

Update: Whole Time Equivalent Data for the Scottish Social Service Workforce 2015

January 2017



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This short report builds on the Experimental Statistics report published by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) on whole time equivalents (WTEs) in March 2016. Based on the feedback received we agreed with our main stakeholders' group (the Scottish Social Services Workforce Data Group) that future annual workforce data reports will contain WTE data as well as headcount data. This will start when we publish our next annual report in August 2017.
- 1.2 As the Experimental Statistics report used data from December 2014 we agreed an update should be published which includes WTE data from December 2015. This report is based on that data.

2. Definition of whole time equivalent (WTE)

- 2.1 We know that almost half of people working in the sector are on part time contracts so using headcount data alone can provide a misleading picture of the scale of the number of staff working in the sector. WTE is usually regarded as a more accurate measure of the amount of labour provided by a workforce.
- 2.2 One problem is that there is no standard figure for how many hours equal one full time post. Figures usually range from between 35 and 40 hours per week. For the purposes of this report we present the data in a standard form which assumes WTE is 37.5 hours for staff working in the sector (see appendix 1 for more details of the method used to calculate WTE).

3. Data on workforce

- 3.1 Table 1 below provides data for the whole sector for the period 2008 to 2015. It provides the WTE figure (using a standardised week of 37.5 hours), the headcount and the final column on the right expresses the WTE as a proportion of the headcount.

Table 1: WTE, headcount and ratio of WTE to headcount 2008-2015

	WTE (37.5 hours pw)	Headcount (HC)	Ratio of WTE to HC
2008 ¹	146,350	191,390	0.76
2009	152,220	197,900	0.77
2010	151,630	198,690	0.76
2011	147,380	194,890	0.76
2012	145,670	192,360	0.76
2013	143,410	189,670	0.76
2014	150,050	199,670	0.75
2015	152,070	203,200	0.75

Source: SSSC

- 3.2 One noticeable thing is that the ratio of WTE hours to staffing headcount has remained fairly consistent over the period in question. Having said that, WTE has declined slightly over time; it peaked in 2009, while the peak headcount was in 2015.
- 3.3 Table 2 provides a more detailed breakdown of data from December 2015 for each of the main types of service that operate in the sector. As with table 1 the WTE data is set alongside the headcount data for 2015 and the ratio of WTE to headcount.
- 3.4 While the average ratio for the sector is 0.75, considerable variety can be found beneath this. Most service types have an average ratio of between 0.70 and 0.90. However, there are exceptions such as childminding where full time workers tend to work longer hours with 40 hours per week being the median (see p35 SSSC Scottish Social Services Sector: Report on 2015 Workforce Data).
- 3.5 The two greatest exceptions are in those employed by either child care or nurse agencies. In the case of the former the ratio is less than 0.3 and for the latter 0.44. This is likely to be due to the different patterns of working that agency staff have compared with those in other service types.

¹ NB the 2008 figures do not include data on childminders.

- 3.6 The table also indicates that the three largest service types in terms of headcount (care homes for adults, day care of children and housing support/care at home) are also the three largest in terms of WTE. They account for 75% of the sector's WTE figure and 77% of the headcount.

Table 2: WTE, headcount and ratio of WTE to headcount 2015

	WTE 37.5 hours	Headcount (HC)	Ratio of WTE to HC
Adoption service	370	460	0.79
Adult day care	5,750	8,080	0.71
Adult placement service	140	180	0.75
Care homes for adults	41,740	53,980	0.77
Central and strategic staff	2,460	2,930	0.84
Child care agency	120	420	0.29
Childminding	5,420	5,570	0.97
Day care of children	24,270	33,460	0.73
Fieldwork service (adults)	4,320	5,070	0.85
Fieldwork service (children)	5,090	5,960	0.85
Fieldwork service (generic)	1,910	2,340	0.82
Fieldwork service (offenders)	1,620	1,880	0.86
Fostering service	820	980	0.84
Housing support/care at home	49,140	69,690	0.71
Nurse agency	1,390	3,120	0.44
Offender accommodation service	90	120	0.74
Residential child care	6,260	7,650	0.82
School care accommodation	1,140	1,290	0.89
Total²	152,070	203,200	0.75

Source: SSSC

- 3.7 Table 3 provides a further breakdown of the data from 2015 and this time looks at WTE by both the type of service and the type of employer.
- 3.8 As with table 2, table 3 shows that while the sector as a whole may have maintained a more or less constant ratio of WTE to headcount in recent years, there is a great deal of variety beneath the sector average.
- 3.9 The table shows that in some types of service the ratio of WTE to headcount varies considerably across the different types of employers. The greatest range is seen in day care of children (DCC) services with a ratio of less than 0.55 for voluntary sector services and over 0.82 for

² NB the totals may differ from the sums of the columns due to the effects of rounding.

private sector services. This is likely to be due to the different types of DCC services that the voluntary sector providers deliver compared with their colleagues in the public and private sectors. For example the voluntary sector runs just over half of all out of school clubs and over 80% of playgroups.

3.10 Across the sector as a whole the ratio of WTE to headcount ranges from 0.28 for private child care agencies to 0.97 for childminders.

Table 3 – WTE/headcount ratio by service and employer 2015

	Public	Private	Voluntary	Total
Adoption service	0.79	-	0.79	0.79
Adult day care	0.76	0.68	0.65	0.71
Adult placement service	0.76	-	0.75	0.75
Care homes for adults	0.72	0.79	0.75	0.77
Central and strategic staff	0.84	-	-	0.84
Child care agency	0.15	0.29	0.29	0.29
Childminding	-	0.97	-	0.97
Day care of children	0.71	0.82	0.55	0.73
Fieldwork service (adults)	0.85	-	-	0.85
Fieldwork service (children)	0.85	-	-	0.85
Fieldwork service (generic)	0.82	-	-	0.82
Fieldwork service (offenders)	0.86	-	-	0.86
Fostering service	0.83	-	0.85	0.84
Housing support/care at home	0.68	0.73	0.70	0.71
Nurse agency	-	0.44	0.58	0.44
Offender accommodation service	0.84	-	0.72	0.74
Residential child care	0.80	0.90	0.78	0.82
School care accommodation	0.70	0.91	0.62	0.89
Total	0.75	0.78	0.69	0.75

Source: SSSC

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 This paper provides an update on WTE data for the social service sector covering the period 2008 to 2015. A standardised approach to measuring WTE has been adopted using 37.5 hours per week as the norm.
- 4.2 The WTE to headcount ratio provides a way of estimating the capacity of the workforce as a proportion of the overall headcount. The range of the ratio is quite broad when data on different service and employer types is examined. However, the figure for the sector as a whole has remained roughly constant for the eight years (2008-2015) for which data is available.
- 4.3 As of August 2017 data on WTEs will be included in the annual Social Service Workforce Data report.

Bibliography

Scottish Social Services Council. 2016. **Scottish Social Services Sector: Report on 2015 Workforce Data**. Dundee: Scottish Social Services Council.

Appendix 1

Calculation of WTE

We use data on the numbers of hours worked by individuals to calculate average (mean) hours worked for a particular section of the workforce. The average hours are then divided by our standard WTE (37.5 hours) to produce a figure for the WTE ratio. We then multiply this by our estimate of the headcount for that section of the workforce to produce a WTE estimate. We use this approach rather than calculating WTE for individuals to account for non-responses from individuals.

This report is published on the SSSC workforce data website which can be found at: data.sssc.uk.com

If you have enquiries about our workforce data please contact us at: dataenquiries@sssc.uk.com



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