



Rural Scotland Key Facts 2021

People and Communities
Services and Lifestyle
Economy and Enterprise



A National Statistics Publication for Scotland



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Introduction

Rural Scotland Key Facts compares and contrasts circumstances in remote and accessible rural areas to the rest of Scotland. The Scottish Government acknowledges that key areas of policy such as the economy, transport, education and health can have a particular impact on rural communities, and seeks to reflect this in mainstream policy development.

While a number of indicators included in this publication report data for 2020, only the indicator on residential property sales reflects the impact that the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had on the country. For the other indicators reporting 2020 data, the data were either collected before the full impact of the pandemic started to be felt or for the median pay figures they were not impacted due to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). The majority of indicators report data for 2019.

Rural Scotland Key Facts is a compendium publication and presents a collation of statistics from a range of surveys and administrative databases. A full list of these can be found in the [Sources](#) section at the end of this publication. This publication presents a snapshot of the latest statistics available at the time of publication.

The publication contains results from several statistical surveys, which are based on samples of households or the population. As such, small differences in results between years or between the geographic areas may not be statistically significant.

A [summary](#) of the publication is also published alongside the full publication.

The data used to create the figures in this publication, as well as the tables, are also available online in an accompanying [spreadsheet](#).

A [page turner](#) version of the publication is also available.

Summary of the key messages

Rural Scotland is Important

The population of rural Scotland continues to grow at a faster rate than the rest of Scotland, driven by the increase in accessible rural areas, mainly due to inward migration. Rural Scotland accounts for 98% of the land mass of Scotland and 17% of the population are resident there.

Rural Scotland is a 'Very Good' Place to Live

A higher proportion of residents of rural Scotland, compared to the rest of Scotland, rate their neighbourhood as a 'very good' place to live. Fewer residents experience neighbourhood problems (e.g. litter, graffiti) and more residents feel they belong to their immediate neighbourhood. In addition, more people volunteer in the community. Crime is less prevalent than in the rest of Scotland and more people feel 'very safe' when home alone at night, particularly in remote rural areas. More people in rural Scotland visit the outdoors at least once a week and are 'very satisfied' with their nearest green or blue space. Life expectancy is higher in rural areas compared to the rest of Scotland.

Rural Scotland Faces Certain Challenges

In terms of travel and access to services, more people in rural areas are outwith a reasonable drive time to key services (e.g. GPs and shops) compared to the rest of Scotland and fewer people are satisfied with the quality of the public transport services delivered. Residents of rural Scotland spend more a month on fuel for cars, with around half of residents reporting to spend over £100 a month in 2019, compared to 39% in the rest of Scotland.

The proportion of households in remote rural areas which are classed as extreme fuel poor (households which spend more than 20% of its adjusted net income on household fuel) is around three times the proportion in accessible rural areas and in the rest of Scotland.

Across all areas of Scotland a similar proportion of households have home internet access. Over half of households in the rest of Scotland access the internet using superfast broadband. This drops to around a third in rural Scotland.

Rural Scotland – A Complex Picture

With regards to the economy and jobs, more residents of rural Scotland are in work with employment rates higher than in the rest of Scotland. Residence based estimates of pay indicate that rates are highest for accessible rural areas but lowest for remote rural areas. More residents in rural Scotland are self-employed and homeworking is more prevalent.

With respect to housing, the average property is more expensive in rural Scotland but there is a higher proportion of owner occupiers. More properties are houses or bungalows and there is a much smaller proportion of flats than in the rest of Scotland.

Use made of the statistics

This publication is widely used to paint a picture of life in rural Scotland and to understand the differences from the rest of Scotland in terms of issues such as demographics, lifestyle, services and the economy.

The statistics presented in Rural Scotland Key Facts are used within the Scottish Government for policy development and monitoring.

In addition to use made in the Scottish Government, the statistics are also used by local government, voluntary organisations, other public bodies and academic institutions to monitor targets and for research purposes.

Findings of previous [consultation exercises](#) on the Rural Scotland Key Facts publication, the aim of which were to gather information on users' needs and wants from the publication and to seek suggestions for new content, are available on the Scottish Government website.

Definition of Rural Scotland

Rural Scotland is defined as **settlements with a population of less than 3,000**. A settlement is defined to be a group of high density postcodes whose combined population rounds to 500 people or more. They are separated by low density postcodes. A postcode is high density if at least one of the following applies:

- it has more than 2.1 residential addresses per hectare;
- it has more than 0.1 non-residential addresses per hectare; or
- the estimate of the population per hectare exceeds five people.

By analysing drive times to larger settlements we can divide rural Scotland into:

Accessible rural: those with a less than 30 minute drive time to the nearest settlement with a population of 10,000 or more; and

Remote rural: those with a greater than 30 minute drive time to the nearest settlement with a population of 10,000 or more.

These definitions form part of the **Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification**. The map on the next page shows the full classification.

A high resolution version of the map can be found in the supporting files of the [Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016](#) publication.

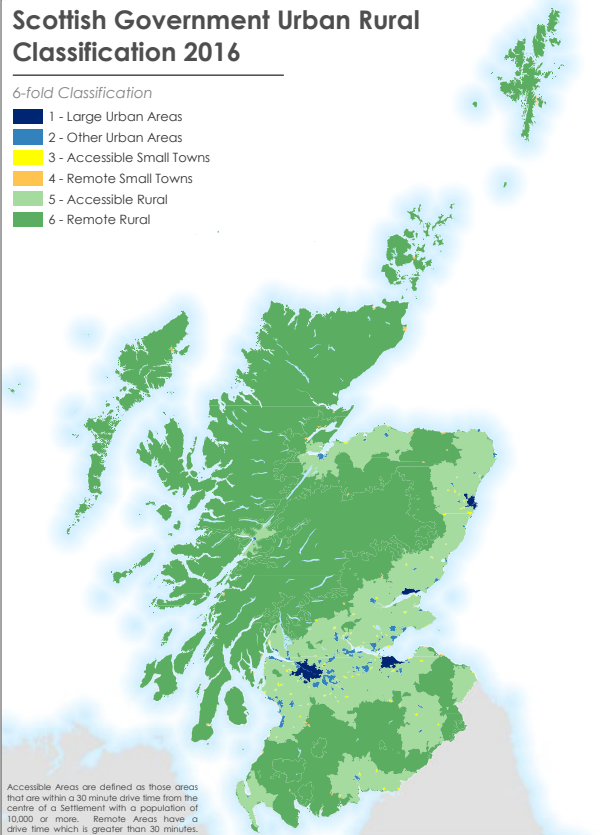
This publication combines the first four categories of the 6-fold classification into the **Rest of Scotland** figures. The rest of Scotland therefore includes large urban areas, other urban areas, accessible small towns and remote small towns.

Map of Rural Scotland

Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016

6-fold Classification

- 1 - Large Urban Areas
- 2 - Other Urban Areas
- 3 - Accessible Small Towns
- 4 - Remote Small Towns
- 5 - Accessible Rural
- 6 - Remote Rural



Demographics

Table 1: Population and land share by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2011 & 2019

	2011	2019	% change 2011-2019	% of 2019 population	% of land area
Remote Rural	315,945	316,166	0.1%	6%	70%
Accessible Rural	573,407	616,536	8%	11%	28%
Rest of Scotland	4,410,548	4,530,598	3%	83%	2%
Total	5,299,900	5,463,300	3%	100%	100%

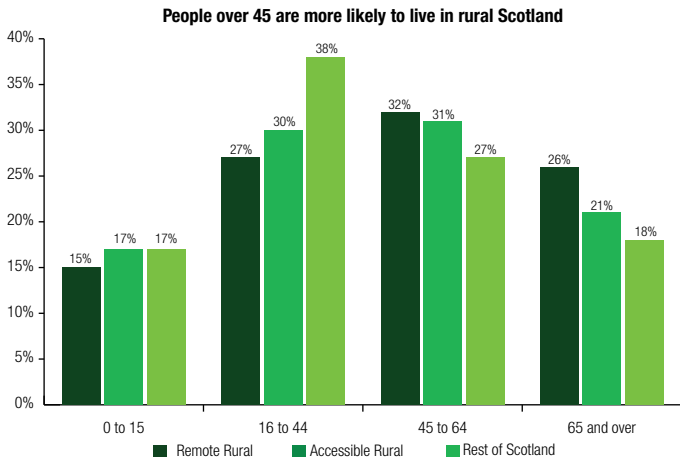
Source: Mid-year small area population estimates, National Records of Scotland (Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Table 1 shows the population figures from the census in 2011 as well as the population estimate for 2019, the most recently available year. Over 5.46 million people live in Scotland, with over 930,000 of them living in rural areas. Rural Scotland accounts for 17% of the total population in Scotland (6% in remote rural and 11% in accessible rural) and has consistently done so since 2011.

The population has increased in all areas of Scotland between 2011 and 2019, but only very slightly in remote rural areas where the increase was 0.1% or 221 people. The greatest increase in population has been in accessible rural areas, with a 8% increase between 2011 and 2019, compared to an increase of 3% in the rest of Scotland.

In contrast to the population distribution, rural Scotland accounts for 98% of the land mass in Scotland (70% in remote rural and 28% in accessible rural). This reflects the dispersed nature of the population in rural areas.

Figure 1: Age distribution of population by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019



Source: Mid-year small area population estimates, National Records of Scotland (Using the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Figure 1 shows that the age distribution of rural areas compared to the rest of Scotland is different for people older than 15, the age at when children can leave school. Rural areas have a lower proportion of the population in the age range 16 to 44 but a higher proportion of people aged 45 and over. This is particularly true for the age range of 65 and over in remote rural areas. Indicating that when people get to retirement age they are more likely to live in rural areas.

Evidence suggests that factors influencing migration decisions of young people moving out of rural areas could be higher education and employment opportunities, housing and public transport availability.

Table 2: Internal population change and migration by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Births	2,221	5,423	42,219
Births per 1,000 population	7	9	9
Deaths	3,574	5,776	48,758
Deaths per 1,000 population	11	9	11
Migration¹ (2018-19)			
In-migration	17,120	39,960	108,020
Out-migration	15,870	32,110	86,880
Net Migration	1,250	7,850	21,140
Net Migration as % of population	0.4%	1.3%	0.5%

Source: Migration Statistics, National Records of Scotland
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Migration flows are rounded to ten nearest 10.

Table 2 shows that the birth rate (per 1,000 population) was lower than the death rate in remote rural areas and the rest of Scotland in 2019. The birth and death rates were almost the same in accessible rural areas but the death rate was marginally higher.

The birth rate was lowest in remote rural areas (seven per 1,000 population) compared to nine per 1,000 in both accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland.

The rate of deaths was lowest in accessible rural areas (nine per 1,000 population). The death rate was the same in remote rural areas and the rest of Scotland (11 per 1,000 population).

Table 2 also shows positive net migration into all three areas of Scotland over the year 2018-19, i.e. the number of in-migrants was greater than the number of out-migrants. The net migration rate was low in all areas of Scotland but was highest in accessible rural areas, equivalent to 1.3% of the population. The lowest net migration rate was in the remote rural areas, equivalent to 0.4% of the population.

Table 3: Country of birth by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Scotland	73%	77%	80%
Rest of UK	22%	17%	10%
Rest of World	5%	5%	10%
European Union	3%	3%	5%
non-European Union	2%	3%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: Annual Population Survey, January to December 2019, ONS
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Table 3 shows the proportions of Scotland's current population that were born in Scotland, in the rest of the United Kingdom and in the rest of the world, which is further split into European Union and non-European Union countries. The area with highest proportion of residents who were born in the UK but outside of Scotland is remote rural areas at 22%. The rate for accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland were 17% and 10% respectively.

The area with the highest proportion of residents that were born outside the UK is the rest of Scotland (10%). In both remote rural and accessible rural areas, 5% of residents were born outside of the UK. In all areas of Scotland, there is a roughly equal split of people who were born outside of the UK born who were born in European Union countries and non-European Union countries.

Households

Table 4: Household type¹ by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Single adult	17%	15%	21%
Small adult	16%	20%	20%
Single parent²	2%	3%	5%
Small family	11%	15%	13%
Large family	7%	6%	5%
Large adult	8%	8%	9%
Older smaller	20%	19%	13%
Single pensioner	19%	14%	14%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	1,070	1,160	8,350

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019 (Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. A description of all household types can be found under [Definitions](#) in the Notes section at the end of this publication.
2. It should be noted that the definition of a single parent does not make any distinction between situations where a child has regular contact and/or partly resides with their other parent and a child who solely resides with their other parent and a child who solely resides with and is cared for by one parent.

Table 4 shows that, relative to the rest of Scotland, remote and accessible rural Scotland have lower percentages of single adult households.

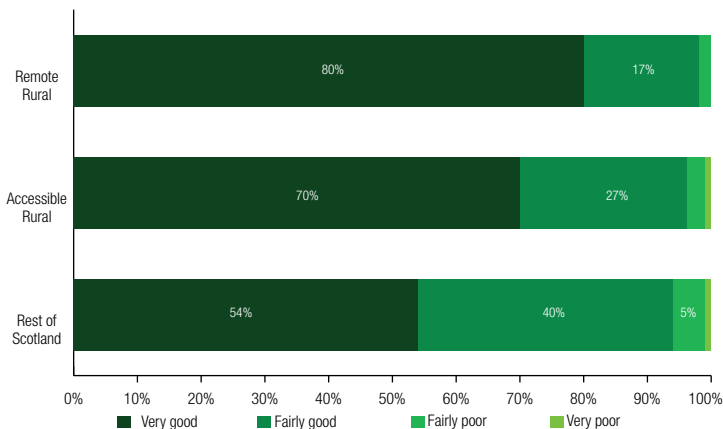
Remote rural areas have the highest percentage of 'large family' households, while accessible rural areas have the highest percentage of 'small family' households. A 'small family' household contains two adults of any age and one or two children while a 'large family' household contains two adults of any age and three or more children or three adults of any age and one or more children.

Rural Scotland as a whole has a higher percentage of 'older smaller' households, where one or both adults are of pensionable age. In addition, remote rural areas have a higher proportion of single pensioner households ('single older') compared to accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland.

Neighbourhood and Community

Figure 2: Rating of neighbourhood as a place to live by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

More people in rural Scotland rate their neighbourhood 'very good'



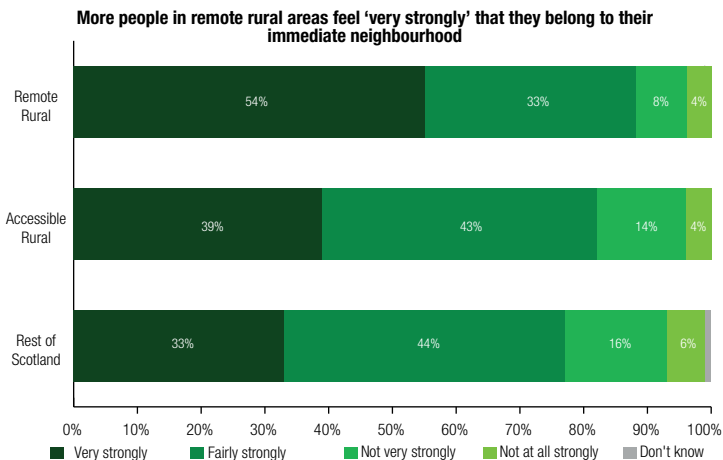
Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Figure 2 shows that 97% of residents in rural areas rate their neighbourhood as a 'very good' or 'fairly good' place to live. This compares to 94% in the rest of Scotland.

People living in remote rural areas are more likely to describe their neighbourhood as a 'very good' place to live (80%), compared to accessible rural areas (70%) and the rest of Scotland (54%).

Within the Communities National Outcome of the National Performance Framework there is a National Indicator called [Perception of Local Area](#), which shows the proportion of adults who rate their neighbourhood as a very good place to live.

Figure 3: Percentage of people who feel they belong to their immediate neighbourhood by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019



Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

A higher proportion of people who live in remote rural areas either feel 'very strongly' that they belong to their immediate neighbourhood than either people in accessible rural areas or the rest of Scotland. When the categories 'very strongly' and 'fairly strongly' are combined, remote rural areas still show a higher proportion than accessible rural areas or the rest of Scotland but the gap is not as large.

As a result, the proportion of people living in the rest of Scotland and accessible rural areas who either feel 'not very strongly' or 'not at all strongly' that they belong to their immediate neighbourhood are similar and higher than in remote rural areas. When the 'not at all strongly' category is considered on its own, the proportion of people who feel this way is almost the same across all areas of Scotland, at 4% for both remote rural and accessible rural areas, compared to 6% for the rest of Scotland.

Table 5: Percentage of people who think they can influence decisions affecting their local area by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Agree	22%	21%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	18%	22%
Disagree	53%	55%	52%
No opinion	10%	6%	9%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	1,020	1,050	7,710

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Table 5 shows that a higher proportion of people living in rural areas think they can influence decisions affecting their local area compared to the rest of Scotland. The proportion is just higher for remote rural areas compared to accessible rural areas at 22% and 21% respectively. This does not imply that people living in remote areas do actually have more influence over decisions that affect their local areas but they believe that they do.

In all areas of Scotland, just over half of people do not think they can influence decisions that affect their local area. The highest proportion is in accessible rural areas (55%).

It should be noted that the proportion of people with no opinion regarding this question is relatively high as well. In remote rural areas, 10% had no opinion and 9% had no opinion in the rest of Scotland.

Within the Human Rights National Outcome of the National Performance Framework there is a National Indicator called [Influence Over Local Decisions](#), which shows the proportion of respondents who agree with the statement 'I can influence decisions affecting my local area'.

Table 6: Experience of neighbourhood problems¹ by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property	1%	2%	7%
Groups or individuals intimidating or harassing others	2%	2%	4%
Seeing drug misuse or dealing	3%	3%	9%
Rowdy behaviour e.g. drunkenness, hooliganism or loutish behaviour	3%	4%	12%
Noisy neighbours or regular loud parties	3%	5%	11%
Neighbour disputes	5%	7%	6%
Rubbish or litter lying around	18%	23%	33%
Abandoned or burnt out vehicles	2%	2%	2%
Animal nuisance such as noise or dog fouling	24%	30%	38%
None	60%	52%	43%
Base	1,020	1,050	7,710

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Respondents can choose more than one option.

Table 6 shows that, for almost all categories, a lower percentage of people in rural Scotland have experienced neighbourhood problems compared to the rest of Scotland. The proportion is also generally lower in remote rural areas compared to accessible rural areas. The one exception is for neighbour disputes where accessible rural areas have the highest proportion at 7%. This compares to 6% in the rest of Scotland and 5% in remote rural areas.

For all areas of Scotland, the neighbourhood problem that is most reported is animal nuisance, such as noise or dog fouling. In the rest of Scotland 38% of people have experienced it. In accessible rural areas, 30% have experienced problems with animal nuisance and it is lowest in remote rural areas at 24%.

In remote rural areas, 60% of people have experienced none of the neighbourhood problems listed. This drops to 52% in accessible rural areas and then further to 43% in the rest of Scotland.

Table 7: Perceptions of safety when at home alone at night by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Very safe	95%	88%	83%
Fairly safe	3%	10%	14%
A bit unsafe	1%	1%	2%
Very unsafe	0%	0%	1%
Don't know	-	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	1,020	1,050	7,710

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Table 7 shows that 95% of people in remote rural areas feel 'very safe' when at home alone at night. This compares to 88% in accessible rural areas and 83% in the rest of Scotland. When the two categories 'very safe' and 'fairly safe' are combined they account for almost all people in all areas of Scotland.

Looking at people who felt 'very unsafe' when at home alone at night, 1% of people in the rest of Scotland feel this way. This compares to less than 0.5% in both remote rural and accessible rural areas.

Table 8: Crime victimisation and perception of change in crimes rates over previous two years by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2018-19

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Percentage of adults who had been the victims of crime in the last 12 months	4%	9%	13%
Base	370	620	4,560
Proportion of adults who perceived that:			
Crime rate has increased over last 2 years	18%	19%	22%
Crime rate has stayed the same over last 2 years	75%	71%	63%
Crime rate has decreased over last 2 years	3%	5%	9%
Don't know	4%	4%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	330	560	3,940

Source: Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2018-19
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2013-2014)

The crime victimisation rates in rural areas are lower than in the rest of Scotland. Remote rural areas have the lowest victimisation rates at 4%. This rises to 9% in accessible rural areas and then to 13% in the rest of Scotland. This may provide an explanation as to why residents of rural Scotland are more likely to feel safe alone in their home at night (as shown in [Table 7](#)).

In terms of perception of changes in crime rates, the majority of people across all areas of Scotland state they feel crime rates have remained the same over the last two years. The highest proportion is in remote rural areas (75%). Of those who feel there has been a change in the crime rate over the two previous years, more feel that crime rates have increased as opposed to decreased, with the highest proportion in the rest of Scotland (22%). However, this is also true of the proportion of people who feel crime has decreased (9%).

Within the Communities National Outcome of the National Performance Framework, there are two National Indicator relating to this Indicator. [Crime Victimisation](#), which shows the proportion of adults in Scotland who have been the victim of one or more crimes in the past year. As well as [Perceptions of Local Crime Rate](#), which shows the proportion of people who have a positive perception of the general crime rate in their local area.

Table 9: Whether respondent gave their time to help as an organiser/volunteer in the past 12 months by age and 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

		Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
16 to 64	Yes	34%	35%	25%
	No	66%	65%	75%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
Base		590	670	5,340
65 and over	Yes	30%	26%	22%
	No	70%	74%	78%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
Base		420	380	2,380
All adults	Yes	33%	32%	25%
	No	67%	68%	75%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
Base		1,020	1,050	7,710

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

In rural Scotland, a higher proportion of people give up their time to help as an organiser or a volunteer than in the rest of Scotland. Around a third of people in rural Scotland give up time to work as a volunteer/organiser compared to a quarter in the rest of Scotland.

This difference is more apparent for people aged 16 to 64, with 34% of this age group in remote rural areas and 35% in accessible rural areas giving up time to work as a volunteer/organiser, compared to 25% in the rest of Scotland.

The proportion of people who give up their time to help as an organiser or a volunteer, while still higher in rural areas, is lower across all areas for people aged 65 and over compared to the proportion for all adults.

Table 10: Number of assets, number of community groups, area and percentage of land area in community ownership by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Assets¹	374	98	118
Groups²	242	77	99
Area³ (ha)	187,702	2,568	1,020

Source: Community Ownership in Scotland 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Assets are assigned an Urban Rural category according to the address/location of the asset. Assets with large areas may straddle multiple Urban Rural categories.
2. Community groups can own multiple assets and may own assets in more than one Urban Rural category.
3. For some assets their area is recorded as zero, mainly buildings, and in other cases no area figures are available.

Table 10 shows that in while around 60% of the assets in community ownership and the groups that own the assets are in remote rural areas 98% of the area in community ownership is in remote rural Scotland. This reflects that the majority of area in community ownership is accounted for by a small number of estates that are located in remote rural areas, and in most case have been in community ownership for a long period of time.

There are more assets and community groups based in the rest of Scotland compared to accessible rural areas, while the area in community ownership is smaller in the rest of Scotland. Communities groups, particularly in the rest of Scotland, are now acquiring assets that have a positive impact on the community but do not necessarily cover large areas of land.

Within the Communities National Outcome of the National Performance Framework there is a National Indicator called [Community Ownership](#), which measures the extent of community ownership in Scotland.

Physical Environment

Table 11: Frequency of visits¹ made to the outdoors² by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Once or more times a week	66%	63%	54%
At least once a month	11%	15%	19%
At least once a year	8%	11%	16%
Not at all	16%	12%	11%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	1,020	1,050	7,710

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Visits are defined as trips that could either have been from home or while away from home on holiday, provided the holiday was in Scotland. They might include everyday activities like walking the dog as well as other activities like mountain biking or kayaking.
2. The outdoors is defined as open spaces in the countryside as well as in towns and cities such as woodland, parks, farmland, paths, beaches etc.

There are similar proportions of people from rural areas who visit the outdoors one or more times a week, 66% in remote rural areas and 63% in accessible rural areas. The proportion drops to 54% for the rest of Scotland.

Looking at the proportion of people who do not visit the outdoors at all, the proportion is also highest in remote rural areas at 16%. This compares to 12% in accessible rural areas and the proportion is lowest in the rest of Scotland at 11%.

Within the Environment National Outcome of the National Performance Framework there is a National Indicator called [Visits to the Outdoors](#), which measures the proportion of adults making one or more visits to the outdoors per week.

Table 12: Walking distance to nearest green or blue space^{1,2} by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
In 5 minutes	71%	75%	64%
6-10 minutes	9%	10%	22%
Within an 11-20 minute walk	4%	3%	9%
Within a 21-30 minute walk	3%	3%	2%
More than a 30 minute walk away	11%	7%	2%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	1,020	1,050	7,710

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Green, blue or open spaces are public or open spaces in the local area, for example a park, countryside, wood, play area, canal path, riverside, sea or beach.
2. In 2019 for one half of the sample the question wording was changed slightly from 'green or open spaces' to 'green, blue or open spaces' to check if including the word 'blue' made any difference to the response given. No statistically significant difference was found in the responses to the different wordings.

In accessible rural areas, three quarters of people live within five minutes walking distance of a green or blue space. This falls to 71% in remote rural areas and then to 64% in the rest of Scotland. When looking at those people who are within ten minutes walking distance of a green or blue space, the proportion for accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland are similar, 85% and 86% respectively. The proportion drops to 80% for remote rural areas.

Remote rural areas have the highest proportion of people living more than 30 minutes walk from a green or blue space (11%), while the rest of Scotland has the lowest proportion (2%).

Within the Communities National Outcome of the National Performance Framework there is a National Indicator called [Access to Green and Blue Space](#), which measures the proportion of adults who live within a five minute walk of their local green or blue space.

Table 13: Satisfaction with nearest green or blue space^{1,2} by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Very satisfied	54%	43%	29%
Fairly satisfied	27%	33%	43%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	8%	9%	11%
Fairly dissatisfied	2%	5%	7%
Very dissatisfied	2%	3%	4%
No opinion	7%	6%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	990	1,030	7,560

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

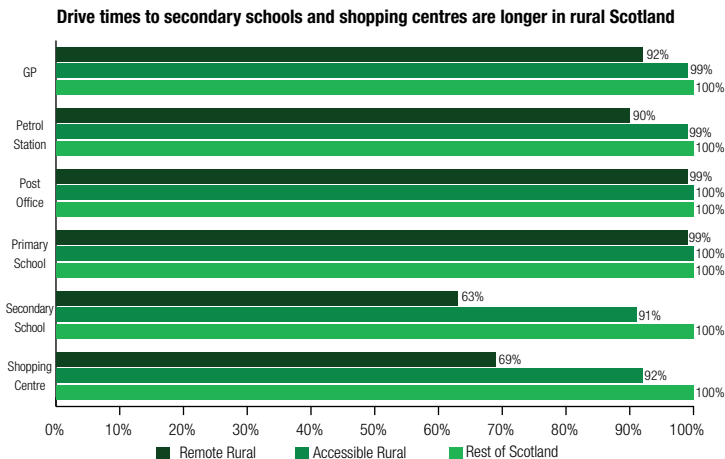
1. Green, blue or open spaces are public or open spaces in the local area, for example a park, countryside, wood, play area, canal path, riverside, sea or beach.
2. In 2019 for one half of the sample the question wording was changed slightly from 'green or open spaces' to 'green, blue or open spaces' to check if including the word 'blue' made any difference to the response given. No statistically significant difference was found in the responses to the different wordings.

In remote rural areas over half of people are 'very satisfied' with their local green or blue space, while the proportion of people who are 'very satisfied' is 43% in accessible rural areas and falls to 29% in the rest of Scotland. In total, 81% of people living in remote rural areas are either 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with their local greenspace. This compares to 76% in accessible rural areas and 72% in the rest of Scotland.

Looking at the people who were 'very dissatisfied' with their local green or blue space, the proportion is highest in the rest of Scotland at 4%. This compares to 2% in remote rural areas and 3% in accessible rural areas.

Access and Convenience of Services

Figure 4: Percentage within 15 minute drive time of service by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2020



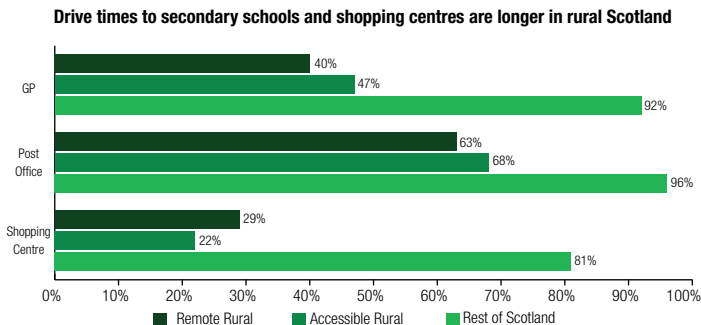
Source: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Figure 4 shows that only rural areas of Scotland are not within a 15 minute drive time to key services. This is the case for all the services for remote rural areas but not for accessible rural areas. However, 99% of people in remote rural areas are within 15 minute drive time to both a post office and a primary school.

The greatest difference observed in drive time is to the nearest secondary school. In remote rural areas, 63% people live within a 15 minute drive time to a secondary school, compared to 91% of people in accessible rural areas and 100% of people in the rest of Scotland.

This is closely followed by the differences in observed drive time to the nearest shopping centre. While 100% of people in the rest of Scotland live within a 15 minute drive time to a shopping centre, only 69% of people in remote rural areas do. This rises to 92% in accessible rural areas.

Figure 5: Percentage within 15 minute drive time by public transport of service, by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2020



Source: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Figure 5 shows that the proportion of people within a 15 minute drive time to key services by public transport. Unlike [Figure 4](#) no proportions are 100%. The highest proportion is 96% for post offices in the rest of Scotland.

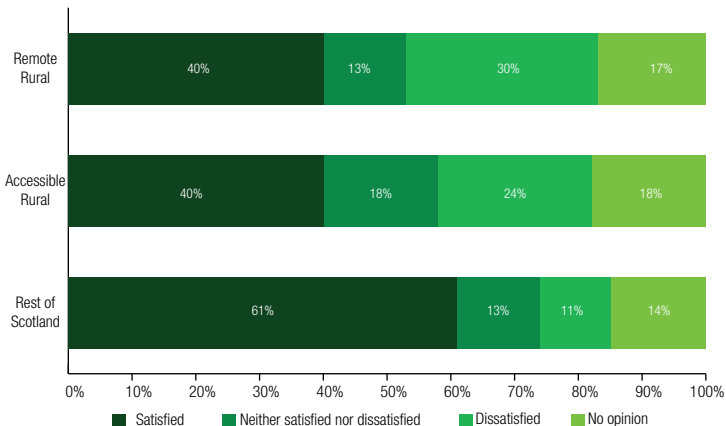
The proportion of people within a 15 minute drive time to key services by public transport are much lower in rural areas compared to the rest of Scotland. The figures are particularly low in rural areas with respect to drive time to the nearest shopping centre, where only 22% of people in accessible rural areas live within a 15 minute drive by public transport. The proportion is slightly higher at 29% in remote rural areas.

Less than half of people living in rural areas of Scotland live within a 15 minute drive time to a GP by public transport, this compares to 92% in the rest of Scotland.

This is reflected in the levels of satisfaction with quality of public transport services shown in [Figure 6](#).

Figure 6: Satisfaction with the quality of public transport services delivered by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

People in rural Scotland are less 'satisfied' with the quality of public transport services



Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Figure 6 shows that while 61% of people in the rest of Scotland are 'satisfied' with the quality of public transport service delivered in their area, only 40% of people in rural areas are 'satisfied' the delivered public transport service.

In contrast to this, 30% of people in remote rural areas and 24% in accessible rural areas are 'dissatisfied' with the quality of public transport service delivered in their area. The proportion of people 'dissatisfied' in the rest of Scotland is only 11%.

Table 14: How households with internet access connect to the internet by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Households with home internet access	87%	90%	87%
Base	280	320	2,400
How these households¹ connect to the internet:			
DSL broadband	66%	59%	40%
Superfast broadband (e.g. Virgin Media, BT Infinity)	29%	36%	53%
Broadband via satellite, public WiFi	3%	4%	5%
Mobile broadband via mobile phone network (3G or 4G) via a mobile phone, smartphone or tablet	8%	8%	11%
Dial-up access	-	-	-
Other	1%	0%	1%
Base	240	280	2,080

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Households can connect to the internet via multiple ways.

The proportion of households with home internet access is very similar across all areas of Scotland, with at least 87% of households in the different areas having home internet access.

Of those households with home internet access, almost all of them have a broadband connection through either Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) broadband or superfast broadband. In remote rural areas, two thirds of households connect using DSL broadband and 29% use superfast broadband. This compares to 53% in the rest of Scotland who connect using superfast broadband and 40% using DSL broadband.

Within the Economy National Outcome of the National Performance Framework there is a National Indicator called [Access to Superfast Broadband](#), which measures the proportion of residential and non-residential premises where superfast broadband is available.

Cultural Engagement

Table 15: Attendance at any cultural event¹ in the previous 12 months by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Yes	73%	82%	81%
Excluding the cinema	66%	75%	75%
No	27%	18%	19%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	1,020	1,050	7,710

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. A cultural event includes: cinema, library, classical music, live music event, theatre, dance show event, historic place, museum, art gallery, exhibition, street arts, culturally specific festival, book festival, archive office and streaming live performance.

The proportion of people who have attended any cultural event in the previous 12 month is highest in accessible rural areas at 82%, closely followed by the rest of Scotland at 81%. The proportion decreases to 73% in remote rural areas.

Going to the cinema is the most popular cultural event across all areas, with around half of people saying that have been to the cinema in the past 12 months. When those people who have only gone to the cinema are excluded, the proportion of people who have attended a cultural event in the previous 12 months decreases across all areas of Scotland in a similar way. There is a decrease of around seven percentage points in the proportion of people who have attended any cultural event.

Within the Culture National Outcome of the National Performance Framework there is a National Indicator called [Attendance at Cultural Events or Places of Culture](#), which measures the proportion of adults who have attended or visited a cultural event or place in the last 12 months.

Table 16: Participation in any cultural event¹ in the previous 12 months by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Yes	80%	77%	74%
Excluding reading	47%	47%	48%
No	20%	23%	26%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	1,020	1,050	7,710

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. A cultural event includes: reading, dance, play instrument, taken part in play, singing group/choir, art sculpture, photography, film making, computer artwork animation, crafts, creative writing, viewed performances online, viewed cultural content online, shared art creative content online and other cultural.

In contrast to what was seen in [Table 15](#), participation in any cultural event in the previous 12 months is highest in remote rural areas (80%). This compares to 77% in accessible rural areas and 74% in the rest of Scotland.

Reading is the most popular cultural event to participate in across Scotland. Over 60% of people have read within the previous 12 months. When those people that have only read are excluded the level of participation in cultural events for all areas drops by around 30 percentage points. The highest proportion of participation is then in the rest of Scotland at 48%. For both remote rural and accessible rural areas it is 47%.

Within the Culture National Outcome of the National Performance Framework there is a National Indicator called [Participation in a Cultural Activity](#), which measures the proportion of adults who have participated in a cultural activity in the last 12 months.

Travel Patterns

Table 17: How adults usually travel to work/education by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Walking	14%	6%	13%
Driver of a car or van	75%	82%	60%
Passenger in a car or van	3%	4%	5%
Bicycle	1%	1%	3%
Bus (ordinary or works)	3%	2%	11%
Rail	1%	4%	6%
Other	2%	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	350	410	3,290

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Table 17 shows that people in rural areas are more likely to drive to work/education, more so in accessible rural areas, and less likely to take public transport, compared to the rest of Scotland.

The highest proportion of adults who walk to work/education is 14% in remote rural areas. This is followed by the rest of Scotland where it is 13%. In accessible rural areas only 6% of adults walk to work/education.

Within the Health National Outcome of the National Performance Framework there is a National Indicator called [Journeys by Active Travel](#), which measures the proportion of short journeys made by adults (16+) that are made by walking or cycling.

Table 18: How children normally travel to school by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Walking/bicycle	28%	31%	59%
Passenger in a car/van	27%	27%	25%
Bus (ordinary, school, works, or private)	42%	37%	14%
Other	3%	5%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	180	220	1,510

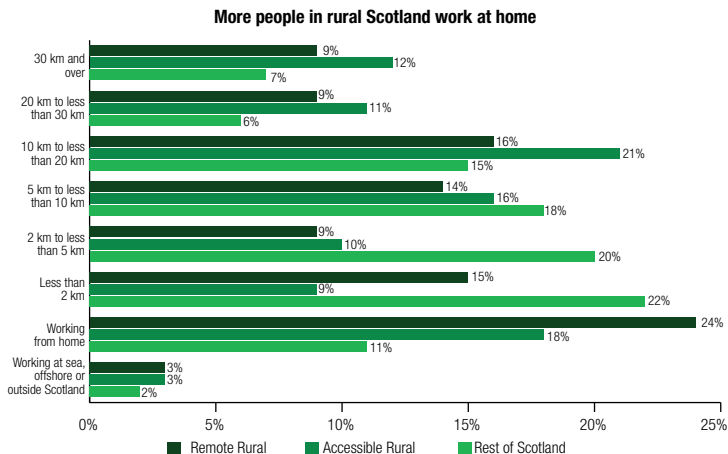
Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Table 18 shows that children in rural areas are more likely to travel to school by bus than by any other mode of transport. The proportion is highest in remote rural areas at 42% compared to 37% in the accessible rural areas.

Whereas, children in the rest of Scotland are more likely to walk or cycle to school compared to children in rural areas.

Figure 4 shows that a greater proportion of children living in rural areas are outwith 15 minutes drive to primary schools and in particular, secondary schools. This is likely to have an impact on the lower proportion of children in rural areas that normally either walk or cycle to school.

Figure 7: Distance to work¹ for people aged over 16 in employment by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2017-2019



Source: Scottish Household Survey 2017, 2018 and 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. The distance to work is a calculation of the straight line between the postcode of place of residence and postcode of workplace.

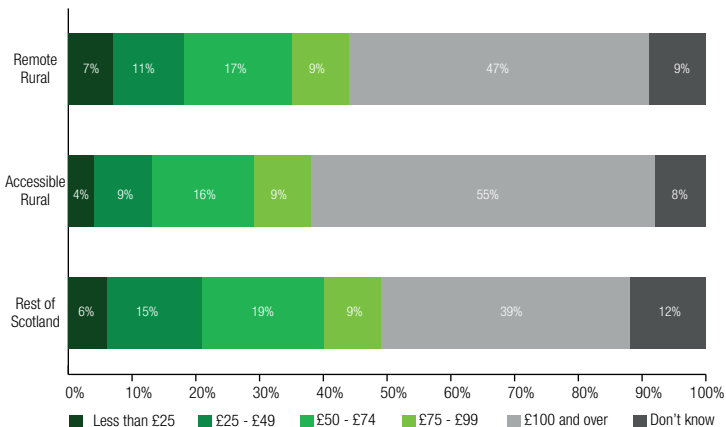
The highest proportion of people living in remote rural areas work from home (24%). The proportion of people working at home is lower in accessible rural areas (18%) and lowest for people in the rest of Scotland (11%).

In accessible rural areas, the highest proportion of people travel between 10 km and 20 km to work (21%). This compares to 16% in remote rural areas and 15% in the rest of Scotland, while for the rest of Scotland the highest proportion of people travel less than 2 km to work (22%). For remote rural areas 15% of people travel less than 2 km to work, in accessible rural areas the proportion is only 9%.

Of people living in accessible rural areas, 32% travel between 10 km and 30 km to work. As accessible rural areas are within a drive time of 30 minutes to the nearest settlement with a population of 10,000 or more, this could indicate that people living in accessible rural areas are commuting to urban areas to work.

Figure 8: Total expenditure on fuel for cars per month by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

More people spend at least £100 on fuel for cars per month in rural Scotland



Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Figure 8 shows that residents in rural Scotland are more likely than those in the rest of Scotland to spend over £100 per month on fuel for their cars. The proportion of those spending more than £100 per month on fuel for their cars is highest in accessible rural areas at 55%. The proportion is 47% in remote rural areas. In the rest of Scotland this falls to 39%. A higher level of expenditure on fuel for cars is likely to be, in part, due to longer driving distances to key services, as shown in [Figure 4](#), as well as the distance travelled to work for people in accessible rural areas, as shown in [Figure 7](#).

Education

Table 19: Destination of school leavers from publicly funded secondary schools by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2018-19

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Positive Destinations	95%	95%	92%
Higher Education	35%	39%	38%
Further Education	18%	23%	24%
Training ¹	3%	2%	2%
Employment	37%	30%	27%
Voluntary Work	0%	1%	0%
Personal Skills Development ²	0%	0%	0%
Other Destinations	5%	5%	8%
Unemployed Seeking	2%	2%	4%
Unemployed Not Seeking	2%	2%	2%
Unknown	1%	1%	1%
Number of Leavers	3,043	5,835	40,777

Source: Destination of Leavers from Scottish Schools 2018-19

(Based on school leaver's home address and Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. For 2018-19, support previously recorded as Activity Agreements is recorded in the Training category. A description of Activity Agreements can be found under [Definitions](#) in the Notes section at the end of this publication.
2. All school leavers undertaking Personal Skills Development (PSD) are now recorded in a new standalone PSD category.

Table 19 shows that 95% of school leavers in rural areas go onto a positive destination. This compares to 92% in the rest of Scotland. Within the positive destinations, the proportion of school leavers who proceed to higher education is very similar across all three areas of Scotland. The proportion is highest in accessible rural areas at 39% and lowest in remote rural areas at 35%.

Fewer school leavers in remote rural areas go on to further education compared to school leavers in accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland.

The highest proportion of school leavers in remote rural areas go straight into employment (37%).

For accessible rural areas the proportion is 30% and for the rest of Scotland it is 27%.

The proportion of school leavers that are unemployed and seeking work is highest in the rest of Scotland (4%). This is marginally higher than the 2% in rural areas. The proportion of the remaining other destinations are the same across all areas of Scotland.

Table 20: Highest qualifications^{1,2,3} held by population aged 16 to 64 by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Degree Level or Equivalent	26%	33%	31%
HNC/HND or equivalent	17%	18%	15%
Higher/A-Level or equivalent	26%	22%	22%
Credit Standard Grade or equivalent	17%	16%	15%
General Standard Grade or equivalent	3%	1%	2%
Other	5%	3%	5%
No Qualifications	7%	7%	11%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: Annual Population Survey in Scotland, January to December 2019, ONS
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Those with unknown qualification status have been excluded from the calculations.
2. Estimates shaded grey are based on a small sample size. This may result in a less precise estimates, which should be used with caution.
3. Unshaded estimates are based on a larger sample size. This is likely to result in estimates of higher precision, although they will still be subject to some sampling variability.

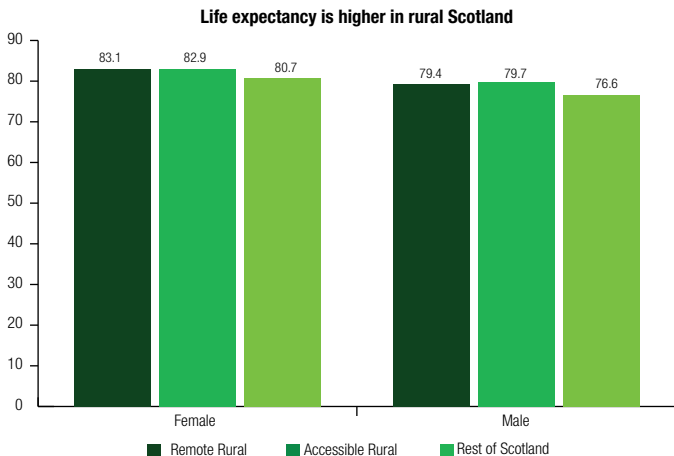
Table 20 shows that levels of school and college education attained are broadly comparable for all areas of Scotland. The proportion of people in accessible rural areas (33%) and the rest of Scotland (31%) that have a degree level qualification or equivalent are higher compared to remote rural areas (26%).

In remote rural areas the proportion of people who have Higher/A-Level or equivalent as their highest qualification is 26%. This compares to both 22% in the accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland.

It should be noted that the information in this table may reflect where people choose to live after achieving their qualifications, rather than reflecting attainment by those initially living in rural areas.

Health

Figure 9: Life expectancy at birth by 3-fold Urban Rural category 2017-2019



Source: Life Expectancy Statistics, National Records of Scotland
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Figure 9 shows that the life expectancy in rural areas is higher compared to the rest of Scotland. As well as that females have a higher life expectancy than males for all areas of Scotland. The life expectancy of people born in Scotland is highest for females in remote rural areas but in accessible rural areas for males.

The life expectancy for females in rural areas is around 83 years. This is just over two years higher than for females in the rest of Scotland. The difference in life expectancy for males is slightly larger at around three years, with life expectancy being around 79.5 years in rural Scotland.

It should be noted that there is an overall increasing trend in life expectancy at birth for both males and females in Scotland.

Table 21: Rate of hospital admissions (emergency and cancer) by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Emergency admissions rate per 100,000 population	9,414	9,630	11,367
Cancer admissions rate per 100,000 population	3,849	3,417	3,696

Source: Public Health Scotland
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Table 21 shows that the highest rates per 100,000 population for emergency admissions was in the rest of Scotland in 2019, while the lowest rate of emergency admission was in remote rural areas. In contrast to this the highest rates per 100,000 population for cancer admissions was in remote rural areas, with the lowest cancer admission rate being in accessible rural areas.

Across all areas of Scotland the emergency admission rate is higher than the cancer admission rate. The admission rates are around three times higher for accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland, but only two and a half times higher for remote rural areas.

Please note that these data are not adjusted to account for the different age profiles of areas (see [Figure 1](#)) which would affect admission rates.

Housing

Table 22: Property type by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Detached house	57%	50%	18%
Semi-detached house	22%	25%	22%
Terraced house	14%	18%	20%
Flat/Maisonette	7%	7%	39%
Other¹	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	1,070	1,150	8,320

Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Other includes caravans, mobile homes and houseboats as well as other kinds of accommodation.

Table 22 shows that while over half of properties in rural Scotland are detached houses (57% in remote rural areas and 50% in accessible rural areas), only 18% of properties in the rest of Scotland are detached houses.

In rural areas over 90% of properties are houses or bungalows. This compares to 60% in the rest of Scotland. In contrast, in the rest of Scotland, flats account for 39% of the housing stock, with only 7% of properties in both remote rural and accessible rural areas being flats.

Table 23: Residential property sales¹ by 3-fold Urban Rural category², 2020³

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Number of Residential Property Sales	4,916	9,228	61,256
Change from 2019	-14%	-8%	-18%
Mean Residential Property Price	£198,908	£228,566	£171,362
Change from 2019	6%	9%	4%
Median Residential Property Price	£172,000	£200,000	£142,500
Change from 2019	6%	11%	4%

Source: House Price Statistics, Registers of Scotland
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. These figures include all market value residential sales in Scotland between £20,000 and £1,000,000 and are based on the date of registration with Registers of Scotland (RoS). The figures includes both cash sales and properties bought with a mortgage.
2. The 3-fold Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016 was attached to all residential property sales in 2019 and 2020. The Urban Rural Classification given to each title was calculated by overlaying the title seed point (a point marker used to identify the position of a Land Register title on the Ordnance Survey base map) with the Urban Rural Classification 2016. There are a number of titles (12% in both 2019 and 2020) which could not be given an Urban Rural category as the title has no seed point. These property sales have been excluded from the figures above.
3. Since March 2020, fewer transactions have been received by RoS than expected because of the introduction of government measures to reduce the spread of the COVID-19. These measures included the UK lockdown announcement on Monday 23 March, the temporary closure of the application record by RoS from Wednesday 25 March and the advice from the Scottish Government to delay moving home wherever possible. From 29 June, all home moves were permitted, provided they could be carried out safely. Caution should be used when comparing the 2019 and 2020 figures.

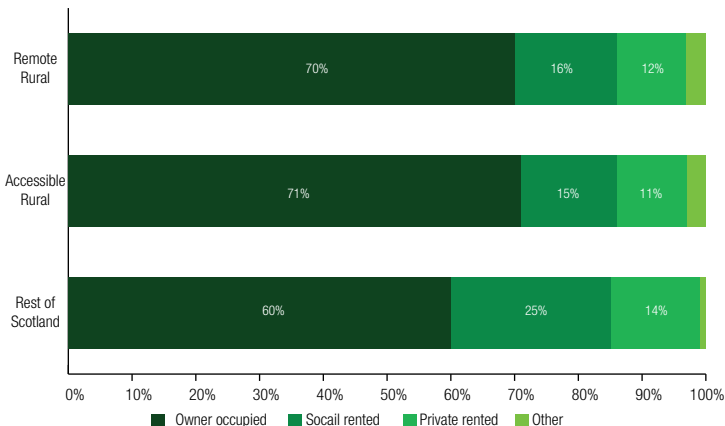
As would be expected due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the number of residential properties sales was lower in 2020 compared to 2019 for all areas of Scotland. The greatest decrease was in the rest of Scotland (-18%) and the smallest decrease was in accessible rural areas (-8%).

While the number of sales was lower in 2020 compared to 2019, both the mean and median residential property prices increased for all areas of Scotland. The highest mean and median increase in property prices were for accessible rural areas. The highest mean and median property prices in 2020, based on actual house sales, were also for accessible rural areas. The lowest mean and median property prices were for the rest of Scotland.

Please note that property prices do not necessarily compare like with like as prices are not adjusted for property type and size ([Table 22](#) shows the differences in property type across Scotland).

Figure 10: Housing tenure¹ by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

More people in rural Scotland own their own home



Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. A description of housing tenure can be found under [Definitions](#) in the Notes section at the end of this publication.

Figure 10 shows that rural Scotland has a higher proportion of households that are owner occupied (70% and 71% respectively in remote rural and accessible rural areas), compared with the rest of Scotland (60%). In contrast to this, a smaller proportion of rural households rent from local authorities or housing associations (16% in remote rural areas and 15% in accessible rural areas) than in the rest of Scotland (25%).

The proportion of private renting is more similar across the different areas of Scotland. It is highest in the rest of Scotland at 14% and is 12% in remote rural areas and 11% in accessible rural areas.

Table 24: Energy Performance Certificate^{1,2} rating by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
BC (69-91)	16%	29%	49%
D (55-68)	30%	41%	42%
E (39-54)	30%	18%	8%
FG (1-38)	24%	13%	2%
Mean SAP 2012 v9.93 Rating	51	59	67
Median SAP 2012 v9.93 Rating	53	61	68
Base	370	340	2,290

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

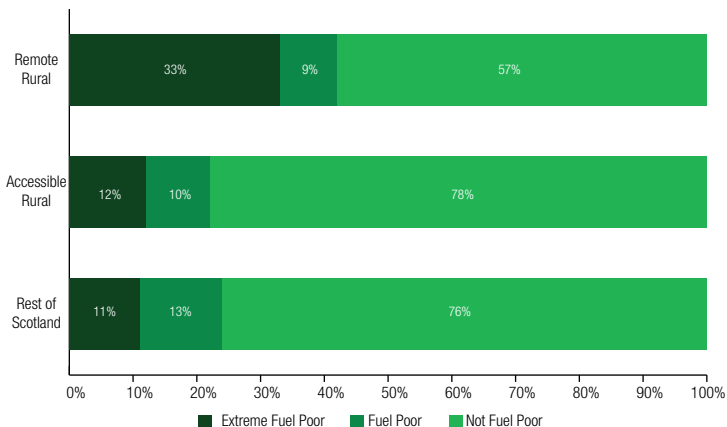
1. For Energy Efficiency Ratings (EERs), band A represents high energy efficiency, while band G denotes low energy efficiency. A full description of Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) and EERs can be found under [Definitions](#) in the Notes section at the end of this publication.
2. No A-rated (92-100) dwellings were sampled.

The housing stock in rural Scotland is generally less energy efficient than in the rest of Scotland, particularly for remote rural areas. In remote rural areas, the median energy efficient rating is 53 compared to 61 in accessible rural areas and 68 in the rest of Scotland. Despite the difference in the actual median ratings, the housing stock in accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland would still be given a band D for their Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). The median rating for the housing stock for the rest of Scotland is however the highest it can be while still remaining in band D. The housing stock in remote rural areas would be in the lower band E.

A higher proportion of the housing stock in rural areas are in the lower bands (F and G) than in the rest of Scotland. In remote rural areas it is 24% and in accessible rural areas it is 13%. This compares to only 2% of the housing stock in the rest of Scotland.

Figure 11: Fuel poverty¹ by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

The level of fuel poverty is much higher in remote rural areas



Source: Scottish House Condition Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2013-2014)

Notes:

1. The definition of fuel poverty can be found under [Definitions](#) in the Notes section at the end of this publication.

Figure 11 shows that a third of households in remote rural areas are classed as ‘extreme fuel poor’. This compares to only 12% in accessible rural areas and 11% in the rest of Scotland. More households in remote rural areas are classed as ‘extreme fuel poor’ than households that are classed as either ‘extreme fuel poor’ or ‘fuel poor’ in both accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland.

In accessible rural areas, 78% of households are classed as ‘not fuel poor’ and in the rest of Scotland 76% of households are ‘not fuel poor’. This compares to 57% of properties in remote rural areas.

Table 25: Presence of loft insulation in homes¹ by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
No loft insulation	..	1%	1%
Less than 100 mm	..	4%	6%
100 mm to 199 mm	27%	25%	30%
200 mm to 299 mm	29%	34%	35%
300 mm or more	40%	36%	29%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Base	340	320	1,740

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

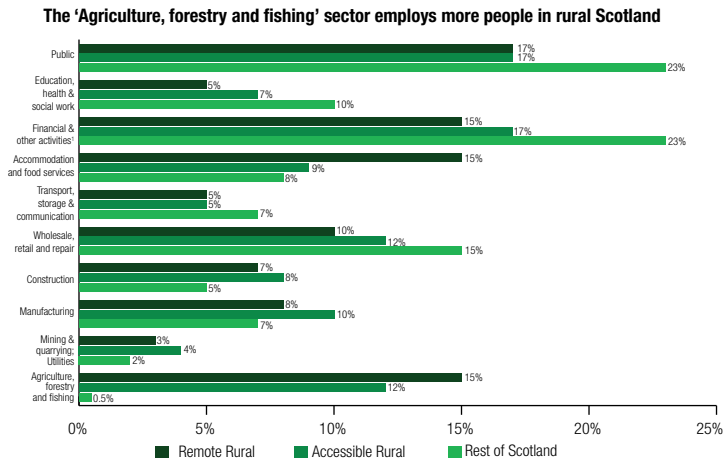
1. Dwellings without loft spaces, for example mid-floor flats, are excluded.
2. .. denotes the data has been suppressed due to the base sample size being below 30.

Table 25 shows the presence and thickness of loft insulation in homes. Only 1% of homes, that have lofts, in accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland have no loft insulation. The proportion for remote rural areas is not available due to the small sample size of homes that have no loft insulation. The same is true for the homes with less than 100 mm of lost insulation in remote rural areas.

The vast majority of homes in Scotland have some loft insulation, the trend is to have a greater thickness of loft insulation. This is particularly true for rural Scotland. In remote rural areas 40% of homes have 300 mm or more of insulation and in accessible rural areas it is 36% of home. This compares to 29% in the rest of Scotland.

Industry

Figure 12: Employment by industry sectors and in the public sector by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2020



Source: Inter Departmental Business Register, as at March 2020
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. 'Financial & other activities' consists of: 'Financial and insurance activities', 'Real estate activities', 'Professional, scientific and technical activities', 'Administrative and support service activities' and 'Arts, entertainment and recreation; Other service activities'.

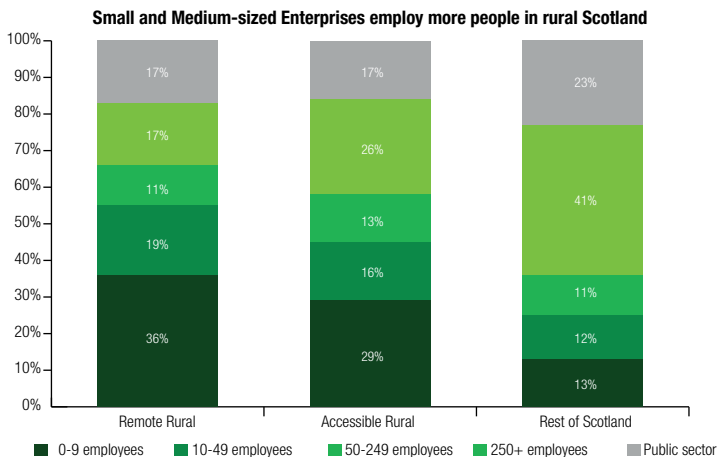
Figure 12 shows the distribution of employment across sectors, with workers in the Public sector shown as a single category. 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing' is the sector that shows the greatest difference across Scotland, accounting for 15% of workers in remote rural areas compared to 12% in accessible rural areas and 0.5% in the rest of Scotland. The 'Accommodation and food services' sector also has a much larger share of employment in remote rural areas (15%) compared to accessible rural areas (9%) and the rest of Scotland (8%).

In all areas of Scotland the Public sector is the largest employing sector. For accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland the 'Financial & other activities' sector has the same proportion of employment as the Public sector.

In remote rural areas the 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing', 'Accommodation and food services' and the 'Financial & other activities' sectors are the largest source of private sector jobs (15% each). Following the 'Financial & other activities' (17%), the largest sources of private sector jobs in accessible rural areas are the 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing' (12%), 'Wholesale, retail and repair' (12%) and 'Manufacturing (10%)' sectors.'

Business

Figure 13 Employment by size of firm and 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2020



Source: Inter Departmental Business Register, as at March 2020
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Figure 13 shows that Micro businesses (0-9 employees) account for 36% of employment in remote rural areas and 29% in accessible rural areas, while they only account for 13% of employment in the rest of Scotland. Overall, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (0-249 employees), which include Micro businesses, account for two thirds of employment in remote rural areas compared to 58% in accessible rural areas. The proportion falls to 36% in the rest of Scotland.

Large businesses (250+ employees) account for 41% of those employed in the rest of Scotland. This compares to 26% in accessible rural areas and 17% in remote rural areas.

Table 26: Percentage of small and medium enterprises by industry sector and 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2020

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	35%	26%	2%
Mining & quarrying; Utilities	1%	1%	1%
Manufacturing	5%	5%	5%
Construction	11%	12%	12%
Wholesale, retail and repair	10%	10%	15%
Transport, storage & communication	5%	7%	11%
Accommodation and food services	9%	5%	9%
Financial & other activities¹	22%	31%	40%
Education, health & social work	3%	3%	6%
Public	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: Inter Departmental Business Register, as at March 2020
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. 'Financial & other activities' consists of: 'Financial and insurance activities', 'Real estate activities', 'Professional, scientific and technical activities', 'Administrative and support service activities' and 'Arts, entertainment and recreation; Other service activities'.

Table 26 shows in which industry sectors Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) operate, across the 3-fold Urban Rural categories. The sector that has the largest difference between rural areas and the rest of Scotland is the 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing' sectors. In remote rural areas, 35% of SMEs are in this sector and 26% are in accessible rural areas, this compares to 2% in the rest of Scotland. Whereas, for rest of Scotland 40% of SMEs are in the 'Financial & other activities' sector compared to 31% of SMEs in accessible rural areas and 22% of SMEs in remote rural areas.

The total number of SMEs (registered for VAT and/or PAYE) operating in remote rural areas, accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland as at March 2020 were 19,520, 29,230 and 129,290 respectively.

Table 27: Population (16 to 74) in employment by socio-economic classification by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Higher managerial and professional occupations	12%	19%	16%
Lower managerial and professional occupations	25%	26%	29%
Intermediate occupations	10%	12%	14%
Small employers and own account workers	19%	13%	8%
Lower supervisory and technical occupations	10%	8%	9%
Semi-routine occupations	15%	12%	14%
Routine occupations	10%	10%	11%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: Annual Population Survey in Scotland, January to December 2019, ONS (using the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

For all areas of Scotland the highest proportion of the population (aged 16 to 74) in employment work in lower managerial and professional occupations. The proportion is highest in the rest of Scotland (29%), then accessible rural areas (26%) and finally remote rural areas (25%). The proportion of people who are employed in higher managerial and professional positions is highest in accessible rural areas (19%). This compares to 16% in the rest of Scotland and 12% in remote rural areas.

A greater proportion of workers in remote rural areas (19%) are small employers or own account workers than in accessible rural areas (13%) or the rest of Scotland (8%).

Table 28: Business openings and closures by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Total businesses	14,960	28,095	140,430
Business openings	1,235	2,775	17,655
Business opening rate	8%	10%	13%
Business closures	1,245	2,595	15,575
Business closure rate	8%	9%	11%
Total businesses per 10,000 adults	473	456	310
Business openings per 10,000 adults	39	45	39
Net business openings and closures	-10	180	2,080
Net business openings and closures as % of total businesses	-0.1%	1%	1%

Source: Inter Departmental Business Register (ONS) 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Table 28 shows the number of business openings and closures as measured by the number registering for either VAT or PAYE. It therefore excludes businesses with no employees and a turnover below the VAT threshold, which has been £85,000 since 1 April 2017.

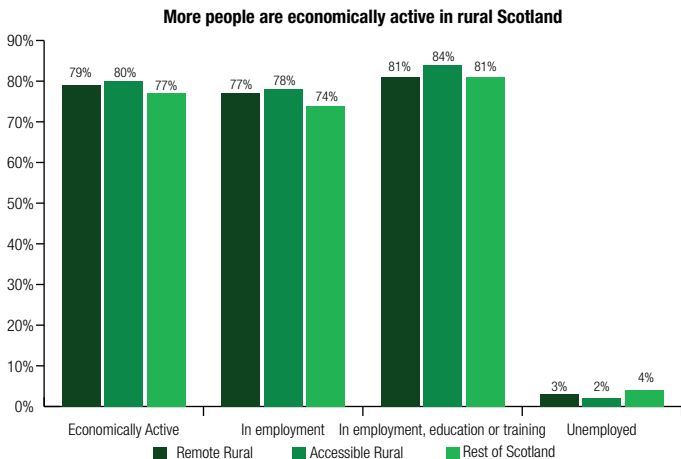
During 2019 more business opened than closed in accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland, in contrast to remote rural areas where more businesses closed than opened. In terms of rates, the lowest rate of business openings was seen in remote rural areas (8%), with the highest in the rest of Scotland (13%). Business closure rates were also lowest in remote rural areas (8%) and highest in the rest of Scotland (11%).

The net business openings and closures as a percentage of total businesses was 1% in both accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland. For remote rural areas, the net business openings and closures as a percentage of total businesses was -0.1%, a net decrease of just 10 businesses.

Within the Fair Work and Business National Outcome of the National Performance Framework there is a National Indicator called the [Number of Businesses](#), which measures the total number of VAT/PAYE registered private sector enterprises operating in Scotland per 10,000 adults.

Economic Activity

Figure 14: Economic activity¹ of population aged 16 to 64 by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019



Source: Annual Population Survey in Scotland, January to December 2019, ONS
(Using the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Levels of employment and unemployment in the figure are for those aged 16 to 64. The unemployment rate is calculated as a proportion of those aged 16 to 64 and who are economically active while the other rates are calculated as a proportion of the total population who are within this age grouping. This differs from standard International Labour Organisation definitions: the employment level is for those aged 16 and above while the unemployment level and rate are also for this age range, with the rate calculated as a proportion of those who are economically active.

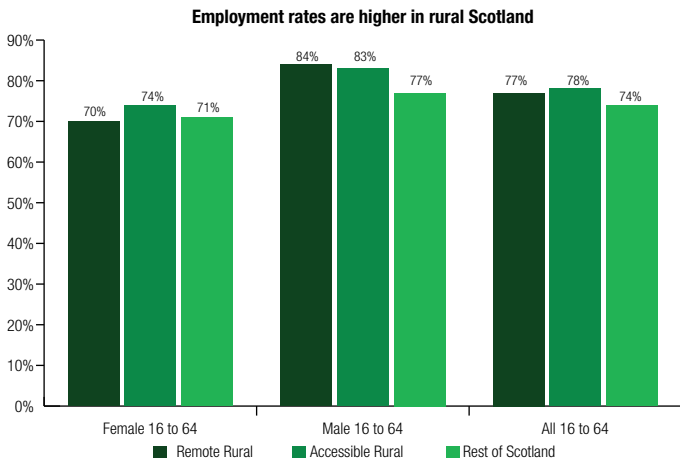
Figure 14 shows that more people are economically active in rural Scotland. People who are employed or looking for work are economically active. The rate of economic activity, the employment rate (the number of people employed as a percentage of the total

population of working age) and the rate of the working age population that is either employed, in education or training are all highest in accessible rural areas.

Unemployment rates are broadly similar across all areas of Scotland. They range from 2% in accessible rural areas to 4% in the rest of Scotland.

The total number of people employed in remote rural areas, accessible rural areas and the rest of Scotland are 128,700, 310,800 and 2,135,300 respectively.

Figure 15: Employment rates by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019



Source: Annual Population Survey in Scotland, January to December 2019, ONS (Using the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Figure 15 shows that the employment rates are mostly higher in rural areas compared to the rest of Scotland. The one exception is for females aged 16 to 64, where the employment rate in remote rural areas is one percentage point lower than in the rest of Scotland at 70%.

For females aged 16 to 64 the highest employment rate is in accessible rural areas (74%), while for males aged 16 to 64 the highest employment rate is in remote rural areas (84%). The employment rates for males aged 16 to 64 are higher than for females aged 16 to 64 in all areas of Scotland.

Table 29: Patterns of work¹ by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Percentage of employed females who are:			
Self-employed	16%	15%	8%
Working part-time in main job	46%	46%	40%
With a second job	10%	5%	4%
Homeworkers ²	12%	10%	4%
Percentage of employed males who are:			
Self-employed	29%	19%	14%
Working part-time in main job	12%	12%	13%
With a second job	6%	3%	3%
Homeworkers ²	10%	9%	3%
Percentage of all employed who are:			
Self-employed	23%	17%	11%
Working part-time in main job	28%	28%	26%
With a second job	8%	4%	3%
Homeworkers ²	11%	9%	4%

Source: Annual Population Survey in Scotland, January to December 2019, ONS (Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Includes all workers aged 16 and over.
2. Homeworkers are people who work mainly in their own home or in the same grounds or buildings as home, in their main job. Excludes people on government employment and training schemes.

Table 29 shows that self-employment is common in rural Scotland than in the rest of Scotland. This is particularly true for remote rural areas. In all areas of Scotland men are more likely to be self-employed than women.

Women are considerably more likely than men to work part-time in all areas of Scotland, with at least 40% of women who are employed working part-time in all areas of Scotland. Employees in remote rural areas, particularly women, are more likely to have a second job than in accessible rural areas or the rest of Scotland.

The percentage of employed people in remote rural areas who have a second job (8%) is more than double that of employed people in the rest of Scotland (3%). A higher proportion of employed people in rural areas are 'homeworkers' compared to the rest of Scotland. This is the case for both women and men.

Earnings

Table 30: Residence based median hourly rates of pay^{1,2} by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2020

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Female	£14.29	£16.27	£15.20
Male	£14.14	£16.19	£15.98
All	£14.19	£16.26	£15.65

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020
(Using the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Employees aged 16+ on the PAYE system on adult rates (including those furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme) and whose pay was not affected by absence.
2. The colour coding indicates the quality of each estimate. The quality of an estimate is measured by its coefficient of variation (CV). Further information on the colour coding used can be found in [Sources](#) in the Notes section at the end of this publication.

Table 30 shows the median hourly wage rate for all female and male employees residing in each of the 3-fold Urban Rural categories. In rural areas the median wage for females is higher than that for males, while in the rest of Scotland the male median wage is higher. The median wage for both females and males is highest in accessible rural areas.

The largest differences in median hourly rates of pay for both females than males is between accessible rural areas, where the rate is higher, and remote rural areas. The difference for females is £1.98 per hour and for males it is £2.05 per hour.

Table 31: Residence based median gross annual pay for full-time employees^{1,2} by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2020

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Female	£27,231	£31,678	£28,405
Male	£32,021	£35,556	£34,044
All	£29,652	£34,311	£31,531

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

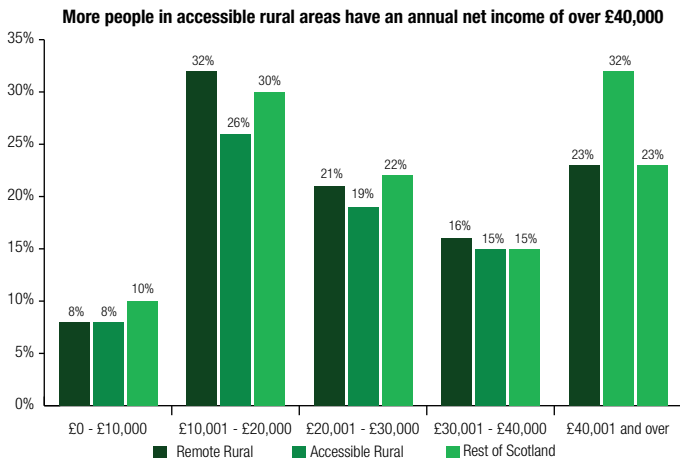
1. Employees on adult rates who have been in the same job for more than a year.
2. The colour coding indicates the quality of each estimate. The quality of an estimate is measured by its coefficient of variation (CV). Further information on the colour coding used can be found in [Sources](#) in the Notes section at the end of this publication.

Table 31 shows that the median gross annual pay (i.e. before taxation and other deductions) for all full-time employees is highest for people living in accessible rural areas. This is followed by people living in the rest of Scotland and then finally those living remote rural areas.

In all areas of Scotland the median gross annual pay is higher for males than females. The difference is greatest in the rest of Scotland where the median gross pay for males is £5,639 higher than for females. In remote rural areas the difference is £4,790 and in accessible rural areas the difference is £3,878.

Income

Figure 16: Annual net income of highest income householder by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019



Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Figure 16 presents the distribution of net household income figures (for the highest income householder) by 3-fold Urban Rural category. The income figures include income from employment, benefits and other sources (after taxation and other deductions).

The most common income bracket for a household in both remote rural areas and the rest of Scotland is the £10,001 to £20,000 category, while in accessible rural areas it is the £40,001 and over category.

The largest differences in proportion between the different areas of Scotland are for households with a net income in the £40,001 and over category. In accessible rural areas the proportion is 32%. This compares to both 23% in remote rural areas and the rest of Scotland.

Table 32: Income and employment deprivation by 3-fold Urban Rural category 2020

	Remote Rural	Accessible Rural	Rest of Scotland
Number income deprived	25,463	44,283	584,815
Number employment deprived	11,841	21,972	290,978
Percentage of the population that are income deprived	8%	7%	13%
Percentage of the working age¹ population that are employment deprived	6%	6%	10%

Source: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020.

(Using 2017 mid-year population estimates (NRS) and Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Notes:

1. Working age refers to male population aged 16 to 64. For females, the working age population has been transitioning from 60 to be the same as for males. For this indicator, the working age of females is taken as at 30 June 2017, with an adjustment to the NRS mid-year 2017 population estimates to reflect that a small proportion of women aged 63 will not be of pensionable age at that point.

Income deprivation comprises five indicators. They are the number of adults receiving Income Support, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, or Jobseeker's Allowance, the number of adults receiving Guaranteed Pension Credit, the number of dependent children (aged 0-18) for claimants of Income Support, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, or Jobseeker's Allowance, people claiming Universal Credit and their dependent children (excluding those in the 'working with no requirements' conditionality group), and the number of adults and children in Tax Credit families on low incomes.

Employment deprivation comprises three indicators that identify those people who are working age that want to work, but due to unemployment, ill health or disability are excluded from the labour market. They are recipients of Jobseeker's Allowance, recipients of Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance or Severe Disablement Allowance, and Universal Credit claimants not in employment count.

Table 32 shows that the proportion of the total population that is income deprived is lower in rural areas than the rest of Scotland, with the proportion lowest in accessible rural areas at 7%.

The proportion of the working age population, as defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, that are employment deprived is also lower in rural areas than in the rest of Scotland. In both remote rural and accessible rural areas the proportion of working age population who are employment deprived is 6%.

Notes

Background

This is the twelfth edition of Rural Scotland Key Facts – a publication intended to be an easily accessible reference for statistics on rural Scotland. This 2021 version updates statistics from the eleventh edition where new statistics have become available. Previous editions can be found on the [Rural Scotland Key Facts collection](#) page on the Scottish Government website.

For some of the statistics included in the publication, reference is made to targets set by the Scottish Government; more details can be found on the [National Performance Framework](#) website.

Most figures in this publication have been rounded to zero decimal places. The percentage figures given in tables and figures have been independently rounded, so they may not always sum to the relevant sub-totals or totals.

The following symbols are used throughout the tables in this publication:

– = nil

.. = denotes the data has been suppressed due to the base sample size being low



The indicators on the pages with the National Statistics logo on the top right hand side are National Statistics. If a page does not have the logo, the indicators are Official Statistics.

Sources

Annual Population Survey

The Annual Population Survey (APS) is the primary source for information on local labour markets. It combines results from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the English, Welsh and Scottish Labour Force Survey boosts, resulting in a sample of approximately 17,000 households for Scotland. For APS data, Office for National Statistics (ONS) guidance is followed in relation to the suppression of data and to indicate the quality of the estimates. The guidance states:

- Any APS output with a person count of less than three should not be published and will be suppressed under disclosure threshold rules. Secondary disclosure rules will also continue to apply.
- On annual datasets, any output with a person count of three or more should be published and a shading measure to denote quality precision (on counts of more than three and less than or equal to 25) and corresponding footnote will be added.

The full [guidance](#) can be found on the ONS website.

The definition of homeworkers used in [Table 29](#) has been updated since the publication of the [Rural Scotland Key Facts 2018](#). The previous definition of homeworkers identified homeworkers as those whose response to the question 'Whether working from home in main job' was either: (1) in their own home; (2) in the same grounds or buildings as home; or (3) in different places using home as a base. The updated definition of homeworkers used within this publication is those whose response to this question was either: (1) in their own home; or (2) in the same grounds or buildings as home.

Estimates from the APS included in the Rural Scotland Key Facts 2021 cover the period January to December 2019 and have therefore not been affected by measures introduced in response to COVID-19.

Further information and data from the [Annual Population Survey for Scotland](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website. Data are National Statistics.

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) is the official source of UK earnings and hours worked estimates. [ASHE](#) data are published annually by the ONS and are based on a 1% sample of the Pay As You Earn (PAYE) system.

Statistics in the latest ONS release for 2020 relate to the pay period that includes 22 April 2020, at which time approximately 8.8 million employees across the UK were furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). The estimates for 2020 in the release include furloughed employees and are based on actual payments made to the employee from company payrolls and the hours on which this pay was calculated, which in the case of furloughed employees are their usual hours. [The Employee earnings in the UK: 2020](#) publication can be found on the ONS website.

For ASHE data, ONS guidance is followed in relation to the suppression of data and to indicate the quality of the estimates. Colour coding is used to indicate the quality of each estimate. The quality of an estimate is measured by its coefficient of variation (CV). The CV shows the extent of variability in relation to the mean of the population, with the higher the CV the less precise the estimate is. The coding used is as follows:

Precise: CV \leq 5%
Reasonably precise: CV $>$ 5% and \leq 10%
Acceptable: CV $>$ 10% and \leq 20%
x = unreliable: CV $>$ 20% or unavailable

The full [guidance](#) can be found on the ONS website.

Further information and data from the [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings for Scotland](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website.

Community Ownership in Scotland

The Community Ownership in Scotland publication series is the source of data on community ownership. The publication provides summary statistics for community ownership in Scotland. It is intended to monitor the number of assets (that is, land, buildings or anything else of substantial value) which are owned by community groups.

The data are collated from a variety of sources, mainly bodies providing funding for community ownership and asset transfers from public sector organisations, and the information checked against the records of the Land Register maintained by Registers of Scotland (RoS). There is no obligation for community groups to report their ownership of an asset to the Scottish Government so where an asset came into community ownership without receiving funding or being the result of an asset transfer, it is unlikely to be included in the published figures. There is therefore an unquantifiable degree of undercount. It is also more difficult for RoS to verify the details of assets which came into community ownership many years ago and so some of the information included may be out-of-date or inaccurate. Further information on the quality of the community ownership data can be found in the supporting [Methodology](#) file published alongside the [Community Ownership in Scotland 2019](#) report.

Further information and data on [Community Ownership in Scotland](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website. Data are Official Statistics.

Destination of School Leaver Destinations

School leaver destination data is sourced from the 'Opportunities for All' shared dataset which is managed and hosted by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on behalf of partners. A pupil is counted as a school leaver if they have a leaver record in the SDS data, a pupil census record for the same academic year, and no pupil census record in the following academic year. The school leaver destinations data is matched to the pupil census for further analysis by pupil characteristic.

The SDS dataset contains information shared by various partners which is combined with information gathered directly from young people, their parents/carers or their representatives by SDS staff delivering services to individuals. The data is primarily used for operational purposes and the quality is continually monitored to ensure SDS, local authorities and colleges can monitor and plan for a young person's involvement in education, training or employment and identify those young people who require advice or support.

Follow-up destinations relate to outcomes approximately nine months after the end of the school year. The figures for 2018-19 relate to early April 2020 and therefore do not reflect the full impact of COVID-19.

The Urban Rural category is based on a pupil's home postcode. There are a small number of pupils for whom it is not possible to determine the Urban Rural category of their home address – usually because postcode information is missing or incorrect. For these pupils, the Urban Rural Classification of the school has been used. Further information and data on [Summary Statistics for Follow-Up Leaver Destinations](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website. Data are National Statistics.

Hospital Admissions

Hospital admissions data are sourced from Public Health Scotland. The data are derived from data collected on discharges from non-obstetric and non-psychiatric hospitals, Scottish Morbidity Record 01 (SMR01), in Scotland. Only patients treated as inpatients or day cases are included. The specialty of geriatric long stay is excluded. The data are episode based – an SMR01 episode is generated when a patient is discharged from hospital but also when a patient is transferred to a different hospital, significant facility, specialty or to the care of a different consultant.

An emergency admission occurs when, for clinical reasons, a patient is admitted at the earliest possible time after seeing a doctor. The patient may or may not be admitted through Accident & Emergency. Coding rules state that a Day Case patient should not be admitted as an emergency. Emergency admissions include stays where an emergency admission occurred at any point in the stay. Cancer admissions include stays where cancer is recorded as either the main or other condition at any point in the stay. The data relates to Scottish residents only. More information can be found on the [Public Health Scotland](#) website. Data are Official Statistics.

Inter Departmental Business Register

The Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR), which is sourced mainly from administrative data, is the underlying data source for a number of indicators included in this publication. The Inter Departmental Business Register is maintained by the ONS and is a database of all registered enterprises operating in the UK, i.e. enterprises that are registered for VAT and/or PAYE. It covers 99% of economic activity in the UK. Those excluded are small sole traders or partnerships with no employees and an annual turnover of less than the VAT threshold. The VAT threshold has been £85,000 since 1 April 2017.

The Business demography, UK publication is the source of the data on business openings and closures. Further information on the [quality](#) of the Business demography, UK publication can be found on the ONS website.

Further information and data from [Business demography, UK](#) can be found on the ONS website. Data are National Statistics.

The Businesses in Scotland publication provides information on the number of businesses operating in Scotland. The main purpose of the publication is to provide an estimate of Scotland's business stock (the number of businesses operating in Scotland). The publication includes all businesses that operate in Scotland regardless of where the business is based. Further information and data from [Businesses in Scotland](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website. Data are National Statistics.

National Records of Scotland

For tables and figures referencing the National Records of Scotland (NRS), figures are derived from a number of sources: Mid-Year Population Estimates, Vital Events (Registered Births and Deaths), Migration Flows (which are produced as part of the overall Mid-Year Population Estimates) and Life Expectancy in Scotland.

Information on the [methodology](#) used to calculate the mid-year population estimates can be found on the NRS website.

Information on [vital events](#), including registered births and deaths, can be found on the NRS website.

Information on the [methodology](#) used to calculate migration data can be found on the NRS website.

Information on the [methodology](#) used to calculate the life expectancy data can be found on the NRS website.

Further information and data produced by the [NRS](#) can be found on the NRS website. All data are National Statistics.

Residential Property Sales

Information on the number and value of house sales in Scotland is obtained from Registers of Scotland. The house price statistics include all residential sales in Scotland between £20,000 and £1,000,000, and are based on date of registration. Further data on [house price statistics](#) can be found on the Registers of Scotland website. Data are Official Statistics.

Scottish Crime and Justice Survey

Information on crime rates have been sourced from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS). The SCJS is a large-scale social survey which asks people about their experiences and perceptions of crime. In 2018-19, around 5,500 face-to-face interviews were conducted with adults (aged 16 and over) in private households in Scotland.

As a sample survey of the general public, SCJS results are estimated values with margins of error, rather than exact counts. Further information on the process used to calculate estimates is provided in the [SCJS 2018/19 - Technical Report](#). Please refer to the [SCJS 2018/19 - Users Statistical Testing Tool](#) to calculate confidence intervals around estimates from the SCJS. Where the unweighted base is 50 respondents or below, data are not displayed as low base sizes are subject to larger confidence intervals.

Further information and data from the [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website. Data are National Statistics.

Scottish Household Survey

The Scottish Household Survey (SHS) is a continuous survey based on a sample of the general population in private residences in Scotland. The SHS is designed to provide reliable and up-to-date information on the composition, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households and individuals, both nationally and at a sub-national level, and to examine the physical condition of Scotland's homes. It covers a wide range of topics. Further information on the [methodology](#) of the SHS can be found on the Scottish Government website.

For tables and figures sourced from the SHS, the unweighted base numbers for households population, rounded to the nearest ten, are 1,070 for remote rural, 1,160 for accessible rural, and 8,350 for the rest of Scotland. There are occasional variations in base sizes for individual tables and figures. The base number for the different categories are included in the tables and the tables used to populate the figures. The sample sizes are smallest for remote rural areas so there are larger confidence intervals associated with the statistics for this area than for the rest of Scotland figures.

The likely extent of sampling variability can be quantified by calculating the 'standard error' associated with an estimate produced from a random sample. Alongside the [SHS 2019: Annual Report](#) there is a table published that shows the 95% confidence limits for a

range of estimates calculated for a range of sample sizes. The 95% confidence limits for the estimates included in the Rural Scotland Key Facts 2021 can be approximated using the estimates and corresponding base numbers and the estimated sampling error table published alongside the [SHS 2019: Annual Report](#). Further information on confidence intervals and statistical significance, as well as the table showing the estimated sampling error associated with different proportions and sample sizes in 2019, can be found in the supporting file titled [Scottish Household Survey – Annual Report 2019 – Confidence intervals and statistical significance](#) that was published alongside the [SHS 2019: Annual Report](#).

Estimates from the SHS are suppressed where the base on which percentages are calculated is less than 50. Such data are judged to be insufficiently reliable for publication. Estimates with base numbers close to 50 should also be treated with caution. Even though these estimates have been published, they are subject to high levels of volatility and have a high degree of uncertainty around them.

Further information on the [Scottish Household Survey](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website. Data are National Statistics.

Scottish House Condition Survey

The Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS) is an annual sample survey, and the only national survey to look at the physical condition of Scotland's homes as well as the experiences of householders. From 2012 onwards, the SHCS is a module of the SHS. In general, around one third of respondents to the SHS are invited to participate in a follow-up inspection by SHCS building surveyors. For 2019, this was increased to almost half of respondents to ensure that the required number of households for the physical survey sample was achieved.

As with the SHS and other surveys, the figures from the SHCS are estimates of the true prevalence within the population and will contain some error associated with sampling variability. The likely size of such variability can be identified, by taking account of the size and design of the sample. Further information can be found in [Section 7 – Technical Notes and Definitions](#) of the [Scottish House Condition Survey: 2019 Key Findings](#) report. Section 7 also includes a table that can be used to calculate approximate 95% Confidence Limits for estimates based on data from the SHCS.

In general, the smaller the sample size, the greater the likelihood the estimate could be misleading, so more care must be taken when using smaller subsets of the survey sample for analysis. For the data from the SHCS any estimates representing two or fewer cases, or where the base sample is below 30 have been suppressed.

In addition, for the SHCS testing statistical significance follows the method described in the [SHS 2019: Annual Report](#) supporting document [Scottish Household Survey – Annual Report 2019 – Confidence intervals and statistical significance](#).

There have been some methodological changes relating to the SHCS since the publication of the [Rural Scotland Key Facts 2018](#):

- There has been an update to the version of Reduced data Standard Assessment Procedure (RdSAP) used in the methodology for assessing the energy efficiency and environmental performance of dwellings. From 2018 onwards SAP 2012 will be based on RdSAP v9.93 rather than RdSAP v9.92. This change does not affect within year comparisons.
- In addition, in July 2019 the [Fuel Poverty \(Targets, Definition and Strategy\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#), received Royal Assent. This Act contained a new definition of fuel poverty which affects the methodology behind how fuel poverty is defined and measured. This change does not affect within year comparisons.

These changes are described in more detail in the [Scottish House Condition Survey: Methodology Notes 2018](#).

Further information on [Scottish House Condition Survey](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website. Data are National Statistics.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) provides a wealth of information to help improve the understanding about the outcomes and circumstances of people living in the most deprived areas in Scotland. Data used for SIMD indicators are sourced from administrative systems and come from different data providers. Administrative data are collected by government departments and other organisations, and consist of information gathered primarily for operational reasons, such as registration, transactions and record-keeping, usually when delivering a service. Their statistical use is therefore secondary.

This type of data are not specifically collected for analysis and research purposes, and are subject to the same types of inherent uncertainty common in most large-scale administrative systems. The SIMD team is proactive in quality assuring and investigating the data to ensure they are fit for purpose. Further details can be found in the [SIMD 2020 technical notes](#).

Information on drive times to services and the number of people experiencing income and employment deprivation from the SIMD are presented in this publication. For the SIMD, employment and income deprivation are defined by receipt of benefits related to unemployment, low-income and disability. More information on the [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website. Data are National Statistics.

The Annual Population Survey, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Scottish Crime and Justice Survey, Scottish Household Survey and Scottish House Condition Survey figures are all based on surveys which sample a proportion of residents of Scotland. Figures quoted are best estimates of the true value, based on the survey results which have been weighted to represent the population. However, small differences in estimates, between geographic areas and years, are not necessarily always statistically significant.

Related publications by Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services

- [Understanding the Scottish Rural Economy](#)
- [Community Ownership in Scotland collection](#)
- [Agriculture Facts and Figures collection](#)
- [Economic Report on Scottish Agriculture collection](#)

Definitions

Activity Agreements

Activity Agreements were 'agreements between a young person and an advisor that the young person will take part in a programme of learning and activity which helps them to become ready for formal learning or employment'.

Since 2010-11, a separate 'Activity Agreement' category has been included in school leaver destination statistics and counted as a positive destination.

The integration of funding streams, as part of the ongoing implementation of 'No One Left Behind' means that although local authorities will provide the same type of support and opportunities for young people, this activity will no longer be funded under the banner of 'Activity Agreements'. This means it is no longer appropriate to record school leavers receiving this support under this category. Instead, school leavers receiving this support who left during or at the end of the 2018-19 academic year are recorded in the Training category. Note that data for earlier years continues to include the Activity Agreements category reflecting the support and funding streams available at the time. This means that the proportion of school leavers recorded in the Training category in 2018-19 is not directly comparable with the proportion recorded in this category in previous years.

'No One Left Behind' was a review of employability services that set out the next steps that will be taken to deliver more effective and joined-up employability support across Scotland. As part of this the funding streams associated with Activity Agreements and other programmes are being integrated into a new local employability delivery model managed collaboratively between Scottish Government and local government from April 2019.

Energy Performance Certificates – Energy Efficiency Ratings

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) were introduced in January 2009 under the requirements of the EU Energy Performance Building Directive (EPBD). They provide energy and environmental ratings for buildings based on standardized usage. EPCs are required when a property is either sold or rented to a new tenant.

EPCs are generated through the use of a standard calculation methodology, known as Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP). SAP is the UK Government approved way of

assessing the energy performance of a building, taking into account the energy needed for space and water heating, ventilation and lighting and, where relevant, energy generated by renewables. Outputs include the Energy Efficiency Rating (EER). From 2018 onwards [SAP 2012](#) will be based on RdSAP v9.93 rather than RdSAP v9.92.

The EER is expressed on a scale of 1 to 100 where a dwelling with a rating of 1 will have very poor energy efficiency and high fuel bills, while 100 represents very high energy efficiency and low fuel bills. Ratings can exceed 100 where the dwelling generates more energy than it uses. Ratings are adjusted for floor area so that they are essentially independent of dwelling size for a given built form.

For EPCs EERs are presented over seven bands, labelled A to G. For EERs, band A represents low energy cost and high energy efficiency, while band G denotes high energy cost and low energy efficiency.

More information about [EPCs](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website.

Fuel Poverty

As set out in Section 3 of the [Fuel Poverty \(Targets, Definition and Strategy\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#) a household is in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime:

- Total fuel costs necessary for the home are more than 10% of the household's adjusted net income (after housing costs); and
- If after deducting fuel costs, benefits received for a care need or disability and childcare costs, the household's remaining adjusted net income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living. The remaining adjusted net income must be at least 90% of the UK Minimum Income Standard to be considered an acceptable standard of living, with an additional amount added for households in remote rural, remote small town and island areas.

Extreme fuel poverty follows the same definition except that a household would have to spend more than 20% of its adjusted net income (after housing costs) on total fuel costs and maintain a satisfactory heating regime.

Household Types

- A 'single adult' household contains one adult aged 16 to 64 and no children.
- A 'small adult' household contains two adults aged 16-64 and no children.
- A 'single parent' household contains one adult of any age and one or more children.
- A 'small family' household contains two adults of any age and one or two children.
- A 'large family' household contains two adults of any age and three or more children, or three or more adults of any age and one or more children.
- A 'large adult' household contains three or more adults and no children.
- An 'older smaller' household contains one adult aged 16-64 and one of pensionable age and no children, or two adults of pensionable age and no children.
- A 'single older' household contains one adult of pensionable age (65 or over) and no children.

It should be noted that the definition of a 'single parent' does not make any distinction between situations where a child has regular contact and/or partly resides with their other parent and a child who solely resides with and is cared for by one parent.

Housing Tenure

The Scottish Household Survey collects information on the ways in which households occupy their accommodation and from which organisation or individual their accommodation is rented, where this is the case. These are combined into a housing tenure variable, namely:

- Owner occupied, which includes households who own outright and those buying with a mortgage or loan.
- The social rented sector, which includes households renting from a local authority or from a Housing Association or Co-operative.
- The private rented sector, which includes households renting from an individual private landlord or where they are renting their property from family, friends or their employer.
- Other tenure, which includes any other category of tenure such as living rent free.

Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification

The Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification is based on settlement size as defined by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) and accessibility based on drive time analysis to differentiate between accessible and remote areas in Scotland. The classification is updated every two years although the definition of urban and rural areas remains unchanged. Settlements of less than 3,000 population are defined as rural, settlements of between 3,000 and 10,000 population are small towns and the remainder are classified as urban (10,000 plus population). Small towns and urban areas are described as 'Rest of Scotland' in this publication.

The latest version of the classification is the [Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016](#). The Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016 updates the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2013-2014 with the latest available population settlement and drive time estimates.

Where possible, it is appropriate to use the classification that relates to the year it is being applied to or the most recent version of the classification that is available if this is not possible. As a result, most of the tables in this publication are based on the 2016 classification.

The majority of data used in this publication have been assigned a Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification based on unit postcodes. The remaining data have been assigned using data zones, which have been classified into the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification using 'best fit' methods. Further information on this is available from the urban rural publication link above.

Alternative urban rural classifications are used in the other regions of the UK. In England and Wales the [Rural Urban Classification](#) that is mainly used defines rural areas based on settlements of less than 10,000 people. The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) [Urban - Rural Classification](#) is the most widely used classification in Northern Ireland and is based on population size, population density and service provision.

The Scottish Government uses the Urban Rural Classification as it is very flexible i.e. not only can it be used to show the degree of rurality of an area, it can also be used to distinguish between accessible and remote areas, irrespective of rurality. The classification also has the flexibility to be compressed to either a 2-fold (urban, rural) or 3-fold classification (remote rural, accessible rural, rest of Scotland), depending on user needs.

In Rural Scotland Key Facts we have chosen to use the 3-fold Urban Rural Classification to contrast rural Scotland to the rest of Scotland to highlight key differences and similarities between the areas. The 3-fold classification also allows us to identify differences between remote rural and accessible rural areas i.e. areas which are within and outwith reasonable drive times of larger settlements and key services.

The Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification is also easy to understand and apply both within and outwith the Scottish Government. In addition, the nature of rurality is different in each region of the United Kingdom and it is therefore preferable to use a classification best suited to each region's needs. For example, the current England and Wales rural population threshold of 10,000 people would not be appropriate for use in the Scottish context.

Alongside the release of the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016, a [storymap](#) was created to give an introduction to the classification. The storymap also highlights that other Urban Rural Classifications for Scotland exist in addition to the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification. One of the primary other classifications used within the government is the Randall Classification.

The Randall Classification was originally produced in 1985 for the Scottish Economic Bulletin. The classification is calculated using population density within local authorities. Any local authority with a population of <1 person/Ha is considered 'rural'. Other Urban Rural Classifications have also been used within the Scottish Government, although these tend to be designed with a very express purpose in mind.

The storymap then goes on to look at the Rural Urban Classification for England and Wales and the Urban Rural Classification for Northern Ireland.

Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

APS – Annual Population Survey

ASHE – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

CV – Coefficient of Variation

COVID-19 – Coronavirus

CJRS – Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

DSL – Digital Subscriber Line

EER – Energy Efficiency Rating

EPBD – Energy Performance Building Directive

EPC – Energy Performance Certificate

EU – European Union

GP – General Practitioner

HNC – Higher National Certificate

HND – Higher National Diploma

IDBR – Inter Departmental Business Register

LFS – Labour Force Survey

NISRA – Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

NRS – National Records of Scotland

ONS – Office for National Statistics

PAYE – Pay As You Earn

PSD – Personal Skills Development

RdSAP – Reduced data Standard Assessment Procedure

SAP – Standard Assessment Procedure

SCJS – Scottish Crime and Justice Survey

SHCS – Scottish House Condition Survey

SHS – Scottish Household Survey

SIMD – Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

SMR01 – Scottish Morbidity Record 01

SDS – Skills Development Scotland

SME – Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

UK – United Kingdom

VAT – Value Added Tax

A National Statistics publication for Scotland

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Designation can be interpreted to mean that the statistics: meet identified user needs; are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and are explained well.

The designation of the Rural Scotland Key Facts as National Statistics was re-confirmed on the 3 April 2020 following a [compliance check](#) by the Office for Statistics Regulation.

Changes to these statistics

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation in April 2020 we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics. Following the recommendations of the review, further information on the data sources used in the publication have been added as well as information on how users can find out about the level of uncertainty for the survey estimates included in the publication. We will continue this work to further enhance the quality and value of this publication.

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How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical publication:

- are available in more detail through statistics.gov.scot
- are available via an alternative route.
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact RuralStatistics@gov.scot for further information.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

Complaints and suggestions

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to: the Chief Statistician, 3WR, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, Telephone: 0131 244 0302, e-mail: statistics.enquiries@gov.scot.

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