

Scottish Workforce Statistics 2015

March 2016

This briefing is our annual review of Scottish public sector workforce statistics for the last year.

There was a further fall in public sector jobs (headcount) in 2015. Allowing for statistical reclassifications, 531,500 people work in the public sector (down 800 last year) or 20.2% of the total Scottish workforce. Full time equivalent job losses have been somewhat higher – down 1,100 in the devolved public sector.

Local government has taken the biggest hit, with a further 1,900 jobs going last year, a drop of nearly 1%. Although some of this loss comes from staff transfers in Borders and Angus. Proportionately the biggest cut was in police staff with a further 400 jobs lost (-1.5%).

The biggest increase in staff is NDPBs, up 1500 or 6.4%. However, again this is in part due to reclassification of the Scottish Agricultural College and Historic Scotland. Colleges show some recovery with an increase of 100 jobs and that is probably higher given the SAC reclassification.

Staffing levels in the NHS have increased by 900 or 0.6%. Allowing for transfers, this means NHS staffing has now recovered back to pre-crash levels.

2009 was the first full year after the crash when staffing numbers fell in line with budgets cuts. Devolved public sector jobs have fallen by around 31,000 since then end of 2009 (allowing for transfers out). Over this period, (with same transfers) local government has lost around 27,000 jobs – 87% of the total. The NHS has

remained the same and colleges have lost just under 2000 jobs.

	National Accounts Central Government Categories ⁵						Local Government ^{4,6,7}
	NHS	Civil Service ⁸	Police and Fire ⁴	Further Education Colleges ^{5,7}	Armed Forces	Other Public Bodies ^{5,9}	
Q4 1999	129,800	48,300	-	15,700	15,100	14,600	296,300
Q4 2009	160,800	51,100	-	16,000	11,900	25,800	305,700
Q4 2010	158,000	48,700	-	16,800	12,300	25,700	295,900
Q4 2011	154,400	46,900	-	15,000	11,600	24,500	283,100
Q4 2012	155,800	45,200	-	13,600	10,400	24,900	277,900
Q4 2013	158,100	44,400	29,300	13,600	10,900	23,100	247,400
Q4 2014	160,500	42,700	28,600	13,900	9,700	23,700	246,700
Q4 2015	161,400	42,300	28,200	13,900	10,100	25,200	244,800
Change on year to:							
Q4 2015	900	-400	-400	100	400	1,500	-1,900
% change on year:							
Q4 2015	0.6%	-1.0%	-1.5%	0.5%	4.2%	6.4%	-0.8%

Looking back at historic trends it is interesting to see how staffing levels have changed since devolution in 1999. Overall employment has increased by 13,400. The big gainer has been the NHS, with

31,600 extra staff. The big loser has been local government, with around 18,000 jobs lost. This allows for police and the other main transfers. Public corporations (that includes Scottish Water) have lost 2,100 jobs. Colleges have lost 1,800 jobs. NDPBs have gained 6,700 jobs on paper, but there have been a number of transfers and reclassifications in this sector. The devolved civil service has increased by 1,300 jobs.

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