

Update: Staff Retention (stability index) in the Scottish Social Service Sector

January 2017



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This short report builds on the Experimental Statistics report published by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) on staff retention in March 2016. Based on the feedback it received we agreed with our main stakeholders' group, the Scottish Social Services Workforce Data Group (SSSWDG) that future annual workforce data reports will contain data on staff retention. 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 with the SSSWDG that we should publish an update including staff retention data from December 2015. This report is based on that data.
- 1.3 Data on staff retention is produced as an alternative to data on turnover. To calculate staff turnover data on leavers is required and accurate data on leavers is not currently available.

2. Measuring staff retention

- 2.1 The measure of staff retention used in this report is the 'stability index'. This measures the number of staff who are retained over a specific period of time as a percentage of the total number of staff at the beginning of that period (Taylor, 2002).
- 2.2 In thinking about staff retention one key question to consider is what do we mean by retention? Is it retention; in post; with their employer; in their workplace; in the sector; in their geographic area; etc?
- 2.3 The Experimental Statistics report explored measures for different types of staff retention and difficulties with them. This report will focus simply on retention in post using data from December 2015 on the 'start date in post' of those working in the sector. This means that people who remained with the same employer but moved posts during the year to December 2015 would not be regarded as having been retained.
- 2.4 Please note that retention in post is expected to be slightly lower than retention with employer as some staff may leave post but move to a new post with the same employer.

3. Data on retention of staff in post

3.1 Table 1 below presents data on staff retention in post by the three main employer types for 2014 and 2015.

Table 1: Stability index in post (%) by employer type 2014-2015

Employer type	2014 (%)	2015 (%)
Public	84.7	83.1
Private	77.1	75.4
Voluntary	81.2	79.6
All	80.7	79.1

3.2 In 2015 the overall stability index for the sector was 79.1%. This means that of all those working in the sector in December 2014, 79.1% were still in the same post in December 2015. It also tells us that 20.9% of those in post in December 2014 were no longer in the same post by December 2015.

3.3 The 20.9% figure is not the same as turnover from post, as turnover is calculated by dividing the number of leavers by the average number employed across the year. As already noted complete data on those who leave employers is not available.

3.4 The table also shows that across all employer types there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of staff who were retained in the same post in 2015 compared with the rate in 2014. In each of the two years the public sector had the highest retention in post while the private sector had the lowest. The degree of variation between the different types of employer is relatively small however compared with the variation between different types of service (see table 2 below), ranging less than eight percentage points each year.

3.5 Table 2 presents data on staff retention by post in different types of services¹. The variability of the stability index is much greater than in table 1 (see comment in 3.2) ranging more than 25 percentage points in 2014 (from 63.0 to 88.8) and more than 26 in 2015 (from 64.5 to 91.2).

3.6 Adoption services have the greatest stability in post in both years while offender accommodation has the least in 2014 and generic fieldwork services the least in 2015.

¹ NB We have excluded data on those employed by child care or nurse agencies because of the different patterns of employment compared with other types of service.

3.7 Five sub sectors saw an increase in retention in post but the majority (10) saw a decrease between the two years.

Table 2: Stability index in post (%) by type of service

Sub-sector	2014 (%)	2015 (%)
Adoption services	88.8	91.2
Adult day care	83.0	78.3
Adult placement services	82.9	85.0
Care homes for adults	80.5	77.6
Central and strategic staff	83.7	76.9
Day care of children	77.7	77.4
Fieldwork service (adults)	81.6	81.6
Fieldwork service (children)	82.5	81.4
Fieldwork service (generic)	87.1	64.5
Fieldwork service (offenders)	80.7	75.8
Fostering services	84.1	86.9
Housing support/care at home	81.7	81.5
Offender accommodation services	63.0	68.0
Residential child care	82.6	80.8
School are accommodation	81.9	88.1
All	80.7	79.1

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 This paper provides an update on staff retention for the social service sector for 2014 and 2015. It uses a measure called the stability index which is the percentage of staff in post one year ago who are still in post one year later. It is important to note that the data looks at those retained in the same type of post and **not** those retained by the same employer but in a different post.
- 4.2 As it is not currently possible to publish turnover data the stability index has been used as an alternative way of looking at the movement in the sector's workforce.
- 4.3 As of August 2017, data on staff retention will be included in the annual Scottish Social Service Sector Workforce Data report.

Bibliography

Taylor, S. 2002. **The employee retention handbook**. London: CIPD

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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