



# Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development

## Headline Indicators Report 2017-18

# About this Report

This report has been developed as part of the support provided to SLAED by the Improvement Service.

Further information on the Improvement Service and its Economic Outcomes Programme can be accessed via the following link:

[www.improvementservice.org.uk/economic-development.html](http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/economic-development.html)

The report sets out a range of data and information which is primarily based on returns submitted by the 32 local authorities. The purpose of the SLAED Indicators Framework is to assist local authorities to:

- evidence and publicise the contribution that they make to Scotland's economy through their economic development activities; and
- provide a basis for collating consistent data which can be used to better understand impact and identify potential areas for improvement.

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## Acknowledgements

The Improvement Service is grateful to a wide range of individuals and organisations for their support in collating the data for this report, including SLAED, the 32 Scottish councils, the Business Gateway National Unit, the Supplier Development Programme, Scottish Enterprise (SE), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and the Scottish Government.

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## *Improvement Service*

November 2018

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# Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the 2017/18 SLAED Indicators report, which is the sixth annual report providing an overview of the economic development work of Scotland's local authorities.

The annual Indicators report enables SLAED to capture and evidence the vital role that councils are playing in economic development across Scotland as a whole. The breadth of indicators provides an insight to good practice, challenges and opportunities for ongoing improvement. As the lead organisations for local economic development, Scotland's councils are making a substantial contribution both in relation to their local economies and in delivering the aims of Scotland's Economic Strategy. In addition to the wide range of outputs and outcomes evidenced within this report, the recently published [Economic Outcomes Programme Overview Report](#) focuses on the significant impact that local authorities also make to their local economy as a local employers, procurers of goods and services and asset managers.

This report provides clear statistical evidence of the nature, scale and impact of the contribution made by local authorities. In 2017/18 councils directly employed over **1,280** people (full time equivalent) in economic development and spent in the region of **£498m** on local economic development and tourism activities. This report provides quantifiable evidence of the value that councils place on economic development and the prioritisation of this activity in a continuing period of financial challenges and budget pressures. In addition, this substantial contribution does not take into account supplementary and complementary activities undertaken by the broader range of services that councils deliver that also have a positive impact on the economy, such as infrastructure, education and planning.

Councils' continued investment in direct economic development activities achieves significant outcomes. Scotland's local authorities supported over **14,000** businesses, supported just under **16,500** unemployed people into jobs and, through effective partnership working, levered in an additional **£1.71** for every £1 of council funding spent on economic development projects.

Since 2015 the Scottish Government has made Inclusive Growth an economic priority for Scotland, and this has been a long standing priority for Local Authorities. After consultation between the SLAED Executive Group and the Performance Group, eight new Inclusive Growth measures have been included in the 2017/18 report for the first time.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the recording, collation and presentation of the data for the 2017/18 SLAED Indicators Report, especially our partners at the Improvement Service who have provided excellent support. As this is now the sixth year of producing our indicators report, we are also able to include a range of robust data highlighting trends over time.

I would also like to thank local government colleagues for their enthusiasm, commitment and endeavour in ensuring that the key services which contribute to the results are delivered to the highest standards possible in a spirit of partnership and collaboration where possible.

**Pamela Smith**  
Chair, SLAED

# Introduction

The SLAED Indicators Framework provides consistent data and evidence on what councils throughout Scotland are delivering as local economic development organisations. This is the sixth year that the SLAED Indicators Report has been produced and it is based on input and feedback from councils themselves. The Framework is used by all 32 Scottish local authority economic development services to provide data on economic development inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.

Through the annual publication of this report, SLAED is demonstrating its continuous commitment to accountability and transparency in monitoring the performance of councils in the delivery of their economic development services. The report is intended to articulate the significant contribution made to Scotland's economy by councils, both individually and collectively, as well as identifying areas for improvement. The aim of this is to ensure the most effective use of resources, strengthen performance management in economic development and maximise the positive impact that councils have on the Scottish economy.

The economic circumstances of individual council areas can vary significantly, therefore the resulting challenges, opportunities and responses are also different across councils. Councils do not deliver exactly the same economic development activities; therefore, care should be taken when making direct comparisons of delivery and performance.

There is interest from the Scottish Government, Audit Scotland, the Scottish Parliament and a wide range of stakeholders in the delivery of economic development services by councils. All councils are committed to economic recovery, growth and jobs and the annual publication of the SLAED Indicators Framework assists councils and CPPs to develop their Local Outcome Improvement Plans.

This report does not include detailed commentary or analysis on the comparative performance of councils, reflecting the fact that there are different policy objectives that influence the resources committed to economic development activities within individual councils. This means that different output levels between two councils might simply be reflective of the different policy priorities rather than relative performance levels.

Four categories of indicators have previously been included in the SLAED Indicators Framework: Input Indicators, Activity Indicators, Output Indicators and Outcome Indicators. 8 additional Inclusive Growth Indicators have been included in the Framework for 2017/18 which now includes 31 indicators. Data for 15 of these was collected from publicly available sources such as ONS, NOMIS and the Scottish Government, and a further 7 were collected from other agencies including the Business Gateway National Unit, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Supplier Development Programme (SDP). This approach was designed to minimise the reporting burden on councils. It means that councils are only required to report on administrative data that they alone hold.

Most of the indicators reflect what councils are delivering in terms of economic development interventions in their respective areas. However, some of the indicators reflect the broader economic context within council areas, including most of the outcome indicators contained within the Framework.

# SLAED Indicators Data

## I1 - Economic Development Expenditure – Estimated (2017/18)

This indicator is used to provide an estimate of councils’ expenditure on the delivery of their economic development service, both in terms of projects and revenue costs including staff etc. For the first time in 2017/18 this expenditure is extracted from the Local Finance Return data which is submitted by councils to Scottish Government, and includes both Economic Development and Tourism capital and revenue spend. The Economic Development spend for 2017/18 is £473,762,000 and Tourism spend is £24,268,000.

Economic Development & Tourism Expenditure – Estimated (I1)	Capital Spend	Revenue Spend	Total Spend
	£225,316,000	£272,714,000	£498,030,000

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below. This is split into capital and revenue spend.

### Economic Development Expenditure - Estimated



## I2 - Economic Development Staffing – Estimated (2017/18)

This indicator is used to provide an estimate of council staff working in economic development across Scotland. This includes areas such as business support, employability support, physical regeneration, policy and performance and external funding. The source of this data is councils’ own records and this is the total number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff working directly in economic development delivery.

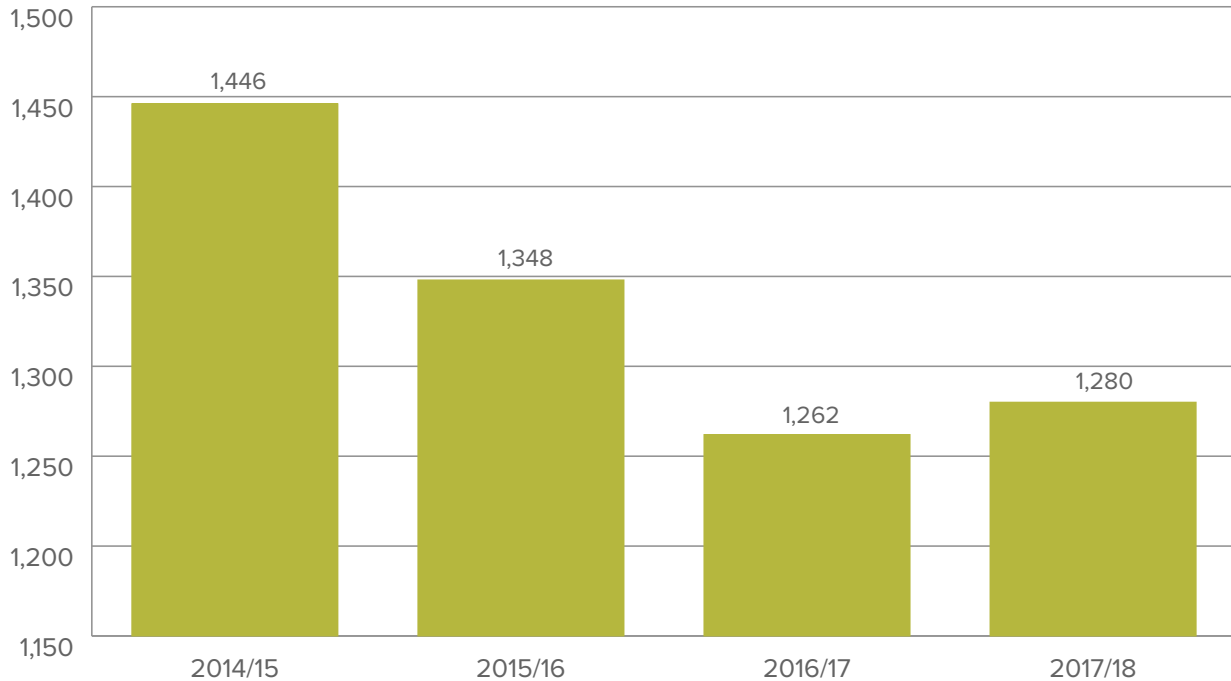
Economic Development Staffing – Estimated (I2)

Total FTE Staff

1,280

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

### Economic Development Staffing - Estimated



### A1 – Number of Attendees at Business Gateway Events (2017/18)

This is an indicator of activity delivered by the Business Gateway services. For some councils, these services are delivered in-house as part of their business support function, and for others this is outsourced. In this context, an event is defined as a workshop to develop skills and training for start-up, growth and local service customers. Although a business may be based in one local authority area, it may also attend events out with this area. This indicator gives an indication of the volume of ‘one to many’ support provided to businesses.

Number of Attendees at Business Gateway Events (A1)

No. of Events

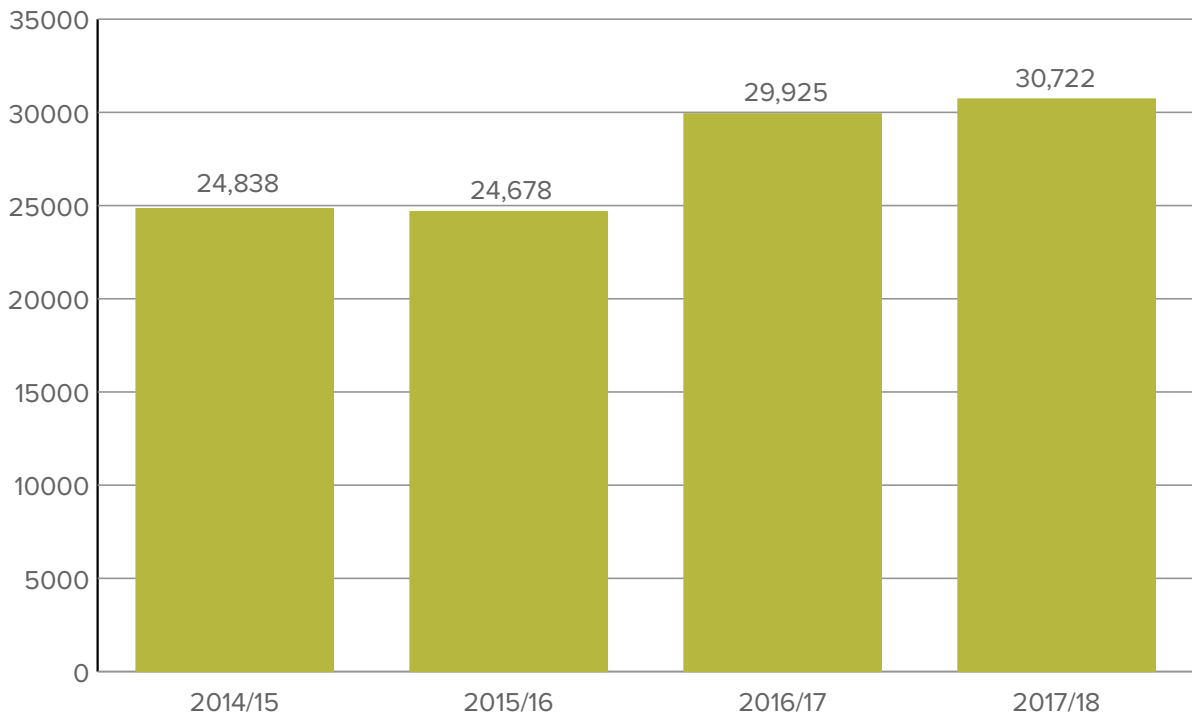
No. of Attendees

3,472

30,722

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

## Number of Attendees at Business Gateway Events



## A2 – Number of Attendees at Business Events Provided by the Council (2017/18)

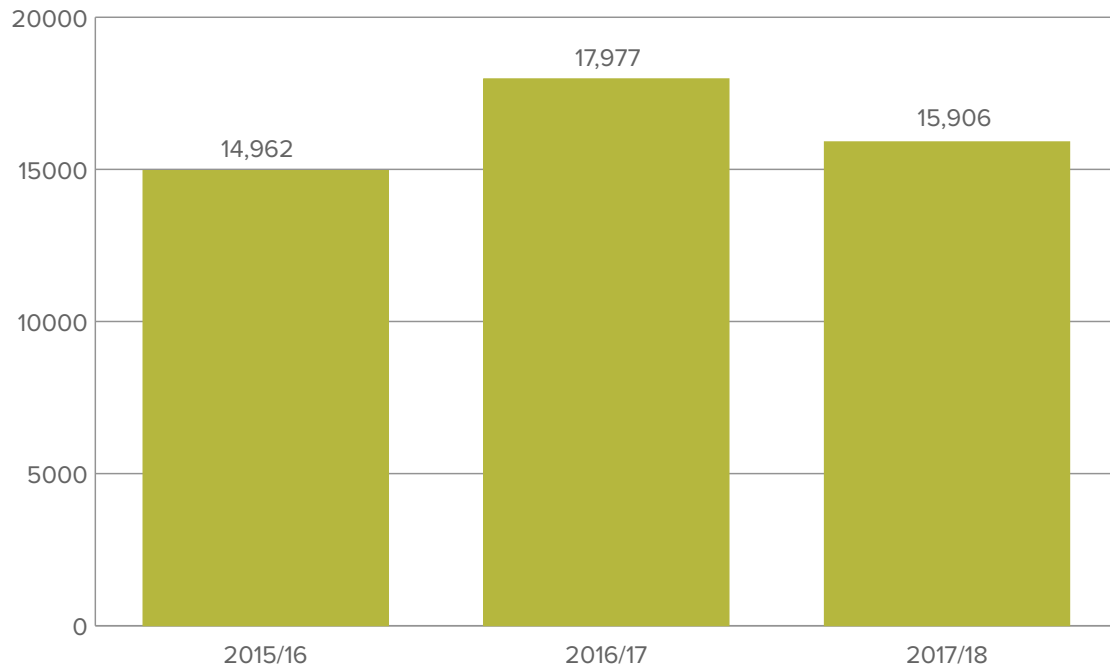
This is an indicator of events delivered by local authorities to their local businesses, over and above that delivered through Business Gateway. This represents ‘one to many’ business support provided by a local authority. These are events in which the council has had a role in their organisation and / or funding.

Number of Attendees at Business Events provided by the Council (A2)	No. of Events	No. of Attendees
	254	15,906

The trend data for this indicator for the last three years is set out in the graph below, as this indicator was only introduced into the framework in 2015/16.



## Number of Attendees at Business Events Provided by the Council



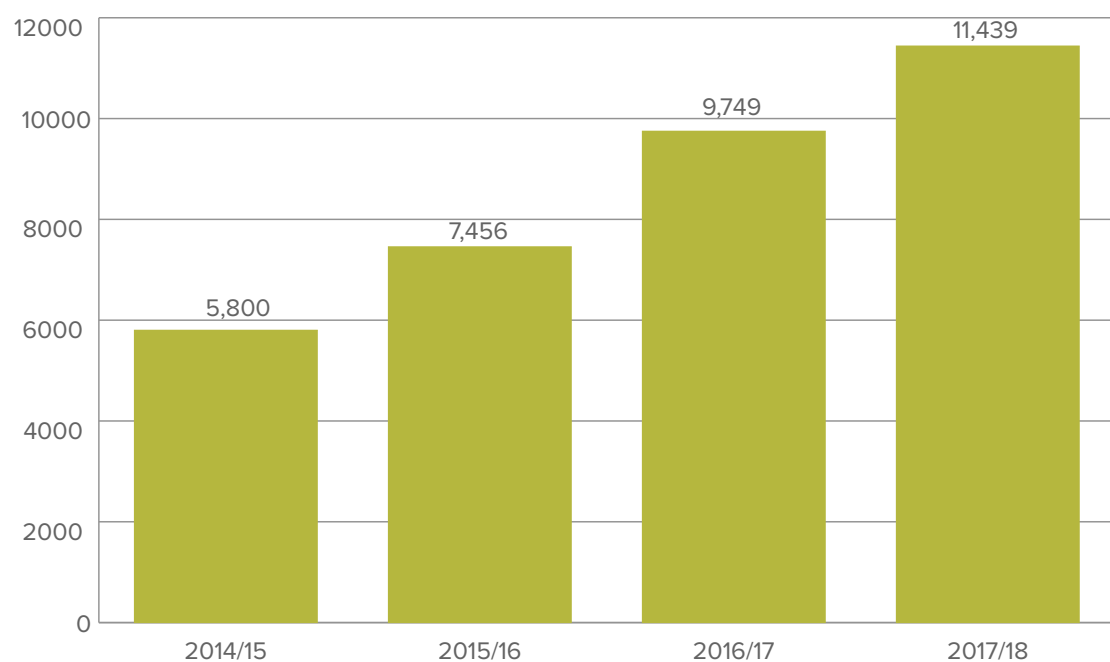
## A3 – Number of Companies Registered with the Supplier Development Programme (2017/18)

This is an indicator of the number of companies that are registered with the [Supplier Development Programme](#). This measure is used to monitor the number of companies within a local authority area that are aiming to grow and diversify through bidding for public contracts.

Number of Companies Registered with the Supplier Development Programme (A3)	No. of Companies
	11,439

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

## Number of Companies Registered with SDP



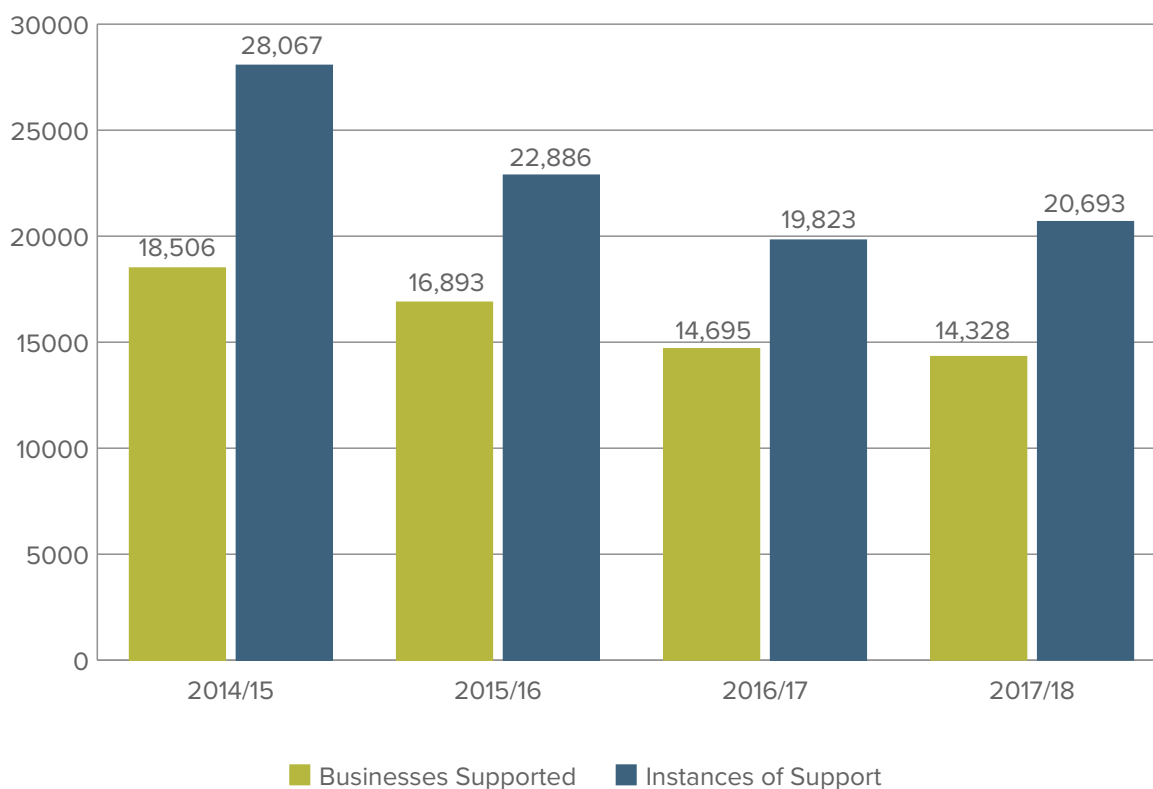
## OP1 – Number of Businesses Supported by Council Economic Development Activity (2017/18)

This is an indicator of the number of unique businesses that have been supported by a council Economic Development team. This includes support such as grants, loans, advice and referrals to other agencies or council services. It also counts the number of different types of support that these unique businesses received. Several businesses may benefit from more than one type of support; therefore, the instances of support are higher than the number of businesses supported. Businesses attending council funded or organised events are not counted here as these are captured under indicator A2. This indicator covers more intensive one to one business support.

No. of Businesses Supported by Council Economic Development Activity (OP1)	No. of Businesses	Instances of Support
	14,328	20,693

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

### Number of Businesses Supported by Council Economic Development Activity



## OP2 – Number of Business Gateway Unique Customer Accounts (2017/18)

This is an indicator of support delivered by the Business Gateway’s core service and reports the number of unique customers who have received this support. This has changed from previous years where the Number of Support Interventions by Business Gateway was reported. This indicator helps to identify how many businesses within a local authority area are receiving support over and above that provided by the council’s economic development service.

No of Business Gateway Unique Customer Accounts (OP2)	Unique Customer Accounts
	50,593

Note: The data is provided for 2017/18 only, due to the difference in recording this measure in previous review periods, therefore no trend data is available.

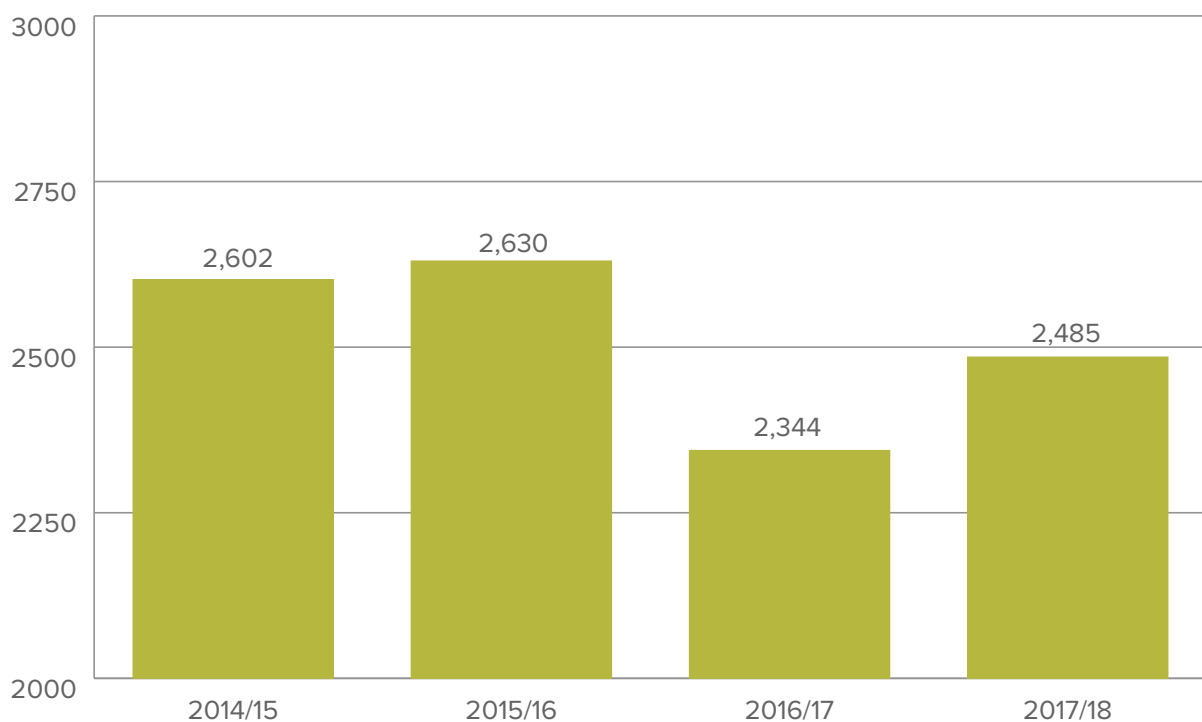
### OP3 – Number of Companies Supported by Scottish Development International (2017/18)

This measure is used to record the number of companies that have received support from Scottish Development International (SDI). Data for this indicator comes from Scottish Enterprise (SE) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) Local Activity Reports. This is used to reflect delivery of support by SDI within council areas.

No. of Companies Supported by Scottish Development International (OP3)	Companies Supported by SDI
	2,485

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

#### Number of Companies Supported by SDI



### OP4 – Number of Unemployed People that have Participated in Council Funded or Operated Employability Activities (2017/18)

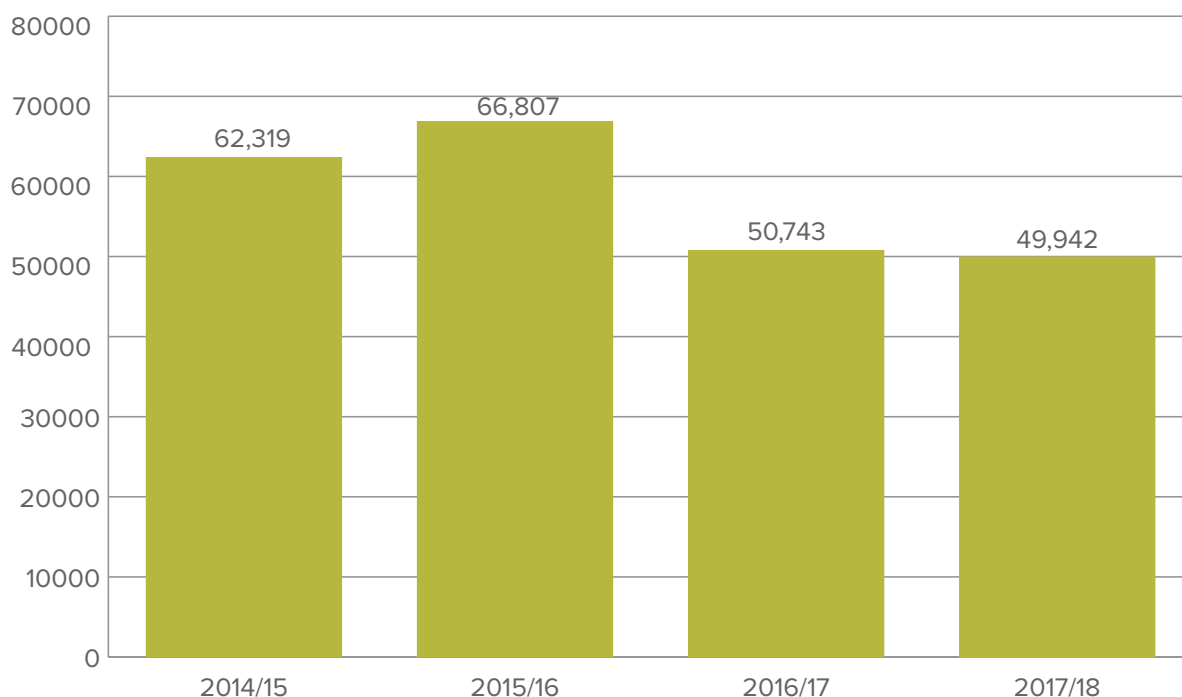
This is an indicator of the result of activities delivered by councils in response to economic inactivity in their areas. This is used to assess the response to worklessness in each council area. In some cases, councils may make a financial contribution to support delivery of employability programmes in partnership with other mainstream providers. In other areas councils may be delivering programmes directly. This measure is used to assess both types of

activity. One individual may have participated in more than one employability programme.

Number of Unemployed People that have Participated in Council Funded or Operated Employability Activities (OP4)	Total	Of Which			
		Male	Female	16-24	25-64
	49,942	63%	37%	49%	51%

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

### Number of Participants in Council Funded/Operated Employability Programmes



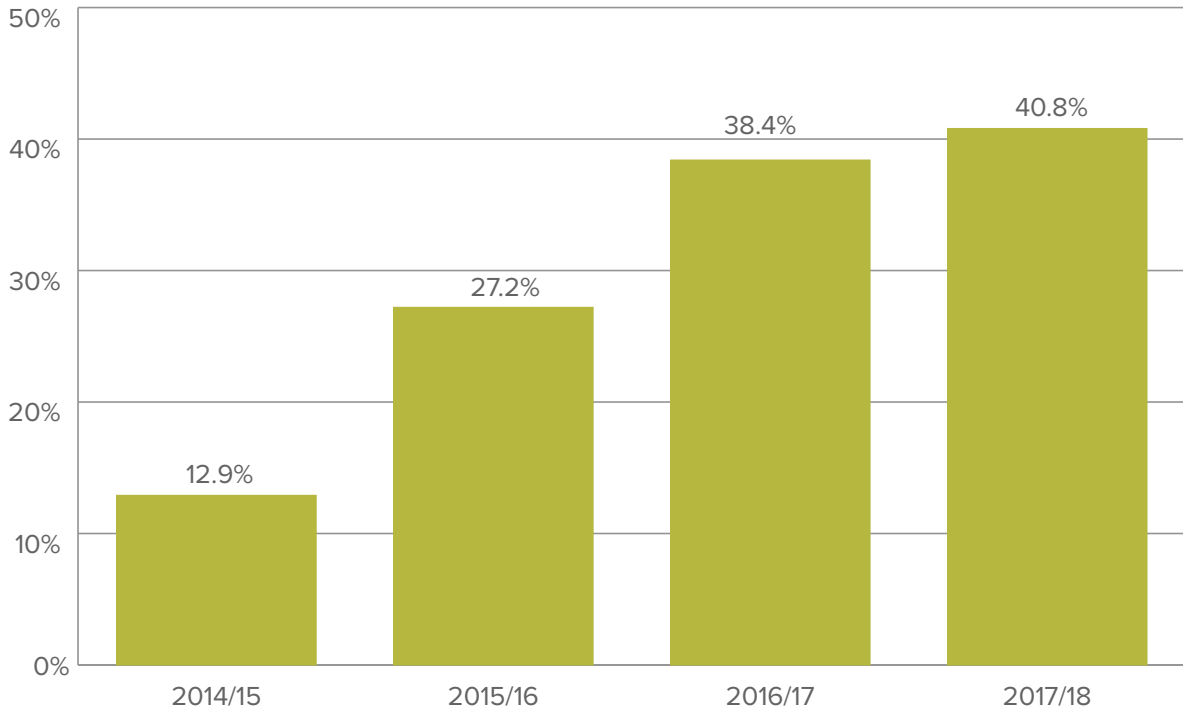
### OP5 – Availability of Employment Land (2018/17)

This indicator is used to assess how ‘investor ready’ and competitive a council is in providing infrastructure to do business. It includes all land/sites, not just those under council ownership. Immediately available employment land is provided as a percentage of all available employment land in a council area. Available employment land is that which has been allocated as employment land but is not yet in use, regardless of minor or major constraints. Immediately available employment land is that which is immediately available for business use. It is therefore serviced and marketed land, as opposed to simply land designated for employment/ industrial use in the Local Plan. This also means that the land has access to utilities.

Availability of Employment Land (OP5)	Total Allocated	Immediately Available	% Available
	6,366Ha	2,596Ha	40.8%

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

## Availability of Employment Land



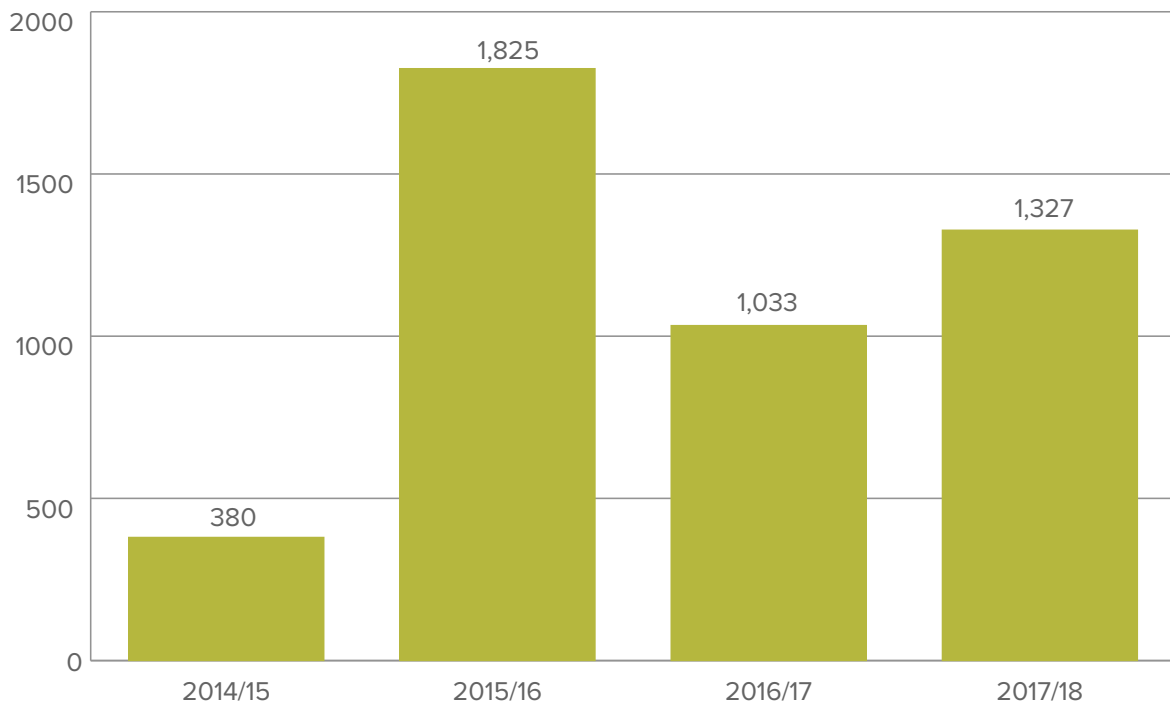
## OP6 – Number of Businesses Participating in the Supplier Development Programme (2017/18)

This measure is used to give an indication of the number of companies that are actively participating in the Supplier Development Programme (SDP), rather than just registered. This is defined as those companies who have attended at least one event after registration (for example Meet the Buyer).

No. of Businesses Participating in the Supplier Development Programme (OP6)	Businesses Participating in SDP
	1,327

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

## Number of Businesses Participating in SDP



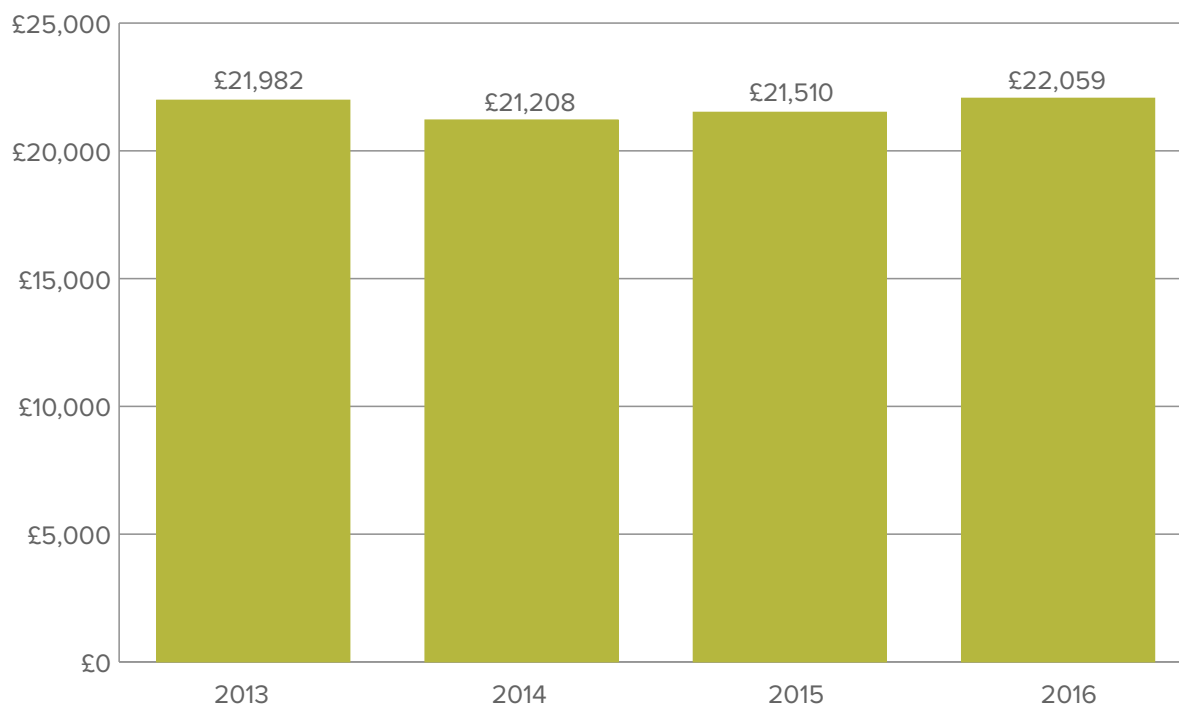
## OC1 – Gross Value Added per Head (2016)

This indicator is used to assess the economic health and wealth of areas. This is GVA per head of population and measures change in total economic output at the local level. It assesses the relative value or productivity of businesses, sectors and economies.

Gross Value Added per Head (OC1)	GVA
	£22,059

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below. Note that 2016 data is the most recent available for this indicator.

## GVA Per Head



## OC2 – Gross Weekly Earnings (2017)

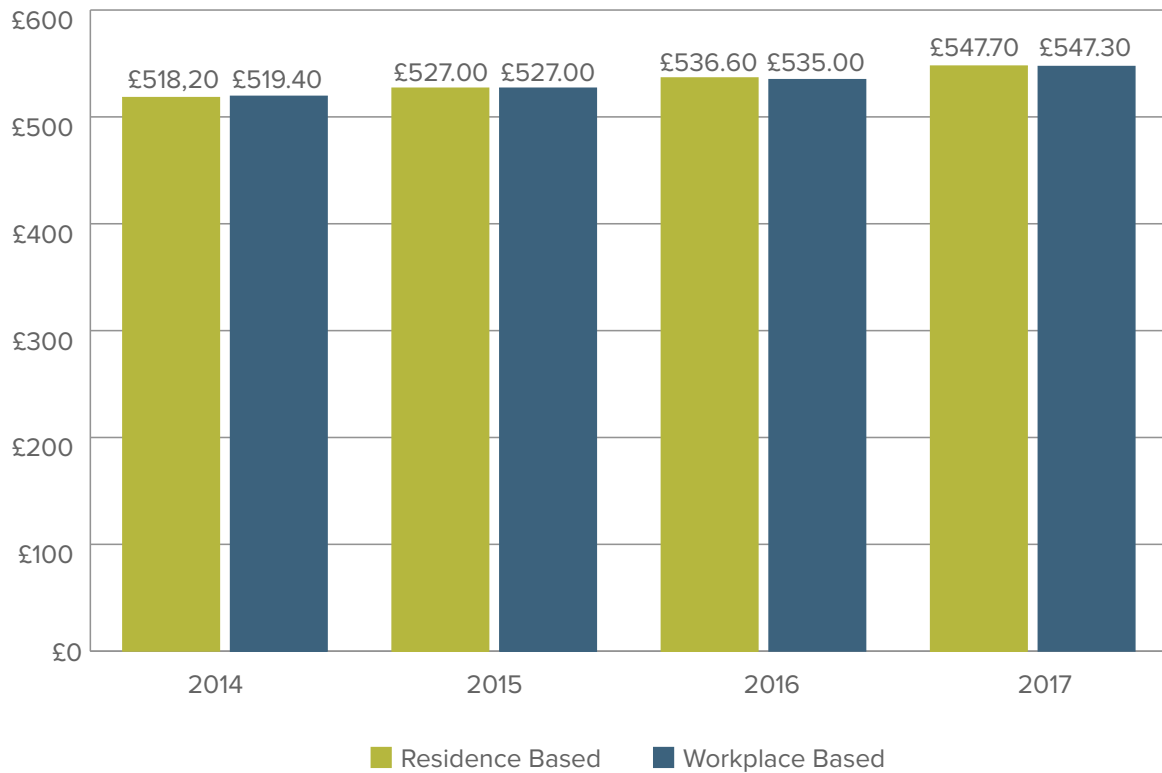
This indicator is used to understand the prosperity of different areas, and the extent to which people living in the area are reliant on jobs in other areas. It also assists in the understanding of sub regions and travel to work areas that do not necessarily coincide with political/ administrative boundaries. These measures also can be used to assess the value of local economies and the demand for skills by the local business base. The median gross weekly earnings of full time employees include two different types of data:

1. Median weekly earnings for full time workers – Residence Based (those living in a Council area but working in another Council area).
2. Median weekly earnings for full time workers – Workforce Based (those living in a Council area and working in that same Council area).

Gross Weekly Earnings (OC2)	Residence Based	Workplace Based
	£547.70	£547.30

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below. Note that 2017 data is the most recent available for this indicator.

## Gross Weekly Earnings



## OC3 – Employment Rate (2017/18)

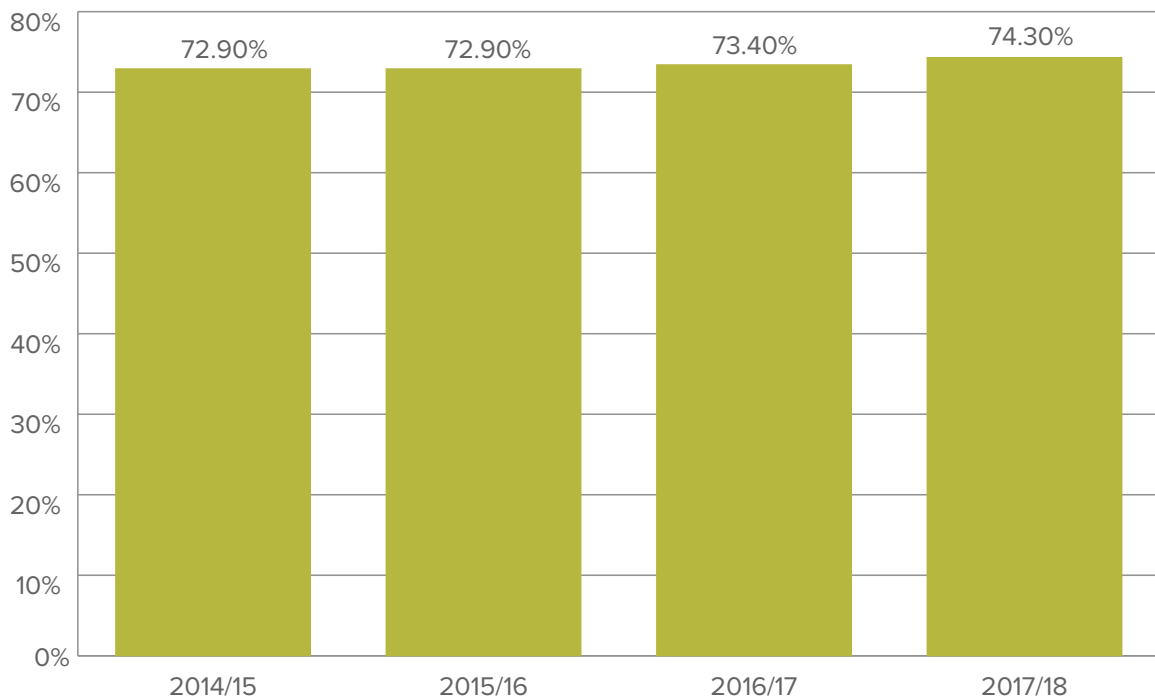
This measure is used to look at economic activity in council areas. Employment rate is the number of people in employment of working age (16-64 years) expressed as a percentage of the total working age population.

Employment Rate (OC3)	Rate
	74.3%

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.



## Employment Rate



## OC4 – New Business Starts (2016)

This measure is used to look at levels of entrepreneurship in council areas. This includes any council or Business Gateway assisted companies counted above. This is calculated as the number of new business births or start-ups (VAT/PAYE registrations) per 10,000 adult working age population (age 16-64).

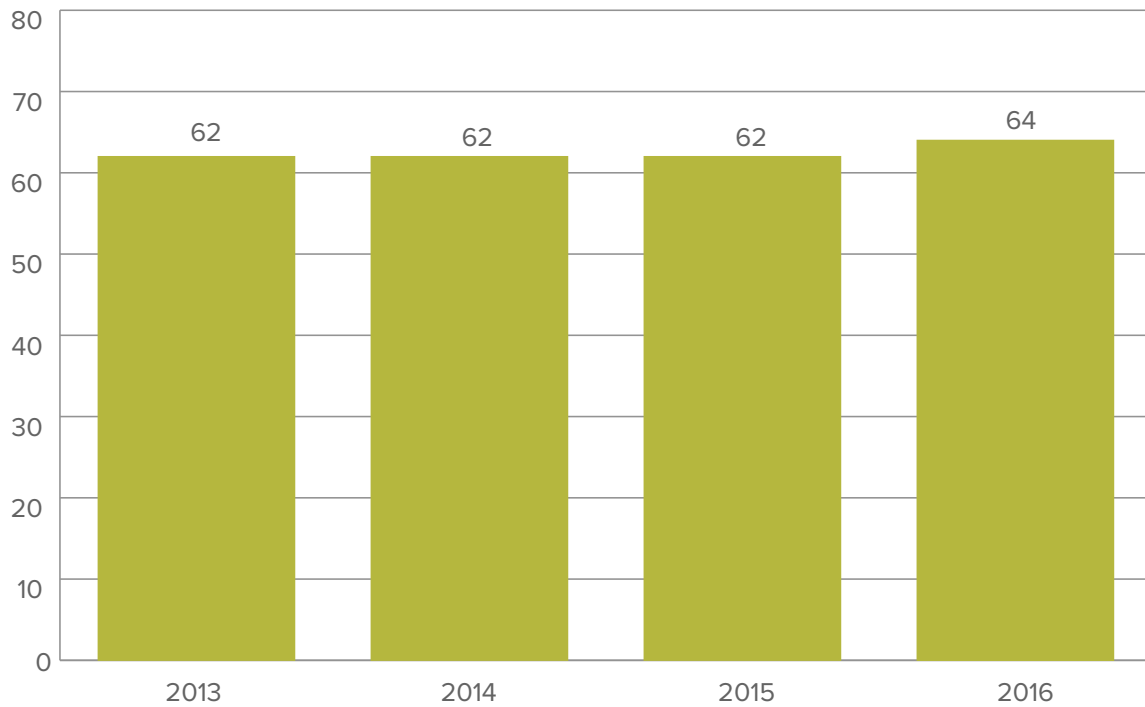
The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below. Note that 2016 data is the most recent available for this indicator.

New Business Starts (OC4)	Rate
	64

This measure is used to look at levels of entrepreneurship in council areas. This includes any council or Business Gateway assisted companies counted above. This is calculated as the number of new business births or start-ups (VAT/PAYE registrations) per 10,000 adult working age population (age 16-64).

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below. Note that 2016 data is the most recent available for this indicator.

## New Business Starts per 10,000 Working Age Population



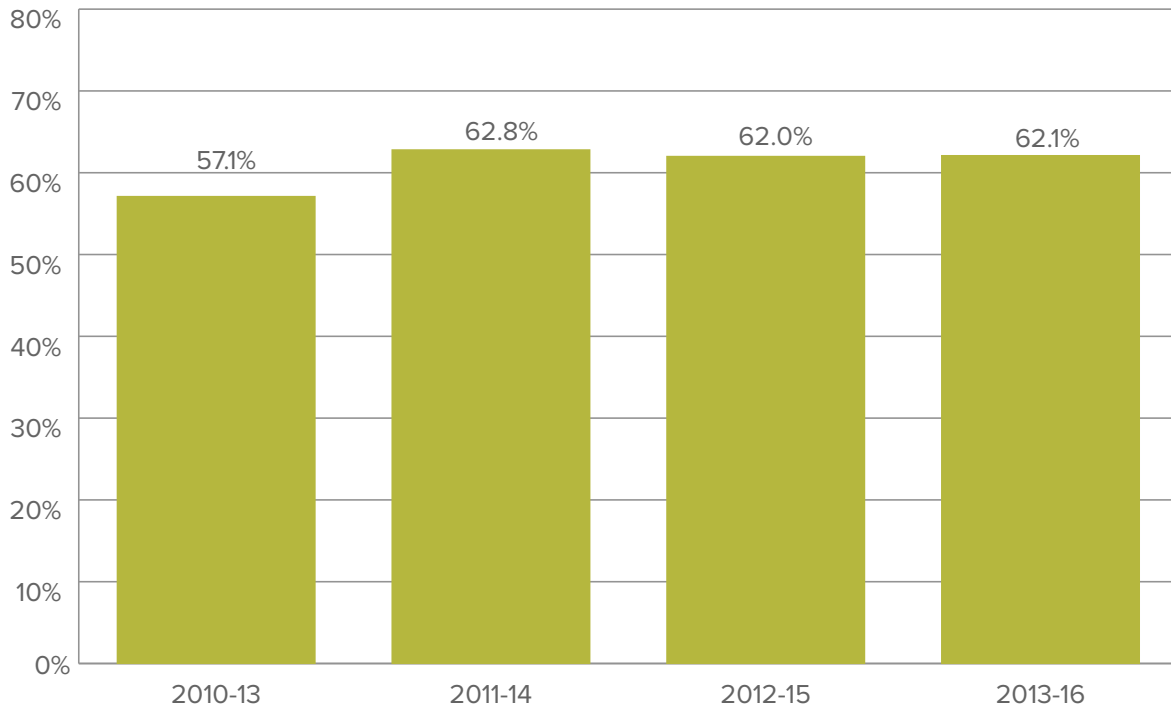
### OC5 – Business Survival Rate (2015)

This measures the sustainability of new businesses in an area and is expressed as a percentage of the VAT/PAYE registered businesses that survive for at least three years. These include any council or Business Gateway assisted companies counted above. The most recent data available for this indicator is for 2016, therefore this is the percentage of businesses that started in 2013 and survived to at least 2016.

Business Survival Rate 2013-2016 (OC5)	Business Survival Rate
	62.1%

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below. Note that 2015 data is the most recent available for this indicator.

## Business Survival Rate



## OC6 – Claimants in Receipt of Out of Work Benefits (2018)

This indicator is used to measure the percentage of people in each council area aged 16-64 that were claiming Job Seeker’s Allowance(JSA) and Universal Credit claimants who are out of work. This has changed since the last review period as the figure for Claimants of Key DWP Benefits is no longer available. This is a proxy measure for poverty/ low income.

Claimants in Receipt of Out of Work Benefits (OC6)	Claimants
	2.6%

*Note:* The data is provided for 2017/18 only, due to the difference in recording this measure in previous review periods, therefore no trend data is available.

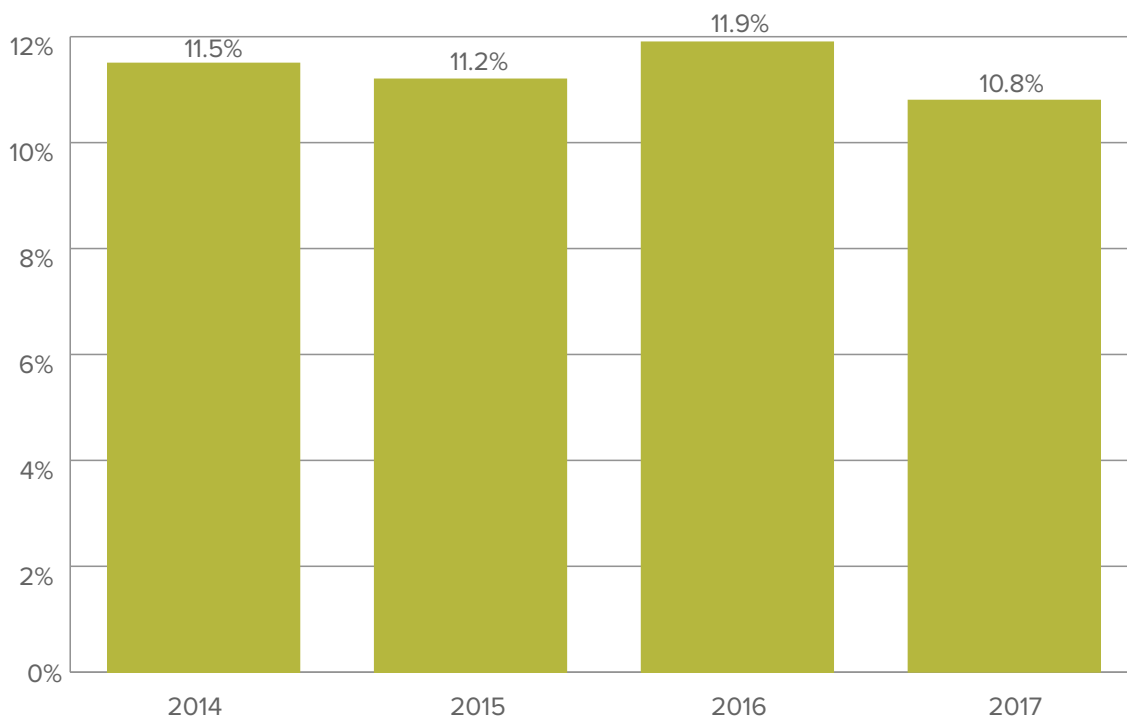
## OC7 – Working Age Population with Low/No Qualifications (2017)

This measure is used to indicate education levels within individual areas. This provides a percentage of the working age population (16-64) that have either no formal qualifications, or qualifications at SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) level 4 or lower.

Working Age Population with Low/No Qualifications (OC7)	% Population
	10.8%

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

## Working Age Population with Low/No Qualifications



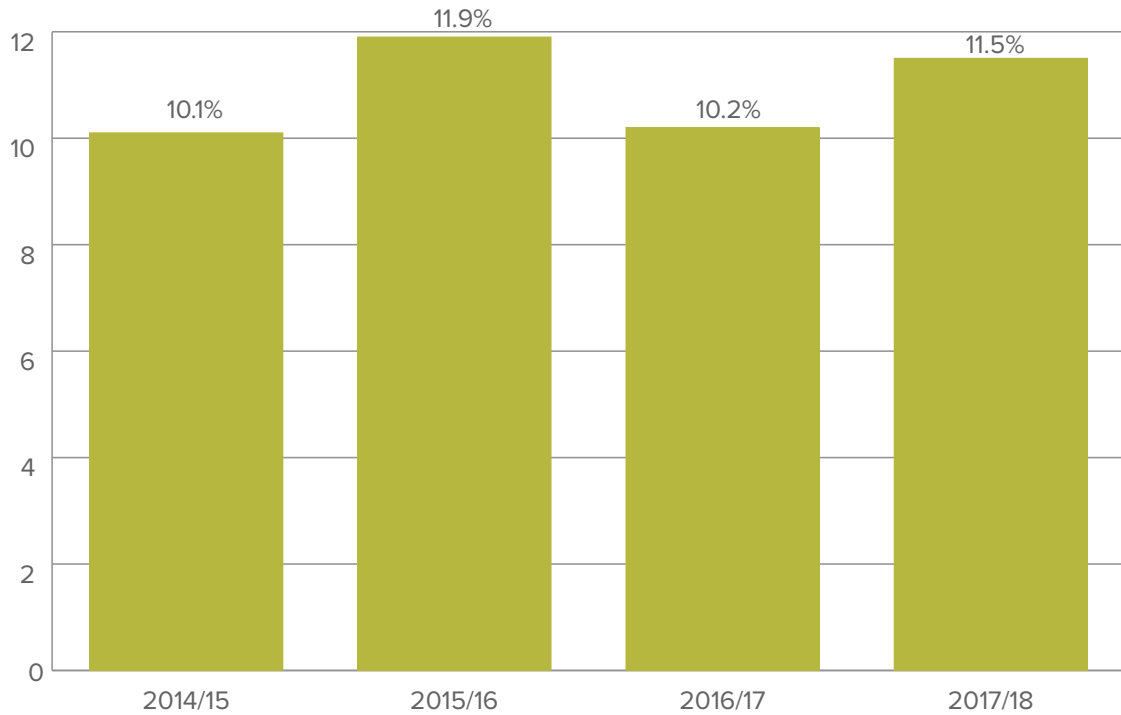
## OC8 – Town Vacancy Rates (2017/18)

This is a measure of vacant commercial units as a percentage of total units for the local authority's key town centres. Towns are classified as having a population of at least 5,000 people. This does not include edge of town and out of town retail units. This indicator is used to measure the relative vibrancy of town centres. For 2017/18 it was decided to report Survey data only, as this is more reliable than Assessor data, and the data below is based on the 26 councils that provided Survey data.

Town Vacancy Rates (OC9)	Total Units	Vacant/Void	Vacancy Rate
	22,879	2,628	11.5%

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

## Town Vacancy Rates



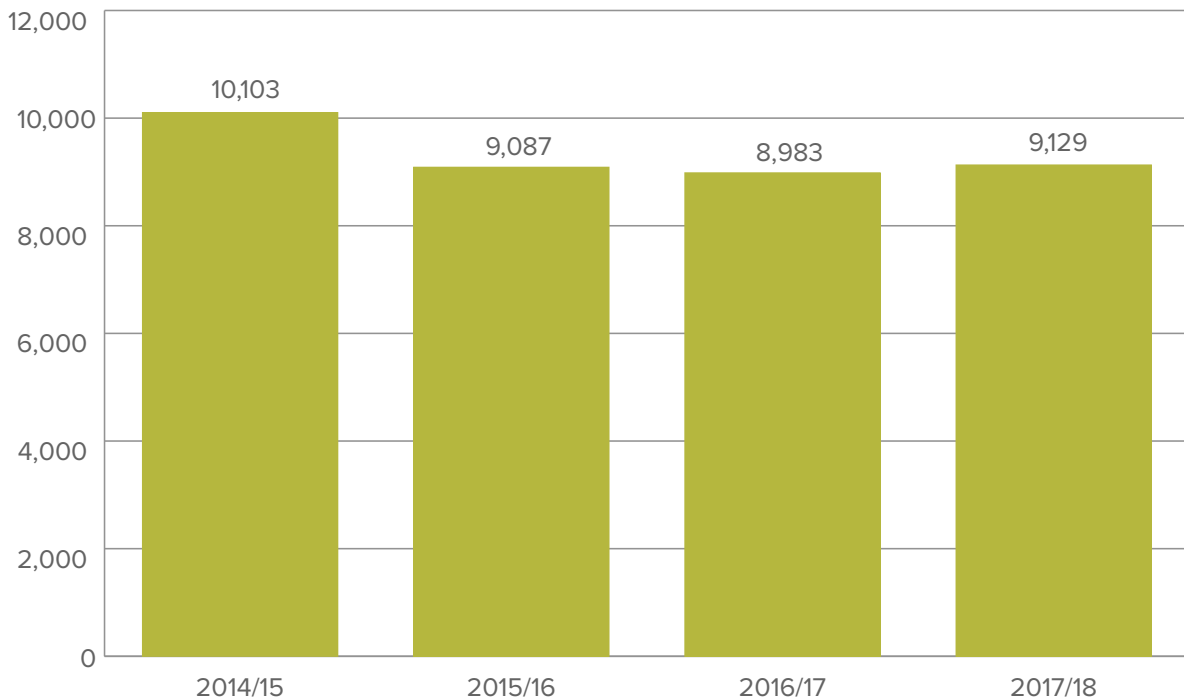
## OC9 – Number of Business Gateway Start-ups that are Trading (2017/18)

This is a measure of business start-ups supported by the Business Gateway that are now trading. In looking at the intermediate outcome of Business Gateway start-up support, the key economic outcome is that the business has begun trading. This measure seeks to capture this aspect of the route to impact.

Number of Business Gateway start-ups that are Trading (OC9)	Start-ups Trading
	9,129

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

## Number of Business Gateway Start-ups that are Trading



## OC10 – Business Gateway Survival Rate (2017/18)

This indicator has been part of the framework in previous review periods. However, Business Gateway halted the survival monitoring survey process in 2016 over concerns in the methodology used in collecting data. A new client monitoring survey has commenced which will look at survival rates of start-up businesses supported by Business Gateway at 12 and 36 months but this will not be available until the 2018/19 review period.

## OC11 – Leverage of External Funding (2017/18)

This indicator is used to assess the value of external funding that a council's contribution has made. It is expressed as 'for every £1 of Council spend, an additional £X has been levered in from other sources'. External Funding is any additional funding that is awarded to a Council to invest in economic development activities as a result of the council's own contribution. This can be used as supporting evidence to articulate a council's overall strategic value, its leadership role and the importance of collaboration in securing these funds. It can also be used as evidence in assessing the value of expertise within councils in accessing funding to deliver economic development activity.

	Council £	External £	Rate £
Leverage of External Funding (OC12)	£81,093,166	£138,972,892	£1 : £1.71

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

## Leverage of External Funding



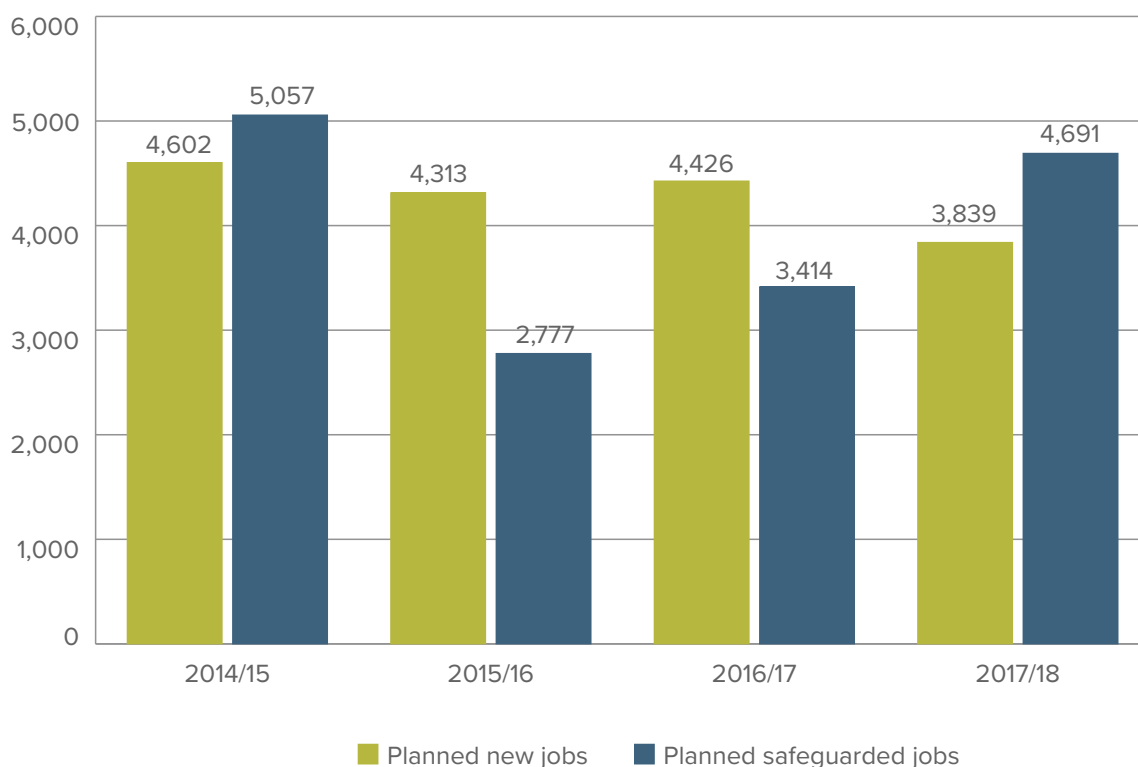
## OC12 – Number of Planned New Jobs from Completed Inward Investment Projects (2017/18)

This measure is used to record the potential for new job creation from completed inward investment projects and reflects delivery of support by Scottish Development International (SDI) within council areas. Data for this indicator is taken from Scottish Enterprise’s Local Activity Reports for 2017-18, which are produced to show examples of Scottish Enterprise (SE) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) activity.

Number of Planned New Jobs from Completed Inward Investment Projects (OC12)	Planned New Jobs	Planned Safeguarded Jobs
	3,839	4,691

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.

## Number of Planned New and Safeguarded Jobs from Completed Inward Investment Projects



## OC13 – Number of Unemployed People that have Progressed to Employment from Participation in Council Funded or Operated Employability Programmes (2017/18)

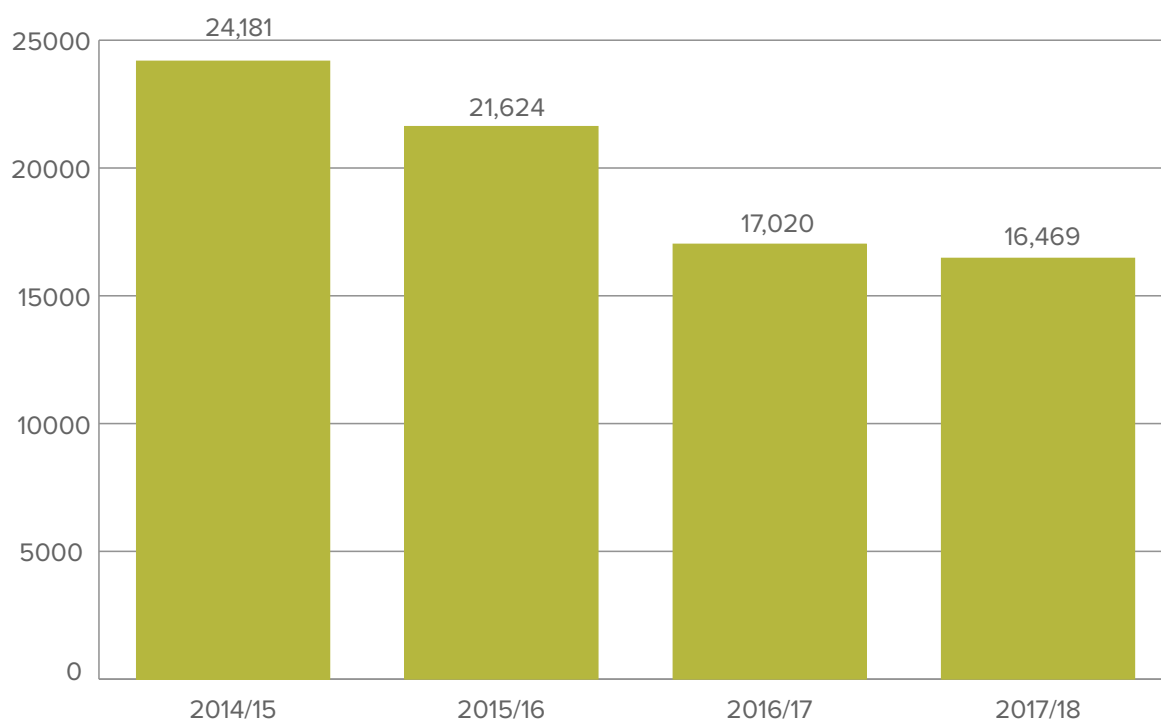
This is a measure of workless people participating in council funded or operated employability activity by gender and age. This measure is used to 'track' progression of those people that have participated in employability activities (OP4 above) into a job outcome. A job outcome is achieved when a participant enters paid employment. There is often a delay between participation in employability activity (OP4) and ultimately securing a job outcome (OC13).

Number of Unemployed People that have Progressed to Employment from Participation in Council Funded or Operated Employability Activities (OC13)	Total	Of Which			
		Male	Female	16-24	25-64
	16,469	8,871	5,357	8,023	6,581

The trend data for this indicator for the last four years is set out in the graph below.



## Number of Unemployed People that have Progressed to Employment from Participation in Council Funded or Operated Employability Programmes



## IG1 – GVA per Hour Worked/Job Filled (2016)

These indicators are recommended for use by ONS to measure sub-regional productivity due to the measures having a workplace based numerator (total GVA) and a workplace based denominator (hours worked/jobs filled).

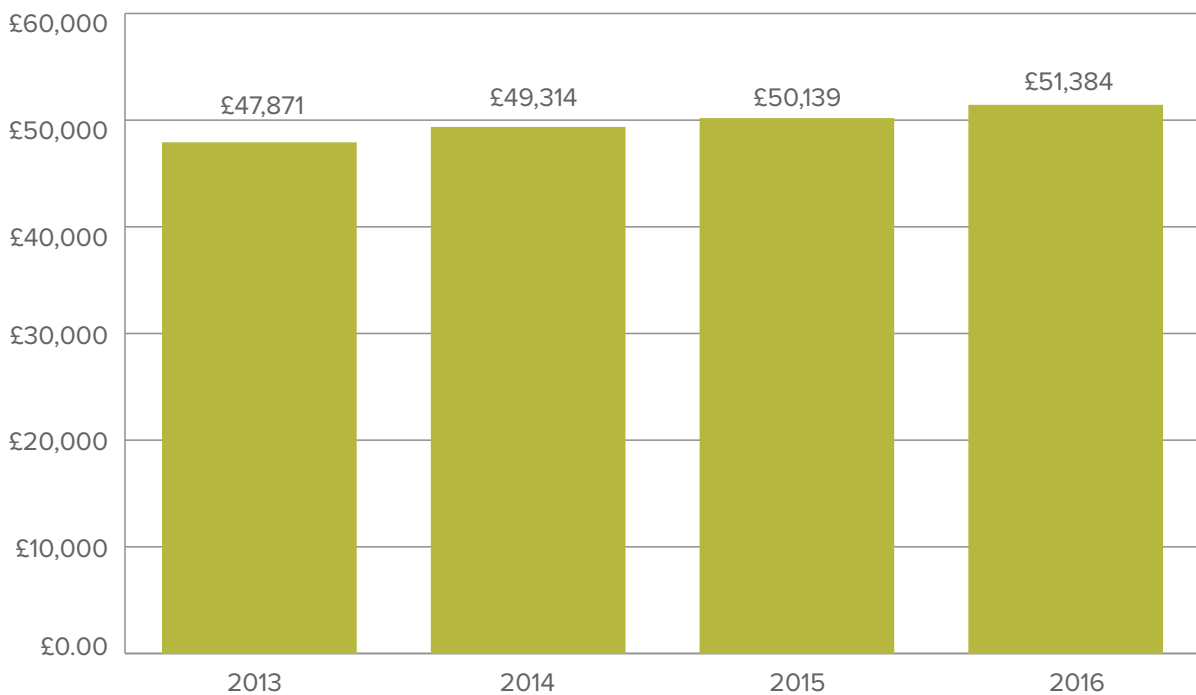
GVA per Hour Worked/Job Filled (IG1)	GVA per Hour Worked	GVA per Job Filled
	£32.40	£51,384

The trend data for this indicator for four years is set out in the graphs below.

## GVA per Hour Worked



## GVA per Hour Job Filled



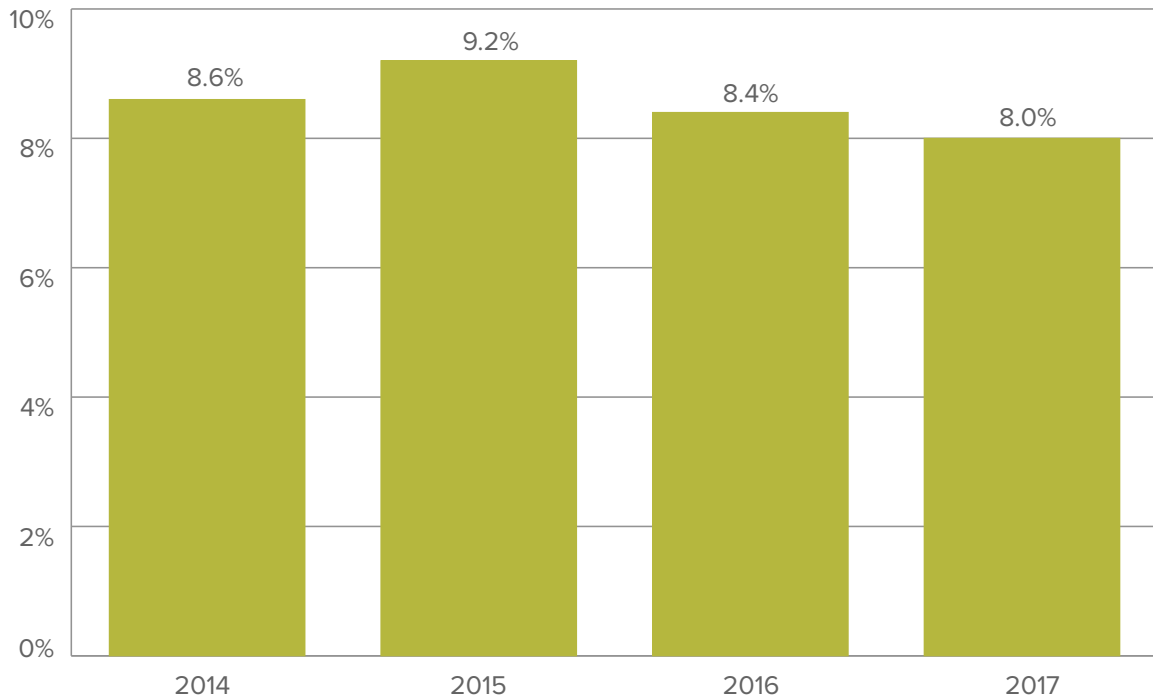
## IG2 – Under-employment (2017)

This indicator measures the percentage of 'Underemployment' in each council area. This represents those aged 16 and over who are in employment and would like to work longer hours in their existing job, have an additional job, or find a different job with more hours.

Under-employment (IG2)	Percentage
	8%

The trend data for this indicator for four years is set out in the graph below.

### Percentage of Under-employment



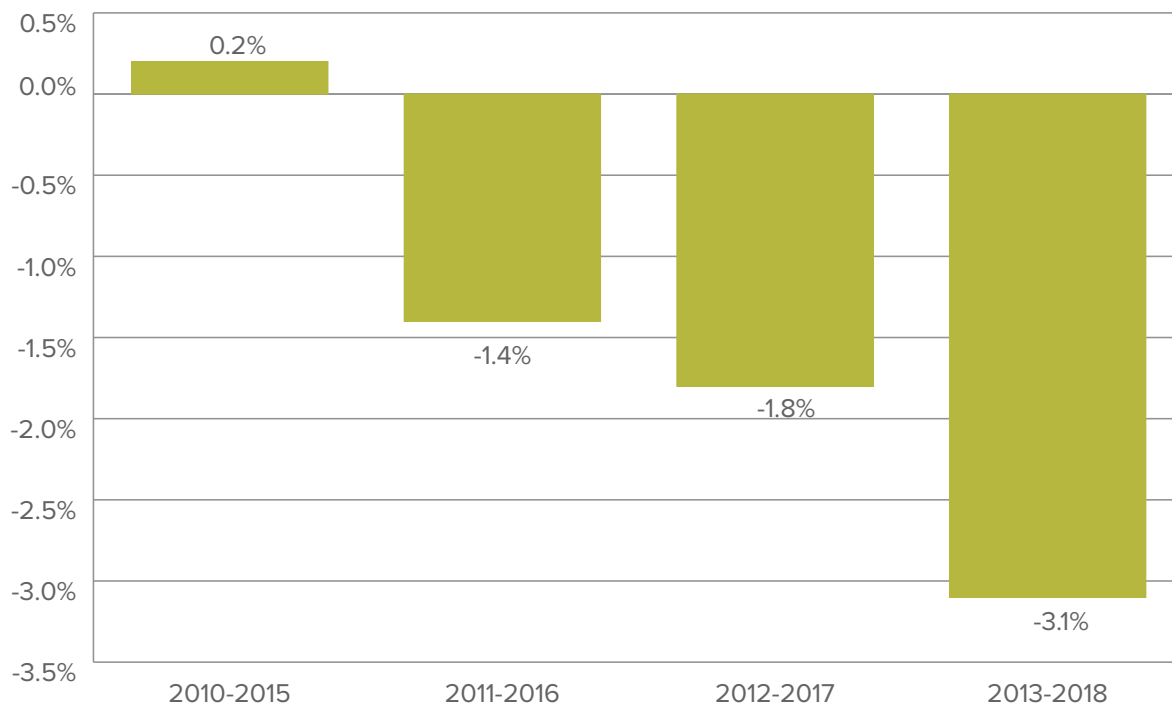
### IG3 - 5 year % Change in median income vs Change in lowest quintile (2013-2018)

This indicator measures the percentage change in median income over 5 year periods, in comparison with the percentage change of income in the lowest quintile.

5 year % Change in median income vs Change in lowest quintile (IG3)	Percentage (2013-2018)
	-3.1%

The trend data for this indicator for four 5 year periods is set out in the graph below.

## Five year Percentage Change in Median Income vs Change in Lowest Quintile



## IG4 – GVA by Key Growth Sector (2014-2016)

This indicator measures the GVA by Head (Employment) for the key growth sectors in Scotland over three years (2014-2016). The growth sectors are: Food & Drink; Financial & Business services; Life Sciences; Energy (including renewables); Sustainable Tourism; and Creative Industries (including digital).

A table showing these figures for each council area has been included in Appendix 2 in the SLAED Indicator Framework Report 2017/18.

*Note:* Sector totals for Scotland have not been included for the following reasons:

- Food and Drink excludes Agriculture as the Agriculture results (for Gross Value Added) are not available broken down by Local Authority Area from the Economic Report on Scottish Agriculture. Therefore a Food and Drink (including Agriculture) Scotland total is not provided.
- Financial and Business Services relates only to those sectors fully covered in the Annual Business Survey (so excludes financial and insurance activities). Therefore a Financial and Business Services Scotland total is not provided.

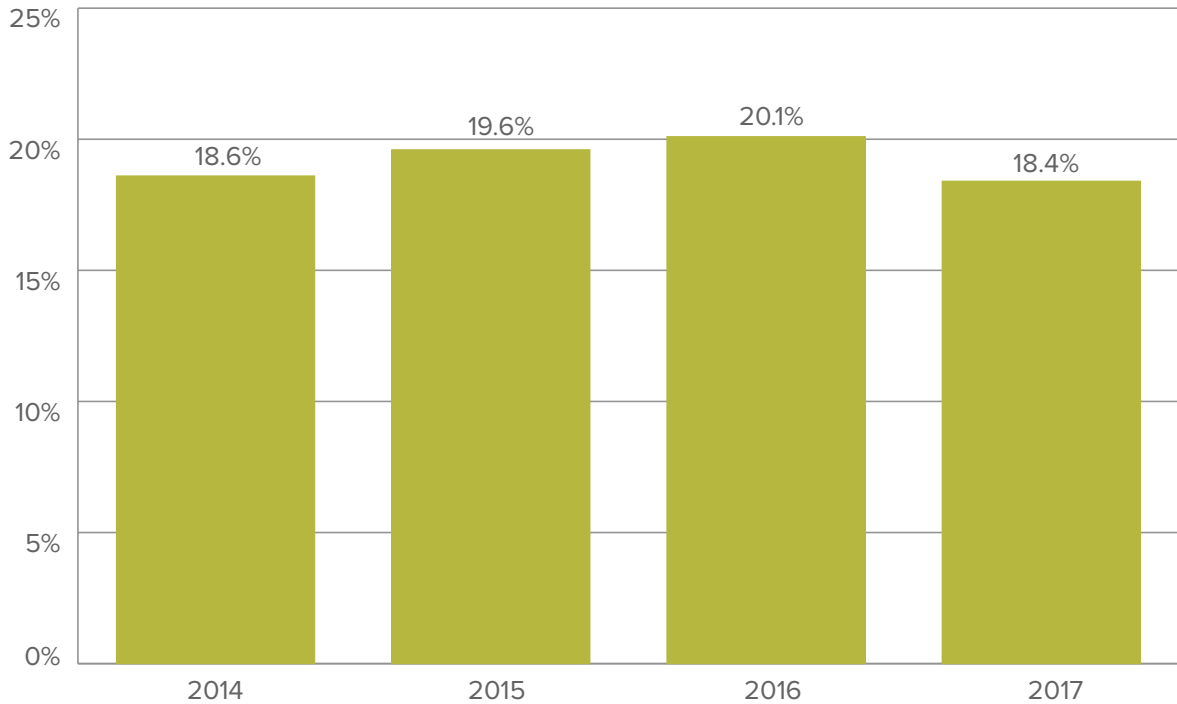
## IG5 – Percentage of those earning less than the Living Wage (2017)

This measures employees who are earning less than the Living Wage in Scotland, and is based on employees who are aged 18+, on the PAYE system on adult rates and whose pay was not affected by absence. Levels are calculated using low pay calibration weights in line with ONS guidance and hourly earnings excludes any overtime payments. The Local Authorities are 'workplace' based, so the data includes all those that work in the Council area regardless of where they live.

Percentage of those earning less than the Living Wage (IG5)	Percentage
	18.4%

The trend data for this indicator for four years is set out in the graph below.

### Percentage of Those Earning Less Than Living Wage



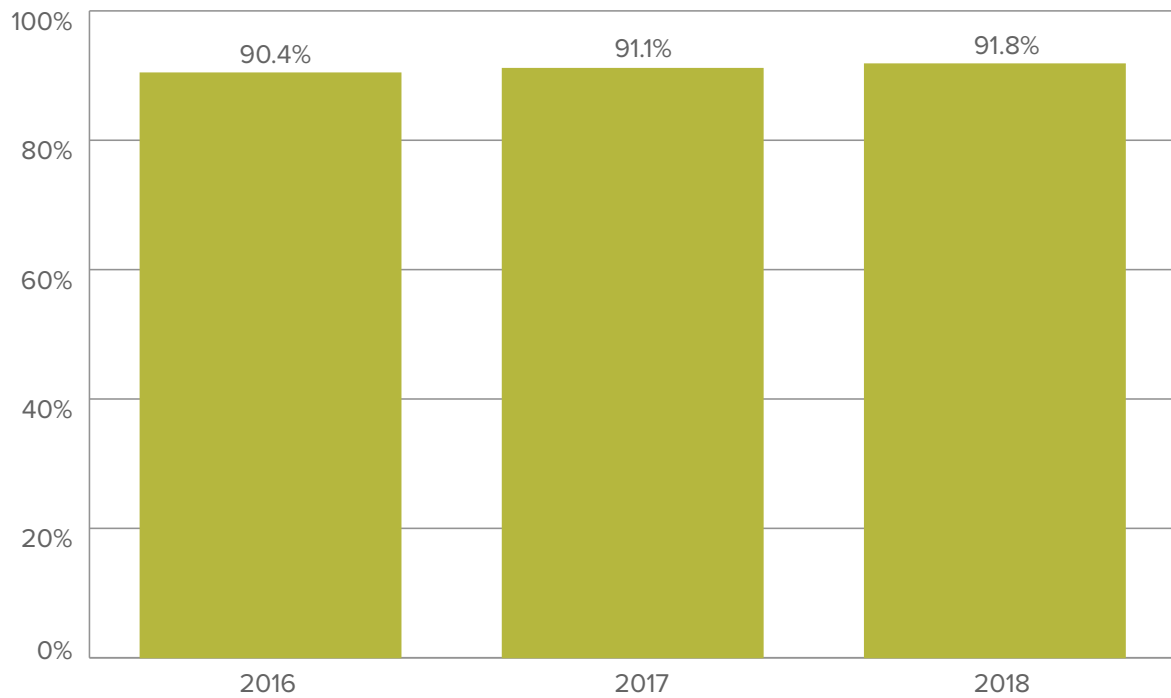
### IG6 – Percentage of Participation by 16-19 year olds (2018)

This indicator measures the percentage of 16-19 year olds participating in education, employment or training.

Percentage of Participation by 16-19 year olds (2018)	Percentage
	91.8%

The trend data for this indicator for three years is set out in the graph below.

## Percentage of Participation by 16-19 Year Olds



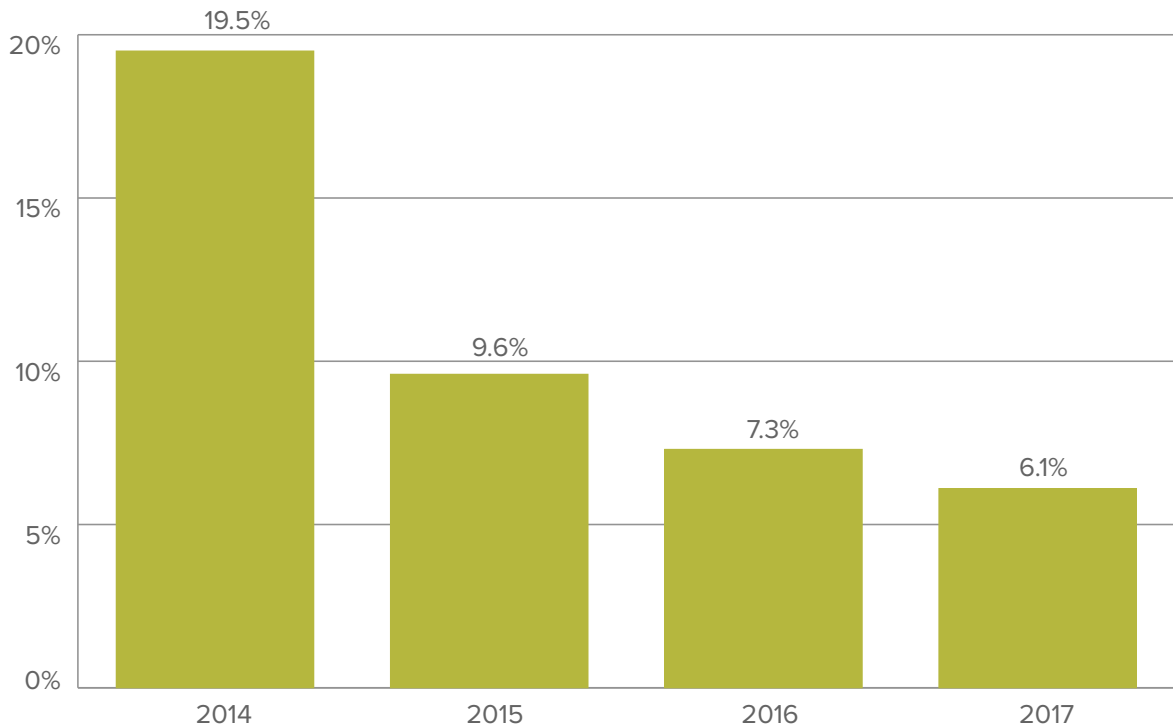
## IG7 - Percentage of Premises Unable to Access 10Mbit/s Broadband (2018)

This indicator measures the percentage of premises unable to access 10Mbit/s broadband, which is the minimum speed for meeting the Universal Service Obligation.

Percentage of Premises Unable to Access 10Mbit/s Broadband	Percentage
	6.1%

The trend data for this indicator for four years is set out in the graph below.

## Percentage of Premises Unable to Access 10Mbit/s Broadband



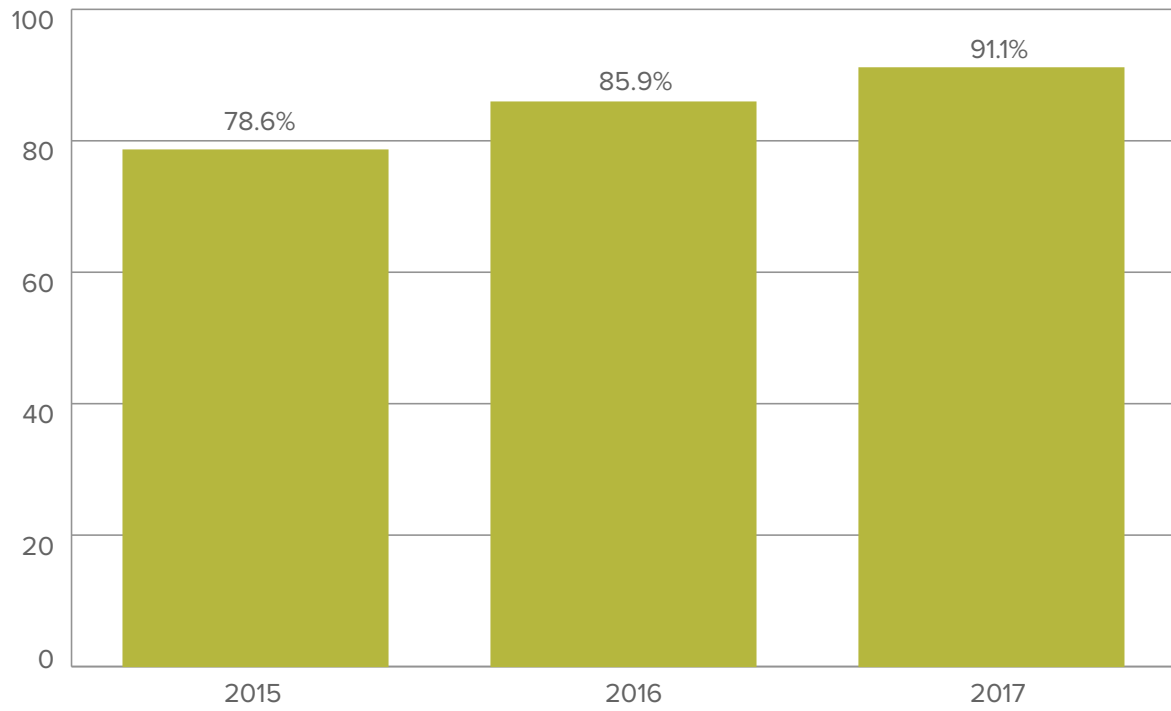
## IG8 - Percentage of Premises Able to Access to Superfast Broadband (30Mbit/s) (2018)

This indicator measures the percentage of premises able to access SFB (30Mbit/s). This is the EU's definition of superfast broadband and it is the Scottish Government's ambition for this to be available to all premises by the end of 2021. This allows businesses to use, analyse and drive data in competitive markets.

Percentage of Premises Able to Access Superfast Broadband (30Mbit/s)	Percentage
	91.1%

The trend data for this indicator for three years is set out in the graph below.

## Percentage of Premises Able to Access Superfast Broadband (30Mbit/s)





# Development of the Framework

This is the sixth year in which the SLAED Indicators Framework Report has been published. Improvements are made to the framework each year to make the indicators and their definitions as robust as possible and minimise the opportunities for different interpretations. The framework will be subject to ongoing review and refinement with an understanding that a balance needs to be maintained between improvement and continuity and the ability to make year-on-year comparisons. This process falls under the remit of the SLAED Performance Group with support from the Improvement Service and the SLAED Executive Group. The Performance Group also works with the Local Government Benchmarking Framework to develop the economic development representation within that framework.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The annual SLAED Indicators Report provides stakeholders with an overview of local authorities' economic development activities. The report also consistently demonstrates the significant contribution that councils are making to the Scottish economy and achieving the objectives set out in Scotland's Economic Strategy, as well as the individual Local Outcome Improvement Plans. By collecting and reporting on this data on an annual basis, councils and stakeholders can identify year-on-year improvements as well as areas that might require additional focus. Examples of good practice can also be identified and shared between councils for improvement purposes.

## Next Steps

The findings of this report will be reported to the SLAED Executive and wider membership, and will be published to coincide with the SLAED Annual Conference in December 2018. The SLAED Performance Group, with support from the Improvement Service, will continue to work with councils and the SLAED Strategic and Thematic groups to further develop the Framework for 2018/19. Membership of the Performance Group is open to all 32 councils which encourages a wide range of views and experiences to influence improvements. The focus for the Performance Group in the coming year will be to explore how councils can use this data to assess relative performance, identify added value and good practice and further drive improvements and efficiencies.

## Further Information

Please email [slaed@improvementservice.org.uk](mailto:slaed@improvementservice.org.uk) if you have any queries regarding this report.

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