.

Whilst the above gives some idea of the stages on the route to employment, there are considerable differences in how different groups move through them, both in terms of time and the agencies that are encountered on the way. For some the 'engagement phase' will be a long one, for others short. For some it will involve developing confidence and transferable skills through voluntary or other 'non employment' related activities. For some there will be easy access to 'employment related advice', for others it will be more difficult. For some the early stages will involve contact with specialist services designed to stabilise chaotic lifestyles, or address a health or social care issue. For others it will involve contact with community based services that provide a range of activities and support that are not solely employment related. Specialist employability programmes are likely to be encountered at the second stage although there will be some overlap (and some would say there should be more). Mainstream training and employment services such as Job Centre Plus are likely to dominate at later stages and whilst they may include some element of assistance to 'hard to help' groups it may be more difficult to access specialist help or assistance to move beyond elementary employment.

Summary and conclusions

Key points that we have made in this section are:

- Programmes focussed on tackling the barriers facing individuals trying to enter employment have tended to focus on facilitating the transition into work. However, it is important to recognise that worklessness is not a static condition.
- The way in which people return to work after a lengthy period out of work is an issue that needs to be addressed, as well as the type of jobs that are available for this group. Barriers to successful sustained employment change as an individual progresses along the route to employment.
- The route into work is a complex one that involves engagement, developing skills, gaining appropriate work experience, readjusting other elements of an individual's life, changing clients' attitudes/ambitions, and developing an ability to make sense of Benefit rules and employers demands.
- It is a route that is made more easily by some than others even within the 'hard to reach' group and is one that does not always produce effective means of overcoming poverty.
- Profiling an individual's position on the route – i.e. the distance they have travelled is an important way of identifying current and future needs.
- Access to appropriate services for specific groups and specific stages are key to successful and long term progress towards work that pays.

On the basis of this review the Workstream would like to recommend that:

- Improved access to realistic activities and proven services that have the confidence of unemployed people and convince them they will get and hold down a job i.e. able to engage and support at each stage, including post employment;
- The development of soft and hard skills at appropriate points and in ways that inspire confidence;
- The development of job search and work experience at appropriate stages, and based on choice;
- Access to specialist advice when needed before and after entry to employment, including information about relevant skills training, financial advice about debt or benefit entitlements, childcare and information about sources of help for people with housing difficulties;
- Access to impartial and flexible employment and benefits advice and support; and
- Access to employment focussed support from an early stage.

In the next section of the report we review some of the examples of good practice that Workstream members have supplied and consider what lessons they hold for the Employability framework. What this section has done is to highlight the need to work with a flexible notion of what working towards employment means for different groups.

5 Where are we now?

The purpose of the Employability Framework review as a whole was to provide evidence and information that could guide effective intervention to help the workless, particularly the 'hard to reach', into sustainable employment. It is important to note that, when looking at existing interventions, we can observe a fast changing situation. In the last three years there has, for example, been major changes in Job Centre Plus activities (such as the new *Pathways to Work* and Department of Work and Pensions initiatives such as *Progress2Work*) as well as Scottish Executive and European funded initiatives (such as the *New Futures Fund* projects and Edinburgh's *Joined up for Jobs*). In order to assess whether there are examples that could inform the direction of future service the Workstream has gathered some examples of good practice that address the needs of workless groups by tackling their barriers to employment. This has been done through the three meetings of the Workstream, the survey of key agencies in the field and core and reference group members, and material provided by members. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of interventions; that is the task of the Workstream looking at Interventions. Nevertheless we hope it offers a starting point of models that could prove useful.

Services and stages

The types of services that offer routes into work differ greatly depending on which type of workless individual is being supported and there is a huge spectrum of existing activity. They can however be categorised into a number of stages that a client may undertake on the path towards employability. The following definitions of service category were arrived at by using the Glasgow Equal Access Partnership/Service Mapping Study and the overview of services developed by Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health.

Types of Services: -

Service Category & Main Focus of Activity	Description of Type of Activity Undertaken with/by Client	Client's position on the employment pathway
<p><u>Positive Activity and assessment</u></p> <p>Personal development assistance towards work or employment</p>	<p>Helping people into regular activity programmes/positive routine and to connect with others</p> <p>Pre-vocational training and rehabilitation</p> <p>Motivational and personal development</p> <p>Assessment of needs and preferences</p> <p>Support and information provision to access mainstream agencies</p> <p>Benefits information and advice</p> <p>Volunteering</p>	Not job ready
<p><u>Work Preparation: Initial Stages</u></p> <p>Pre employment assistance</p>	<p>Assessment of needs and preferences</p> <p>Basic skills (literacy and numeracy)</p> <p>Life skills development</p> <p>Increasing self awareness</p> <p>Self management/helping individuals make choices</p> <p>Supported work experience</p> <p>Confidence and motivational development</p> <p>(Sometimes)</p>	Not job ready

	Specific occupational training Work placements Job search Benefits information and advice	
<u>Work Preparation: Later Stages</u> Helping people to focus much more on employment Support <u>into</u> employment	Careers advice and guidance Occupational or vocational profiling to match the person and the job Supporting volunteering Developing care skills Vocational training Job search skills Job tasters/work placements Work experience Work preparation (contracted services) Intermediate Labour Markets Support for self-employment Job search services (matching, brokering, facilitation, marketing) Finding employers and appropriate vacancies Addressing specific barriers and difficulties accessing work In-work benefits calculations and advice	Job ready
<u>In Work: Early Post-Recruitment Support</u> Sometimes referred to as 'aftercare', typically provided for up to around 6 weeks	Active support for employee Mentoring and buddy schemes External supports, such as support workers, telephone counselling etc Assist employee to retain and progress in job Negotiating return to work programmes after absence Active support for employer Job training Supported employment Helping employees adjust to specific barriers	In work
<u>In Work: Longer Term Support</u> Supporting the individual and employer – less intensive service activity, including supported employment	Career development Assist employee to retain job Support for employer Helping employees adjust to specific barriers + Sometimes (but not often) - helping employees adjust to the type of labour market demand in the sector where they are employed	In work

The survey of agencies and policy departments carried out through the Workstream identified a similar model of existing activities but respondents also commented on how the services should be delivered. It was clear from the responses that a lot of importance is placed on the quality of the interface between advisor(s) and client. Staff attitudes, motivations and values are seen as being at least as important as other practices. Mention was also made of the nature of the relationship with the client with words like choice, empowerment, control, support, and advocacy coming through strongly.

Most respondents stressed that the support that the client receives must be person centred, focus on achievable goals (depending on the service user's skill level or job-readiness) and must be maintained as the individual moves towards and into employment. In work support, aftercare and mentoring were mentioned as key elements of the process. References were made to job coaches,

support workers and the benefits of positive peer group pressure. Two respondents commented that this type of person centred employability training, needs sufficient staffing to offer one to one sessions or groupwork where appropriate.

A pattern emerged from the survey of two other basic types of activity that respondents felt already, or potentially, constitute good practice for working towards an employability framework - External Relationships around the interface between the 'Employability Service' and others, and Internal Relationships within the 'Employability Service'.

Improving the Interface between Employability Services and Others

There are a range of tasks undertaken which are "external" to the relationship between the client and the organisation assisting them and which respondents felt were necessary for a positive outcome. Examples of these include: liaison with housing providers regarding the allocation of tenancies; providing employers with accurate information about specific client groups; and tackling the major structural barriers such as the benefit trap. External relations also included a contribution to debates regarding national policy on welfare regulations, childcare entitlement, and increasing service provision.

The provision of information was also seen as important, with two respondents referring specifically to information from the Scottish Executive. One felt that the Scottish Executive should provide employers with awareness literature on criminal records, rehabilitation of offenders and understanding of which convictions are potentially risky for which jobs. Another felt that in addition to there being more flexible pharmacy provision, the Scottish Executive should provide awareness literature on the purpose, effects, and pros and cons of methadone prescription.

There were a significant number of comments relating to employers and employment law practises. Respondents felt that employers should receive more support to help them to employ economically inactive client groups. Suggestions included: employer wage subsidies; work placement opportunities; funding for employers to cover additional training requirements and modification of working environments. Two respondents suggested that this support should include training for employers and support to help them to engage with client groups and to make reasonable adjustments once employed.

There was also mention of employment law related practices, including the importance of flexible working hours, implementation of new equalities legislation, modification of working environments, flexible free childcare and family friendly policies. One respondent commented that employers need to be able to engage with support services in a structured and simple manner and that experienced agencies were needed to act as the contact with employers (making it easier for employers to understand and engage with the client group).

Improving the Interface between Component Parts of the Employability Service

There was consistent mention made of the value of inter-agency working. Co-ordination of services, spreading best practice, quality measurement and networking are all seen as improving the services available to individuals.

Several comments related to the importance of a national framework for supported employment that should include the key stakeholders working with employers – Jobcentre Plus, DWP, Community Planning partners etc. Employer engagement at a local community based level was also felt to be

critical to the success of improving the employability of 'harder to reach' clients. This should include flexible work placements.

From the services provision side, others commented that it was important to ensure that an awareness and assessment of an individual's employability was considered as part of mainstream practice, within services that may not themselves be primarily focused on getting an individual into work. Effective quality measurement of an individual's progress on the employment pathway was also seen as critical and partners needed to highlight expertise, duplication and gaps in service provision in order to best meet the full range of their clients' needs. The same view was also referred to as co-ordinated (cross agency) local delivery of an employability programme – accessible to all on a modular basis. This was expanded on by three respondents who felt that there should be well co-ordinated training and job search facilities which link employability with the wider resettlement process. Clients should have access to an integrated programme of training & preparation for work, which creates a pathway for them to sustained employment. This links group-based, pre-vocational training, with vocational training & employment, alongside access to a range of support mechanisms (including specialist advice, childcare, mentoring, travelling expenses and aftercare).

Where are we now and where do we want to go?

During two of the meetings of the Workstream the current position of services and preferences for future development were discussed further. The main issues that arose from these discussions were similar to those identified in the survey. In relation to *current* employability provision they included:

- A general feeling that current provision provides some specialist provision for different groups, but not all, and not to a level that fully closes the opportunity gap. Current funding regimes and target setting support cherry-picking of clients who are easier to help.
- A reported experience of short termism, found too often in the support available to disadvantaged clients, with expertise often lost between the end of funding from one project to another.
- A perception that the needs of some groups are met in a way that separates them unnecessarily from others (e.g. refugees, mental health)

The *preferred* direction for an employability service included:

- The provision of generalist support for all, but the maintenance of referrals to specialist services and of specialist knowledge be drawn upon when needed. There was a preference for case management, and common reporting of clients' progress. This would need protocols for sharing information across agencies and was felt particularly relevant within the homelessness, ex-offenders and drugs fields.
- Increasing the accessibility of New Deal to those furthest from the labour market.
- The availability of both short and long term support for clients, supported by agreed measurement of distance travelled and an individual's job readiness.
- The use of employability services to integrate rather than separate. This might mean a single entry point to all employability services, or better still a 'no wrong door' approach, since it is not possible to predict a client's journey through and between services.

Are there principles of intervention that could help inform future services?

On the basis of these discussions the principles of intervention that the Workstream felt should frame future services were:

- Providing a co-ordinated response to the needs of the workless across different agencies;
- An holistic service, dealing with employability at the same time as personal and social barriers to a stable and secure lifestyle;
- Geared to client needs i.e. recognising the point at which employability support would help move the individual on;
- Delivered by committed staff, trained to understand client needs;
- Able to deliver or provide referral to appropriate services;
- Delivered in a safe environment, where an honest and supportive relationship between support worker and client has been built on trust and choice;
- Evidencing the benefits and difficulties of employment, including an accurate assessment of the financial incentives/implications;
- Supporting progression – in small steps pre and post employment, and recognising that set backs will often occur;
- Sustaining support in periods of change and crisis and for the longer term;
- Providing a range of opportunities for employment and work experience from an early stage;
- Based on a model of distance travelled that is shared by different agencies;
- Based on fewer funding streams that create incentives to providers to join up services for the benefit of clients.

Recommendations for each of these are provided in the next chapter, and are based in part on the examples of good practice provided by members of the Workstream.

Are there examples of good practice that highlight how these principles of intervention could be implemented?

The Interventions Workstream has separately carried out a comprehensive mapping of existing services but Workstream A members were asked to identify examples of good practice. A wide range of examples were given that illustrate the above principles of intervention. They include:

- *Providing a co-ordinated response.* Wise Move and Joined up for Jobs in Edinburgh were cited as examples of co-ordinated responses across social care, employability focused services and employers.
- *An holistic service,* dealing with employability at the same time as personal and social barriers to stable and secure lifestyle. Lifeskills through Sport in the Highland and Islands Enterprise area and Local Exchange Trading Schemes were cited as examples of how participation in voluntary activity could represent a useful way of increasing confidence and skills and a

means of transition to the open labour market. A range of One Plus Intermediate Labour Market projects were mentioned as examples of how work experience and relevant skills can be provided while supporting clients on a personal level.

- *Geared to client needs* i.e. recognising the point at which employability support would help move the individual on. The Scottish Business in the Community “Ready for Work” programme was mentioned as successful because it supported people affected by homelessness who were mentored through a work placement and if successful, given a chance to attend an interview for vacancies within the placement company. The John Sutherland 1-2-1 service in Inverness was a similar example provided of good practice for those with learning disabilities.
- *Delivered by committed staff*, trained to understand client needs, and to deliver or provide referral to appropriate services. Phoenix House residential service in Glasgow was mentioned as benefiting from staff that really believes in the service users’ ability to achieve their employment and educational goals in their Phased employability programme.
- *Able to refer* clients to specialist provision. The six Glasgow New Futures Funded Homelessness projects were mentioned. Here clients were referred on to the relevant specialist agencies to address particular problems, but the client’s overall programme was co-ordinated by the project. This holistic approach was felt to help address barriers and build relationships, which is vital to success for these client groups.
- *Delivered in a safe environment*, where an honest and supportive relationship between support worker and client has been built on trust and choice; numerous community based examples were cited, as opposed to more ‘traditional’ Job Centre Plus services.
- *Evidencing the benefits* and difficulties of employment for employers and employees – to agree a realistic purpose for the client; Apex Scotland’s Stevenson project provides an example of how employers have become involved in providing mock interviews, checking CVs, thus allowing them to get to know the service users, reducing stigma, and increasing job and work taster opportunities.
- *Supporting progression once in work*. Creative Change Network in Hamilton have a 24 hour helpline for employer and client support, and the One Plus Sustainable Employment project were cited as examples of good quality initiatives that supported progression once in work. The personal adviser support and the Employment Retention and Advancement scheme from Job centre Plus were also mentioned
- *Sustaining support in periods of change and crisis*. One respondent commented that residential rehabilitation and prisons see greater sustained long term progression due to the 24 hour nature of provision, but that community rehabilitation centres have to work much harder to engage clients at times of change, and so sustain motivation. As a result they often see reduced progression to employment.
- *Family focused* – for parents or carers moving towards work, there are a number of strands of support that they require before they will make the decision to move into work. Support services need to be able to put in place long term sustainable solutions for any carig responsibilities that client may have, at the same time as they address the adult’s needs. The

Working for Families Fund has developed a two-strand model that addresses childcare barriers at the same time as progressing parents towards work. This is delivered through initiatives such as the Parent Champions in Highland.

- *The shared development of an employability database* by the City Council, Wise Move and Sorted in Edinburgh was cited as a good example of a model of distance travelled that can be shared by different agencies.

The number of good practice examples far exceeded those listed here and further details of the examples cited and their contact details are provided in Appendix B. Nevertheless they highlight the existence of a breadth and depth of experience in service delivery in the area of employability that could be drawn on when rolling out the Employability Framework, as well as the range of agencies involved. Good practice was identified across public, voluntary and private sectors. The prevalence and success of NGO's in delivering services for harder to reach groups, was noted and a case was made that good practice involving a positive mindset amongst staff members, engagement with clients wider needs and a willingness to use outreach and in-depth knowledge of local conditions were key to the client's progress.

However, what was also noticeable was the plethora of different funding streams and the difficulties this posed to services trying to combine different funding regimes. There was also a relative paucity of examples of locally co-ordinated responses across employability, health and social care, and on post employment support. The involvement of community-based organisations in local strategic partnerships was seldom evident and some questioned whether this represents something of a missed opportunity to influence the delivery of programmes and make them more responsive to local needs.

Summary and conclusions

Key points that we have made in this section are:-

- The types of services which offer routes into work differ greatly depending on which type of economically active individual is being supported. There is a huge spectrum of activity already occurring.
- Existing services can, however, be categorised into a number of stages that a client may undertake on their path towards employment. These include services for those who are not yet job ready, those who are and those who have entered the labour market. At present services tend to mainly focus on the job ready.
- Activities involved in developing employability among those some way from the labour market include: direct services to clients; cross agency work developing policy; some elements of co-ordinated delivery; and attempts to move mainstream services towards a recognition of the relationship between employability and social disadvantage.
- Key stakeholders in the sector feel that there are gaps in current provision: not all clients are served adequately; funding regimes and target setting support cherry-picking of 'easier to help' clients; expertise is often lost due to short term funding and some groups needs are met in a way that separates them unnecessarily from others (e.g. refugees). Preferences for a future 'employability service' include: generalist support alongside referral to specialist

services; improved case management of clients; increased accessibility of the New Deal to those furthest from the labour market; and the availability of both short and long term support for clients.

A range of good practice across all sectors was identified that can provide a sound basis for the future direction of the Employability Framework. In the final chapter we identify how these principles can be adopted. We also provide a short examination of how and by whom members of the Workstream think they could be delivered.

On the basis of this we would like to recommend that:

- Both generalist and specific services need to be incorporated into the Framework.
- Services should be available for those not yet job ready, those who are and those who have entered the labour market, but particular attention should be paid to service gaps for those who are furthest from the labour market and those who have recently entered employment.
- Competition for funding should be replaced by coherence and pooling of funding.
- Existing good practice should be drawn on and shared in planning and delivering the Framework.

6 Summary and Recommendations

The purpose of the Employability Framework review as a whole was to provide evidence and information that could improve the way in which we help the workless, particularly the 'hard to reach', towards and into work. Within our own Workstream we were asked to develop a clear picture of the workless client groups, the barriers that prevent them from entering the labour market and from sustaining meaningful employment, and the opportunities available to enable them to overcome those barriers. On the basis of this we were asked to provide recommendations regarding the targeting of the framework and the principles of intervention that could act as the basis for the Framework.

We have understood employability as the ability to both gain and sustain employment in the open labour market and have focused on those with the greatest risk of not achieving this transition, because they face additional barriers that prevent them from entering the open labour market or make it difficult for them to sustain employment.

The review has convinced us that a number of significant challenges have to be addressed in drawing up the Employability Framework. These are:

- A client group that is not easily measured and is best seen as a continuum from those closest to the labour market (and possibly even involved in the elementary jobs that leave them at risk of falling back into worklessness) to those whose circumstances prevent them from thinking employment is even possible, when evidence points to it being a real possibility for them.
- Finding ways to overcome a set of barriers facing the workless that involve issues around employers, carers, advisers, family and friends - as well as the workless themselves.
- Finding ways of using a well established understanding of good practice on how to help clients. An understanding, moreover, that is based on experience gathered in the last decade and which could provide the basic principles for intervention, but which a context of competition between services and experience of short term funding has prevented from fully developing.
- A need to clarify ownership and leadership of the overall framework and its constituent parts.

We examine a number of these below and provide some initial recommendations on how the challenges can be faced.

The Client Group

In this section we noted that drawing a complete picture of the workless client group and its component parts is extremely difficult due to data limitations. Nevertheless we found that the overall figure is somewhere near 640,000 and risk factors include:

- Low or no qualifications. Rates of worklessness peak in the 'no qualifications' group at 48.7% (247,000). Those with no qualifications represent just over 35% of the workless population.
- Lack of employment experience. The longer an individual is unemployed the more likely it is that their worklessness will continue. There is a growing divide between work rich and work

poor individuals and households. About two thirds of the workless group have been out of work for over 3 years or have never worked.

- Caring and parenting responsibilities. Lone parents remain one of the largest groups who are workless and want to work. They and others with caring responsibilities often face a combination of low skills, lack of work experience, poorer health and inflexibility in the hours available for them to work.
- Mental health, long term illness and disability. Measuring the numbers of people with mental health problems and/or a physical illness/disability who wish to work is difficult but they represent one of the main target groups that the DWP Pathways to Work Pilots policy are trying to address. The success of this pilot goes some way to demonstrating that people with an illness or disability are capable of, and willing to, work. Over half of the workless client group declare a health problem. Mental health problems represent a major risk factor amongst this group and health is the most significant secondary barrier for most of the client groups within the workless population.
- Location. While not totally related to locality, worklessness is concentrated in certain areas. For example, excluding students, 41% (286,000) of the workless group is found in the 7 local authorities targeted by CtOG Target A, and Glasgow alone accounts for 15.7% (109,000). In addition, the workless are further concentrated in the 15% most deprived areas in each local authority.
- Age. Worklessness increases with age and rates of inactivity within the over 55 age group are extremely high.
- Scotland also has a rate of youth unemployment that is higher than most European countries.
- Smaller but significant groups amongst the workless include those with substance abuse problems, the homeless and ex offenders. Whilst relatively small in number they represent some of the hardest to reach for any employability programme.
- Ethnicity. When the employment levels of all ethnic minority groups are combined and measured against the level of Whites a gap is found. This is called the employment rate gap. In England this gap has persisted for over 15 years at around 16 percentage points. In Scotland, the gap is greater – it is 19 percentage points. The Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African/Black Scottish groups have the highest unemployment rates, and are comparable with rates in England.

Key issues that the workstream discussed as part of its overview included the difficulties of measurement and the need to recognise that judgements will need to be made over the groups that become the focus of a Scottish Employability framework. There are difficulties in measuring the exact size of the workless group and its sub sections. Different methods of measurement, for example, exist between the Census, Labour Force Survey, and for some sub groups there is simply no accurate way of estimating numbers involved. Decisions over priorities will therefore involve some element of political and value judgement. Decisions must also be taken over the extent to which resources should take into account the situation where some groups presently receive very limited support. Simply focusing on the 'workless who want to work' may limit the possibility of reducing over the

longer term the more intractable barriers that discrimination and social exclusion create and the lack of engagement with work that results.

Focussing on the 'workless' as a whole may produce so wide a group as to make policy and resources too widely spread. Decisions over priorities will have to involve an assessment of the cost and benefit of including the hardest to reach groups or those closest to the labour market in the short, medium and long term. In addition members of the group also felt that there was a need to complement initiatives currently being undertaken by Job Centre Plus with particular groups, if Executive money is to add most value. At the same time members felt that it was important to recognise the additional groups that could be brought into a Scottish employability framework to ensure that it is not totally dominated by Job Centre Plus policy.

Client group recommendations.

On the basis of this review we would like to recommend that:

- Improved baseline information is required for sub-groups of the workless population, if realistic targets are to be set for improvements in the rates of worklessness among particular groups.
- The national aspiration to halve the differential between employment and unemployment rates amongst the most and least disadvantaged wards be reaffirmed as part of the Employability Framework.
- The Employability Framework sets ambitious targets for a reduction in the differences in the employment rate between the working age population as a whole and lone parents, people in ethnic minorities, those with health problems, the homeless, ex offenders and those recovering from substance abuse.
- The CtOG target F, to improve the attainment of the lowest performing S4 pupils be incorporated into the Employability framework.

Barriers and routes into work

Key points that we have made in this section are: -

- Worklessness may, in part, result from an overall shortage of job opportunities and requires action to stimulate local job generation but 'economic' development and 'employment' development are not automatically linked. There is no guarantee that new jobs will be accessed by those who are workless.
- Worklessness may reflect a weak connection between the job opportunities that are available and the ability of workless people to access these opportunities.
- We have identified a large number of barriers that affect a client's chances of obtaining and retaining a job. Each individual faces a unique set of barriers, although certain barriers are more prevalent among particular client groups. We concluded that the barriers to sustainable employment can be divided into:

- Structural: Barriers such as the cost, availability or ease of access to services and benefits as well as the state of the local labour market.
 - Attitudinal: Including the attitudes and recruitment practices of employers, or of carers and support workers (institutional or family) whose low expectations may lead to low levels of support or inappropriate support.
 - Personal: The circumstances, skills and attitudes of the workless individual themselves, including fear of losing benefits, low self-esteem, an inability to self motivate, a lack of skills, poor health, caring responsibilities, poor employment record and/or a lack of mobility/willingness to travel.
- Programmes that seek to address the barriers to employment facing individuals have tended to focus on facilitating the transition into work. However, it is important to recognise that worklessness is not a static condition. The way in which people return to work after a lengthy period out of work is an issue that needs to be addressed, as well as the type of jobs that are available for this group. Barriers to successful sustained employment change as an individual progresses along the route to employment. In the next chapter we examine the stages on an individual's journey into sustainable employment.
- Programmes focussed on tackling the barriers facing individuals trying to enter employment have tended to focus on facilitating the transition into work. However, it is important to recognise that worklessness is not a static condition.
 - The way in which people return to work after a lengthy period out of work is an issue that needs to be addressed, as well as the type of jobs that are available for this group. Barriers to successful sustained employment change as an individual progresses along the route to employment.
 - The route into work is a complex one that involves engagement, developing skills, gaining appropriate work experience, readjusting other elements of an individual's life, changing clients' attitudes/ambitions, and developing an ability to make sense of Benefit rules and employers demands.
 - It is a route that is made more easily by some than others even within the 'hard to reach' group and is one that does not always produce effective means of overcoming poverty.
 - Profiling an individual's position on the route – i.e. the distance they have travelled is an important way of identifying current and future needs.
 - Access to appropriate services for specific groups and specific stages are key to successful and long term progress towards work that pays.

Recommendations relating to reducing the barriers and widening the routes into work

On the basis of our review we would like to recommend that:

- Full account of local labour market conditions is taken when developing local elements of the employability framework.
- Employers, carers and communities should be made more aware of the benefit of work and their potential role in implementing the recommendations of an Employability Framework.

- More should be done to reach people who currently slip past existing active labour market policies.
- A major emphasis of support for workless people should be on the enhancement of their skills and opportunities to engage with the existing labour market.
- The needs of specific groups of excluded people should be recognised and specialist support provided that moves them towards more generic employment provision and sustains them once they enter the labour market.
- Improved access to realistic activities and proven services that have the confidence of unemployed people and convince them they will get and hold down a job i.e. able to engage and support at each stage, including post employment;
- The development of soft and hard skills at appropriate points and in ways that inspire confidence;
- The development of job search and work experience at appropriate stages, and based on choice;
- Access to specialist advice when needed before and after entry to employment, including information about relevant skills training, financial advice about debt or benefit entitlements, childcare and information about sources of help for people with housing difficulties;
- Access to impartial and flexible employment and benefits advice and support; and
- Access to employment focussed support from an early stage.

Current provision and good practice

Key points that we have made in this section are:-

- The types of services which offer routes into work differ greatly depending on which type of economically active individual is being supported. There is a huge spectrum of activity already occurring.
- Existing services can, however, be categorised into a number of stages that a client may undertake on their path towards employment. These include services for those who are not yet job ready, those who are and those who have entered the labour market. At present services tend to mainly focus on the job ready.
- Activities involved in developing employability among those some way from the labour market include: direct services to clients; cross agency work developing policy; some elements of co-ordinated delivery; and attempts to move mainstream services towards a recognition of the relationship between employability and social disadvantage.
- Key stakeholders in the sector feel that there are gaps in current provision: not all clients are served adequately; funding regimes and target setting support cherry-picking of 'easier to help' clients; expertise is often lost due to short term funding and some groups needs are met in a way that separates them unnecessarily from others (e.g. refugees). Preferences for a future 'employability service' include: generalist support alongside referral to specialist

services; improved case management of clients; increased accessibility of the New Deal to those furthest from the labour market; and the availability of both short and long term support for clients.

Recommendations for developing good practice

Our recommendations are:

- Both generalist and specific services need to be incorporated into the Framework.
- Services should be available for those not yet job ready, those who are and those who have entered the labour market, but particular attention should be paid to service gaps for those who are furthest from the labour market and those who have recently entered employment.
- Competition for funding should be replaced by coherence and pooling of funding.
- Existing good practice should be drawn on and shared in planning and delivering the Framework.

Principles of intervention

We explored what sort of services would be most appropriate for the groups that were the focus of our Workstream and identified a number of principles of intervention for adoption by all agencies as part of a future Employability Framework. These are listed below, with related recommendations.

1 Geared to Client Needs

The wide, but often overlapping, range of needs of disadvantaged groups trying to progress towards work relate to differences in the structural, attitudinal and personal barriers they face, and also in their progress on a range of indicators (including both personal/social and employment related). We therefore recommend:

- Client centred services in order to respond to the range of individual needs. But care should be taken to avoid any silo effect (i.e. services should not result in labelling groups in inappropriate ways).
- A holistic approach that assists individuals to overcome their unique set of personal, social and institutional barriers; from engagement through to sustained employment.

2 Employability focused

Evidence suggests that many within the workless group view work positively, but that the concept of working is often not incorporated into the advice and support they receive from specialist agencies. We therefore recommend:

- The enhancement of work related advice in environments that are trusted by the most disadvantaged, but where employability advice has historically been low.
- Raising awareness of positive attitudes amongst employers and agencies involved in supporting many of the groups we have been considering.

3 Flexible

Clients move towards employment through different routes, some faster than others, some only after a few 'starts'. This relates in part to the difficulties faced by individuals themselves, but also to the nature of entry level and low paid jobs in the labour market. We therefore recommend:

- The development of flexible routes into work and acceptance of incremental as well as systematic change.
- The encouragement of progression alongside continued support and a willingness to 'stay with' the client even when progression falters.
- Discretion and flexibility when dealing with clients.

4 Evidencing progress

Two key issues for those some distance from the labour market, or even engaged in low skilled and low paid jobs appear to be a lack of confidence and a lack of skills. This is often reinforced by a lack of tangible progress as a result of employability interventions – the 'cycling' effect as clients pass through a range of similar services without progressing. Interventions must therefore be 'for a purpose' and must evidence some measurable benefit to an individual on a model of 'distance travelled'. Too many interventions are focussed on 'throughput' and not enough success is measured by 'outcomes' for the client (be they 'soft' or 'hard'). Providing positive feedback to those with low self-esteem is an important part of support towards employment. We therefore recommend:

- A key worker or mentoring approach where individuals can be encouraged to see the developments they have obtained (however small) and helped to identify their own goals
- The development of a common tracking system whereby 'distance travelled' information is available to and owned by both client and case manager.
- The passing on of clients and their 'case history' between support agencies when appropriate.
- A greater focus in funding agreements for employability services on client 'outcomes', rather than 'output' measures.

5 Long term support

Although support needs will vary across different groups, the complex nature of barriers, and the evidence that barriers re-appear at different times and in different contexts suggests there is a need for long term support as well as short term interventions. There is also evidence that suggests that more support is needed once clients enter work, to enable them to tackle the barriers that may then arise, enabling them to sustain work and prevent them 'cycling' in and out of low paid, low skilled work. We therefore recommend:

- Long-term support towards employability that follows clients for a significant period and supports them up to and into employment.
- Support that encourages engagement and is able to refer clients towards the activities that address the personal, family and skills issues that arise at different times and affect their employability (often at times of crisis/change).

- A key worker approach that enables personalised, long-term support to be provided by a trusted individual who can identify the most suitable service for an individual to help overcome specific barriers.

6 Based on trust and honest brokering

Many of the groups we have been asked to consider will have experienced discrimination and exclusion. Research suggests that they find it difficult to trust employers and official employment agencies. In addition, as mentioned above, a lack of tangible progress may reinforce feelings of mistrust whereby clients do not perceive that they are being helped to make progress. We recommend:

- A non judgemental but honest environment of support where trust can be developed between client, support agency and employer.
- The availability of workers with employment guidance skills in environments that are trusted by disadvantaged groups. This could also include job-brokering skills to assist the negotiation between potential employer and client.
- Responses that allow clients and employers to 'test the water' – for example, flexible benefits that encourage clients to make the transition to work.

7 Based on a co-ordinated response

There is growing evidence that advice and referral between agencies can lead to the 'transferability' of confidence and commitment. We therefore recommend:

- Continued moves towards a more co-ordinated response between agencies e.g. health/social care and employability.
- Cross sectoral training to allow greater understanding of the role that different agencies and professionals can play and the potential for referral.
- The development of a common tracking system that enables distance travelled to be measured and the effective transfer of clients between agencies.

8 Engaging with clients to develop services

Incorporating the views of end-users/clients into the design and review of services has been shown to have the potential to improve their effectiveness. Whilst some clients will not be willing or able to contribute to service development, particularly at times of crisis and change, others will want to contribute their views and experience to service development, or at least to plans for delivery of their own service. We therefore recommend:

- The incorporation of the views of clients and frontline workers into service design.
- Early recognition of an individual's ability to contribute to their plans for progression.
- Stronger recognition of how client views can improve the quality and efficiency of service.

9 Cross sectoral work that also maintains specialist knowledge

Whilst the above are principles of intervention that could be incorporated into many existing services (and indeed may already be so) evidence suggests that some agencies are probably better placed to work in certain ways or to address particular barriers. We therefore recommend:

- Continual cross sectoral training where good practice can be shared and referral possibilities explored.
- Maintenance of specialist knowledge for particular client groups or particular points on the 'distance travelled' model.
- The adoption of the principle of 'comparative advantage' when tailoring a package of support for individual clients – that ensures that the most appropriate agency tackles a particular barrier or development need. One agency need not provide all the services a client needs. Rather, if effective tracking and co-ordination is in place, a range of agencies can provide different elements of that support when best placed to do so.

Ways forward

Our final task was to identify how our recommendations could be taken forward. We spent less time on this than the other tasks we were charged with as the Interventions Workstream were looking at it in some detail. Nevertheless we identified some essential ways forward for the short term (i.e. in the next three years):

- A focus on those who want to work, or those that previous experience has shown want to work if barriers are addressed;
- The balancing of supply and demand side policies – i.e. ensuring that the workless are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to undertake the jobs that are, or are likely to become, available locally;
- A policy framework that adds to UK DWP strategy, but does not merely parallel or duplicate that strategy;
- A focus on changing hearts and minds of employers and key workers;
- Creating a clearer funding structure, and encouraging more 'pooled bids' for resources by local and national partners;
- A clarification of the policy framework, with clear Ministerial ownership and a Lead Partner accountable for implementing specific elements of the Framework. We did not identify who the lead partner should be but felt that if the Framework was to produce effective change there needed to be a system of ownership and accountability;
- A clarification of frameworks for funding services, managing delivery, developing support systems and co-ordinating staff development at a local level; and
- The establishment of bilateral or multilateral agreements between agencies, where necessary to devolve and hold implementation accountable.

APPENDIX A: WORKSTREAM MEMBERS

Chair

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Secretariat

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Core Members

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Lilias Noble
Sheena Ogg
Pam Orchard
John Reid
Sheila Durie
Janice Hewitt
Anna Donald
Norman Dunning
One Plus
Scottish Enterprise
Careers Scotland
Scottish Executive ETLLD
Glasgow Drug Action Team
Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Scottish Executive ETLLD Analytical Services
Communities Scotland
Jobcentre Plus BDM, Grampian & Tayside District
Edinburgh Cyrenians
Jobcentre Plus HIC
Scottish Development Centre
Scottish Prison Service
Scottish Executive Homelessness Team
ENABLE

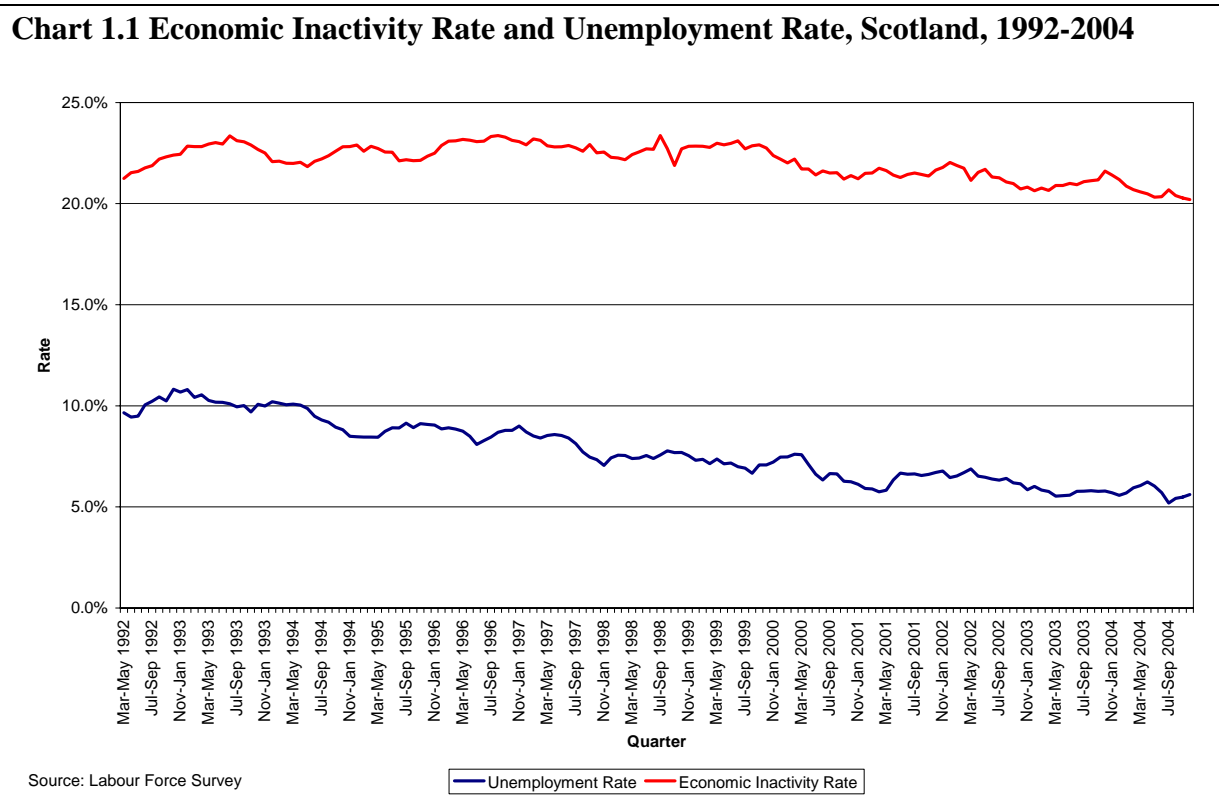
Reference Group

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Alistair Shaw
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Scottish Executive Health Department
Glasgow Homelessness Network
Senior Partnership Development Manager, Jobcentre Plus HIC
Scottish Adult Learning Partnership
Scottish Executive Education Department
Scottish Council for Single Homeless
Scottish Executive: European Social Funds
Department for Work and Pensions
Scottish Association for Mental Health
Scotland's Health At Work
National Programme for Mental Health And Well Being
Scottish Executive Equality Unit
APEX
Scottish University for Industry (Learn Direct Scotland)
Disability Rights Commission
Scottish Refugee Council
Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability
National Autistic Society in Scotland
West Lothian Council

APPENDIX B: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF DATA ON THE WORKLESS CLIENT GROUP UNDERTAKEN BY SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE ETLTD ANALYTICAL SERVICES DIVISION

1. Background

1. In December 2004 the Scottish Executive announced the introduction of 10 Closing the Opportunity Gap (CtOG) targets. Target A is to reduce the number of working age people claiming key benefits in 7 Local Authorities in Scotland. The employability framework will support the delivery of this target along with helping to reduce the level of worklessness in Scotland in general.
2. The workless population which the CtOG target is interested in are those who are unemployed and those who are claiming inactive benefits. The majority of this paper will look at all unemployed and economically inactive people as it is often not possible to determine whether people are claiming benefits with the sources available.
3. Chart 1.1 below shows the economic inactivity rate⁵¹ and unemployment rate⁵² for Scotland from 1992 to 2004. The chart clearly shows that although the unemployment rate has reduced considerably over the last 10 years or so, the economic inactivity rate has only dropped slightly remaining at above 20% in the latest quarter.



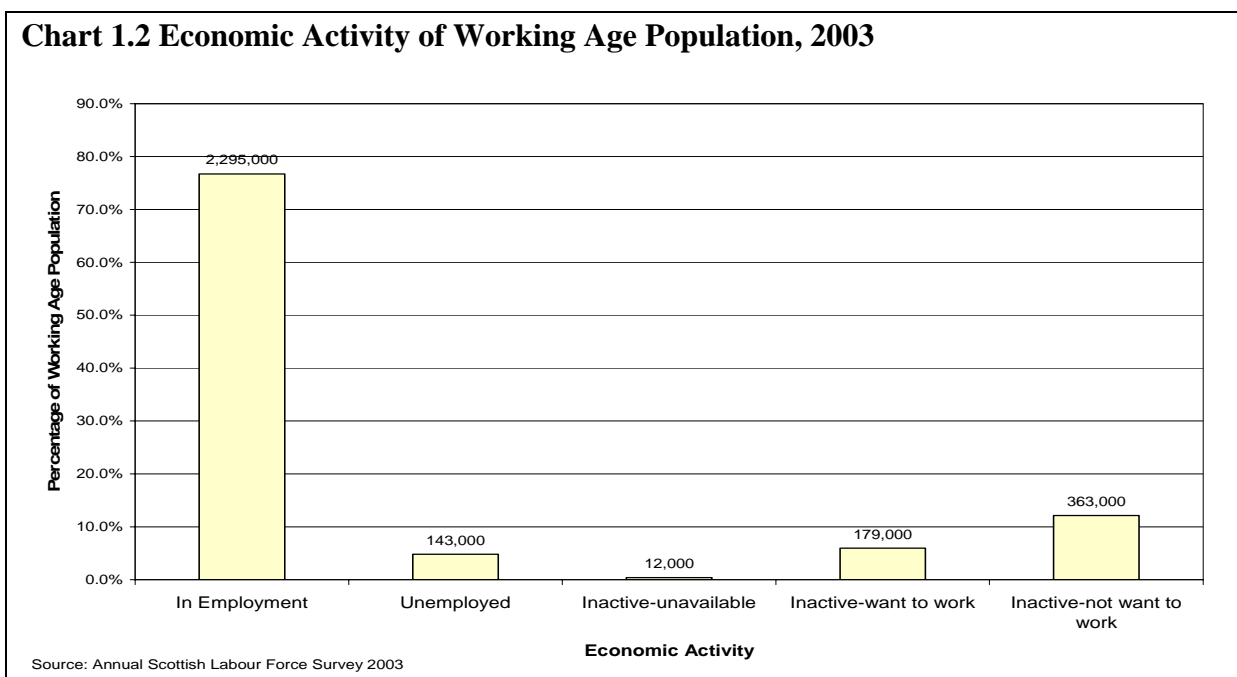
⁵¹ Working age

⁵² As a proportion of the economically active population, 16+

4. As mentioned earlier it is not always possible to identify the workless group claiming benefits. However using the Labour Force Survey (LFS) it is possible to get a measure of the different types of economic activity. The economic activity indicator in the LFS can be broken down into 5 main categories. **Note that, where possible, students have been removed from this analysis** as they can often distort the characteristics of the economically inactive population. The five categories are:

- In employment
- Unemployed
- Economically inactive – Seeking employment but currently unavailable
- Economically inactive – Not Seeking but would like to work
- Economically inactive – Not Seeking and would not like to work

5. The last three categories can be broken down into more detailed categories which give reasons for being in these categories such as sick or disabled, student or looking after family/home. Chart 1.2 below shows the proportion of the working age population⁵³ which fall into each of the 5 categories.



6. Chart 1.2 shows that the vast majority of the working age population are in employment at over 73%. 4.6% of the working age population are unemployed and only 22% of the working age population are economically inactive. Of those who are inactive just over a half do not want to work (approximately 12% of all working age people). For the purposes of this paper the interest lies in the inactive and unemployed groups but for

⁵³ The working age population is defined as males aged 16-64 and females aged 16-59

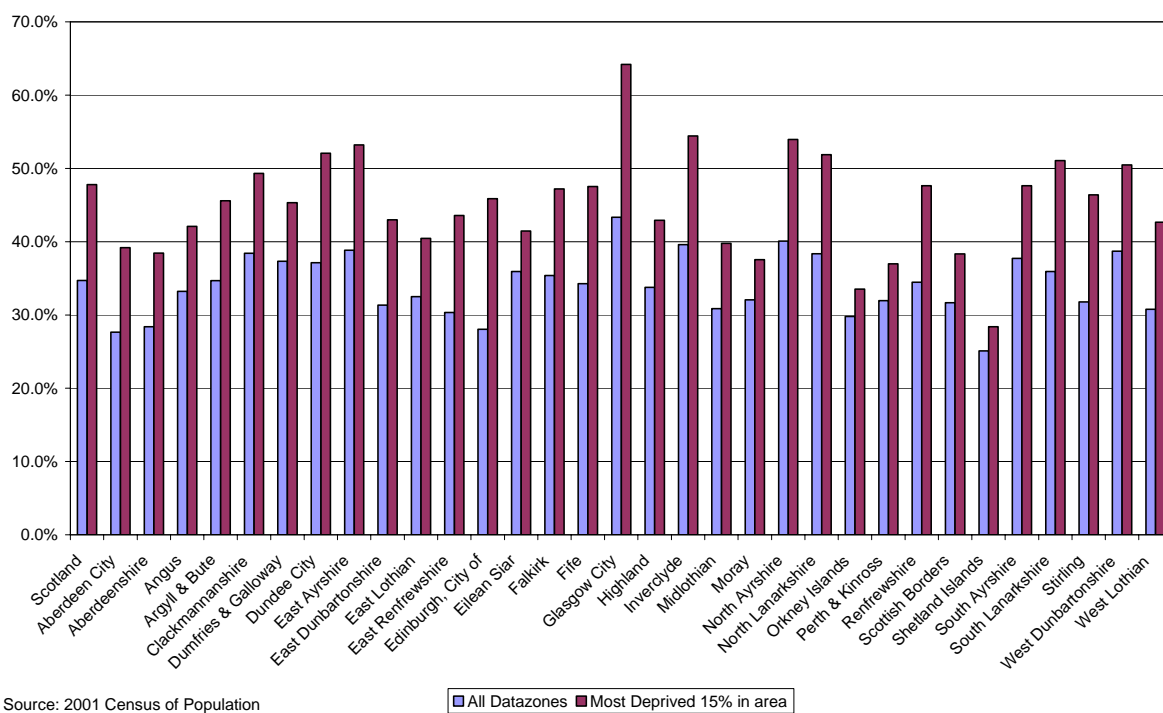
some of the analysis will also split the groups by whether they want to work or not. There are therefore now 3 separate groups:

- In employment
- Inactive – Don't want to work
- Workless-want to work

7. The workless-want to work group is made up of approximately 334,000 people (143,000 unemployed, 12,000 unavailable and 179,000 inactive but wanting to work). The inactive-don't want to work is made up of approximately 363,000 people.
8. As well as looking at worklessness issues for Scotland as a whole this paper will look at data at a Local Authority area level to determine any major differences at a local level. Where possible, data will be used to look at the 15% most deprived areas⁵⁴ within each Local Authority area also. Note that these are not the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland. Looking at the 15% most deprived areas of each Local Authority area allows analysis of data for all Local Authority areas.
9. Chart 1.3 below shows the rate of worklessness for the 16-74 year old population by LA area for the full area and also for the 15% most deprived in each area. The chart shows that worklessness varies across the majority of LA areas between 25% and 40%. Glasgow is the one exception with a worklessness rate of over 40%. It should be noted that as this data is for the 16-74 population a proportion of this group will be retired so these rates are slightly higher than would be expected.
10. The Chart also clearly shows a marked increase in the worklessness rate of each local Authority when looking at the 15% most deprived datazones within each LA area. Dundee, East Ayrshire, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire and North Lanarkshire all increase to over 50% worklessness with Glasgow increasing to over 60%.

⁵⁴ As defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). More information on the SIMD can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/government/glsimd.pdf>

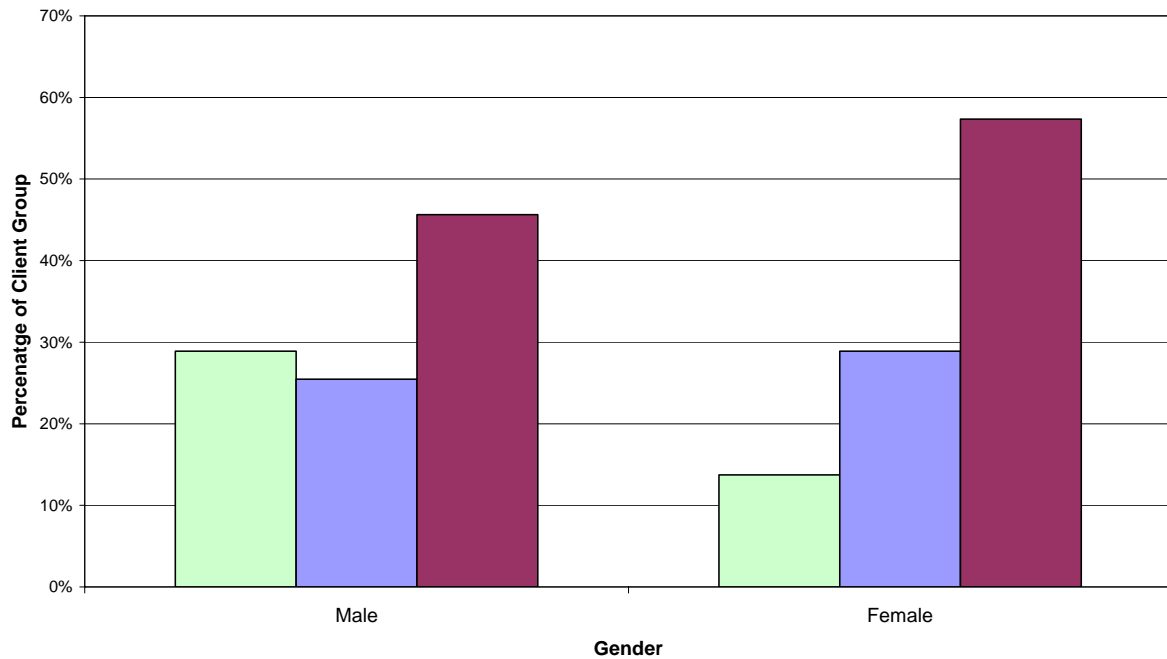
Chart 1.3 Worklessness Rate for 16-74 year old Population by LA area



2. Age and Gender

11. The proportion of working age people who are workless is higher for females (26.2%, 383,000) than for males (20.5%, 314,000). Chart 2.1 shows that the economic make up of the workless client group is also different for males and females. Almost 60% (220,000) of workless females are inactive-don't want to work whereas for males this drops to just over 45% (143,000). Of those males who do want to almost 55% (91,000) are unemployed as opposed to inactive whereas for females just over 30% (53,000) of people who want to work are unemployed. Note the measure of unemployment used here is the ILO unemployed which covers those who are: out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the previous fortnight; or out of work and have accepted a job that they are waiting to start in the next fortnight.

Chart 2.1 Workless Client Group by Gender and Economic Status

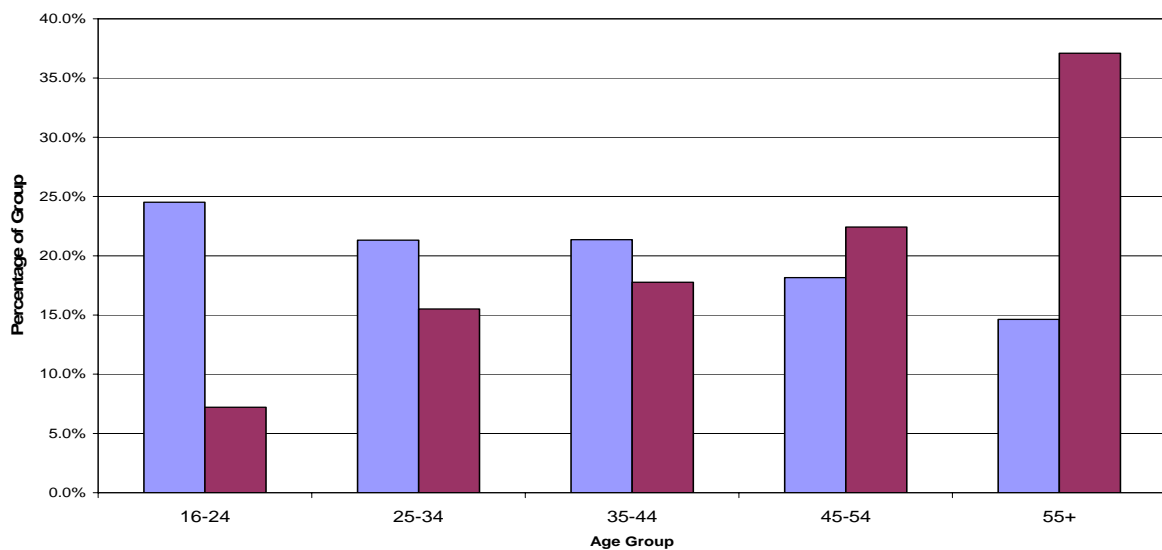


Source: Annual Scottish Labour Force Survey 2003

Legend: Unemployed (light green), Workless-want to work (blue), Inactive-don't want to work (maroon)

12. Chart 2.2 shows the age breakdown of the two workless groups. As would be expected the inactive-don't want to work group have a slightly older age profile with nearly 60% (216,000) being older than 45. However, there are still over 20% (82,000) of this group are aged between 16 and 34. The Workless-want to work group has a much younger age profile with over 45% (153,000) under the age of 35.

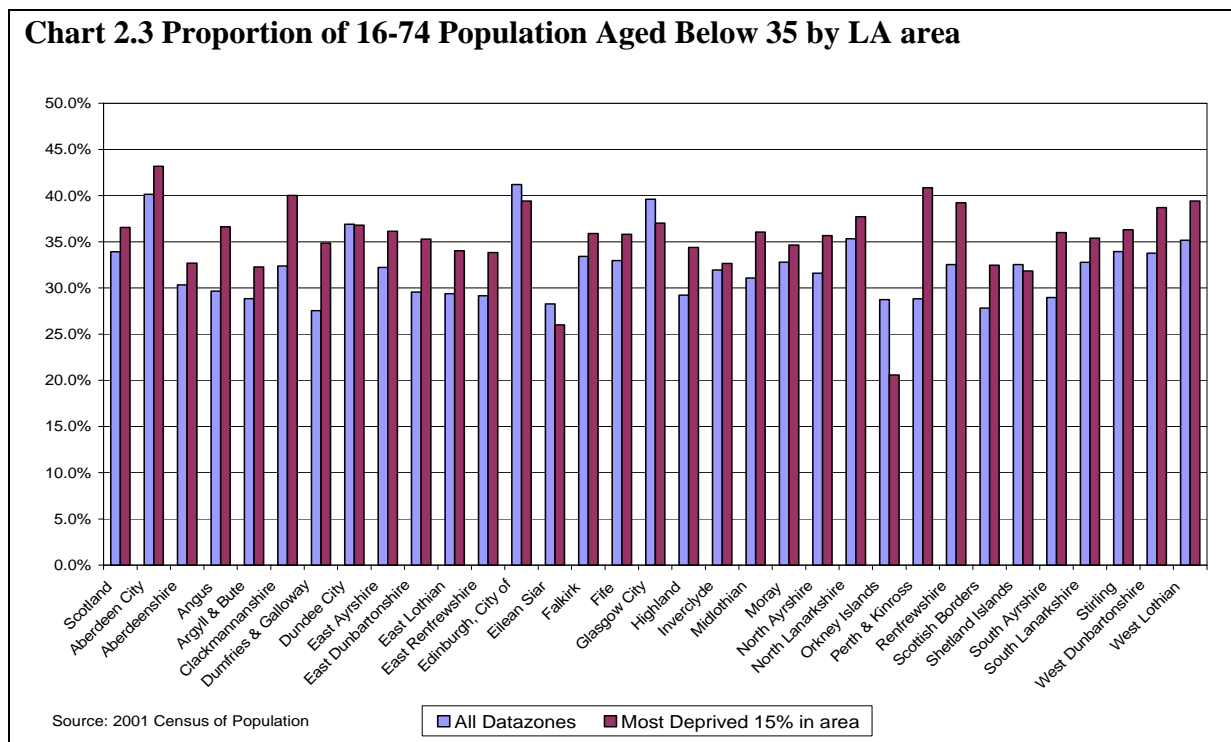
Chart 2.2 The Workless Client Group by Age Band



Source: Annual Scottish Labour Force Survey 2003

Legend: Workless-want to work (blue), Inactive-don't want to work (maroon)

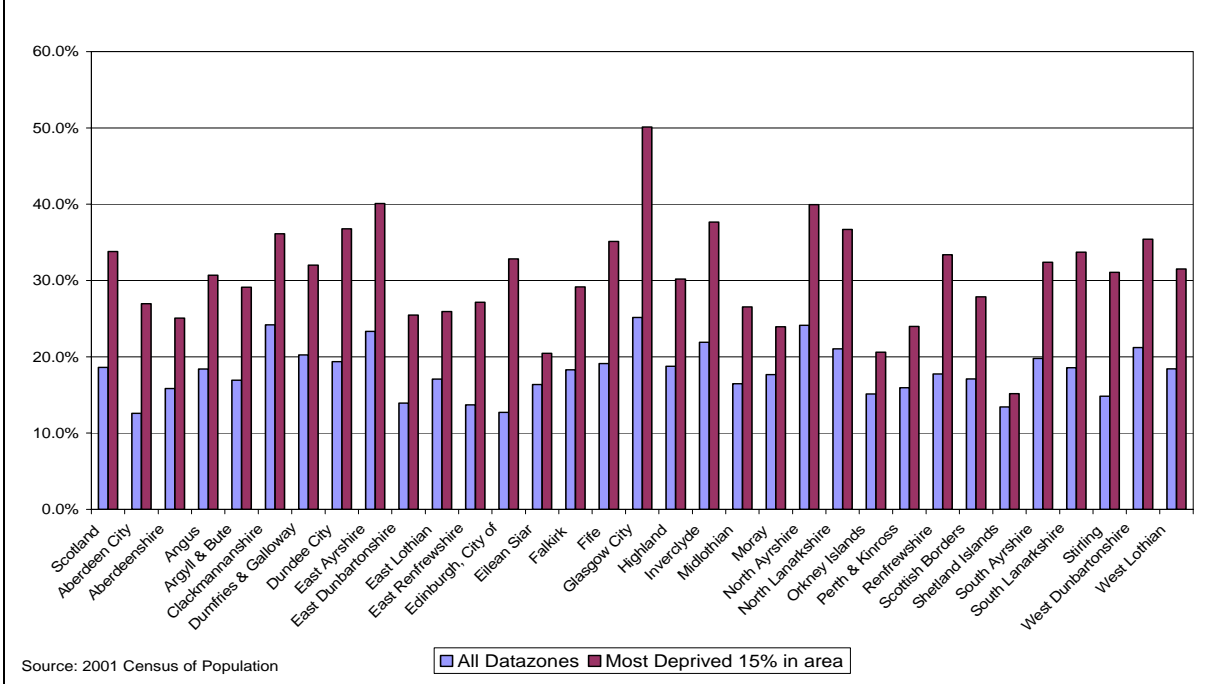
13. Looking at Local Authority areas, chart 2.3 below shows the proportion of people aged 16-74 who are aged less than 35 by Local Authority area. The proportion in the 15% most deprived areas in each LA are also shown.



14. The chart shows that there is a reasonably similar proportion of under 35's in most LA areas. Aberdeen city, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow seem to have a slightly higher proportion of under 35's but this is likely to be due to the student populations in these areas. The chart also shows that the proportion of under 35's increases within the 15% most deprived areas for most LA areas.

15. Chart 2.4 shows the worklessness rate amongst 16-34 year olds by each LA area. The chart shows that worklessness amongst 16-34 year olds is between 10% and 20% for most LA areas. When looking at the 15% most deprived areas within each LA area the worklessness rate increases considerably for each LA area. This is true particularly in Glasgow where the worklessness rate amongst 16-34 year olds increases from 25% to 50%.

Chart 2.4 Worklessness Rate Amongst 16-34 year olds by LA Area



16. Looking at the older population in each Local Authority Area chart 2.5 shows the proportion of over 50's in each LA area. Also chart 2.6 shows the worklessness rate amongst the over 50's by LA area.

Chart 2.5 Proportion of 16-74 Population Aged 50 or Over by LA area

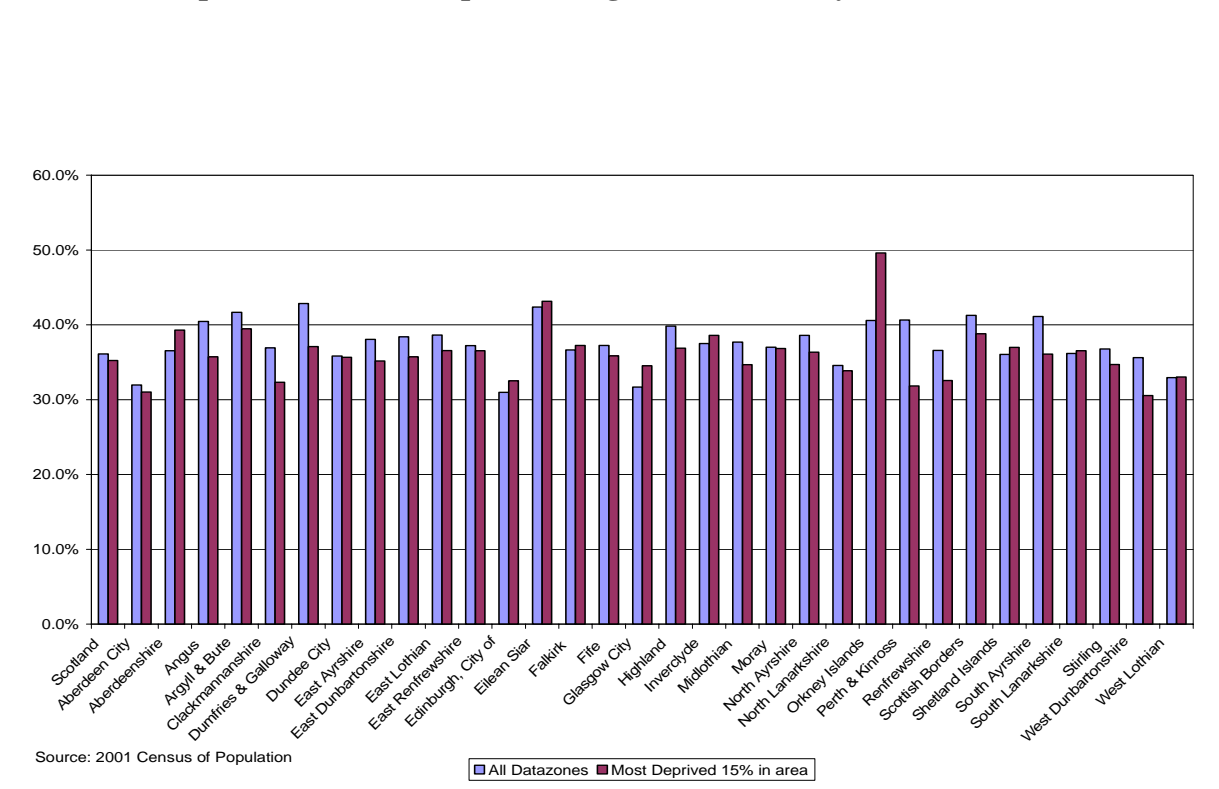
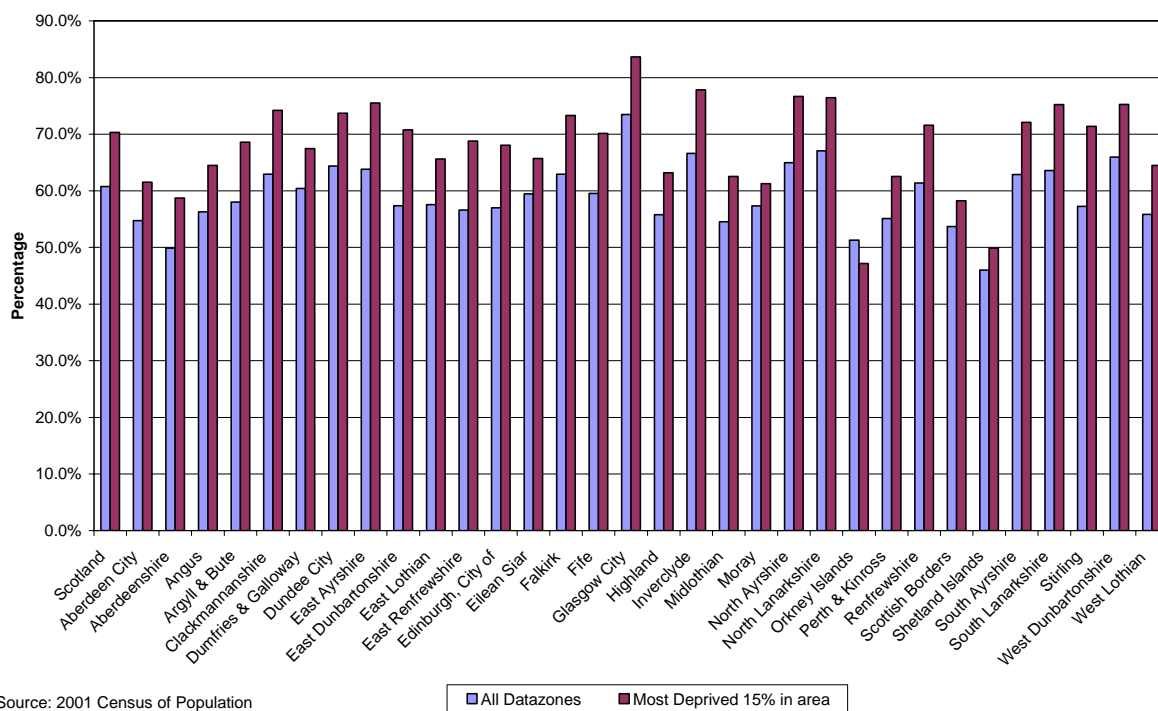


Chart 2.6 Worklessness Rate Amongst Those Aged 50 and Over by LA Area



17. Chart 2.5 shows that the proportion of over 50's are reasonably similar across the Local Authority areas with between 30% and 40% of the 16-74 year old population aged 50 or over. There is very little difference when looking at the most 15% deprived areas within each Local Authority area.

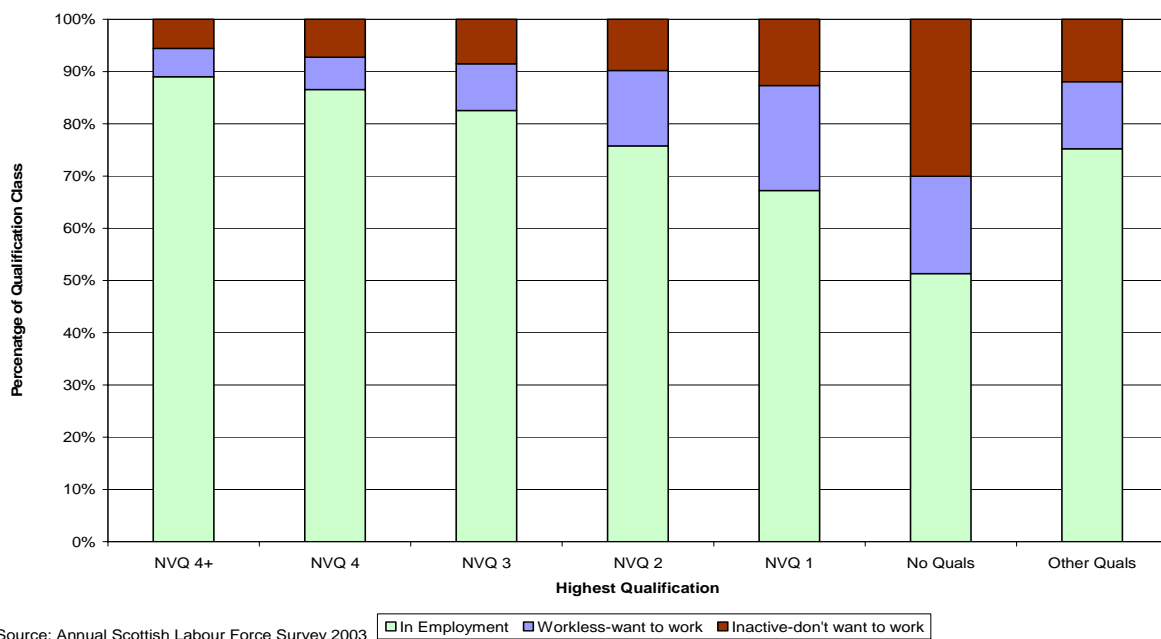
18. Chart 2.6 shows that the worklessness rate amongst those aged 50 and over is very high in most Local Authority areas. Glasgow has a particularly high rate with over 70% of people aged 50-74 being workless increasing to over 80% of those aged 50-74 being workless in the 15% most deprived areas of Glasgow.

3. Qualifications

19. Lack of qualifications have often been quoted as a major barrier to employment particularly those with less than NVQ level 2 qualifications. Chart 3.1, overleaf, shows the 3 economic activity groups by highest level of qualification.

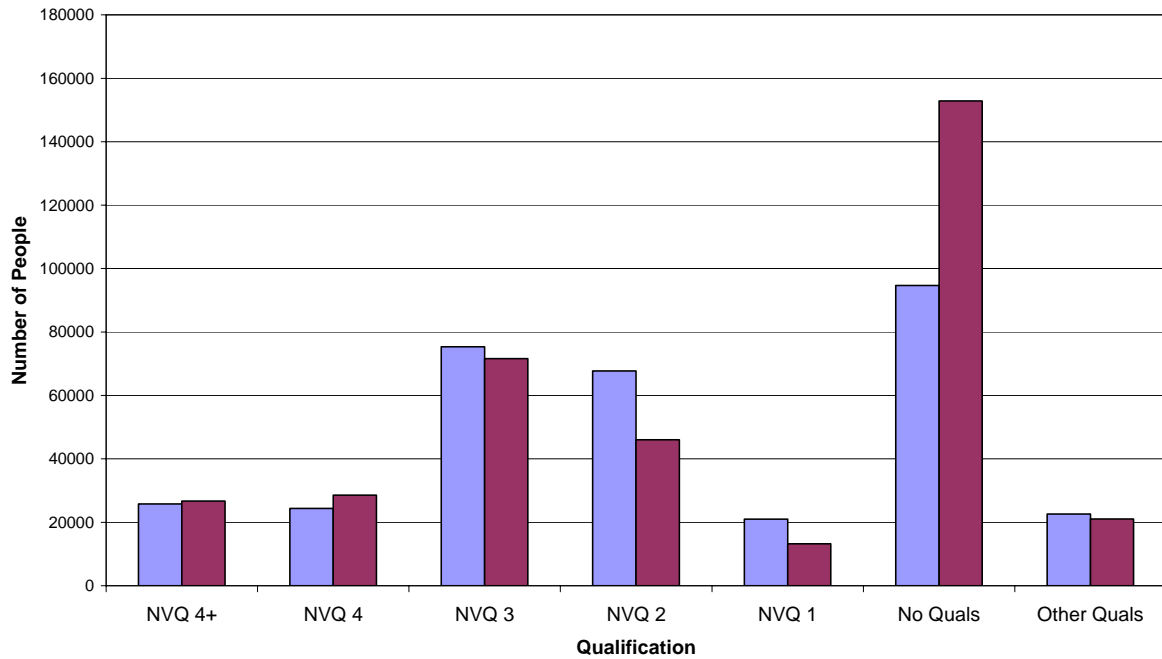
20. The chart shows that the working age employment rate declines steadily as the qualification levels decline (excluding other qualifications) ending with the no qualifications group which has an employment rate of 51.3% (261,000). The chart also shows that there is a willingness to work (in employment plus workless-want to work) of well over 80% for all qualifications groups except the no qualifications group.

Chart 3.1 Economic activity grouping by highest qualification



21. Concentrating on just the workless client groups' chart 3.2 shows the qualifications breakdown for these groups. The chart shows that the majority of both groups are made up of those with NVQ level 2 qualifications or below. The chart also shows that there is a considerable amount of people with no qualifications who do not want to work (153,000).

Chart 3.2 Workless client groups by highest qualification

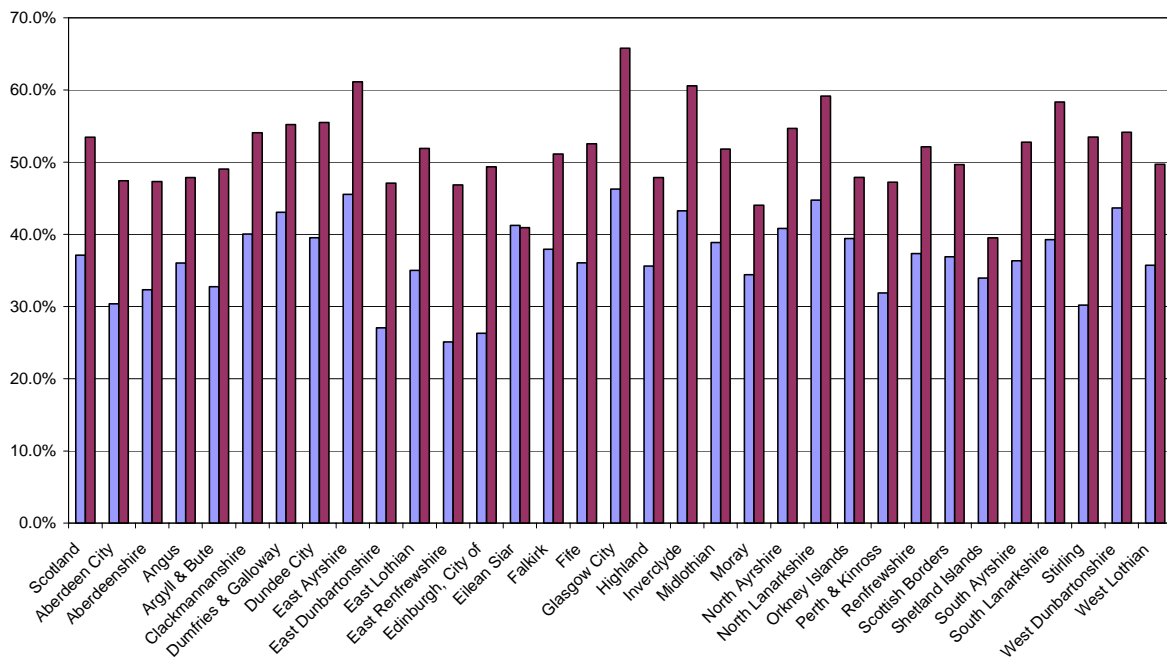


Source: Annual Scottish Labour Force Survey 2003

Legend: Workless-want to work (blue), Inactive-don't want to work (maroon)

22. Chart 3.3 shows the proportion of people aged 25-74 with no qualifications by LA area. The chart shows that most Local Authorities have between 30% and 40% of the 25-74 population with no qualifications. Glasgow and East Ayrshire have particularly high rates of people with no qualifications, at just over 45%, and Edinburgh and East Renfrewshire have particularly low rates at just over 25%

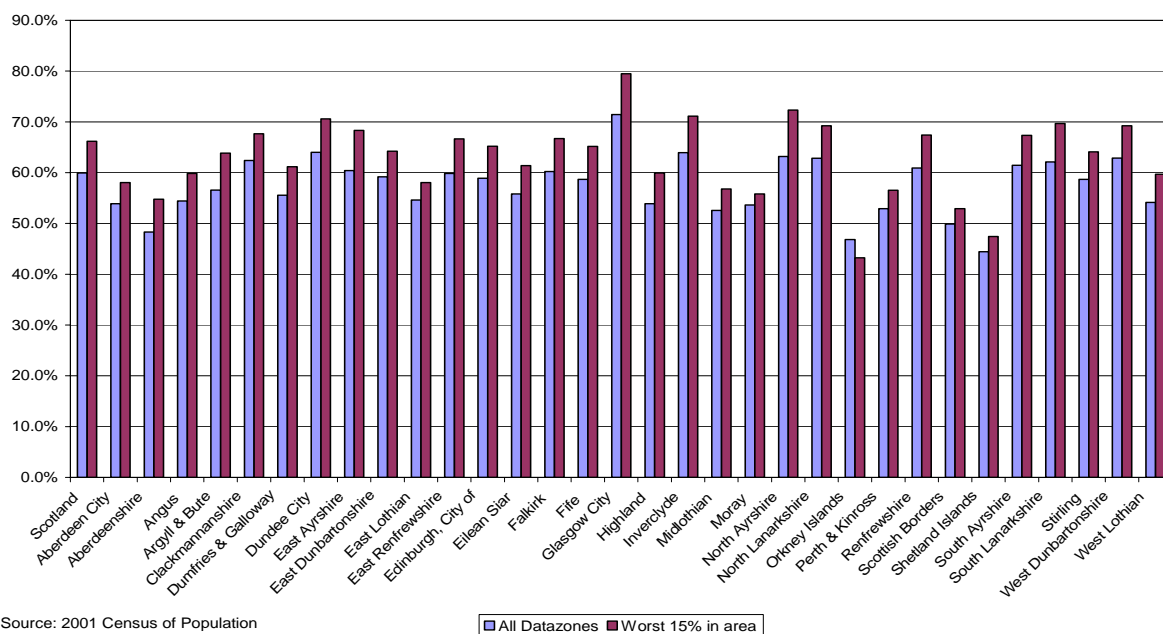
Chart 3.3 Proportion of 25-74 Year Olds with No Qualifications



Source: 2001 Census of Population

Legend: All Datazones (blue), Most Deprived 15% in area (maroon)

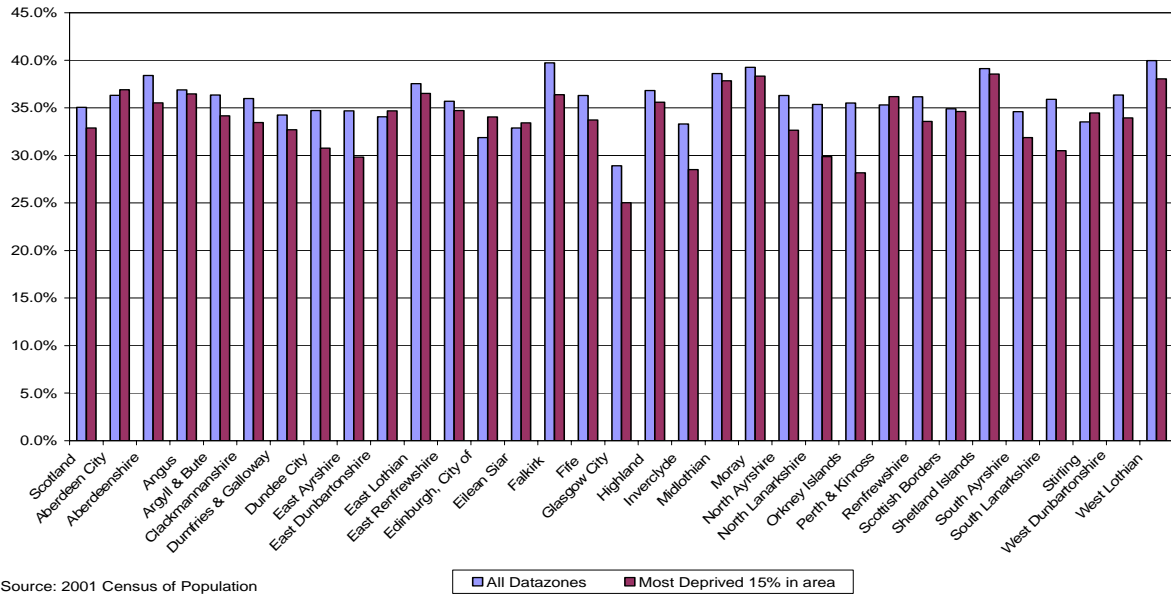
Chart 3.4 Worklessness Rate Amongst Those Aged 25-74 With No Qualifications



23. Chart 3.4 shows the workless rate amongst those with no qualifications by LA area. The chart shows that there is not much difference between the worklessness rate of those with no qualifications in LA's in general and the 15% most deprived datazones. This suggests that perhaps lack of qualifications is a barrier to employment independent of whether a person in a deprived area or not.

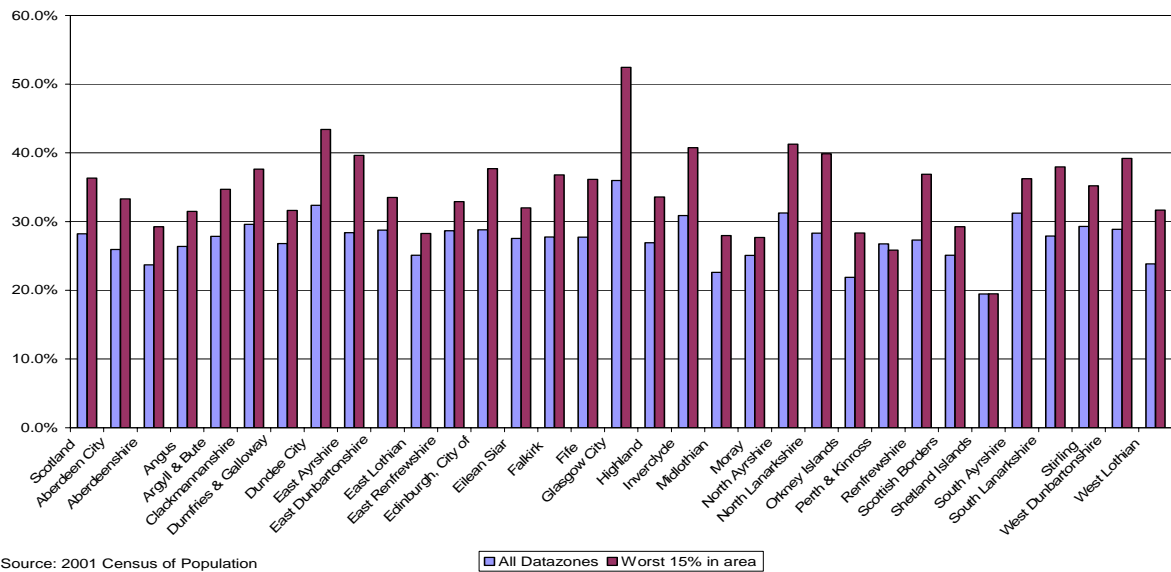
24. As shown earlier having low qualifications can be a barrier as well as having no qualifications. Chart 3.5 shows the proportion of the 25-74 population with low qualifications by Local Authority Area. Chart 3.6 shows the worklessness rate amongst those with low qualifications.

Chart 3.5 Proportion of 25-74 Year Olds with Low Qualifications



Source: 2001 Census of Population

Chart 3.6 Worklessness Rate Amongst Those Aged 25-74 With Low Qualifications



Source: 2001 Census of Population

25. Chart 3.5 shows that between 25% and 40% of 25-74 year olds in each Local Authority Area have low qualifications. The chart also shows that there is actually a lower proportion of people in the 15% deprived areas with low qualifications in most Local Authority areas. However, this is balanced out by the fact that a much higher proportion of people living in the 15% most deprived areas have no qualifications as shown in chart 3.3.

26. Chart 3.6 shows that the worklessness rate for those who have low qualifications is considerably lower than those with no qualifications. The chart also shows that there is a marked increase in worklessness amongst those with low qualifications when looking at

the 15% most deprived areas. This suggests that, contrary to the no qualifications group, the extra barrier of deprivation has a considerable effect on those with low qualifications.

27. As well low qualifications being a major barrier to employment many people in Scotland lack numeracy and literacy skills which can also be a major barrier to employment. Research shows that around 800,000 adults in Scotland have very low literacy and numeracy skills⁵⁵. This research also shows that those with low literacy and numeracy skills tend to live in economically disadvantaged areas and may have a health problem or disability affecting learning, speech sight or hearing.

⁵⁵ Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland, Scottish Executive

4. Last Occupation

28. The Labour Force Survey collects information on the duration since last having a job and also the last occupation individuals had. Chart 4.1 shows the workless client groups by duration since last employment. The chart shows that the willingness of people to work decreases considerably the longer the individuals are out of employment with only 33% (98,000) of those out of work for over 5 years still wanting to work.

29. Chart 4.2 shows the workless client groups broken down by duration since last employment. The chart shows that over half (180,000) of the workless-want to work group have been out of work over 3 years and this rises to over 3 quarters (277,000) when looking at the inactive-don't want to work group. This could have important implications when trying to help these people into employment.

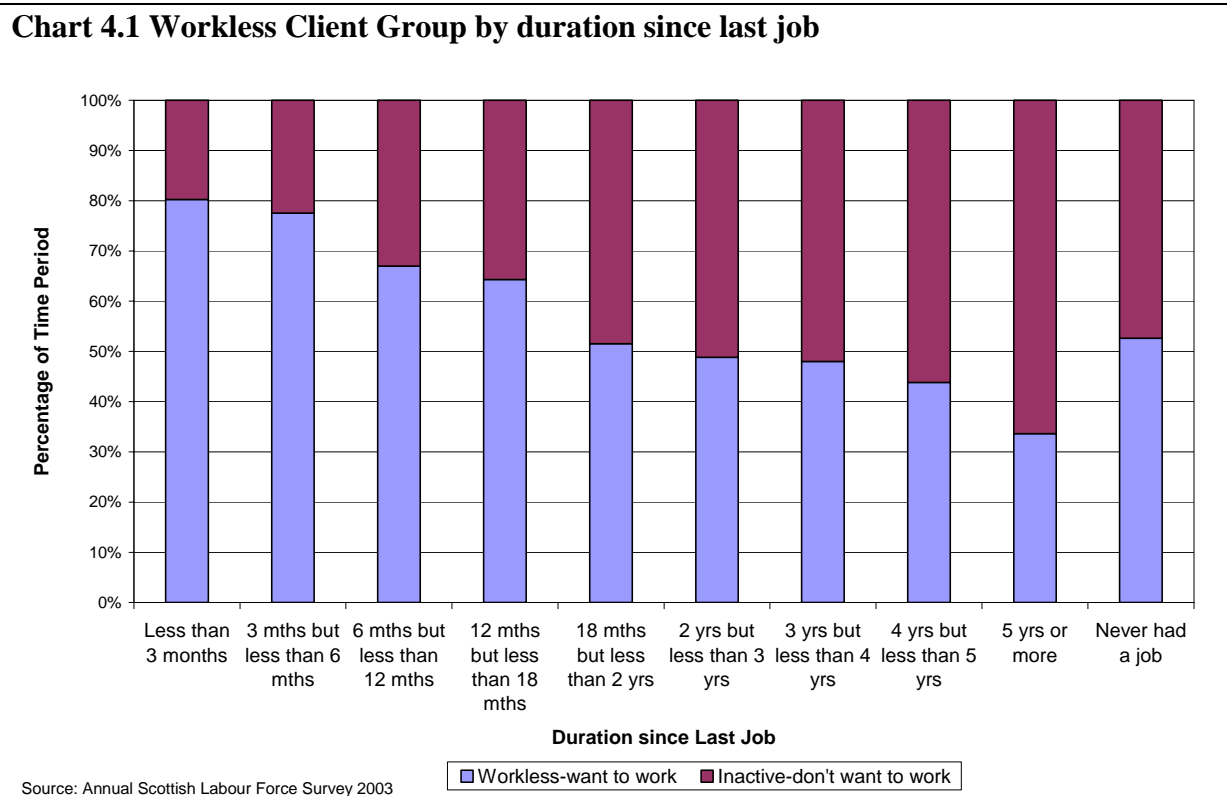
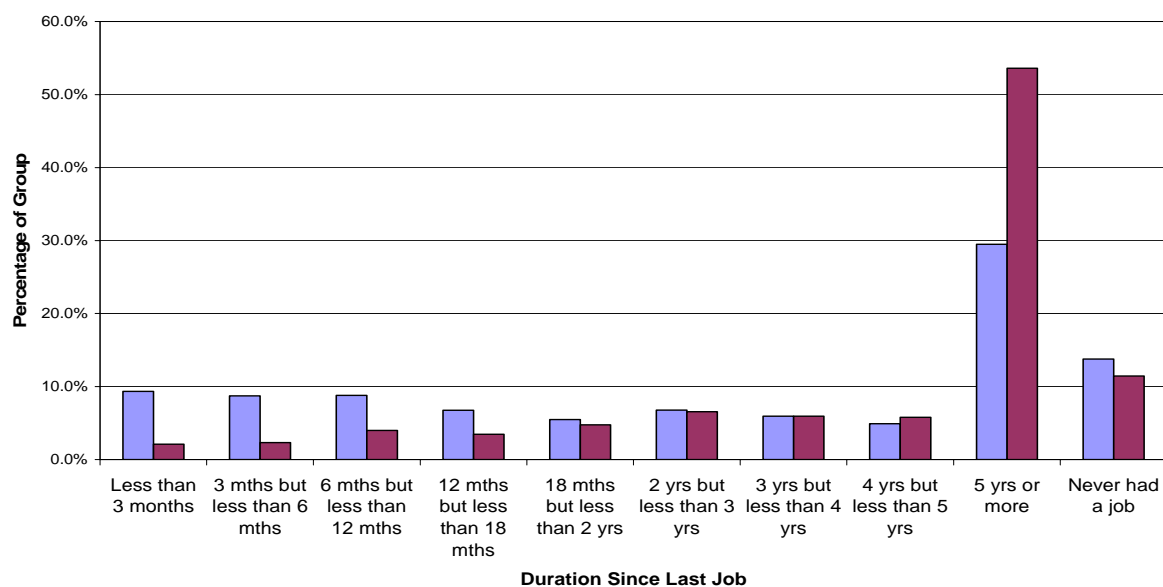


Chart 4.2 Workless Client Groups by duration since last job

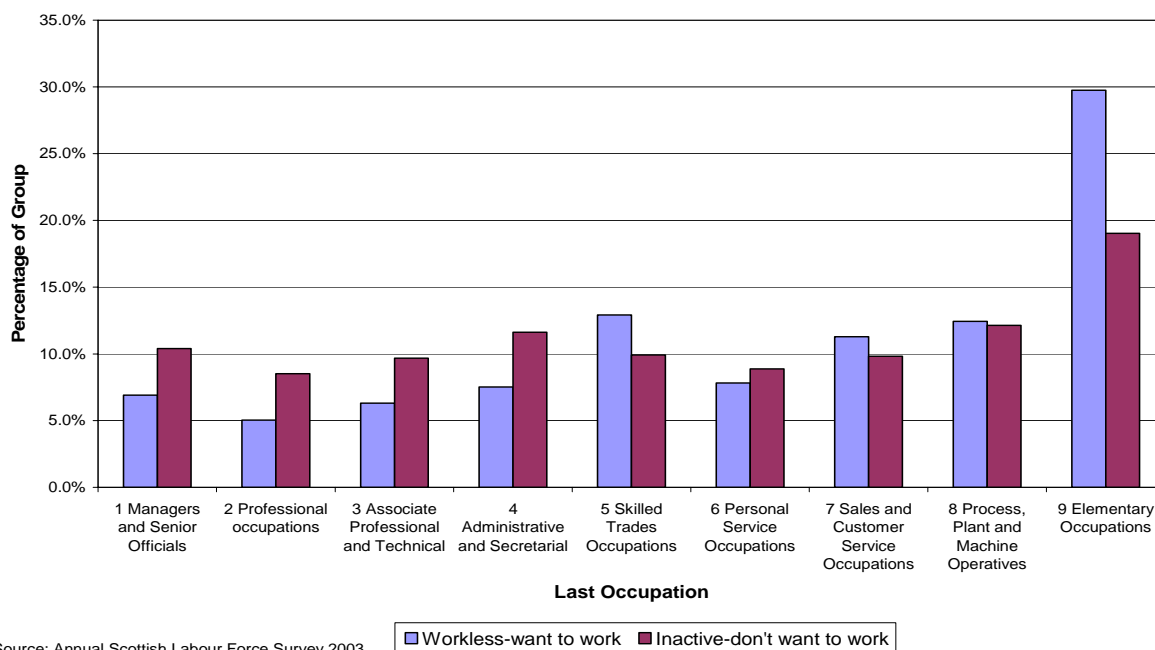


Source: Annual Scottish Labour Force Survey 2003

Legend: Workless-want to work (blue), Inactive-don't want to work (maroon)

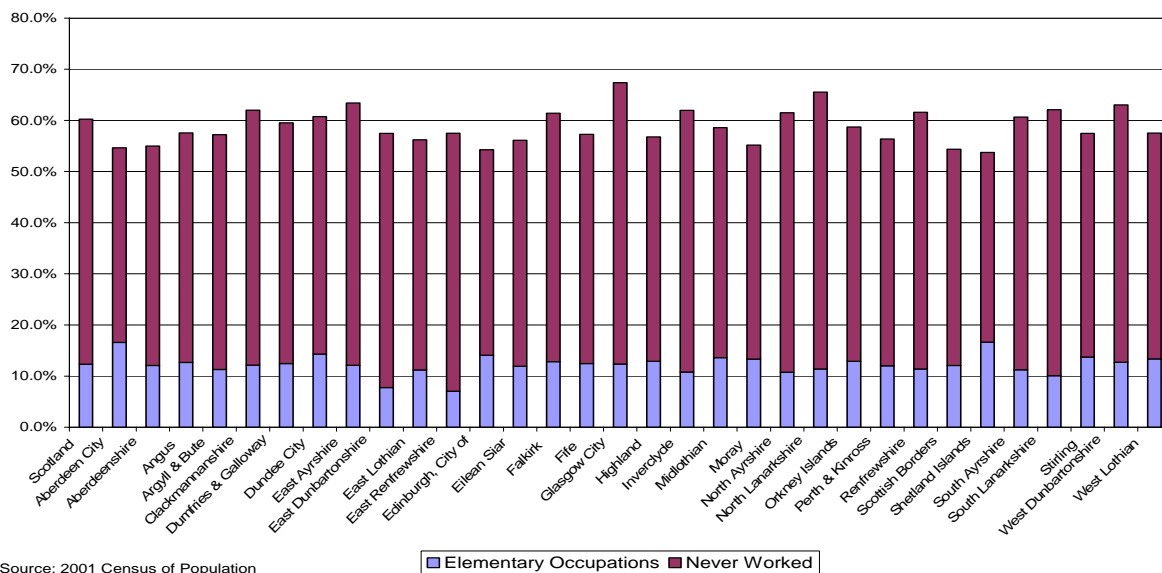
30. Chart 4.3 shows the last occupation of those in the workless client group. Nearly 30% (67,000) of the workless-want to work group were previously employed in elementary occupations. Also over 12% (29,000) of the workless-want to work group were employed in skilled trade occupations and a further 12% (28,000) as process plant and machine operatives. These people are perhaps most likely to need training to work outwith these occupations as they are likely to mainly have skills which are relevant to their trade only. It is perhaps also worth noting that a fair proportion of the inactive-don't want to work group previously worked in categories 1,2 or 3 (19,000, 15,000, 17,000 respectively). This may suggest that these people have either taken early retirement or are not able to find employment in a similar position to their last job.

Chart 4.3 Workless Client Groups by last occupation



31. Chart 4.4 shows the proportion of the workless population who either worked in an elementary occupation⁵⁶ or have never worked⁵⁷ by LA. Note that this data contains students as it was not possible to remove them from this analysis.

Chart 4.4 Proportion of Workless population who previously worked in Elementary Occupations or have Never Worked

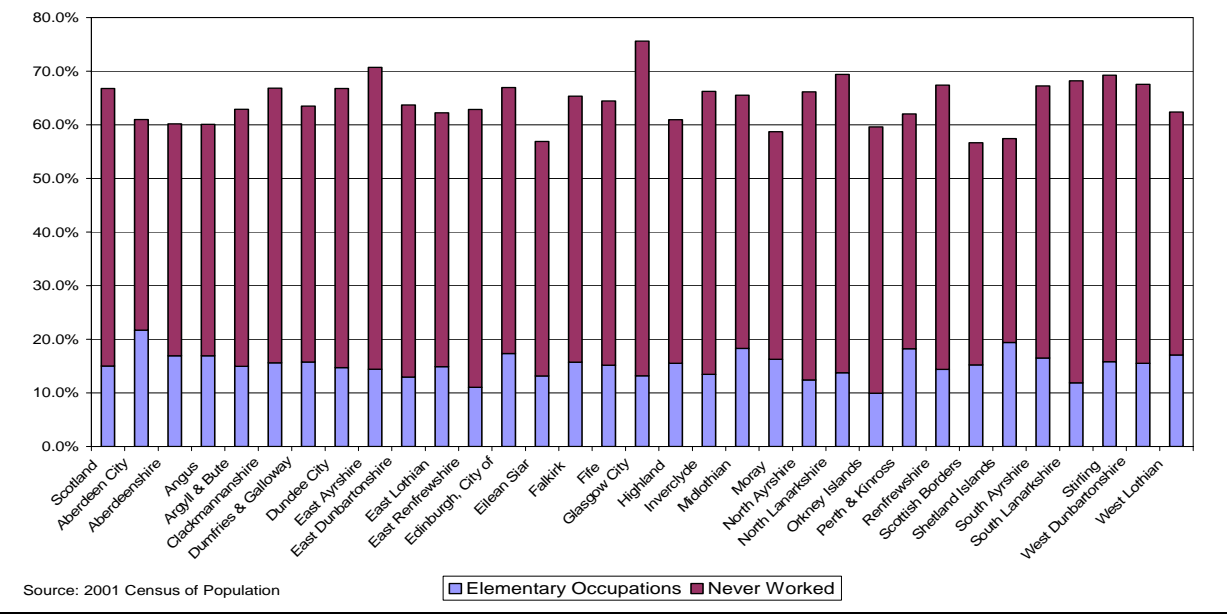


⁵⁶ As classified by Standard Occupational Code 2000

⁵⁷ Census definition is never worked or had not worked in the 5 years prior to the Census

32. The chart shows that between 50% and 70% of the workless population (including students) have never worked or previously worked in elementary occupations, which are possibly more likely to be low paid. The chart also highlights the fact that a large proportion of the workless population have never worked.

Chart 4.5 Proportion of Workless population who previously worked in Elementary Occupations or have Never Worked within the 15% most deprived areas in each LA



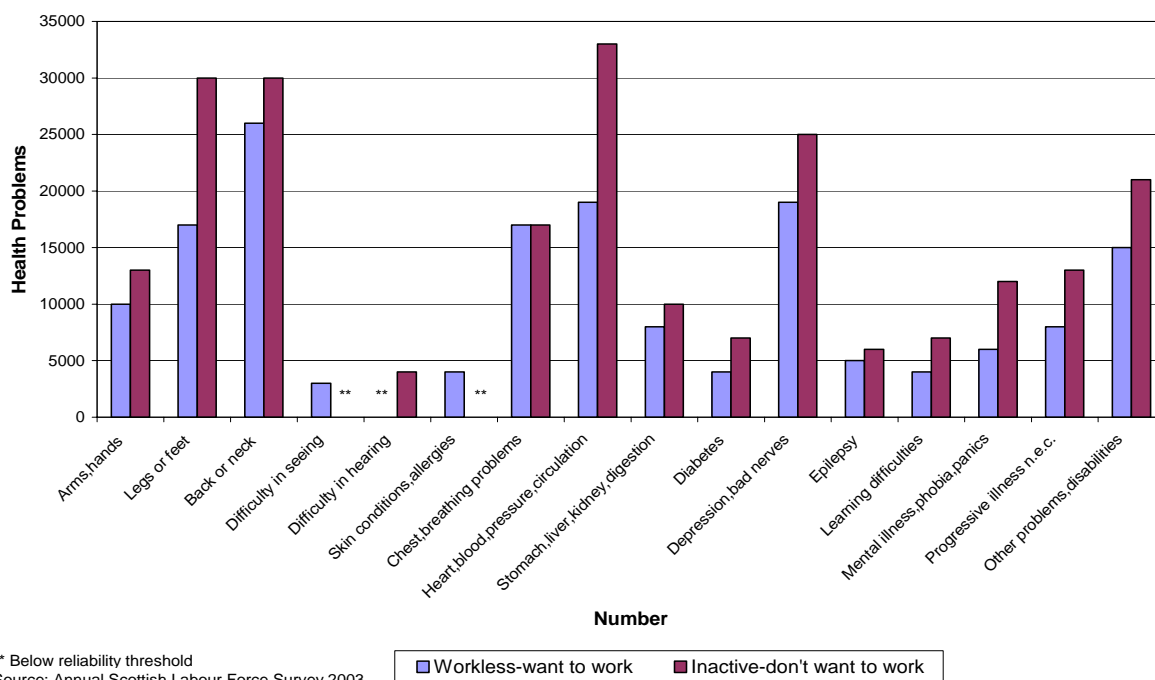
33. Chart 4.5 shows a similar pattern to chart 4.4 although, as before, is slightly higher in the deprived areas. It is worth noting that in many LA areas over 50% of the workless people in deprived areas have never worked, with this rising to over 60% in Glasgow.

5. Health Problems

34. One of the main groups of people that the Closing the Opportunity Gap target A is interested in are those who are claiming Incapacity Benefit (IB). There are specific DWP schemes developed to help those on IB including the New Deal for Disabled People and the recent Pathways to Work Pilots. The Pathways to Work pilots are currently running in Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Argyll & Bute but will soon be extended to include Glasgow, Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire.

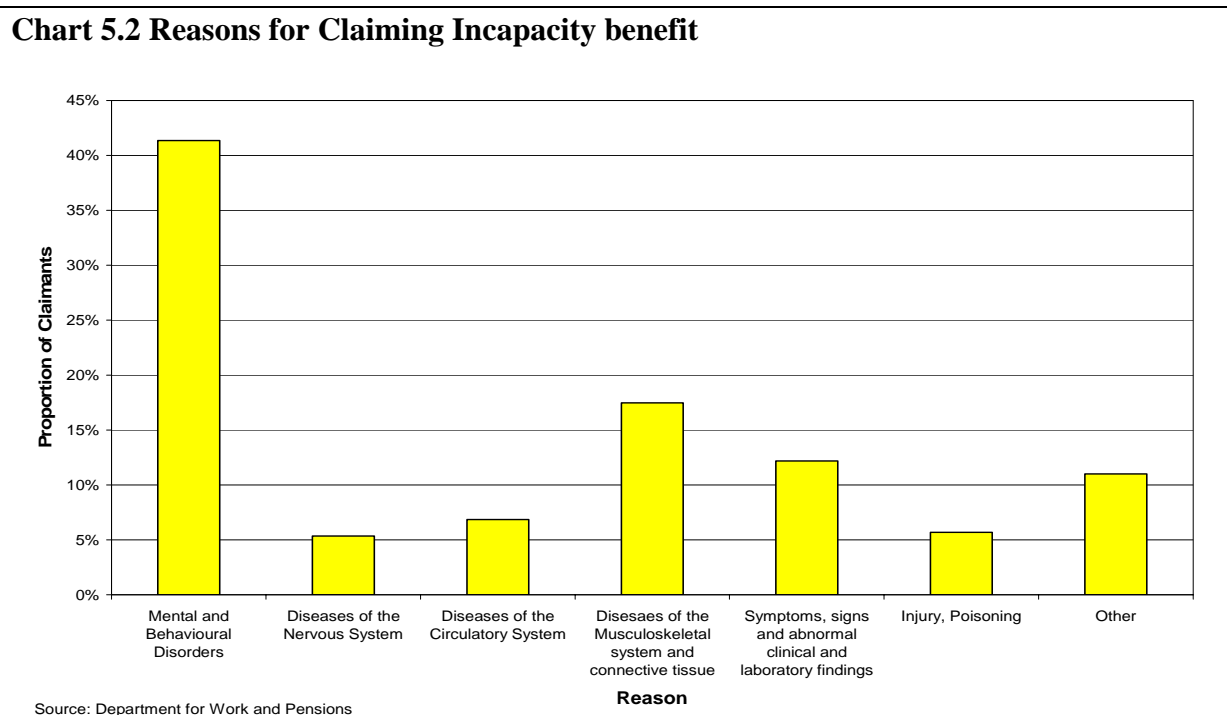
35. Obviously the types of health problems people suffer from can have a large effect on their ability and willingness to work. It has been shown that with the right support many people suffering from health problems can be supported into employment. Chart 5.1 shows those in the workless client groups with health problems or a disability broken down by health problem/disability. It should be noted that about half of the workless client group declare a health problem or disability in the Labour Force Survey.

Chart 5.1 Workless Client Group with health problem/disability by type of health problem/disability



36. The chart shows that there are over 25,000 people with back or neck problems in the workless-want to work group. This is a reasonably large number of people and many of these people may need only little help to be able to take on some form of employment. It is also worth noting that nearly 30,000 people in the workless-want to work group report that they have mental problems or learning disabilities (depression, bad nerves, learning difficulties or mental illness).

37. The chart also shows that, for the majority of health problems, more people are in the inactive-don't want to work group than the workless-want to work group. This is particularly true of those with leg or feet problems and those with heart, blood pressure or circulation problems. However, perhaps many of these people would not be aware of the support available to them to help them back into employment.
38. The data shown in chart 5.1 shows the breakdown of health problems defined by the individual as the Labour Force Survey is a self reported survey. Previous evidence has shown however, that the proportions of health problems reported in the LFS does not reflect the reasons given for claiming IB. Chart 5.2 shows the breakdown of official reasons for claiming IB.
39. The chart shows that over 40% (119,100) of people claiming IB are claiming due to mental and behavioural disorders. Although there is a relatively large number of people citing mental problems in the LFS data it is not as high as 40%. This mismatch may be caused by people not wishing to be stigmatised with certain health problems when being surveyed and/or people originally being on IB for other reasons but this reason then turning to mental health problems such as depression. Please note that the IB administrative data has no way of telling how many of these people would like to work and how many would not.

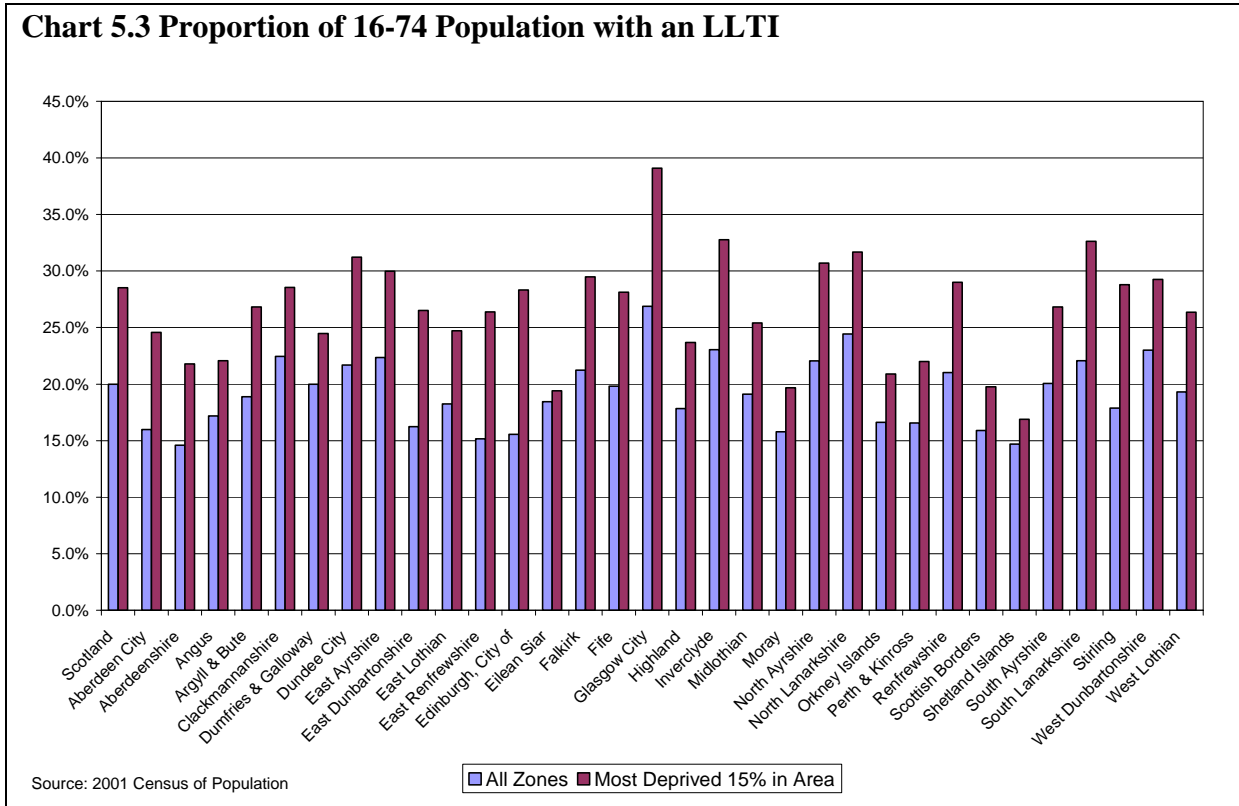


40. Although the 2001 Census did not ask about specific health problems question 8⁵⁸ did ask “Do you have any long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits your daily activities or work you can do?”. The information from this question can be used as a

⁵⁸ A copy of the 2001 Census form can be found at: <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files/indform.pdf>

proxy for those who are sick or disabled (and possibly claiming Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance).

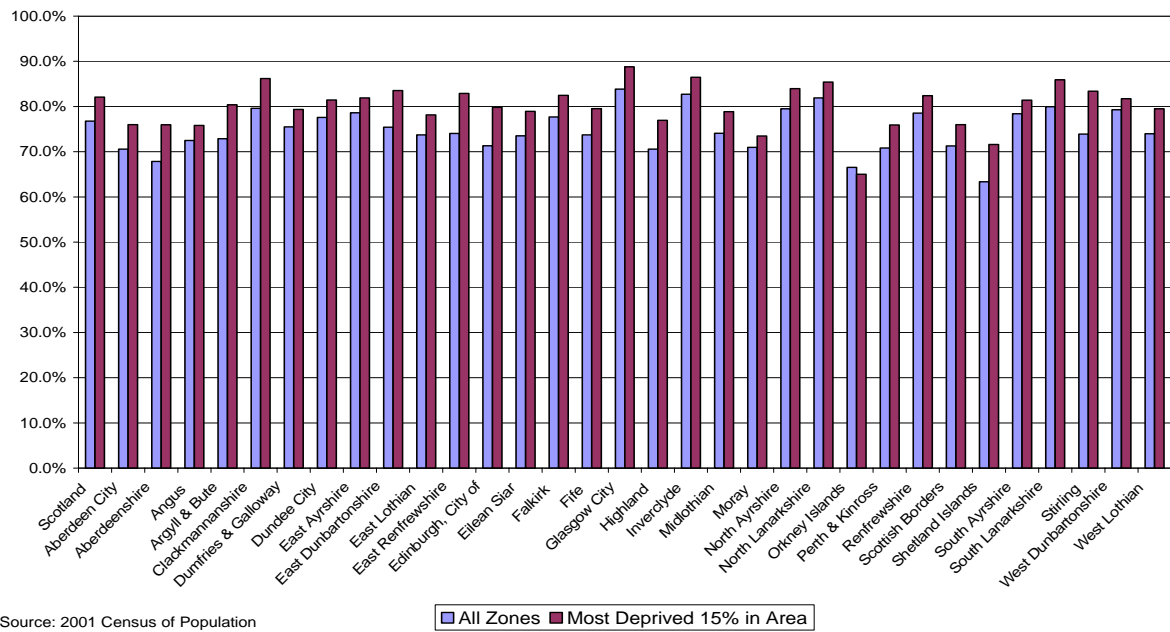
Chart 5.3 Proportion of 16-74 Population with an LLTI



41. Chart 5.3 shows that the majority of LA areas have less than 20% of the population reporting an LLTI. The proportion in Glasgow reporting an LLTI is nearly 27% which reflects the high proportion of Incapacity Benefit Claimants in Glasgow. There are also fairly high rates of LLTI's in Dundee, North Lanarkshire, Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire which ties in with the areas chosen for CtOG target A.

42. Chart 5.4 overleaf shows the worklessness rate amongst those with an LLTI. The chart shows that worklessness amongst those with an LLTI is a considerable issue with almost every LA area having a worklessness rate of over 70%. This increases to almost 85% in Glasgow. When looking at the 15% most deprived areas within each LA the worklessness rate increases but not to a large extent, however Glasgow does approach a worklessness rate of 90%. As with those with no qualifications, this evidence suggests that a LLTI is a strong barrier to employment in itself and is not strongly affected by social circumstances once you have an LLTI. However the evidence also does show that a considerably higher proportion of people with an LLTI live in deprived areas.

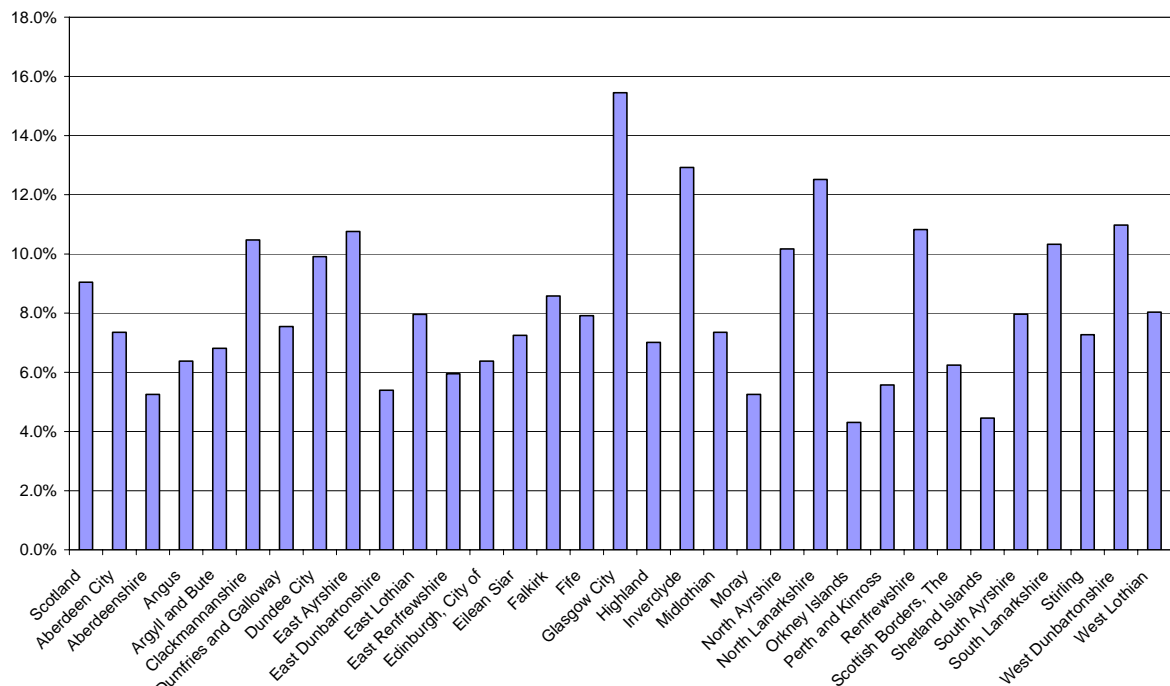
Chart 5.4 Worklessness Rate amongst those with an LLTI



Source: 2001 Census of Population

43. Chart 5.5 shows the proportion of working age people claiming Incapacity Benefit (IB) by Local Authority Area. The chart shows that there is a considerable difference between the different Local Authority Areas. Glasgow stands out with over 15% of the working age population claiming IB with North Lanarkshire and Inverclyde not far behind at nearly 13%.

Chart 5.5 Proportion of Working Age Population Claiming IB by Local Authority Area

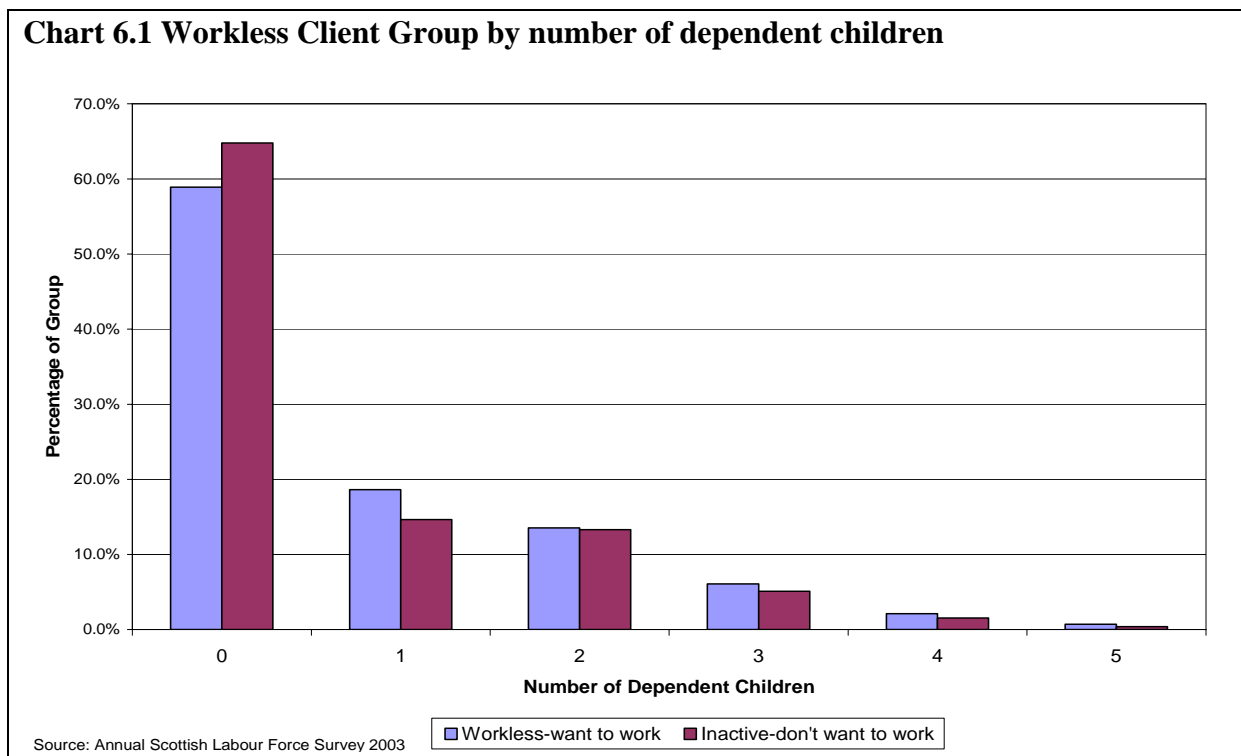


Source: Department for Work and Pensions

6. Family Circumstances

44. The number of dependent children people have or their family circumstances can have a large effect on whether they are able to take up employment or not. This is especially true of those who are lone parents. The data from the LFS estimates that around 17%⁵⁹ (40,000) of the workless-want to work group are lone parents and that around 9%⁶⁰ (43,000) of the inactive-don't want to work group are lone parents. There are many initiatives to help lone parents into employment including New Deal for Lone parents and the Work Works pilot in Glasgow.

Chart 6.1 Workless Client Group by number of dependent children

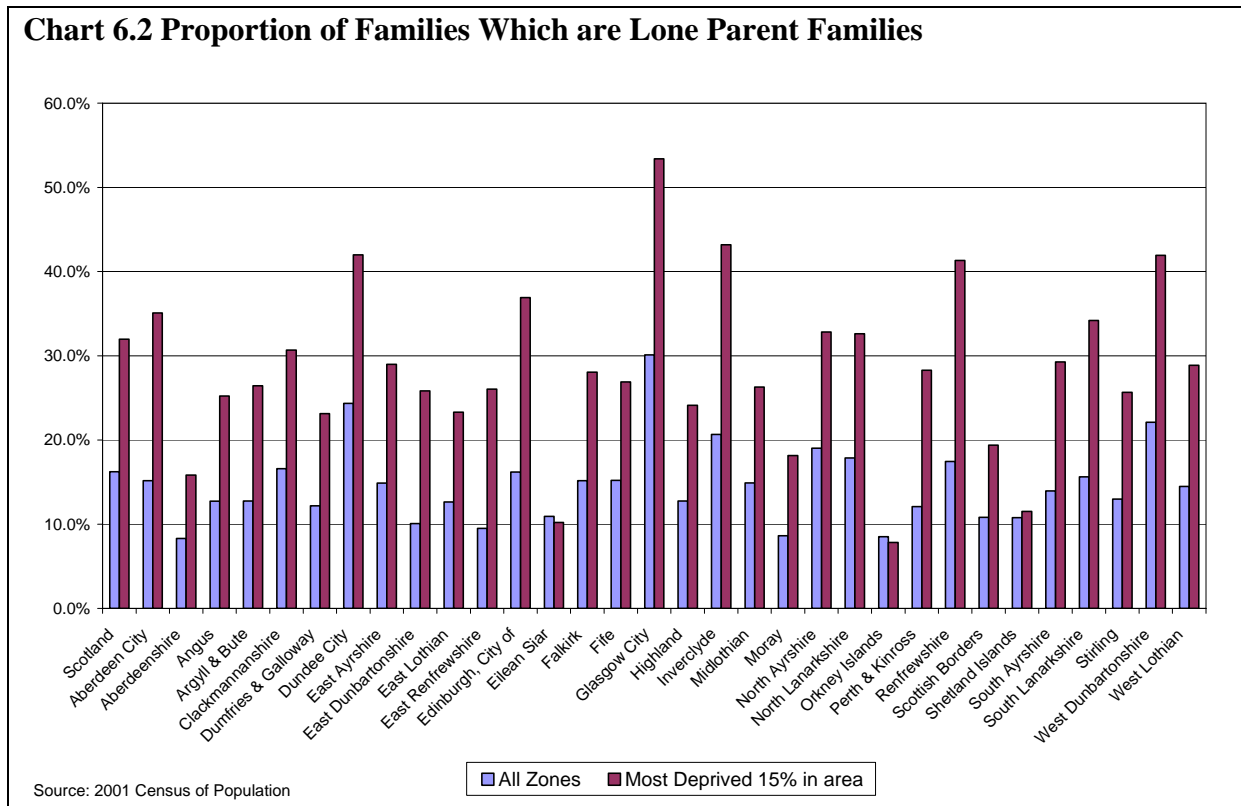


45. Chart 6.1 shows the workless client group by the number of dependent children that they have. The chart shows that the profile for both the workless-want to work group and the inactive-don't want to work group are fairly similar. The chart shows that between 35% (127,000 not want to work) and 40% (137,000 want to work) of the two groups have at least one dependent child. This means that for up to 40% of the workless client group childcare may be a barrier to employment. Also, there may be other family circumstances which cannot be picked up by the LFS such as caring for a member of the family who is not a dependent child.

⁵⁹ Including Students

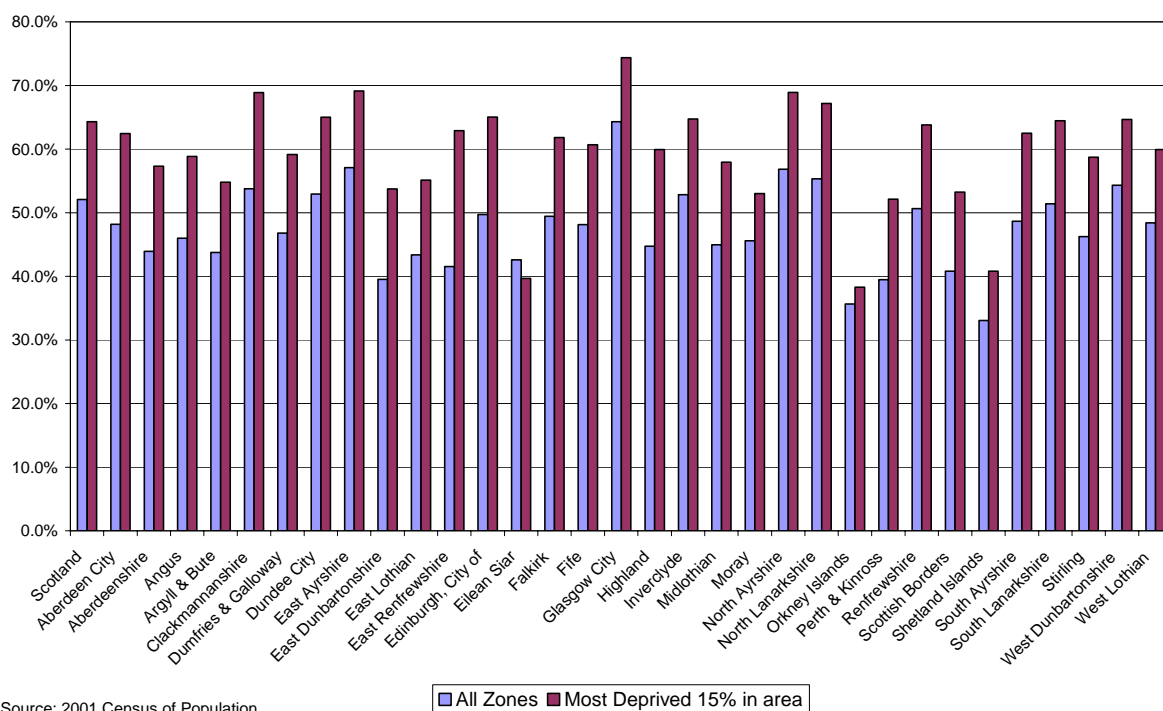
⁶⁰ Including Students

46. Using the 2001 Census data it is possible to look at Lone Parents by Local Authority area. Chart 6.2 below shows the proportion of families (**with children**) who are lone parent families.



47. The chart shows that the proportion of lone parents vary considerably amongst LA areas. Glasgow has a particularly high rate of lone parents at 30% with Dundee, Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire all having a rate over 20%. Areas such as Aberdeenshire, East Renfrewshire, Moray and the Orkney Islands all have a rate below 10%.

Chart 6.3 Worklessness Rates Amongst Lone Parents by LA area



48. Chart 6.3 shows the worklessness rate of lone parents by LA area. The chart shows that the worklessness rate amongst lone parents vary between 30% and 60% for all LA areas except Glasgow which has a rate of nearly 65%. When looking at the 15% most deprived areas within each LA it can be seen that the worklessness rate increases by a considerable amount in most of the LA areas. This is particularly true in areas such as East Renfrewshire, Edinburgh and Clackmannanshire. This data would suggest that, although being a lone parent is a barrier to employment itself, being a lone parent in a deprived area can be a significant barrier to employment.

49. Research has shown that lone parents often suffer multiple barriers to economic activity. One of the main barriers is affordable, accessible childcare however it is worth noting that 51%⁶¹ of lone parents on IS have no academic or technical qualifications which has been shown to be a barrier in itself. It is also worth noting that recent research has shown that 50% of lone parent families live below the poverty line⁶².

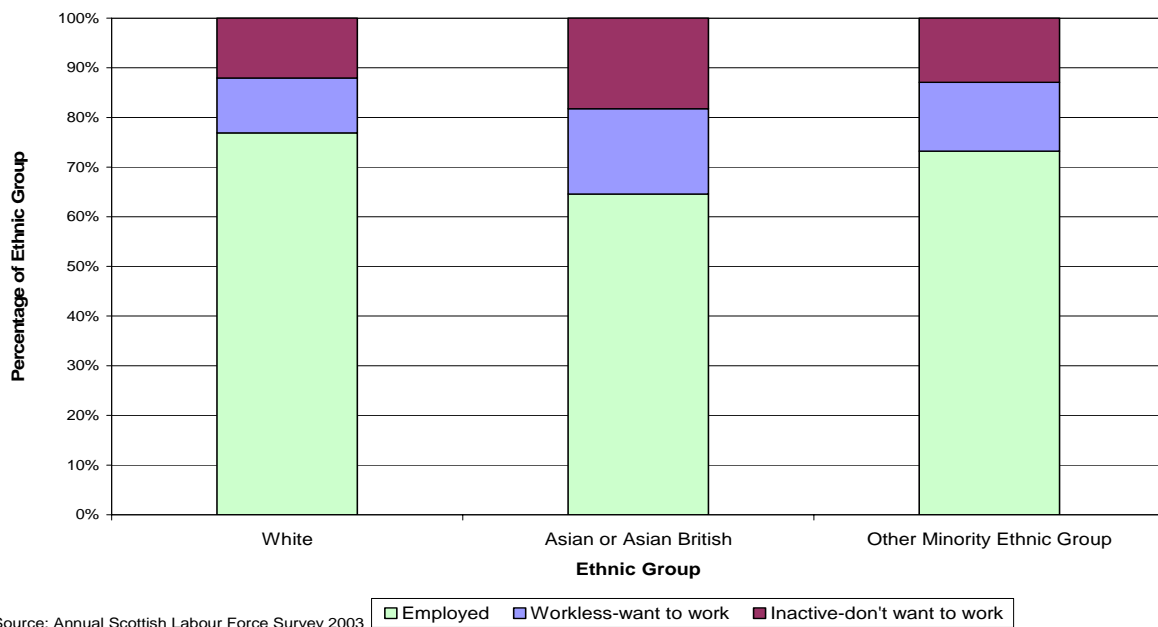
⁶¹ Work Works, Final Report, National Employment Panel's Steering Group on Lone Parents

⁶² Work Works, Final Report, National Employment Panel's Steering Group on Lone Parents

7. Ethnicity

50. It is estimated from the LFS that 1.9% of the working age population⁶³ are from a minority ethnic background. The largest single minority ethnic group is Asian or Asian British which has around 36,000 people. Chart 7.1 shows the economic groups by ethnicity (most ethnic groups have been amalgamated). The chart shows that there is a lower employment rate for the minority ethnic groups than for the white ethnic group. The chart also shows that there is a higher proportion in the inactive-don't want to work group for the Asian or Asian British Ethnic Group compared to the other two ethnic groups which are reasonably similar.

Chart 7.1 Workless Client Groups by Ethnicity

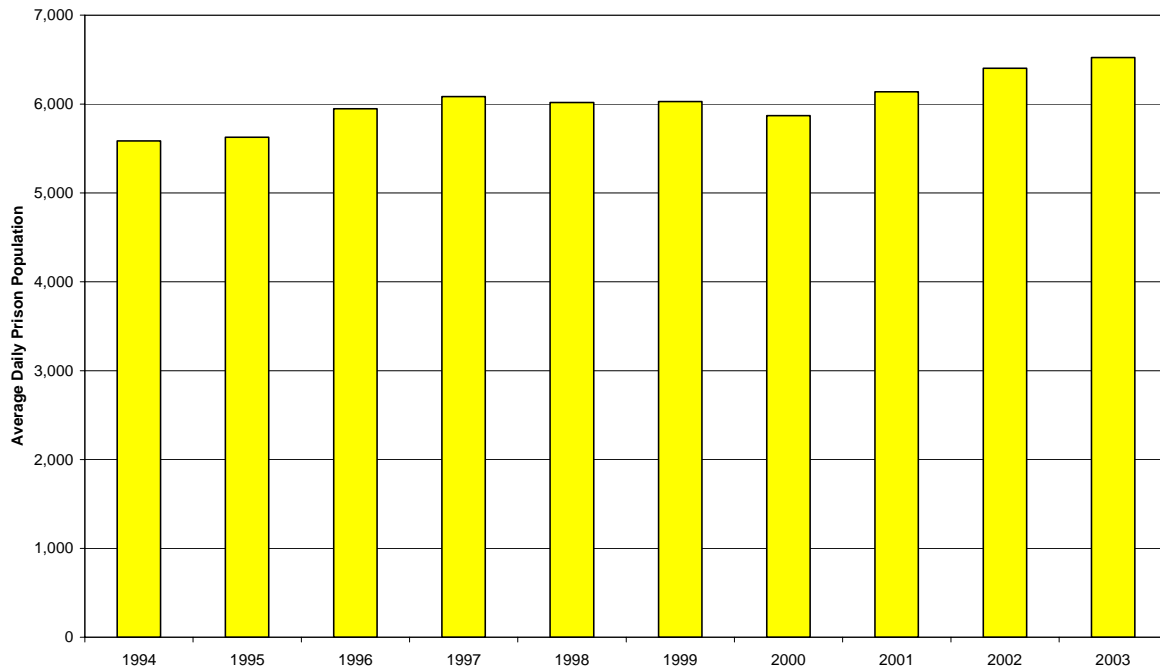


⁶³ Excluding students

8. Prisoners and Ex-Offenders

51. In 2003/04 the average daily prison population was 6,618⁶⁴. Also in 2003/04 the average cost per prisoner place was £33,244⁶⁵. Chart 8.1 shows that the prison population has increased considerably since 1994 with the figure looking to increase further.

Chart 8.1 Average Daily Prison Population, Scotland



Source: Prison Statistics Scotland, 2003

52. Research shows that 60% of offenders released from prison are re-convicted of another offence within 2 years⁶⁶. Research also shows that employment reduces re-offending between a third and a half⁶⁷. Given that 80% of prisoners claim benefits on release⁶⁸ these statistics can have a serious financial impact. Some of the barriers to employment for ex-prisoners are⁶⁹:

- i. Employer attitudes
- ii. Criminal records and offenders' concerns about disclosing their records
- iii. Low self-esteem, confidence and motivation
- iv. Behavioural problems

⁶⁴ Scottish Prison Service Website

⁶⁵ Scottish Prison Service Website

⁶⁶ Reduce, Rehabilitate, Reform: a consultation on reducing re-offending in Scotland

⁶⁷ Reducing Re-offending by ex-prisoners, Social Exclusion Unit

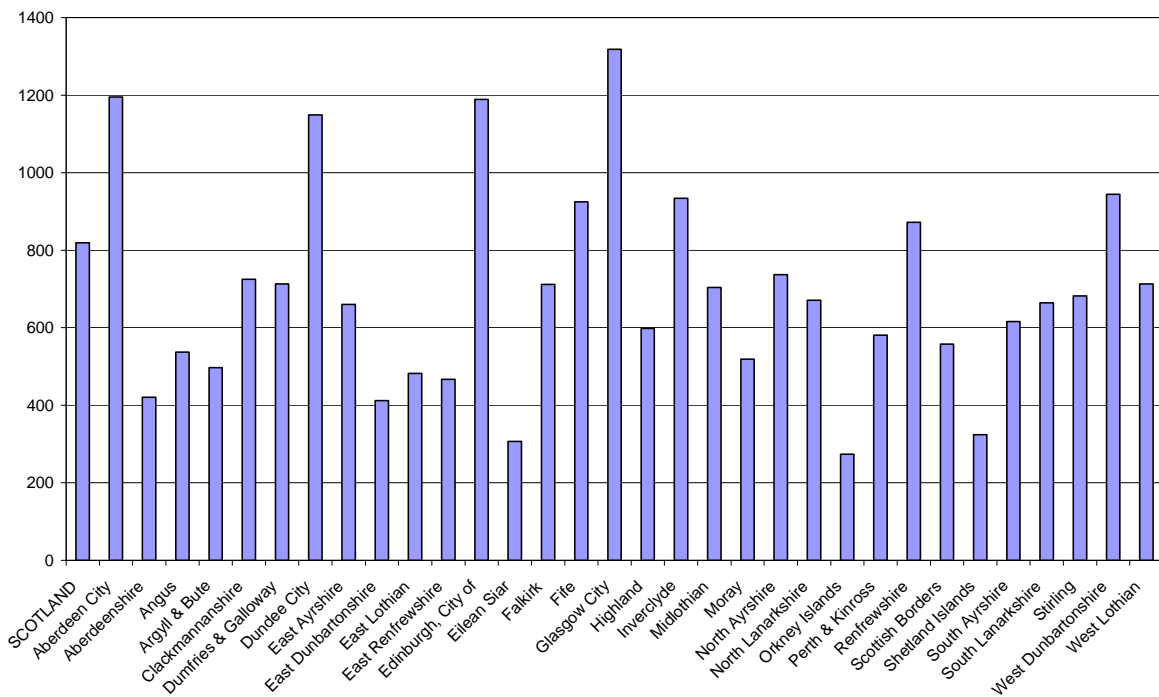
⁶⁸ Reducing Re-offending by ex-prisoners, Social Exclusion Unit

⁶⁹ Building Bridges to Employment for Prisoners, 2001

- v. Poor Health
- vi. Lack of qualifications, including poor basic skills
- vii. Lack of recent work experience and informal contacts for jobs
- viii. Poverty and debt
- ix. Insecure Housing

53. Although it is not possible to look at the number of ex-offenders by Local Authority area chart 8.2 shows the crime rate by Local Authority Area. The chart shows that the four cities have the highest rate of crime with Glasgow having over 1,300 crimes per 10,000 population.

Chart 8.2 Recorded Crime Rates per 10,000 Population by Local Authority Area



9. Substance Abuse

54. Many drug users may wish to work once they have completed a treatment programme or are stabilised on a substitute prescription but may be unable to due to a combination of personal, institutional and labour market barriers. Research⁷⁰ shows that the main barriers are:

Individual barriers

- A range of social problems, poor living conditions and financial deprivation (including debt) brought about by months or years of unemployment.
- A criminal record as a result of activities to fund their habit.
- Lack of school and work-related qualifications, as well as minimal previous experience of training and employment.
- Low self-esteem leading to fear of failure when facing the difficult challenge of job-hunting.
- Lack of motivation.
- Mental and physical health problems.

Institutional barriers

- Supervised prescribing of methadone. The need to attend a pharmacy on a daily basis can impede employment opportunities.
- Benefit rules. Income from employment, particularly with entry level or part-time jobs, can be lower than income from benefits
- Informal economic activity can be more financially rewarding than formal employment

Labour Market

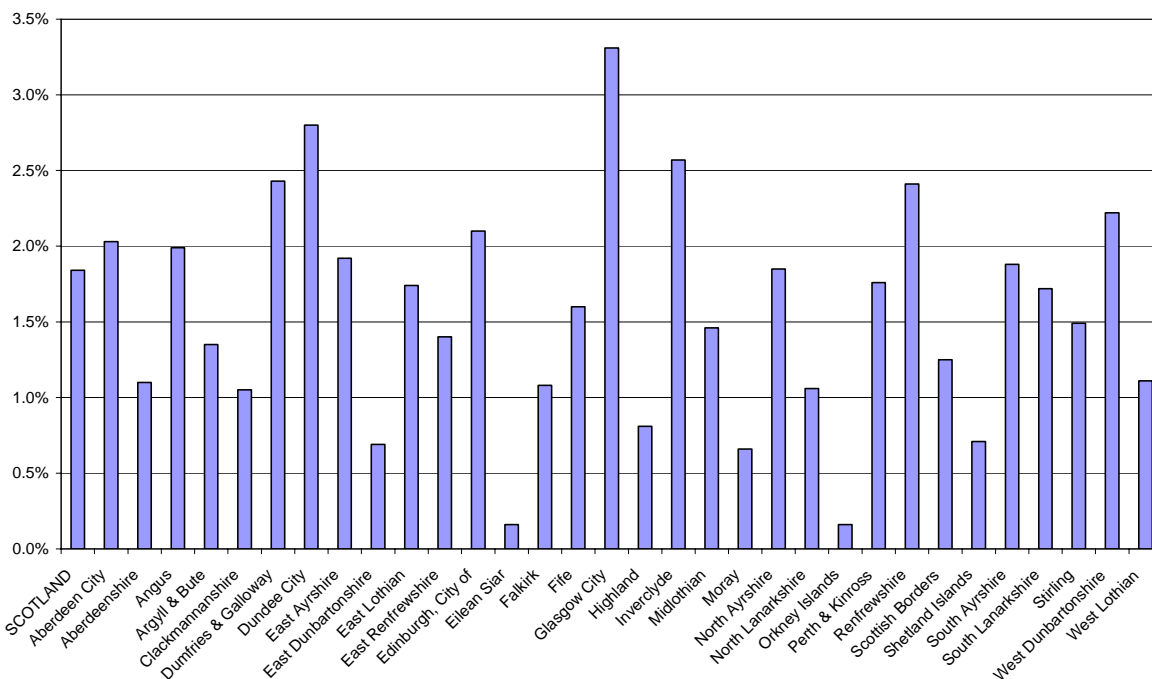
- Employers attitudes.
- Standard recruitment practices. The requirement to fill in application forms or produce CVs can cause problems when an individual has had little or no job experience.
- Lack of knowledge of the current demands of the local labour market.

54. Chart 9.1 overleaf shows the prevalence rates of problem drug users by Local Authority area. The chart shows that there is a fairly wide range of prevalence rates across the different areas. Glasgow has the highest prevalence rate at 3.3% with Dundee (2.8%) and Inverclyde (2.6%) not far behind. Orkney and Eilean Siar have the lowest rates at 0.16%.

⁷⁰ Moving On: Update Employability and Employment for Recovering Drug Users

55. Applying the overall prevalence rate to the Scottish Population⁷¹ estimates that there is approximately 58,000 working age individuals with drug problems.

Chart 9.1 Prevalence Rate of Problem Drug Users by Local Authority area



Source: "Estimating the National and Local Prevalence of Problem Drug Misuse in Scotland", University of Glasgow

56. Table 9.1 shows the economic activity of patients/clients in contact with drug treatment services⁷² between 1999/00 and 2003/04. The tables shows that the employment rate of those in contact with drug treatment services has decreased over recent years with only 10.1% of clients in employment in 2003/04. The proportion of clients who are unemployed for over a year in 2003/04 was 58.1%, this could have implications on the chances of getting these clients into employment.

Table 9.1 Economic Activity of Patients/Clients in Contact with Drug Treatment Service

Status	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Never Employed	14.6%	13.0%	13.6%	14.3%	14.6%
Unemployed (1 year or longer)	52.0%	52.7%	54.2%	57.8%	58.1%
Unemployed (less than a year)	17.5%	17.8%	15.9%	13.5%	12.0%
Employed ¹	12.4%	12.8%	11.2%	9.7%	10.1%
Student	1.9%	1.9%	3.0%	2.9%	3.8%
Other ²	1.6%	1.8%	2.1%	1.8%	1.5%

1 Employment includes training

2 Other includes: housewife/husband, retired and invalidity/sick.

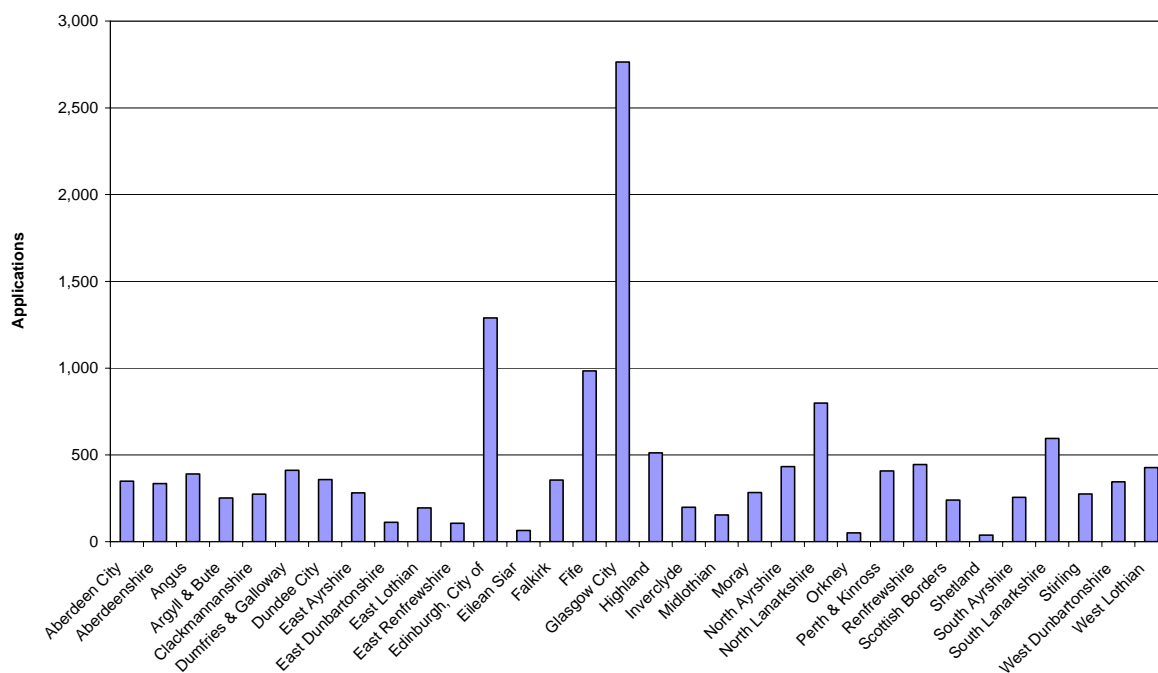
⁷¹ 2003 mid year estimate

⁷² Source: Scottish Drug Misuse Database

10. Homelessness

57. Homelessness is an obvious barrier to employment and homeless people are amongst the hardest to help in terms of employability. The best guide to homeless people in Scotland is the number of applications to Scottish Local Authorities for assistance under the Homeless Persons legislation. Chart 10.1 shows the number of applications by Local Authority area for the period July-Sept 2004, the total figure for Scotland was 13,977.

Chart 10.1 Applications to Local Authorities for Assistance Under the Homeless Persons Legislation



Source: Scottish Executive

58. 63% of all applications are made by single people with 43% of applications being made by single males. 35.8% of all applications are made by people aged under 25 years old with this figure rising to nearly 40% for single people. Nearly 60% of all applications are made by people who have had a dispute with their household or have lost their accommodation with friends or family.

11. Discussion

59. This paper has highlighted some of the main characteristics of the Workless group in Scotland. However it should be noted that very few of these groups are mutually exclusive. Evidence has shown that groups such as lone parents, ex-offenders and those with substance abuse problems are likely to have low qualifications which is a known barrier to employment. Also it is likely that many ex-offenders are likely to have substance abuse problems. Often one barrier faced by those who are workless can be dealt with. However as the number of barriers increases the chances of gaining employment decreases exponentially. Unfortunately it is not easy to get data on the overlap between the groups which makes it difficult to quantify the level of people who are very far from the labour market with multiple barriers.

APPENDIX C: BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT SURVEY – SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the written responses to the Barriers to Employment questionnaire which was circulated as part of the consultation process to determine the baseline of knowledge and experience of 'workless client groups' from key organisations across Scotland.

The questionnaire was distributed by email through the 14 Core Group members and the 22 Reference Group members of Workstream A: Workless Client Group. The core group members were asked to discuss their replies with reference group members and send only one joint reply. Eight other key organisations were also contacted. Feedback was received from 15 individuals operating within the employability arena, representing 15 organisations within the public and voluntary sectors across Scotland.

Replies to the consultation were received from the following organisations:

- Depression Alliance Scotland
- Drumchapel Opportunities
- Glasgow Homelessness Network
- Highlands & Islands Enterprise
- Jobcentre Plus, Highland, Islands & Clyde Coast District
- Nameless Homeless Organisation / Project
- One Plus
- Scottish Association for Mental Health
- Scottish Council for Single Homeless
- Scottish Drugs Forum
- Scottish Executive
- Scottish Executive Health Department
- Scottish Homelessness and Employability Network
- Scottish Prison Service
- Strathclyde European Partnership

The format of the report starts with a summary of the responses to each question followed by examples of specific comments where appropriate. Some further analysis of the results and observations have been made and where made are given at the end of each section.

1. Client Group Understanding and Experience

From the following (the homeless, those subject to substance abuse or mental health problems, ethnic minorities, refugees, re-offenders/ex-offenders, those with learning or physical disabilities, lone parents and carers, other (please specify)) please identify up to 2 groups whose problems in moving towards the labour market you understand.

The number of respondents selecting each group of people whose problems in moving towards the labour market they understood was as follows:

- People with substance misuse (5)
- Mental health issues (7)
- Homelessness / Those facing homelessness (4)
- Lone parents and carers (4)
- People with Learning Disabilities / People with autistic spectrum disorders (3)
- Re-offenders / Ex-offenders (2)
- People with Physical disabilities (1)

Please list the source of that knowledge / understanding (e.g. research or consultancy, commissioning research, delivery of service to group, representing group/ advocacy)

Respondents experience and understanding of the issues relating to these groups was varied yet extensive and as such there was limited consistency in responses. The experience within the sample included: delivering or managing services to the identified groups; commissioning research; and co-ordinating and developing networks and partnerships to develop joint approaches. Respondents also had experience in developing employability services and assessment tools for these groups as well as advising on National policy and participating in Government Advisory teams.

In looking at the respondents and the “source of knowledge” there is a notable consistency in the use of phrases like co-ordination, partnership, multi-agency etc. The respondents, whilst involved in service delivery, are equally involved in improving the general level of services available. This would tend to support the argument that organisations are relatively powerless on their own to make significant changes to the way that these complicated client groups are supported and that service provision develops organically.

2. Barriers to employment

What would you say are the 2 main barriers to employment that face each of the groups you have identified?

Respondents were asked to list the two main barriers to employability that they felt their chosen groups experienced. Initially an overview of the results appeared to show much variety across the respondents however further analysis of the questionnaires reveals three basic “types” of barrier: Structural, Attitudinal and Personal.

Structural Barriers

These barriers are tangible and not within the control of the individual client, or arguably the workers supporting them but are often an unintended by-product of regulations which otherwise are reasonable. The cost, availability or ease of access to services makes it more difficult to seek or take employment. Specifically mentioned were the availability of Methadone, the price of childcare, poor information for potential employers, the benefit trap (needing a high substitution wage caused by rent/care costs).

Attitudinal Barriers

These barriers are again largely outwith the control of the individual and relate to social attitudes to the workless client group. There is consistent mention of attitudinal barriers, whether the attitudes of employers who often discriminate through ignorance and fear, or carers (institutional or family) whose low expectations lead to low levels of support. Specifically mentioned are the effects of Criminal records, methadone use and the additional supervision requirements on employers.

Personal Barriers

The impact on the individual of their “condition” is mentioned – the effect of methadone on the ability to self motivate, the greater challenges posed by complex tasks on other clients – but these are reported less than the more generic personal barriers such as self esteem.

The questionnaires were also analysed by the type of client group to whom the respondent was experienced in working with. This presents a more specific portrayal of the issues relating to the individual groups, although the numbers within each subset of the sample are too small to claim that these views are representative.

The main barriers to employment for people with substance misuse problems were reported as follows: -

Structural barriers included: the constraints around Methadone through pharmacy provision and the limited number of take home prescriptions; and the benefit trap.

Attitudinal barriers included: the stigma of this drug with employers; the stigma and perception of the client group; the assumption of being unemployable; and peer group pressure to re-use.

Internal barriers included: a reduced capacity to self motivate (especially methadone users); possibility of addiction and/or relapse; low skills and confidence; lack of vocational identity; and lack of work experience and education.

The main barriers to employment for people with mental health problems were reported as follows.

Structural barriers included: very little flexibility within the social security system, tax credit system, training or workplace, to cope with fluctuating medical conditions where someone looks to return to work; limited availability to health management resources; limited employer support services; business concerns over fluctuating health conditions.

Attitudinal barriers included: Ignorance and lack of awareness by employers; public stigmatisation even when aware of facts; present there is very little flexibility within the social security system, tax credit system, training or workplace, to cope with fluctuating medical conditions where someone looks to return to work.

Internal barriers included: many people with mental health problems will have a fluctuating condition that can have a significant impact on their ability to overcome barriers to employment. People thinking of returning to work rarely only have to face one or two barriers.

The main barriers to people experiencing or facing homelessness were given as follows.

Structural barriers included: managing the transition from benefits to employment (in terms of accommodation costs, debt, benefit trap and moving away from benefits ‘culture’); moving out of the benefits culture; having secure and/or permanent accommodation.

Attitudinal barriers included: accessing high quality, flexible training that develops job readiness for those with chaotic lifestyles.

Internal barriers were summarised as being many compounding issues including low self worth, addiction, offending, fear of losing benefits & risk of not working out.

For people with learning disabilities the barriers were listed as

Structural: limited number of co-ordinated services working directly with employers.

Attitudinal: low expectations of individuals, families, professionals in agencies from school years to adult life, and of employers; Additional training / supervision requirements of this group can dissuade employers; and generally low expectations from all stakeholders.

Internal: this client group was thought to find it difficult to compete in the labour market without advocacy.

For those with physical disabilities,

Attitudinal barriers included: employers' perceptions of employing this client group and a lack of awareness by employers of scope of reasonable adjustments that can be made.

Internal barriers mentioned included: self confidence, including confidence in coming off benefits (finance & debt management) and being able to sustain employment.

Lone Parents and carers were felt to experience mainly structural and internal barriers:

Structural: childcare or respite care for dependants; the benefit trap; affordable care services; the cost, availability, type and flexibility of childcare; the transitions from benefit to work; and high in-work costs such as housing, childcare, and school meals etc.

Internal barriers included: low self esteem and low level of skills, qualifications & work experience.

For offenders, the main barriers were given as follows:

Structural barriers included: delays in arranging housing for people leaving prison or residential rehab cause desperation to take any tenancy putting users in high risk areas for relapse and hence re-offending and anti-social behaviour; the inflexible benefits system; and disclosure.

Attitudinal barriers included: the criminal record stigma with employers and colleges especially in the care field, where clients do have knowledge and there is a labour shortage.

Internal barriers were given as fear; literacy problems; and lack of appropriate skills for the employment available.

Multiple Barriers

3. A number of studies suggest that individuals often face multiple barriers / that membership of one disadvantaged group does not preclude experiencing other disadvantages. Thinking of this can you identify which issues you think come together most often for the groups you have identified? Please ring up to three that come together

Respondents were asked to identify which three issues they thought came together most often for the groups they had identified from the following list: - Confidence, Caring responsibilities, Housing problems, Drug Use, Mental health problems, Low skill level, Literacy / numeracy problems, Discrimination, Offending record, Physical disability, Learning disability and Other. Although respondents were asked to circle up to three issues, three responses circled more than three. A number of responses (4) highlighted the difficulties that inflexible social security benefits add to individual's internal problems.

The most frequently selected barrier was "confidence", followed by "low skill level" and "discrimination". Quantitatively, the number of respondents who selected each barrier were as follows: - Confidence (13), Low skill level (12), Discrimination (10), Offending record (6) Housing problems (6), Drug Use (5), Literacy / numeracy problems (4) Caring responsibilities (4), Learning disability (2), Mental health problems (2), Health problems (1)

Although the number of respondents representing each client group was not consistent, it emerged that the different client groups seemed to exhibit slightly different combinations of barriers, according to those responding. These have been listed as follows, with the number of occurrences given in brackets:

Substance abuse

Offending record (4) Confidence (4), Discrimination (2), Housing problems (2) Drug Use (1), Literacy / numeracy problems (1), and Low skill level (1)

Mental health issues

Discrimination (4) Confidence and life skills (2) Fluctuating health conditions (2) Length of time out of the labour market (1) Anxiety over health management and continuing support when returning to work (2)

Homelessness or Those facing homelessness

Confidence (3) Housing problems (3), low skill level (3), Discrimination (1), Drug Use (1), Literacy / numeracy problems (1), Mental health problems (1), Offending record (1).

Learning disabilities / ASD

Discrimination (4), Confidence (3), Learning disability (2), Low Skill Level (2) Literacy / numeracy problems (1).

Physical Disabilities

Health problems (1), Discrimination (1).

Lone parents / carers

Caring responsibilities (4), Low Skill Level (4), Confidence (3) Literacy / numeracy problems (1).

(Ex)-Offenders

Drug Use (3), Discrimination (2), Low skill level (2), Housing (1), Offending record (1), Mental health (1).

Observations

This section on overlapping barriers presents us with a picture of a self reinforcing cycle of effects. Those individuals with lowered effectiveness due to a medical or Psychological condition suffer discrimination which will compound an already reduced self belief. Those with a “bad history” are directly discriminated against by both poor services and poor attitudes. The net effect is that people end up excluded and believing it is “their fault”, rather than that of the systems that exclude them. In addition a number of replies highlighted the role that benefits system plays in reinforcing exclusion.

It seems from the surveys that each broad client type has a slightly different mix of barriers. If we factor out the low confidence which is at least in part a result of being unemployed then:

Lone Parents seem to face primarily structural barriers. The cost of Childcare, the minimum wage, the loss of passported benefits the availability of shift patterns which fit round school hours all conspire to make it difficult even for skilled and motivated Lone Parents to find and retain work.

Disabled people are more commonly excluded from work by barriers which are attitudinal. During the latter half of the 20th century many policies were introduced to make employment more possible for disabled people and yet they are still underemployed on average. With a few notable exceptions, employers do not adopt positive practices towards employing people who they would see as being “difficult” or requiring expensive “special treatment”.

Other groups such as stabilised methadone users are excluded from work more by their own personal characteristics, or that and prejudice in equal measure.

Practices

4. What particular practices would you say could help reduce the barriers you have identified?

Respondents were asked to provide details of any particular practices they felt could help reduce the barriers they identified. Many respondents commented on similar aspects of good practice. A pattern emerged which suggests three basic types of intervention or activity: External Relations, Internal Relationships and Client Interface.

External relations

There are a range of tasks undertaken which are “external” to the relationship between the client and the organisation assisting them. Examples of these include: negotiations with Housing Associations to change the ways in which tenancies are awarded; providing employers with accurate information about specific client groups; and tackling the major structural barriers such as the benefit trap. External relations also includes national policy on welfare regulations, childcare entitlement, increasing service provision etc

Four respondents refer specifically to the benefit trap. One stated that there should be a transition period allowing people to retain some benefits while testing the world of work while the other supported this view, suggesting an amnesty for people to stay on benefits while on work trial. One respondent felt that New Deal should be more accessible and supportive of these client groups.

The provision of information was also seen as important with two respondents referring specifically to information from Scottish Executive. One felt that the Scottish Executive should provide employers with awareness literature on criminal records, rehabilitation of offenders and understanding of which convictions are risky for which jobs. Another felt that in addition to there being greater more flexible pharmacy provision, Scottish Executive should provide awareness literature on the purpose, effects, and pros and cons of methadone.

There were a significant number of comments relating to employers and employment law practises. Respondents felt that employers should receive more support to help them to employ economically inactive client groups. Suggestions included: employer wage subsidies; work placement opportunities; funding for employers to cover additional training requirements and modification of working environments. Two respondents suggested that this support should include training for employers and support to help them to engage with client group and make reasonable adjustments once employed.

There was also mention of employment law related practices, including the importance of flexible working hours, implementation of new equalities legislation, modification of working environment, flexible free childcare and family friendly policies. One respondent commented that employers need to be able to engage with support services in a structured and simple manner and having experienced agencies providing contact with employers, makes it easier for employers to understand and engage with the client group.

Internal relationships

There was consistent mention made of the value of inter-agency working. Co-ordination of services, spreading best practice, quality measurement and networking are all seen as improving the services available to individuals.

Several comments related to the importance of a national framework for supported employment which should include the key stakeholders working with employers –Jobcentre Plus, DWP, Community Planning etc. Employer engagement at a local community based level was also felt to be critical to the success of raising the employability of these client groups. This should include flexible work placements.

From the services provision side, others commented that it was important to embed employability awareness and assessment within mainstream generic resettlement practice. Effective quality measurement of employability effort was also seen as critical and partners needed to highlight expertise, duplication and gaps in service provision in order to best meet these clients needs. The same view was also referred to as co-ordinated (cross agency) local delivery of employability programme which should be accessible to all on a modular basis. This was expanded on by three respondents who felt that there should be well coordinated training and job search facilities which link employability with the resettlement process. Clients should have access to an integrated training & employment continuum, which creates pathways to sustainable employment. This links group-based, pre-vocational training, with vocational training & employment and access to a range of support mechanisms including specialist advice, childcare, mentoring, travelling expenses and aftercare.

Training was seen as key way to address problems, but many of the current training opportunities available were seen to be limited in what they offer and often this is dictated by funding and outcome criteria. Training has increasingly become a competitive market and this can lead to situations where the training service becomes more important than the person accessing the service. Currently this approach to training can struggle to meet either the 'hard' outcomes required or the needs of the individual accessing training leading to an unending 'cycle of training'.

Training should not operate in isolation with a particular service provider and should look to adopting a partnership approach linking health, support and social needs with training opportunities in order to offer a seamless service promoting the individual benefits of training and work.

Client Interface

It is clear from the responses that a lot of importance is placed on the quality of the interface between advisor(s) and client. Staff attitudes, motivations and values are seen as being as important as other practices. Mention is also made of the nature of the relationship with the client with words like choice, empowerment, control, support, and advocacy coming through strongly.

Most respondents stressed that the support that the client receives must be person centred, focus on achievable goals depending on the service users skill level or job-readiness and must be maintained as the individual moves toward and into employment. In work support, aftercare and mentoring were mentioned as key elements of the process. References were made to job coaches, support workers and the benefits of positive peer group pressure. Two respondents commented that this type of person centred employability training needs sufficient staffing to offer one to one sessions or groupwork where appropriate.

Further comment referred to the role of flexibility at different stages of an individual's return to work. One respondent commented that initial stages of training should aim to adopt a person centred approach taking into account a person's health, ability and social needs with the aim of creating a personal development plan outlining the goals before offering an individual tailored package.

5. Can you provide examples of any particularly good practice in supporting movement towards employment amongst the groups you have identified above? Please give reasons for their success.

In response to this question, respondents included both specific projects and also general methods in supporting clients. The following factors seem to underlie the successful projects mentioned.

Good project design – to include best practice from elsewhere and very client specific supports before and after seeking employment.

Organisational and personal values – which are based on an empathy and understanding of the client group.

Well managed and robust but honest relationships – with employers, potential employers, and statutory service providers.

Practices to remove or mitigate discrimination – in selection and retention of trainees and employees.

Amongst the good examples cited were the following:-

One respondent stated that good service delivery needs workers who really believe in the service users' ability to achieve employment and educational goals. Phoenix House residential service in Glasgow was mentioned as having very enthusiastic staff in their Phase employability programme.

Being honest with employers in face to face conversations (letters were felt to be less personal and have less impact) with employability workers or service users was felt to bring about the best results.

After care or in work support from employability workers was considered important for client success. The example cited was the Creative Change Network in Hamilton who have a 24 hour helpline for employer and client support. Also mentioned as an example of good practise in aftercare provision was Aberlour Child Care Trust in Glasgow (New Futures Funding).

One respondent commented that residential rehabilitation and prisons see greater sustained long term progression due to 24 hour nature of provision. Therefore individuals are very stable and more likely to attend programmes regularly, whereas community rehabilitation centres have to work much harder to engage clients, sustain motivation and therefore see reduced progression to employment.

It was thought to be good practice to encourage local employers to assist in employability programmes by providing mock interviews, checking CVs, etc. This allowed them to get to know the service users, reduce any stigma, and increase job and work taster opportunities. The example given was Apex Scotland's Stevenson project.

Scottish Business in the Community "Ready for Work" programme was mentioned as successful because it supported people affected by homelessness who were mentored through a work placement and if successful, given a chance to attend an interview for vacancies within the placement company.

Supporting both people entering employment and those who otherwise may be at risk of losing employment due to their health problems by offering a tailored programme of on-going support and job retention was the good practice element identified in the Workstep programme delivered by SAMH across Scotland including remote areas such as the Shetland Isles.

Basing interventions in local economic development companies was seen to be good practice – and Castlemilk Economic Development Agency and Glasgow North's provision of career guidance and a wide range of training and work experience including job placements and tailoring training to both the needs of client and employers was referred to as a model that served unemployed adults disadvantaged by mental health problems and at risk of exclusion from the labour market.

The six Glasgow New Futures Funded Homelessness projects were mentioned. It was commented that the clients were referred onto the relevant specialist agencies to address particular problems but the client's programme was co-ordinated by the project. This holistic approach was felt to help address barriers and build relationships, which is vital to both of these client groups.

Good Practice Project Contact details

6. Can you provide contact details of any projects/ innovations that you feel represent good practice in this area?

Creative Change Network, Beckfords Business Centre, Beckford St, Hamilton

Aberlour's No1 Project (New Futures Project), 1 Lancaster Cres, Kirklee, Glasgow, G12

Phoenix House Residential, Keppochill Rd, Possilpark, Glasgow, G21

National Autistic Society *Prospects*: NAS 0141 221 8090

Billy Lynch, Wise Move, 1 Mansfield Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6NB tel 0131 557 8093
billy_lynch@thewisegroup.co.uk

Brian O, Hagan, North Lanarkshire ACCESS Coordinator, Dalzeil Workspace, Mason St, Motherwell, ML 1YE tel.0169 8332775

AnnMarie Taylor, Project Manager, BUDS, Adelphi Centre, 12 Commercial Rd., Glasgow G5 0PQ tel 0141 420 3492

Diane Norris, Albyn Housing Assoc. 98-100 High St, Invergordon IV8 0DR tel. 01463 716512

Elaine Darling, 6th Floor, 7 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, G1 3HL. 0141 226 4541

Determined to Succeed – Education Department

Lifeskills through sport, based at Ross County Football Club. Contact Vicki Grant – Ross & Cromarty Enterprise

STAR Project, Ex-Substance Misusers and Employment Project, Drumchapel 0141-949-4949

North Lanarkshire – George McInally: McInallyG@northlan.gov.uk

Castlemilk Economic Development Agency 0141-634-1024

One Plus, 55 Renfrew Street, Glasgow G2 3BD

The SHIRLIE Project (Inverness) – Programme of training & job coaches

John Sutherland (Inverness/Grampian) – 1-2-1 service & work placements

West Dunbartonshire Learning Support Unit – Advice & Supported Employment

Into Work, Routes back to work, George Shand. 3 tiered service to build employability, gain and sustain employment.

Liz Catterson, ENABLE. Supported employment. Promotion of employability & access to jobs.

Glasgow City Council Equal Access Strategy

SQA – Professional Development Award in Supported Employment

Respondents Names and organisations

Biba Brand, Regional Manager, Scottish Drugs Forum

Elaine Whyte, Objective 3 Programme

Bette Francis, Scottish Executive Health Department

Geraldine Wooley, Co-ordinator, Scottish Homelessness and Employment Network

John Reid, Welfare to Work Manager, Jobcentre Plus, Highland, Islands & Clyde Coast District

Anna Donald, Scottish Executive Homelessness Team

Kathleen Deacon, Glasgow Homelessness Network

Tom Roberts, Scottish Council for Single Homeless

Anne MacDonald, Highlands & Islands Enterprise

Julia Abel, Drumchapel Opportunities

David Coyne, Strathclyde European Partnership

Marion Davis, One Plus

Janice Hewitt, Head of Inclusion, Scottish Prison Service

Chris White, Policy and Information, Scottish Association for Mental Health

Ruth Lang, Information and Support Officer, Depression Alliance Scotland

Julia Able and Gill Scott

Scottish Poverty Information Unit, March 2005

**What's Working? – Client views
of barriers to employability and
preferred solutions**

May 2005

**Robin Tennant
Poverty Alliance**

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to report on the What's-Working Focus Group held at One Plus in Glasgow. The focus group was run by The Poverty Alliance in partnership with Glasgow Caledonian University. The purpose of the exercise was to collect and collate clients' perspectives on the positive and negative experiences faced when attempting to return to work, education or training. The results and analysis will be fed into the Scottish Executive's forthcoming Employability Framework. This framework specifically address two of the ten Closing the Opportunity Gap targets. These are to:

- Reduce the number of workless people dependent on DWP benefits in Glasgow, North and South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Dundee and West Dunbartonshire
- Reduce the proportion of 16-19 year olds not in education, employment and training (NEET)

The Framework will also contribute to Scotland's lifelong learning and economic development strategies. The main factors influencing the Framework are the high levels of economic inactivity and deprivation in some areas of Scotland. Currently there are around 350,000 people in Scotland who are not working but want to work as a possible route out of poverty.

There were three participants in the focus group. They were chosen through The Poverty Alliance's contacts in the employability and training field. Seven agencies working in this field were contacted by telephone and email asking them to put forward participants. The three respondents came from One Plus the organisation that provides support and services to lone parents in Scotland, Breaendam Link, a family support service based in Glasgow and Routes Out the thematic SIP working with former prostitutes.

Methods

The first section of the focus group concentrated on discussing the barriers people faced in trying to return to work, education and training. Participant's comments are outlined below. They can be categorised into: childcare – its availability, affordability, suitability and quality; financial – including the lack of flexibility in the benefits system particularly housing benefit, and hidden costs of returning such as transport, clothing and in the case of education, loans; attitudes of support agency staff and employers; the need for ongoing support mechanisms; and making the most of clients life-skills and their aspirations

Barriers to Employment/Training and Education

- Childcare
- Financial constraints especially loss of Housing Benefit. In low paid jobs even with tax credits work 'does not pay'.
- Attitudes of agency staff (former prostitute told that she was ineligible for Social Care course because she was a sex offender)

- Attitude of employers. Negative attitudes whether from employers or agencies to peoples' past experiences can damage their confidence and 'set them back' in getting their lives back on track
- Employers and training agencies are not making enough of clients life skills and developing these. (e.g. Drama skills, business skills although gained in 'informal economy'). Participants also felt that they were being pushed towards certain jobs (e.g. Call-centres) and not towards jobs and training to develop careers that they wanted to do. Employers in these fields would be missing out on committed workers. Similarly employers in fields where clients had been pushed towards would not be getting fully committed workers. Participants experience also suggested that trainers were meeting the needs of the organisation rather than the clients.
- Postcode discrimination. This also worked in the opposite direction in that positive action excluded people wishing to return to work education or training but who did not live in a SIP area. (important given that most recent research shows that most poor people do not live in 'deprived areas – 40%/60% split)
- Bad advice – from agency staff – re what benefits are/could be lost through entering training/returning to work programmes. Participants felt that they could not always trust the advice they had been given..
- Health issues, in particular the need for employers to take into account ongoing health needs such as GP or hospital appointments once people start work.
- Criminal convictions – especially those not related to work or training the person wishes to undertake. For example one participant was informed that she could not take up a place on a Social Care course due to a conviction and that she should wait another two years before re-applying
- The extra/hidden costs of going into education need to be recognised in support packages. These costs are not always fully/clearly explained to clients before applying for courses e.g. Change from NC to HNC to HND means loss of benefits plus need to take out loans.
- Jobs would need to be fulfilling and pay well enough to make it worthwhile missing time with children

The second part of the focus group concentrated on discussing how the barriers could be overcome. Once again their comments are outlined below. Overcoming the barriers can be categorised as:

The need for reliable, accurate and up to date information especially regarding what will happen to their benefits; the need for, and better use of support services; greater understanding from and amongst employers regarding returners personal situations; client led training and support.

What could be done to overcome the barriers?

- Participants mentioned the positive experiences they had with local support groups when trying to get their lives back on track (such as coming off drugs, dealing with depression etc.) and that this could be used/developed in labour market/training initiatives
- Central agency/point of contact that was able to give correct information on all aspects of benefits, jobs, education and training. Participants said that there was a variety of advice and initiatives but they did not seem to be all pulling in the same direction
- Employers need to be patient and allow time for people to fit into work environments and not dismiss people if they fall at the first hurdle. Need for family friendly policies. Flexibility has to work both ways
- Universal services should be available and not just targeted at SIP areas. One participant commented that her move to a better house in an area of South

Lanarkshire meant that she was no longer able to access certain back to work services and support as she no longer lived in a SIP area.

- There was a suggestion that If job centre plus was not so closely linked to benefits agency people may be more open and trust staff. The agency could perhaps be voluntary sector rather than statutory. In addition the ongoing support of 'key workers' from the start of process through to in work support would be vital resource
- There is a need for more thorough 'hands on' monitoring of ILM and other training programmes to enable greater transparency and accountability. Not just the tick-box/bums on seats mentality.
- Training needs to be tailored to the clients and the careers that they wish to pursue to enable people to get the most out of life.
- More 'work based' learning programmes/Learning on the job
- There needs to be greater and more firmer commitments from employers regarding placements and possibility of employment

Conclusions

Although the number of participants was low the depth and quality of the wide ranging discussion in the focus group enabled a detailed picture to emerge. In addition the participants had very diverse backgrounds and experiences which added to the depth of understanding we were able to gain. In addition the participant's experiences and comments support existing knowledge and research. A key recommendation would be to set up a client's 'panel' to monitor their experiences as they progress and could act as a valuable sounding board on policy implementation.

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