



# intelligence

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GOOD LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION IS VITAL FOR EMPLOYERS PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES AS IT HIGHLIGHTS KEY ISSUES AND IS ESSENTIAL TO PLAN FOR THE SOCIAL SERVICES WORKFORCE FOR THE FUTURE. THE DATA PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN HELPING EMPLOYERS TO UNDERTAKE EFFECTIVE WORKFORCE PLANNING AND TO IMPROVE THEIR BENCHMARKING PROCESSES.

THIS EDITION OF INTELLIGENCE PROVIDES THE KEY SOURCES OF DATA AVAILABLE ON THE SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES WORKFORCE. I HOPE YOU FIND THIS BULLETIN INFORMATIVE AND IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK PLEASE CONTACT  
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The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), as part of Skills for Care and Development, publishes these Intelligence bulletins to let you find out more about the Scottish social services workforce and help plan the workforce for the future. Skills for Care and Development is the sector skills council for the social care, children and young people's workforce in the UK.

## **THE SOCIAL SERVICES SECTOR – KEY WORKFORCE DATA SOURCES**

There are a range of places where we can get information on the number of people working in social services in Scotland. The SSSC is using information from the Care Commission's annual returns, the annual survey of local authority social work services and data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

### **Annual Business Inquiry (ABI) and Labour Force Survey (LFS)**

The ONS provides official sources of labour market information in the UK through the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI). The ABI and LFS define sectors of the UK economy using the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) coding system. The social work activities core code for social services is SIC Code 85.3. Table one over the page, shows what the ABI and LFS believe the size of the workforce to be in December 2007.

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**Table one: The Scottish social services workforce, 2007  
(LFS and ABI, SIC code 85.3)**

ABI – social work activities (85.3)	122,000
LFS – social work activities (85.3)	162,000

The coding system used by ABI and LFS doesn't give an accurate measure of the sector as the way it classifies the workforce does not fully fit with the definition of the Scottish social services sector. It is likely that the LFS figure gives a more accurate estimate of the size of the sector than the ABI figure as it asks individuals to specify their area of employment. These figures are unlikely to include all workers in the sector, for example childminders or personal assistants.

### **Care Commission annual returns and the Staff of Local Authority Social Work Service (SLASWS) survey**

The Care Commission gathers data on every registered care service in Scotland. Care providers complete annual returns based on the Core Minimum Dataset (CMDS) which collects detailed information on employees, their employer, unit and post. The annual returns provide a more detailed breakdown of the workforce than that provided by the ABI or LFS.

The Staff of Local Authority Social Work Services (SLASWS) is an annual census conducted by Scottish Government. The SLASWS census and the Care Commission's annual returns can be meaningfully compared because they both make use of the CMDS.

The SSSC believes that information from the Care Commission's annual returns and the census of local authorities provide the best data for understanding the size and nature of the social services workforce in Scotland. It is crucial that service providers and local authorities continue to submit accurate annual returns as the data they contain have radically improved our knowledge of the social services workforce, and play a vital role in helping employers to undertake effective workforce planning. This information can also support employers to improve their benchmarking processes. A small proportion of people working in the social services sector are not covered by this information. The main exemptions include personal assistants employed under self-directed support and central or strategic staff employed by private and voluntary sector providers. Tables two and three outline headcount figures which combine data from the Care Commission's annual returns and the SLASWS census.

**Table two: The social services workforce by employer, 2007  
 (Care Commission and Scottish Government data)**

Type of employer	Headcount
Health Board	330
Local Authority	68,710
Private	66,430
Voluntary or not for profit	56,320
Not known	840
Self-employed	6,050
<b>Total</b>	<b>198,680</b>

This new workforce figure of 198,680 seems to confirm the view that the ABI and the LFS underestimate the size of the social services sector in Scotland.

This data can also be divided by service type:

**Table three: The social services workforce by service type, 2007  
 (Care Commission and Scottish Government data)**

Service type	Headcount
Adult day care	9,080
Adult residential care	52,950
Day care services for children	31,410
Childminders	6,050
Combined care at home and housing support	67,120
Residential child care	7,480
School care accommodation services	1,230
Local Authority social work non-registered services	18,250
Other	5,110
<b>Total</b>	<b>198,680</b>

Data from the Care Commission's December 2008 annual returns and the next survey of Scottish local authority social work services will be available later in 2010.

## Summary

We've set out to provide an explanation of the key sources of workforce data on the social services sector in Scotland:

- the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI)
- the Labour Force Survey (LFS)
- the Care Commission's annual returns and the annual survey of local authority social work services.

These surveys do not capture data on every worker in this sector. However, the data from the Care Commission annual returns and the local authority survey seem to confirm the view that the ABI and the LFS underestimate the size of the sector in Scotland. The SSSC believes that information from annual returns and the census of local authorities provide the best data for understanding the size and nature of the workforce in Scotland. This information provides a detailed breakdown of the sector and associated sub-sectors, and plays a vital role in helping employers to undertake effective workforce planning.

For more information about these bulletins or if you have any comments or feedback please contact Neil MacLeod at: [neil.macleod@sssc.uk.com](mailto:neil.macleod@sssc.uk.com)

## Sources

Care Commission annual returns, December 2007

Scottish Government (2008) A National Statistics Publication for Scotland: Staff of Scottish Local Authority Social Work Services 2007. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

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