

Regional Skills Assessment

West Region

October 2025



Regional Skills Assessments

First launched in 2014, Regional Skills Assessments (RSAs) provide a robust and consistent evidence base to support strategic skills investment planning. Skills Development Scotland (SDS) has worked with key partners and stakeholders to produce RSAs, ensuring an inclusive approach to their development, dissemination and utilisation.

RSAs include forecast data that has been commissioned through Oxford Economics. The Technical Note¹ provides full details on the caveats that must be applied when using forecast data, but broadly, it should be noted that:

- Forecasts are based on what we know now and include past and present trends projected into the future.
- The more disaggregated they become, especially at smaller geographical units, the less reliable they are likely to be.
- Their value is in identifying likely directions of travel rather than predicting exact figures.
- The forecasts do not account for national or regional activities, initiatives or investments that are planned.

Industries and occupations used in the RSAs are defined by Standard Industrial Classifications (SIC)² and Standard Occupational Classifications (SOC).³

This RSA report is for the West Region, which covers the East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire, and West Dunbartonshire local authorities

A summary of forecast data is also available down to local authority level in the [RSA Summary Infographics](#).

The RSAs are part of a suite of Labour Market Insight publications by SDS. Other products in the suite include:



[Economy, People and Skills](#) report which provides succinct and up-to-date evidence on Scotland's economy, businesses and people. It is published monthly.



[Sectoral Skills Assessments](#) provide Labour Market Insight for key sectors across Scotland. These are published annually.



The **[Data Matrix](#)** is an interactive tool, offering more detailed data from a variety of sources in a visually engaging format. It is updated frequently.

Throughout the report, we indicate where **local authority information is available through the Data Matrix**.

The Data Matrix also contains additional data for the region, including data on employment, unemployment, and economic inactivity from the Annual Population Survey. These are available under the theme Skills Supply.

Alongside the suite of Labour Market Insight publications, SDS also produces a wide range of reports such as statistics on Modern Apprenticeships and the Annual Participation measure for 16-19 year olds. This includes a wide range of data related to equalities. Further information can be found on the [Publications and Statistics](#) section of the SDS website.



We value user feedback on the Regional Skills Assessments.

If you would like to provide feedback, please do so [here](#).

For any further information or queries on the RSAs or any of our other products, please contact: RSA@sds.co.uk

1. RSA Technical Note (2025).

2. Office for National Statistics UK Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 2007.

3. Office for National Statistics UK Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 2010.

The Context for Scotland's Labour Market

Over the past decade, the Scottish economy has experienced disruption driven by changes in the global political landscape, the cost-of-living crisis and conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine. In addition, megatrends in demography, technology, and the environment have continued to shape Scotland's economy and labour market, many of which are interdependent. Below is an overview of the drivers that are expected to have the greatest influence on Scotland's labour market outlook in the near term, based on a comprehensive analysis of both structural and cyclical factors.

The Economy

Scotland and the UK experienced weak economic growth of 1.1% in 2024, with inflation also staying above the 2.0% target. Forecasters expect economic growth to remain at around 1.0% in 2025, with inflation also expected to remain elevated. The effects of rising prices and high interest rates continue to impact Scottish households and businesses. This contributes to the Scottish labour market being cooler in 2025, following a period of sustained tightness in recent years.



Demographic Change

Scotland's population is projected to grow until mid-2047, largely driven by positive net migration, which will offset the anticipated natural decline due to a falling fertility rate. However, whilst the population is growing, it is also ageing. Around one-fifth of Scotland's residents were aged 65 or over in 2024. By 2047, the number of people of pensionable age is expected to increase by 21%. This demographic change has implications for the economy and labour market, by affecting caring responsibilities, tax revenue, and productivity.



Inclusion and Equality

There is a lingering effect from the cost-of-living crisis, which began in 2021, with rising energy prices and financial pressures continuing to have a disproportionate impact on low-to-middle income households. Poverty, including in-work poverty, persists; however, the Fair Work policy agenda aims to reduce labour market inequalities. Barriers to accessing the labour market remain for disabled people and minority ethnic groups, and gender equality still requires progress.



Technology and Automation

Artificial Intelligence (AI) continues to be the core driver in technology transformation. Scotland has a strong technology sector, underpinned by extensive academic and business presence in AI and related fields. The adoption of AI is rapidly increasing among Scottish businesses, particularly in optimising workflows. However, the implications of AI for the labour market remain uncertain. Scotland's strong base in digital and data skills could provide an advantage, but maintaining a skilled workforce will be essential.



Climate Change and Net Zero

The transition to net zero will directly impact the labour market as actions are taken to meet net zero targets. This shift offers significant opportunities for job creation in Scotland, particularly in the clean energy sector. Scotland has strong natural assets, and existing sectoral strengths provide a strong foundation for a green economy. However, upskilling will be crucial for transition to net zero. Especially in the construction, manufacturing, agriculture, energy and transport sectors.



A fuller report on Scotland's Labour Market Drivers can be found [here](#).

Regional Insight¹

West Region includes the local authority areas of Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire. It is part of Glasgow City Region - one of the largest City Regions in the UK and is “*Scotland’s economic powerhouse.*” It has a well-established Regional Partnership, and its [regional economic strategy](#), published in December 2021, was co-produced with partners with the vision that “*by 2030, Glasgow City Region will have the most Innovative, Inclusive and Resilient Economy in the UK.*” Three key challenges underpin the strategy:

- Creating an inclusive economy;
- Enhancing productivity; and
- Accelerating climate action.

The subsequent [Action Plan \(2022\)](#) set out 12 strategic programmes to deliver the strategy. Skills are at the heart of the economic strategy, building upon partners’ implementation of the Regional Skills Investment Plans, and the importance of jobs and skills in the region’s economic recovery plan. A highly skilled workforce is critical to the region’s economic success, and a route out of unemployment and low pay.

Although the City Region has one of the highest levels of the population with degree level qualifications among the UK Core Cities, it also has significant skills gaps and skills shortages and high levels of skills underutilisation. The [OECD profiled Glasgow City Region](#) and its challenges and opportunities in its international programme to futureproof skills and adult

learning (September 2024), making recommendations on future delivery.

Glasgow City Region’s £1 billion City Deal was the first City Deal in Scotland – signed in 2014 – and is now one of the largest and the most advanced in the UK delivering 21 infrastructure projects across the City Region.

The City Region has identified four short-term sectoral priorities for “Future Skills”:

- Heat Decarbonisation;
- Maritime;
- Local Government; and
- To support the investment zone and innovation districts.

Engineering skills is of particular importance in this region. There is a £2 million programme to support Clyde Maritime skills underway, and recent international investment and the Defence Industrial Strategy secures the future of shipbuilding and associated industries for decades to come.

The City Region has three innovation districts clustered around Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities and the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District near Glasgow Airport, and in 2023 was awarded £33 million Innovation Accelerator funding to deliver 11 projects. The £120 million [City Region Investment Zone](#) will seek to capitalise on sectoral strengths in advanced

manufacturing (particularly space, semi-conductors and maritime), and partners are developing proposals for the £30 million Local Innovation Partnerships Fund with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

As part of its place-based approach, Glasgow City Region is developing a masterplan to ensure that those communities closest to the river benefit from its development as an engine of inclusive, sustainable growth.

Following on from the establishment of its Task Force, Inverclyde is recognised as a distinct programme within the city region, requiring particular attention.

It is important to note that the forecasts used in this Regional Skills Assessment are policy and investment neutral.



This means the figures present a baseline outlook that takes into account historical trends and external economic conditions, but the figures do not reflect investment or policy that is unconfirmed or at planning/development stage. This would include, for example UKRI, Investment Zone or Industrial Strategy investments.

Therefore, the forecasts should be used in conjunction with other sources, and readers are encouraged to overlay these with their own local and sectoral knowledge.

1. Insight from the region gathered via Skills Development Scotland (2025).

Economic Performance¹



Estimated GVA in **the West Region** in 2025: **£9,146m**

The West Region was estimated to generate 5.4% of Scotland's output in 2025. This share of GVA ranked the region in the second highest quartile of regions for GVA contribution to the Scottish economy.

In 2025, the highest value industries in the West Region were estimated to be:

	Manufacturing	£1,280m
	Real Estate Activities*	£1,203m
	Human Health and Social Work Activities	£1,067m
	Wholesale and Retail Trade	£935m



GVA forecast average annual growth (2025-2028)

West Region: 1.5%

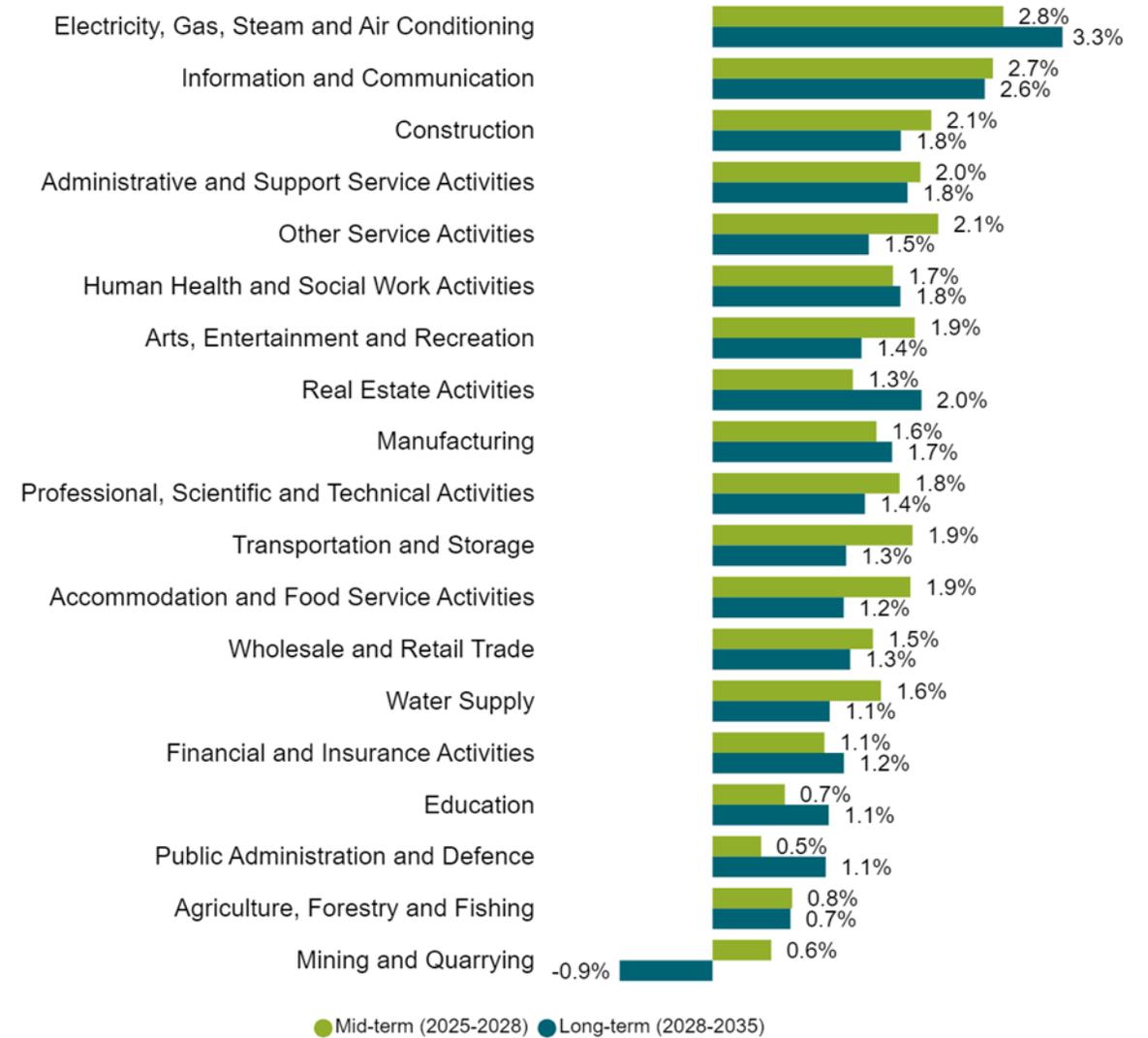
Scotland: 1.7%

GVA forecast average annual growth (2028-2035)

West Region: 1.6%

Scotland: 1.6%

Forecast Average Annual GVA Change by Industry (%), West Region



For data on GVA at local authority level please see the **Data Matrix**.
(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Economic Output (GVA))

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.

*GVA in the Real Estate industry is inflated by owner-occupier imputed rent. This reflects the value of services provided by homeowners who own and live in their homes.

Productivity¹

In this report, we have used Oxford Economics' measure of productivity, which is calculated by dividing total regional GVA by total regional employment (measured by jobs). Please note, there are different ways of calculating productivity, and caution is needed when interpreting productivity data presented in this report. It must be considered in the context of other data and insight.

Productivity in **the West Region** was estimated to be **£50,200** in 2025. In comparison, the Scottish average was estimated to be £57,700.



Mid-term Productivity

From 2025 to 2028, productivity in the West Region is forecast to grow by 0.8% on average each year. Over the same period, the Scottish growth rate is forecast to be 0.8%.

West Region forecast productivity in 2028: **£51,500**

Scotland forecast productivity in 2028: **£59,100**



Long-term Productivity

From 2028 to 2035, productivity in the West Region is forecast to grow by 1.1% on average each year. Over the same period, the Scottish growth rate is forecast to be 1.0%.

West Region forecast productivity in 2035: **£55,400**

Scotland forecast productivity in 2035: **£63,600**

Productivity (2025)



For data on productivity at local authority level please see the Data Matrix.

(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Economic Output (GVA) per Job)

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.

Regional Employment¹



Workforce Size 2025:
170,600 people

The region's workforce was estimated to account for **6.3%** of Scottish employment.

Over the last 10 years (2015-2025), regional employment was estimated to have **grown** by **8.4%** (**13,200** people). In comparison, employment in Scotland increased by 5.5%.



Workforce Size 2028:
174,100 people

The region's workforce is forecast to **grow** by **2.0%** (**3,500** people) between 2025 and 2028.

Compared to a Scotland-wide increase of **2.5%** or **68,000** people.

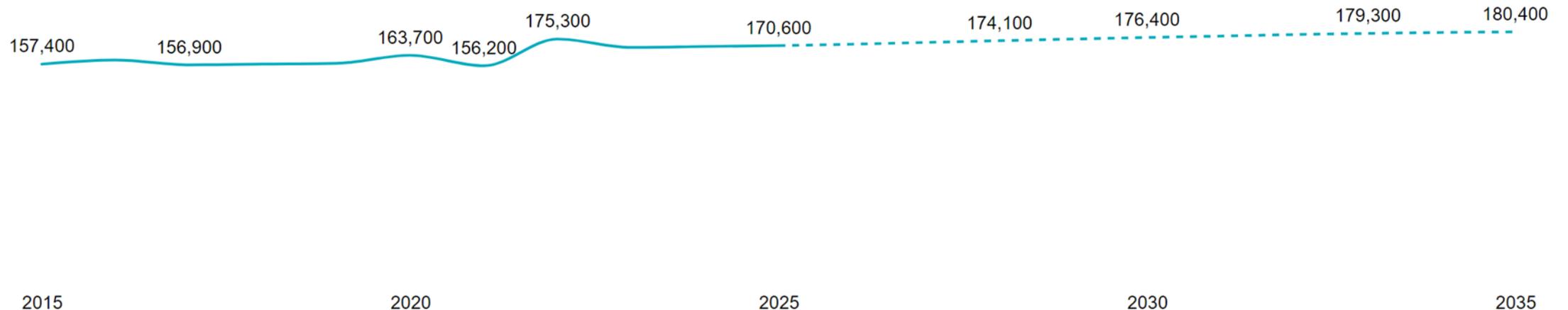


Workforce Size 2035:
180,400 people

The region's workforce is forecast to **grow** by **3.6%** (**6,400** people) between 2028 and 2035.

Compared to a Scotland-wide increase of **4.0%** or **112,500** people.

Employment and forecast employment (2015-2035) (people), West Region



For data on employment and forecast employment at local authority level please see the [Data Matrix](#).
(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Employment Forecast)

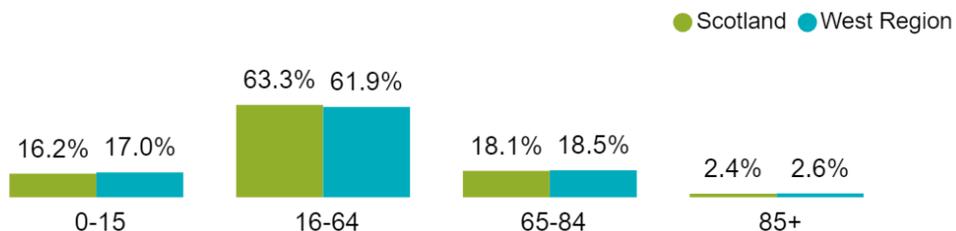
1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.

Spotlight: Region's People

Population¹



In 2024, the population in **the West Region** was estimated to be **457,000**, accounting for **8.2%** of Scotland's total population. By age, the population distribution of the region and Scotland was:



Disability²



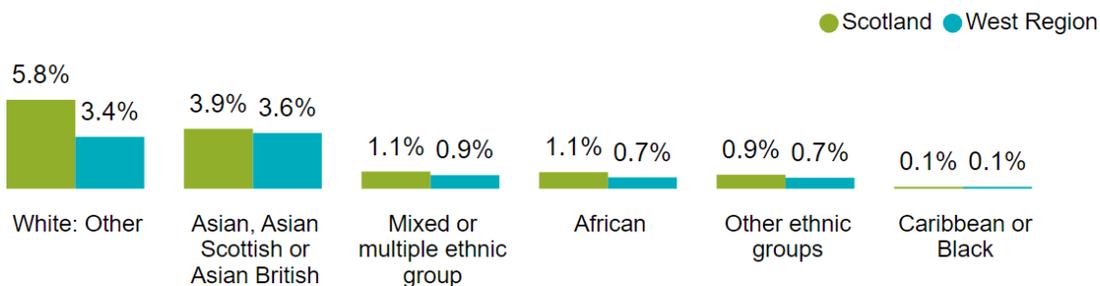
In 2022, the percentage of the population that reported having a health condition or disability that affected their daily activities was:

West Region: 25.0%

Scotland: 24.1%

Ethnic Groups²

The majority (**90.6%**) of people in **the West Region** identified as 'White Scottish' or 'Other White British' in 2022. The breakdown of Minority Ethnic groups included:



Population Projections³



The population is forecast to **grow** by **7.1%** in **the West Region** between 2022 and 2047. Over the same period, the Scottish population is forecast to grow by 6.2%.

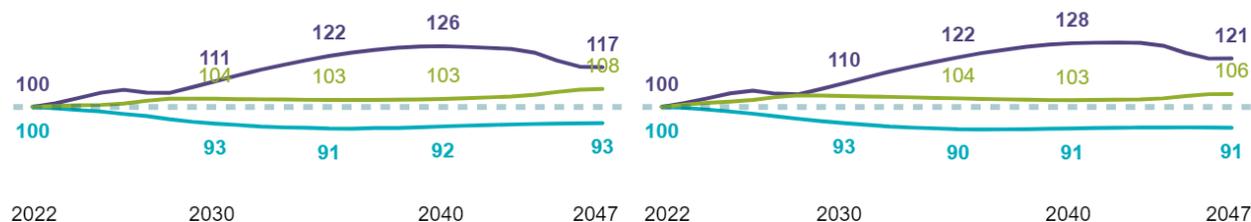
The number of people of working age is projected to **grow** by **7.8%** by 2043. While, across Scotland it is forecast to increase by 5.6%.

Index of Regional and National Projections (2022=100)³

— Children — Pension age — Working age

West Region

Scotland



Dependency Ratio⁴

The dependency ratio considers the **non-working age population** (consisting of children and those of pensionable age) **compared to those of working age**. As an example, a dependency ratio of 54% would mean that for every 100 people of working age there are 54 people of non-working age.

Dependency Ratio for **the West Region**:

Dependency Ratio for **Scotland**:

2022: **57%**

2047: **56%**

2022: **54%**

2047: **55%**

1. National Records of Scotland (2025) [Mid-2024 Population Estimates](#)

2. Scottish Government (2024) [Scotland's Census 2022](#)

3. National Records of Scotland (2025) [Projected Population of Scotland: 2022-based](#)

4. SDS analysis of: National Records of Scotland (2025) [Projected Population of Scotland: 2022-based](#)

Employment by Industry¹

The largest employing industries in the region in 2025 (based on people) were estimated to be:

 **Human Health and Social Work Activities**
35,700

 **Wholesale and Retail Trade**
20,100

 **Education**
16,600

Between 2025 and 2028, employment in the region is forecast to grow, however industries will have varying performance. The greatest employment growth is forecast in Administrative and Support Service Activities, with 700 more people by 2028. While Manufacturing is forecast to have the greatest employment contraction (-500 people) in the mid-term.

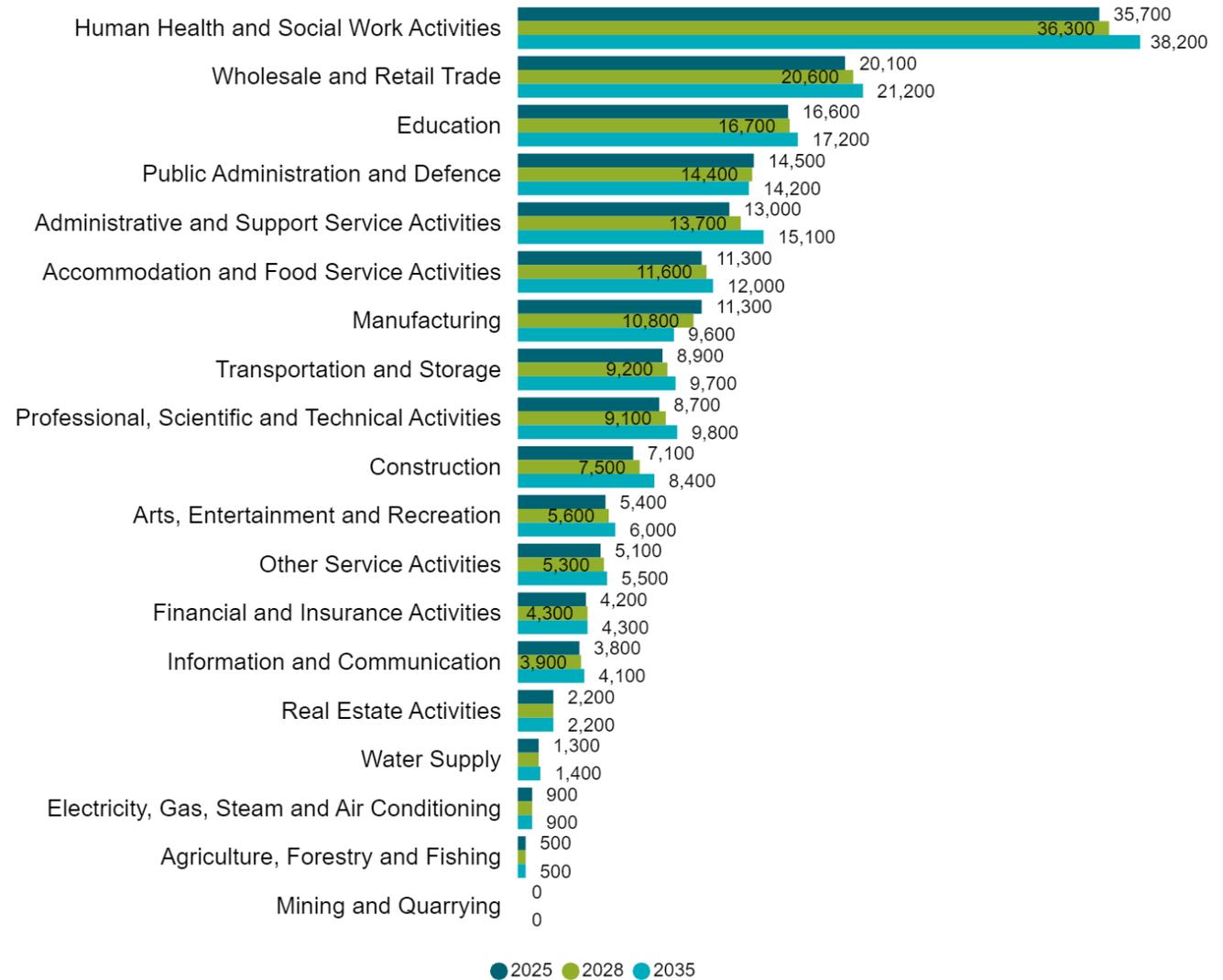
Over the long-term, between 2028 and 2035, the greatest employment growth is forecast in Human Health and Social Work Activities, with 1,900 more people by 2035. While Manufacturing is forecast to have the greatest employment contraction (-1,200 people) in the long-term.

In 2025, the Manufacture of Leather and Related Products was estimated to be the region's greatest specialism, with the percentage of employment in this industry 9.5 times greater than the Scottish average. The second largest specialism was estimated to be Air Transport (4.4 times greater in the region than the Scottish average).



Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Employment by Industry, West Region



1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.



For data on employment by industry/key sector at local authority level please see the Data Matrix.

(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Employment Forecast by Industry)

Employment by Occupation¹

The largest employing occupational groups in the region in 2025 (based on people) were estimated to be:



Elementary Occupations: Clerical and Services

17,200



Caring Personal Service Occupations

16,700



Business and Public Service Associate Professionals

16,000

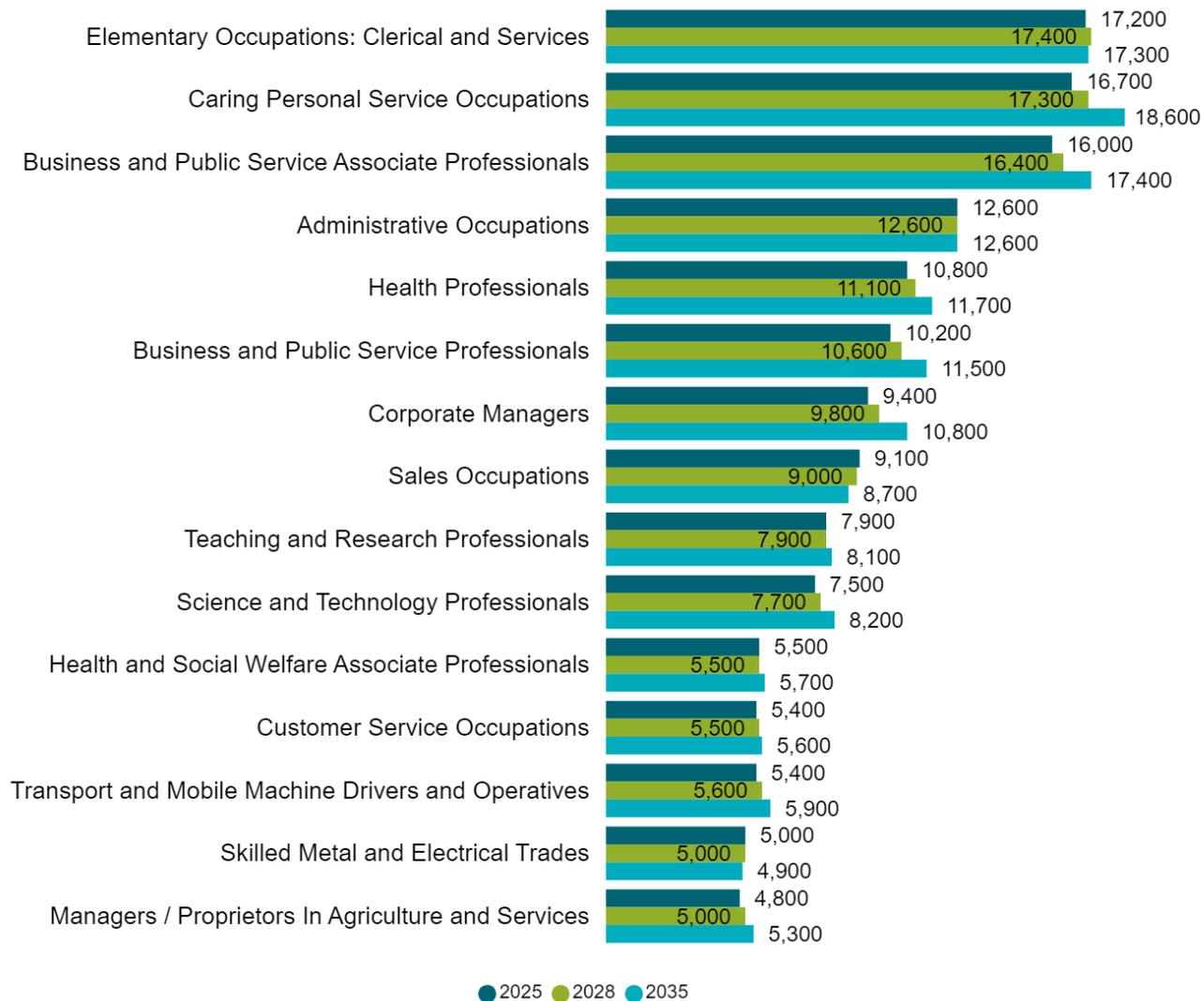
In 2025, 48.5% of employed people in the region were in 'higher-level' occupations*, which was a lower percentage of the workforce than Scotland (50.8%). 'Mid-level' occupations accounted for 27.6% of the workforce, which was a lower percentage of the workforce than Scotland (27.8%). Around 23.9% of people were employed in 'lower-level' occupations, which was a higher percentage of the workforce than Scotland (21.3%).

Between 2025 and 2028, the greatest growth is forecast to be in Caring Personal Service Occupations (500 people). While Process, Plant and Machine Operatives is likely to experience the greatest contraction (-100 people).

Over the long-term, between 2028 and 2035, the greatest growth is forecast to be in Caring Personal Service Occupations (1,300 people). While Sales Occupations is likely to experience the greatest contraction (-300 people).

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Employment in the 15 Largest Occupational Groups, West Region



For data on employment by occupation at local authority level please see the [Data Matrix](#).

(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Employment Forecast by Occupation)

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.

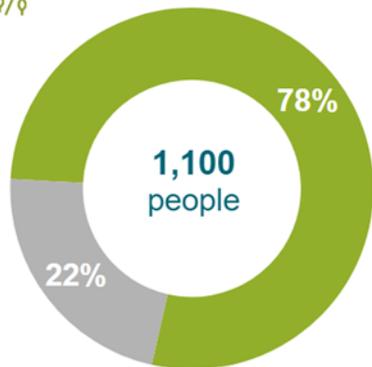
* See RSA Technical Note (2025) for an explanation of what is defined as 'higher-level', 'mid-level' and 'lower-level' occupations.

Transition to Net Zero¹

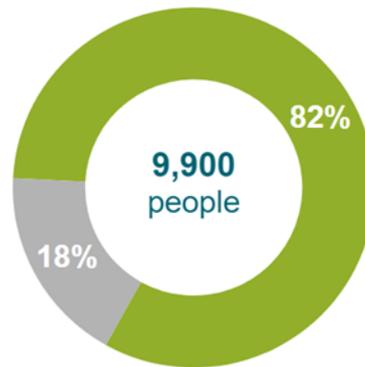
Identified as part of the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan (CESAP), the sectors² listed below **make a significant contribution to the transition to net zero** and have the greatest potential for skills implications and jobs growth arising from it. We have been able to establish the split between green jobs and non-green jobs for the College regions. Green jobs in Scotland are defined by three different categories: enhanced skills and knowledge, increased demand and new and emerging.³ Presented below is the **number of people estimated to be employed in these sectors within the West Region in 2025.**



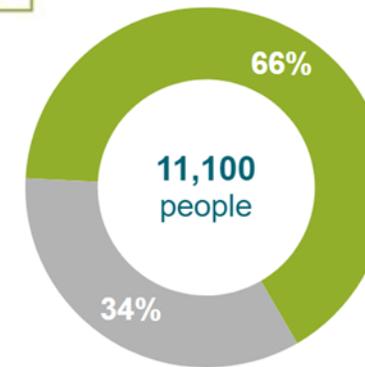
Agriculture



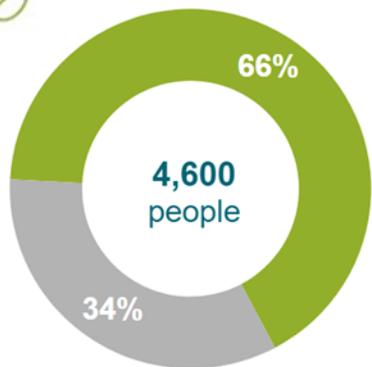
Construction



Manufacturing (with Engineering)



Energy and Waste Treatment



Transport



The total number of people employed in the sectors that will make a significant contribution to net zero in Scotland was estimated to be 667,300 in 2025. The West Region was estimated to account for **5% of Scotland's total** (or 34,800 people). Of the sectors of most importance to the transition, Manufacturing (with Engineering) was the largest employing sector (32%) in the region.

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.

2. The sectors that make a significant contribution to the net zero transition were identified in [the Green Jobs in Scotland report](#).

Due to the methodology adopted, the footprint of sectors presented on this page differs from the industry footprint presented elsewhere in this report, and in our Sectoral Skills Assessments (SSAs). Please find a full list of the

Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes used to define these sectors in the Green Jobs in Scotland report (and on this page) [here](#).

3. Please see page 13 for more information.

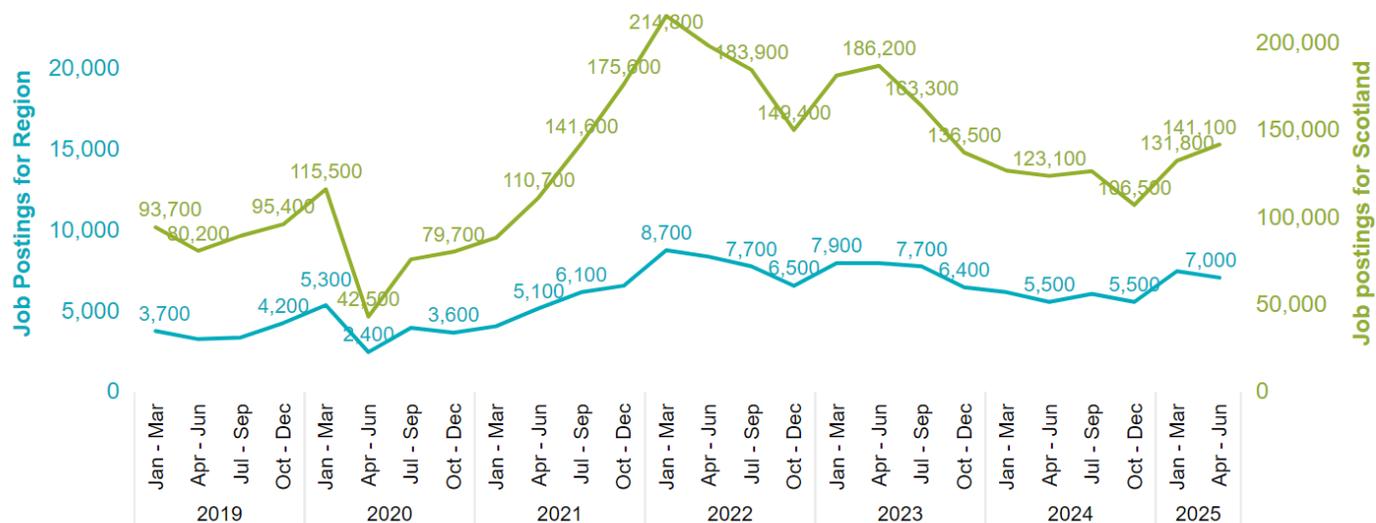
Job Postings¹

Online job postings data provides a useful barometer for the health of the jobs market, real-time employer demand and can indicate changing skills demands. It is important to note that the data does not capture all activity, so it should be considered as an estimate only.

The labour market has cooled across Scotland, and job postings have declined from a peak in 2022. In the West Region, the peak in job postings occurred in 2022, in line with Scotland's peak.

Whilst the labour market has softened, there has been sustained demand for workers in the region in the first six months of 2025. Job postings in the West Region accounted for 5.3% of Scotland's total job postings between January and June 2025.

Job Postings 2019 – 2025*



Between January and June 2025, there were 14,400 job postings in the West Region, of which:

The locations with the most jobs advertised were:

Paisley
3,200 job postings

Port Glasgow
1,800 job postings

Renfrew
1,700 job postings

Clydebank
1,100 job postings

Greenock
1,100 job postings

Dumbarton
800 job postings

Specialised skills and knowledge were:

- Social Work
- Invoicing
- Risk Analysis
- Personal Care
- Project Management
- Effective Communication

The top job postings were for:



Figures may not sum due to rounding.

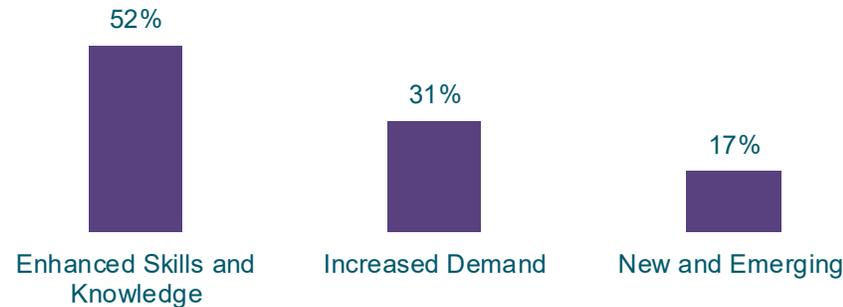
Green Job Postings¹



Out of the 14,400 job postings in the West Region between January and June 2025, **36% (5,200) were for green jobs**. This was a lower proportion of green job postings than the Scottish average (41%). The number of green job postings in the region accounted for 5% of all green job postings in Scotland.



Between January and June 2025, **over half of green job postings** in the West Region were for Enhanced Skills and Knowledge roles.



The green jobs in demand in each category between January and June 2025 included:

Enhanced Skills and Knowledge:



Vehicle Technicians, Mechanics and Electricians

Increased Demand:



Large Goods Vehicle Drivers

New and Emerging:



Engineering Technicians



The median advertised salary for **green jobs** in the West Region was **£34,200*** in the first six months of 2025.

This was higher than the median advertised salary for all jobs in the region which was £28,400**.

The **Green Jobs in Scotland** research uses an **inclusive definition** to define green jobs.

This definition recognises that there will be an ongoing process of 'greening' across the economy due to the transition to net zero, and a broad range of jobs will be impacted in different ways as a result.

Green jobs can be classified into one of the following three categories:

- 1. Enhanced Skills and Knowledge:** Existing occupations which will require significant change to the work and worker requirements due to green economy activities.
- 2. Increased Demand:** Existing occupations which will be needed in higher numbers due to green economy activities.
- 3. New and Emerging:** New occupations which are created because of the need for unique work and worker requirements due to green economy activities.

The full list of occupations (defined using Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) 2020) can be found [here](#).

Figures may not sum due to rounding.



More information on the CESAP Pathfinder can be found [here](#).

1. Lightcast, 2025.

*Median salary based on 40% of job postings.

**Median salary based on 42% of job postings.

Future Demand in the Mid-Term (2025-2028)¹

Oxford Economics' forecasts should be used as guidance only on the overall trends based on current evidence - rather than definitive numbers. There are still a wide range of factors which may impact on the labour market. It is important to note that the forecasts do not account for national or regional activities, initiatives or investments such as those mentioned in our section on Regional Insight, which are likely to influence the outlook presented. Users of the RSAs are encouraged to overlay the forecasts with their local knowledge.

Earlier in the report, we examined the future total employment in the West Region. This part of the report focuses on the total requirement, which introduces not only employment growth or contraction but also the need to replace workers leaving the labour market due to retirement and other reasons.

The mid-term forecast suggests there could be a total requirement for **28,900** people in **the West Region**. Between 2025 and 2028, replacement demand could create the need for **25,400** people, while **positive** expansion demand is forecast to result in **3,500 additional** workers.

In **Scotland**, there could be a total requirement for **398,300** people in the mid-term. Between 2025 and 2028, replacement demand could create the need for **330,300** people, while **positive** expansion demand is forecast to result in **68,000 additional** workers.

Figures may not sum due to rounding.



Total Requirement

made up of expansion demand and replacement demand to show the total number of people required.

West Region: 28,900 people

Scotland: 398,300 people

=



Replacement Demand

the number of people required to replace workers leaving the labour market (i.e. retirement, move away, or change jobs).

West Region: 25,400 people

Scotland: 330,300 people

+



Expansion Demand

the number of people required as a result of economic growth or contraction.

West Region: 3,500 people

Scotland: 68,000 people

The total requirement by qualification for **West Region**:

SCQF 11-12	SCQF 7-10	SCQF 6	SCQF 5	SCQF 1-4	No qualifications
2,300	13,300	3,900	6,000	900	2,500
8%	46%	14%	21%	3%	9%

The total requirement by qualification for **Scotland**:

SCQF 11-12	SCQF 7-10	SCQF 6	SCQF 5	SCQF 1-4	No qualifications
37,800	191,300	49,500	78,400	10,400	30,900
9%	48%	12%	20%	3%	8%

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.



Future Demand in the Mid-Term (2025-2028) by Industry¹

By industry, the greatest number of people are forecast to be required in:



Wholesale and Retail Trade

4,900



Human Health and Social Work Activities

4,300



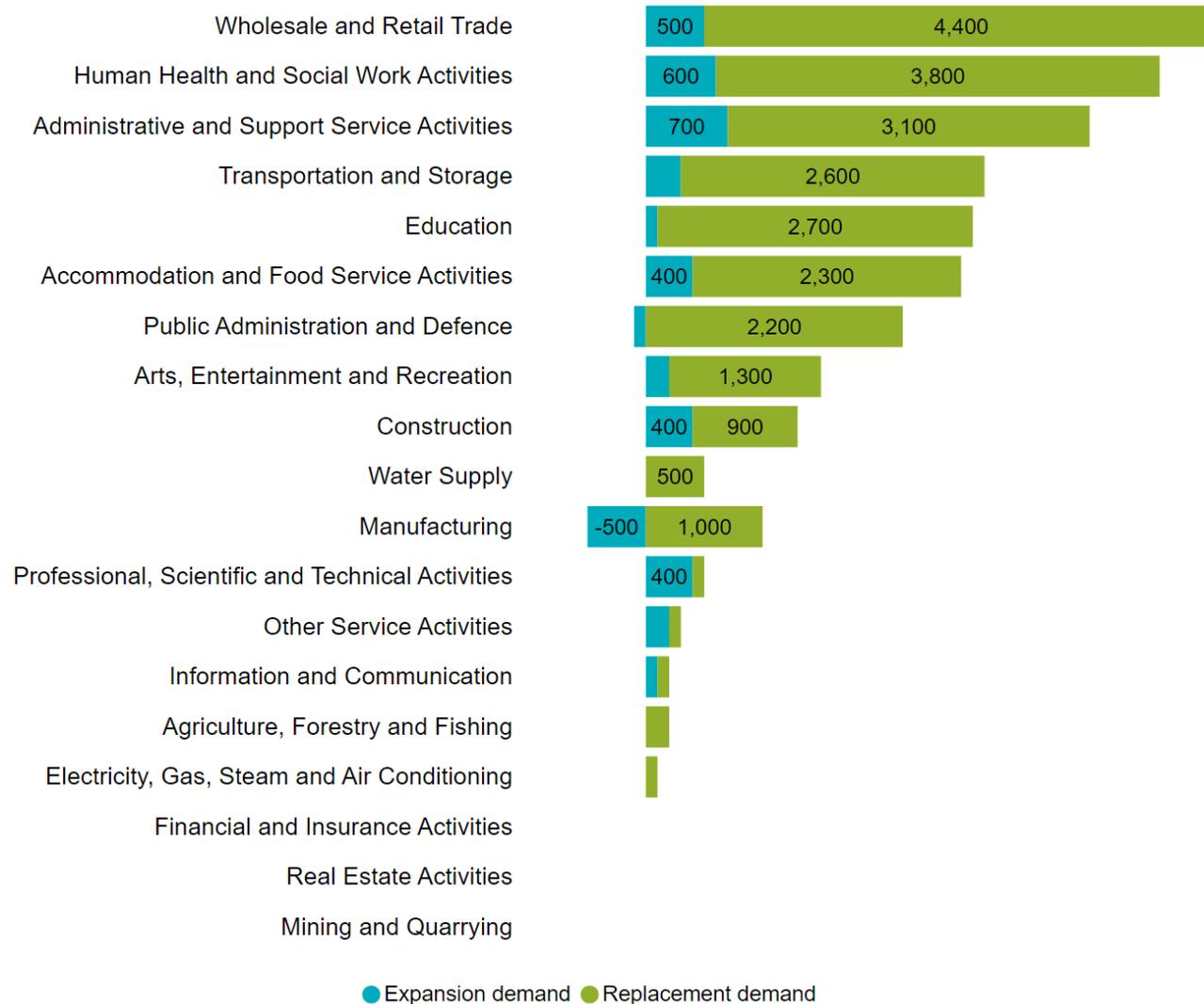
Administrative and Support Service Activities

3,800

Headline figures for each industry do not show how the composition of the industry is changing. Within the industries, there are changes to operating practices and consumer behaviours driven by automation, digitalisation and the transition to net zero. Additionally, industries are defined using SIC codes, which might not reflect the full complexity and diversity within each sector. For example, High Value Manufacturing activities would not be fully captured within the traditional definition of Manufacturing, and it would span across different industries, such as Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities. We encourage readers to keep these two points in mind when interpreting the data. For further sectoral evidence, please see our Sectoral Skills Assessments.

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Forecast Total Requirement by Industry (2025-2028), West Region



For data on future demand by industry at local authority level please see the Data Matrix.

(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Total Requirement by Industry)

Future Demand in the Mid-Term (2025-2028) by Occupation¹

By occupation, the greatest number of people are forecast to be required in:



Elementary Occupations: Clerical and Services

4,200



Teaching and Research Professionals

2,800



Caring Personal Service Occupations

2,700

As mentioned, there is forecast to be a total requirement for 28,900 people in the region over the mid-term. 'Higher-level' occupations* are forecast to account for 48.6% of this total requirement, followed by 27.0% in 'mid-level' occupations and 24.5% in 'lower-level' occupations. Across Scotland, 52.2% of total requirement will be in 'higher-level' occupations, 26.5% in 'mid-level' occupations and 21.4% in 'lower-level' occupations.

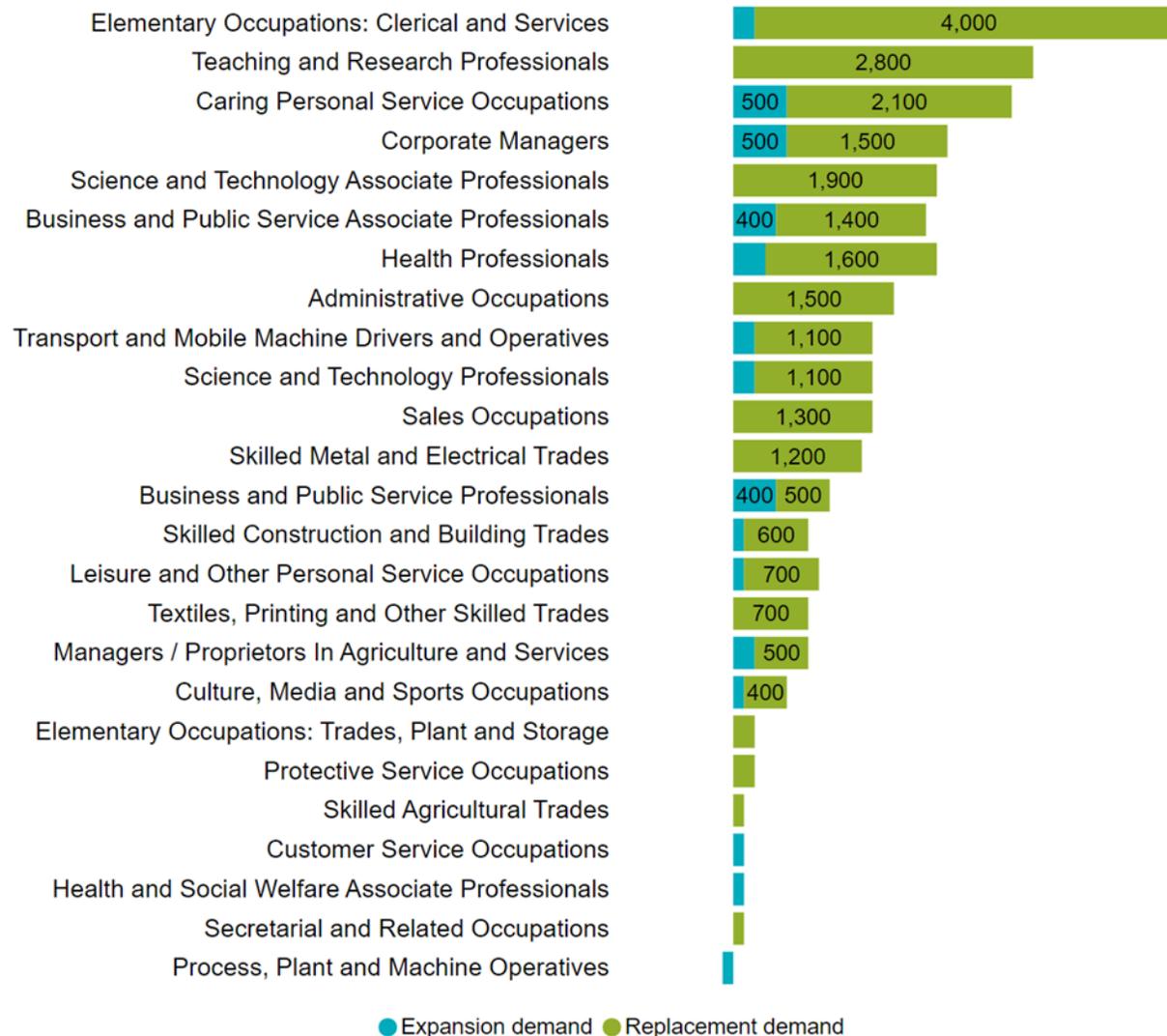


New this year, the RSA report includes more detailed forecasts on the total requirement for the region.

On the next page, the mid-term total requirement is presented with an intersection by both Industry (SIC 1) and Occupation (SOC 1).

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Forecast Total Requirement by Occupation (2025-2028), West Region



● Expansion demand ● Replacement demand



For data on future demand by occupation at local authority level please see the Data Matrix.

(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Total Requirement by Occupation)

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.

* See RSA Technical Note (2025) for an explanation of what is defined as 'higher-level', 'mid-level' and 'lower-level' occupations.

Future Demand in the Mid-Term (2025-2028) by Industry and Occupation¹

Forecast Total Requirement by Industry and Occupation (2025-2028) (people), West Region

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

	Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	Professional Occupations	Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	Skilled Trades Occupations	Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	Sales and Customer Service Occupations	Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	Elementary Occupations
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0
Mining and Quarrying	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manufacturing	100	100	300	0	100	0	0	-100	100
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water Supply	0	100	100	0	100	0	0	100	100
Construction	200	200	200	100	500	0	0	100	100
Wholesale and Retail Trade	800	200	400	200	600	0	1,600	400	700
Transportation and Storage	200	100	300	100	200	100	100	900	800
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	200	0	100	100	400	100	100	100	1,600
Information and Communication	0	100	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial and Insurance Activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Real Estate Activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	100	100	100	100	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative and Support Service Activities	400	200	400	200	400	200	0	100	1,900
Public Administration and Defence	200	600	700	300	100	100	0	0	200
Education	0	2,000	500	100	0	200	0	0	0
Human Health and Social Work Activities	200	1,700	400	200	100	1,500	0	0	300
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	300	200	300	100	100	400	0	0	200
Other Service Activities	0	100	100	0	0	100	0	0	0



For data on future demand by industry and occupation at local authority level please see the [Data Matrix](#).

(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Total Requirement by Industry and Occupation)

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.

Future Demand in the Long-Term (2028-2035)¹

The long-term forecast is more changeable than the mid-term forecasts and could be influenced by a range of factors that are less known. It is important to note that the forecasts do not account for national or regional activities, initiatives or investments like those mentioned in our section on Regional Insight, which are likely to influence the long-term outlook presented. Oxford Economics' forecasts should be used as guidance on overall trends based on current evidence - rather than definitive numbers.

In the West Region, the labour market forecast for the long-term (2028-2035) suggests employment is expected to grow, and there could be opportunities created as a result of the need to replace workers leaving the labour market due to retirement and other reasons.

Forecasts for the long-term suggest there could be a total requirement for **64,600** people in **the West Region**. Between 2028 and 2035, replacement demand could create the need for **58,300** people, while **positive** expansion demand is forecast to result in **6,400 additional** workers.

In **Scotland**, there could be a total requirement for **885,200** people in the long-term. Between 2028 and 2035, replacement demand could create the need for **772,800** people, while **positive** expansion demand is forecast to result in **112,500 additional** workers.

Figures may not sum due to rounding.



Total Requirement

made up of expansion demand and replacement demand to show the total number of people required.

West Region: 64,600 people

Scotland: 885,200 people

=



Replacement Demand

the number of people required to replace workers leaving the labour market (i.e. retirement, move away, or change jobs).

West Region: 58,300 people

Scotland: 772,800 people

+



Expansion Demand

the number of people required as a result of economic growth or contraction.

West Region: 6,400 people

Scotland: 112,500 people

The total requirement by qualification for **West Region**:

SCQF 11-12	SCQF 7-10	SCQF 6	SCQF 5	SCQF 1-4	No qualifications
5,100	29,600	8,400	14,700	1,500	5,300
8%	46%	13%	23%	2%	8%

The total requirement by qualification for **Scotland**:

SCQF 11-12	SCQF 7-10	SCQF 6	SCQF 5	SCQF 1-4	No qualifications
81,500	427,000	104,500	190,000	15,800	66,400
9%	48%	12%	21%	2%	8%

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.



Future Demand in the Long-Term (2028-2035) by Industry¹

By industry, the greatest number of people are forecast to be required in:

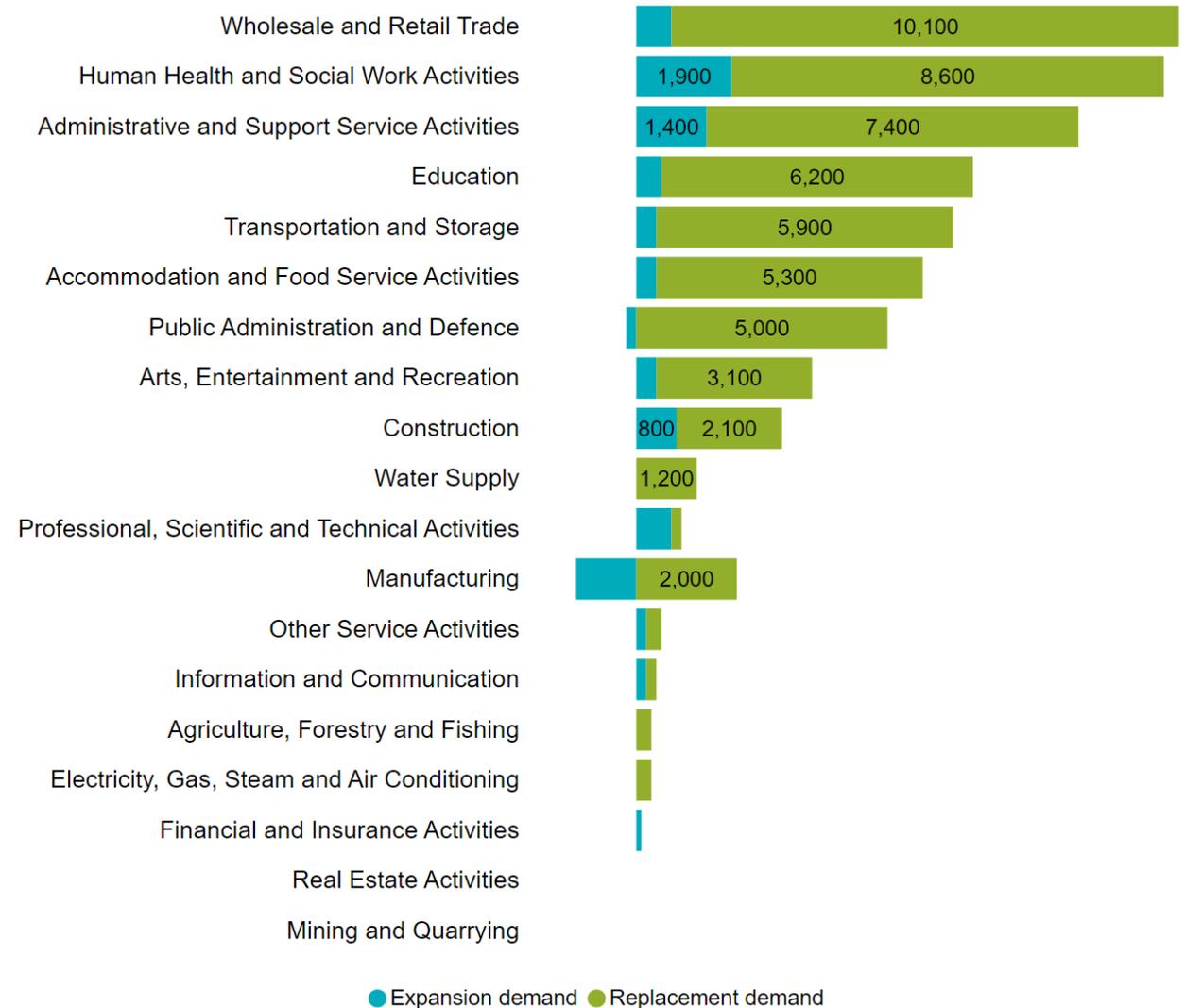
 **Wholesale and Retail Trade**
10,800

 **Human Health and Social Work Activities**
10,400

 **Administrative and Support Service Activities**
8,800

The mid-term forecast analysis indicated that some industries are experiencing a shift in their operational practices, and this trend is also applicable to the long term outlook.

Forecast Total Requirement by Industry (2028-2035), West Region



Figures may not sum due to rounding.



For data on future demand by industry at local authority level please see the Data Matrix.

(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Total Requirement by Industry)

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.

Future Demand in the Long-Term (2028-2035) by Occupation¹

By occupation, the greatest number of people are forecast to be required in:



Elementary Occupations: Clerical and Services

9,100



Teaching and Research Professionals

6,500



Caring Personal Service Occupations

6,100

There is forecast to be a total requirement for 64,600 people in the region over the long-term. 'Higher-level' occupations* are forecast to account for 50.2% of this total requirement, followed by 26.5% in 'mid-level' occupations and 23.3% in 'lower-level' occupations. Across Scotland, 54.0% of total requirement will be in 'higher-level' occupations, 25.9% in 'mid-level' occupations and 20.1% in 'lower-level' occupations.



New this year, the RSA report includes more detailed forecasts on the total requirement for the region.

On the next page, the long-term total requirement is presented with an intersection by both Industry (SIC 1) and Occupation (SOC 1).

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Forecast Total Requirement by Occupation (2028-2035), West Region



● Expansion demand ● Replacement demand



For data on future demand by occupation at local authority level please see the Data Matrix.

(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Total Requirement by Occupation)

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.

* See RSA Technical Note (2025) for an explanation of what is defined as 'higher-level', 'mid-level' and 'lower-level' occupations.

Future Demand in the Long-Term (2028-2035) by Industry and Occupation¹

Forecast Total Requirement by Industry and Occupation (2028-2035) (people), West Region

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

	Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	Professional Occupations	Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	Skilled Trades Occupations	Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	Sales and Customer Service Occupations	Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	Elementary Occupations
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100
Mining and Quarrying	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manufacturing	100	100	600	0	200	0	0	-200	100
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning	0	0	100	0	100	0	0	0	0
Water Supply	0	200	300	0	200	0	0	100	300
Construction	400	400	500	200	1,200	0	0	100	200
Wholesale and Retail Trade	1,900	600	800	500	1,400	100	3,300	800	1,500
Transportation and Storage	500	200	700	200	500	200	100	2,000	1,900
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	500	0	100	200	1,000	300	200	200	3,300
Information and Communication	100	200	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial and Insurance Activities	100	100	100	-100	0	0	0	0	0
Real Estate Activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	100	200	300	200	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative and Support Service Activities	800	600	900	500	1,000	500	0	200	4,300
Public Administration and Defence	400	1,300	1,600	500	100	200	0	0	500
Education	100	4,700	1,100	300	100	400	0	0	0
Human Health and Social Work Activities	500	4,000	1,200	500	100	3,500	100	100	500
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	700	400	800	100	200	900	100	0	400
Other Service Activities	100	100	100	100	0	200	0	0	0



For data on future demand by industry and occupation at local authority level please see the [Data Matrix](#).

(Theme: Skills Demand; Topic: Total Requirement by Industry and Occupation)

1. SDS (2025). Oxford Economics Forecasts.

Skills
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For further information or queries on the RSAs or any of our other products, please contact: RSA@sds.co.uk