

ADULT TRAINING AND SKILLS – SUBJECT PROFILE

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This briefing provides a general introduction to lifelong learning in Scotland and focuses specifically on skills and adult learning. It provides information on the importance of skills and identifies trends in skill requirements. It outlines skills policy in Europe, the UK and Scotland and identifies the main organisations and initiatives contributing towards the development of adults in Scotland. This briefing updates SB 03/42 published in June 2003.

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KEY POINTS

- Lifelong learning is used to describe all levels of education and training in both formal and informal settings. However, Lifelong Learning is often used to refer to post 16 education and training.
- The Scottish Executive's lifelong learning strategy [Life Through Learning: Through Life](#) is the main policy document relating to adult skills. Its vision for lifelong learning is "the best possible match between the learning opportunities open to people and the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours which will strengthen Scotland's economy and society".
- It is argued that the need for a skilled workforce has intensified as a result of increasing levels of international competition. Skills are identified in the UK Government's productivity framework as one of the five drivers that underlie long-term productivity.
- A large proportion of UK workers have a low level of skills (33% of the working age population do not have a level 2 qualification, equivalent to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 5) and poor literacy and numeracy. Compared with the rest of the UK, Scotland has a well qualified working age population.
- In 2006 companies in Scotland reported that 30% of job vacancies were hard to fill due to skill shortages. In 2004 skill shortage vacancies were found to be higher in Scotland compared to all the other UK regions.
- Skills policy is devolved. However, a recent review of the future skill needs of the UK economy, commissioned by the UK Treasury, recommended that "*the UK should commit to becoming a world leader in skills by 2020*" (HM Treasury, 2006c). This review is intended to have an impact across the UK. In Scotland the themes of the review will be considered in the Scottish Executive's consultation on lifelong learning.
- A number of policies run alongside the Scottish Executive's lifelong learning strategy to help improve the skills of young people and adults. These include: the enterprise strategy; a strategy to reduce the proportion of young people who are not in employment, education or training; a strategy to address low level of literacy and numeracy; a strategy for English for Speakers of Other Languages; and guidance on community learning.
- The Scottish Executive has set up a number of organisations to support its lifelong learning strategy including Learndirect Scotland and Careers Scotland. Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise are also involved in delivering training and improving adult skills across Scotland. Higher Education Institutions and Further Education Colleges play an important role in delivering lifelong learning in Scotland.
- There are a number of initiatives which provide financial support for adult learning. These include: ILA Scotland; the Scottish Union Learning Fund; and Career Development Loans.
- A better understanding of skills need can help the successful operation of the labour market. Futureskills Scotland, part of Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, is responsible for labour market predictions in Scotland.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Lifelong learning is used to describe all levels of education and training in both formal and informal settings. It can be delivered in a number of ways including through further education, higher education, continuing education, distance learning, work based training, and community education (Davies and Wakefield, 2003).

The European Commission (2001) adopted a broad definition of lifelong learning:

“All learning activity undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competencies within a personal, civic, social and/or employment related perspective.”

In July 2001 the Scottish Parliament Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Committee (2002) launched an inquiry into lifelong learning. The Committee's remit was:

“To inquire into the need for a long-term, comprehensive strategy for continuing post-compulsory education and training in Scotland which meets the needs and aspirations of individuals and society as a whole in respect of quality, relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, accessibility, accountability, funding levels and structures and delivery mechanisms.”

As a result of evidence provided to the inquiry the Committee adopted a broad definition of lifelong learning that covered all age groups:

“The continuous development of knowledge and skills aimed at enhancing the individual's quality of life and society's wellbeing.”

Following the Committee's Inquiry the Scottish Executive (2003) published its lifelong learning strategy for Scotland [Life Through Learning: Through Life](#). This stated that lifelong learning:

“encompasses the whole range of learning: formal and informal learning, workplace learning, and the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that people acquire in day-to-day experiences”

This briefing focuses specifically on skills and adult learning. A separate briefing covers the further and higher education sectors in Scotland.

SKILLS

DEFINITION OF SKILLS

Skills are capabilities in a particular area or occupation. They are often grouped into the following categories:

- basic skills – the ability to read, write, speak and do simple maths
- generic skills – transferable skills that are needed to do a number of jobs and can include technical skills and soft skills, such as communication and interpersonal skills
- specific skills – these are the skills that are specific to a certain job

(Scottish Office, 1999).

MEASUREMENT OF SKILLS

Qualifications are one way of measuring skills. The [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework](#) (SCQF) sets out the relationships between levels of qualifications. It covers the mainstream qualifications offered by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs). The SCQF table of main qualifications can be found in Appendix 1.

In 2006 the European Commission adopted a proposal for the establishment of the [European Qualifications Framework](#) for lifelong learning (EQF). The EQF aims to support the movement of learners across Europe by providing a reference point for comparing qualifications across different education and training systems and to strengthen co-operation and mutual trust between the relevant stakeholders (European Commission 2006a).

It is difficult to certificate all skills. Many skills are developed through on the job training and do not lead to a qualification. Other soft skills such as, communication, flexibility and leadership, are developed through experience and are difficult to measure and assess (Newton, B. et al 2005).

THE NEED FOR A SKILLED WORKFORCE

SKILLS IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY

Several propositions have been put forward as to why skills are an important issue. It has been argued that increasing levels of international competition have increased the need for a skilled workforce. The Treasury has stated on a number of occasions that for the UK to be successful and competitive in the global economy it must be able to succeed in high-skill, high value added service and manufacturing industries (HM Treasury 2004; HM Treasury 2007).

Productivity of the economy

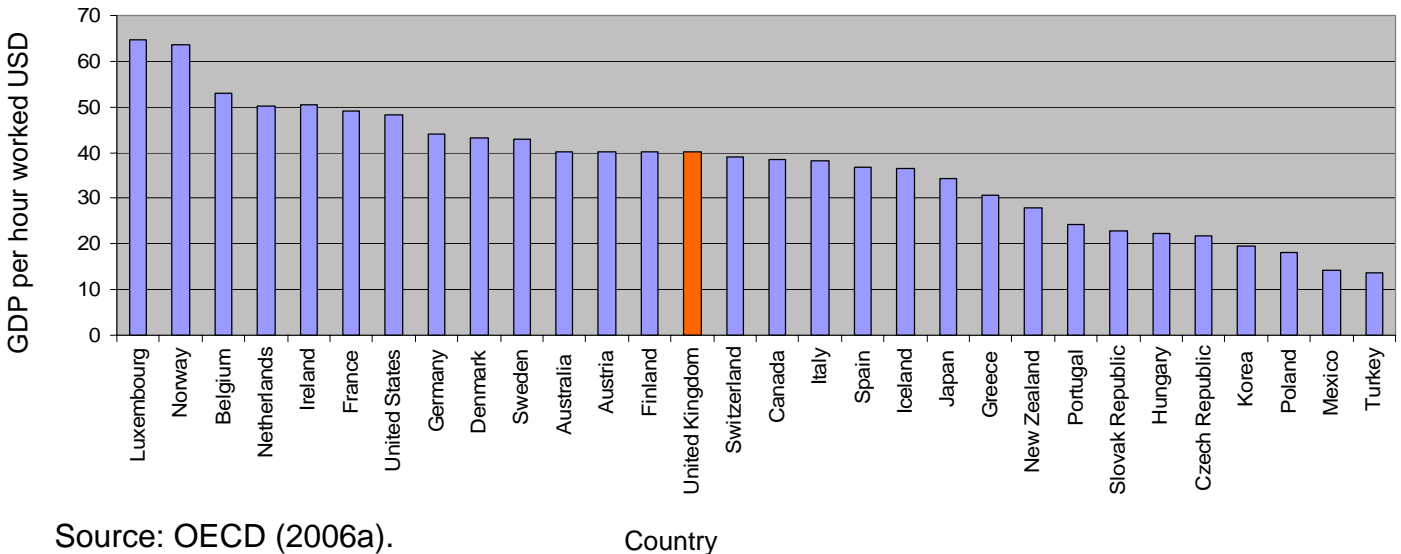
A highly skilled workforce is both directly and indirectly linked to productivity. People with high-level skills can increase productivity by implementing new investment and innovation. They are also likely to be flexible and able to adapt to changes in the labour market, ensuring a high level of employment (HM Treasury, 2004).

Skills are identified in the UK Government's productivity framework as one of the five drivers that underlie long-term productivity. The Treasury in its report *Productivity in the UK 6: Progress and New Evidence* states:

“The quantity and quality of skilled labour available in an economy is an important determinant of economic performance and productivity growth. Skills complement physical capital, and are needed to take advantage of investment in new technologies and organisational structures. Furthermore management skills are an important influence over how firms react to competition, new innovations and how physical investments and human capital are employed” (HM Treasury, 2006a).

Figure 1 shows that productivity (GDP per hour worked) is lower in the UK than many other OECD countries.

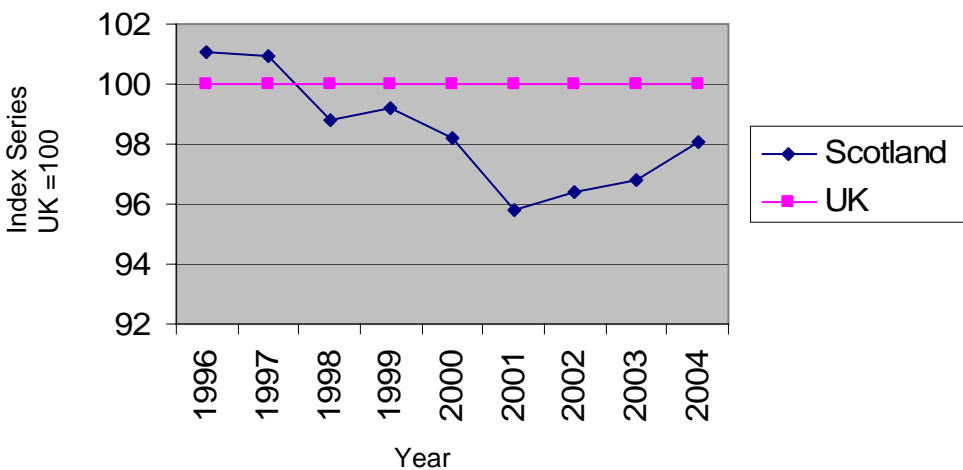
Figure 1: OECD estimates of labour productivity levels (2005)



Source: OECD (2006a).

Another measure of productivity is output per hour worked. Figure 2 shows that output per hour worked in Scotland has slipped from being slightly above the UK average to slightly below, but has recovered a little in recent years.

Figure 2: Output per hour worked¹ in Scotland relative to the UK (1996-2004)



Source: Office of National Statistics (2006).

¹ Output per hour worked is the ratio of regional accounts place of work gross value added estimates and regional total workforce hours worked (Office of National Statistics, 2006).

Earning power of individuals

Increased skills have been found to be related to increased employment opportunities and higher pay. The Scottish Executive's Employability strategy Workforce Plus (2006a) reported that people who are unemployed are likely to have low or no qualifications (48.7% of workless people). Improving the skills, and therefore employability, of parents has been identified as one way to help reduce child poverty (Scottish Executive, 2006b).

AN AGEING POPULATION

Scotland's population is ageing. The projected share of the population over 65 is projected to increase in Scotland from 19% in 2004 to 23% in 2024 (General Register Office for Scotland, 2006).

The most commonly stated disadvantage with an ageing population relates to the decline in people of working age and tax payers (Burnside, 2006). The challenges facing an ageing population can be addressed in a number of ways. One way is through encouraging people to stay in work longer. Following the Lisbon summit, the Stockholm European Council (2001) set a target of raising the employment rate for older workers (aged between 55 and 64) in Europe to 50% by 2010 (European Commission, 2005).

To allow people to stay in work longer and continue to meet the changing requirements of employment (such as e-skills) opportunities for people to up-skill and re-skill throughout their careers will be needed. Phillipson and Smith (2005b) identified six areas of development to assist the objective of extending working lives:

- improving choice and control in the transition from work to retirement
- training and lifelong learning
- developing health interventions and improving the quality of work
- improving support for older women in the workplace
- extending the scope of flexible employment
- providing integrated public policies to support older workers

Projections of population ages in Scotland, the UK and other OECD countries can be found in Appendix 2. Further information on population ageing can be found in Burnside (2006).

TRENDS IN THE REQUIREMENT FOR SKILLS

This section highlights changes in the skills base thought to be required by a knowledge based economy. It outlines the current level of skills in the UK and Scotland and examines the existence of skill shortages and skill gaps in the labour market.

THE KNOWLEDGE BASED ECONOMY

The knowledge based economy is a term used to describe trends in advanced economies towards a greater dependence on knowledge, information and high skill levels, and the increasing need for ready access to all of these (OECD, 2005).

Across Europe there has been an increased focus on the importance of lifelong learning and the development of knowledge based economies. At the Lisbon European Council in 2000, EU Heads of States and Government set out a 10 year strategy to make Europe:

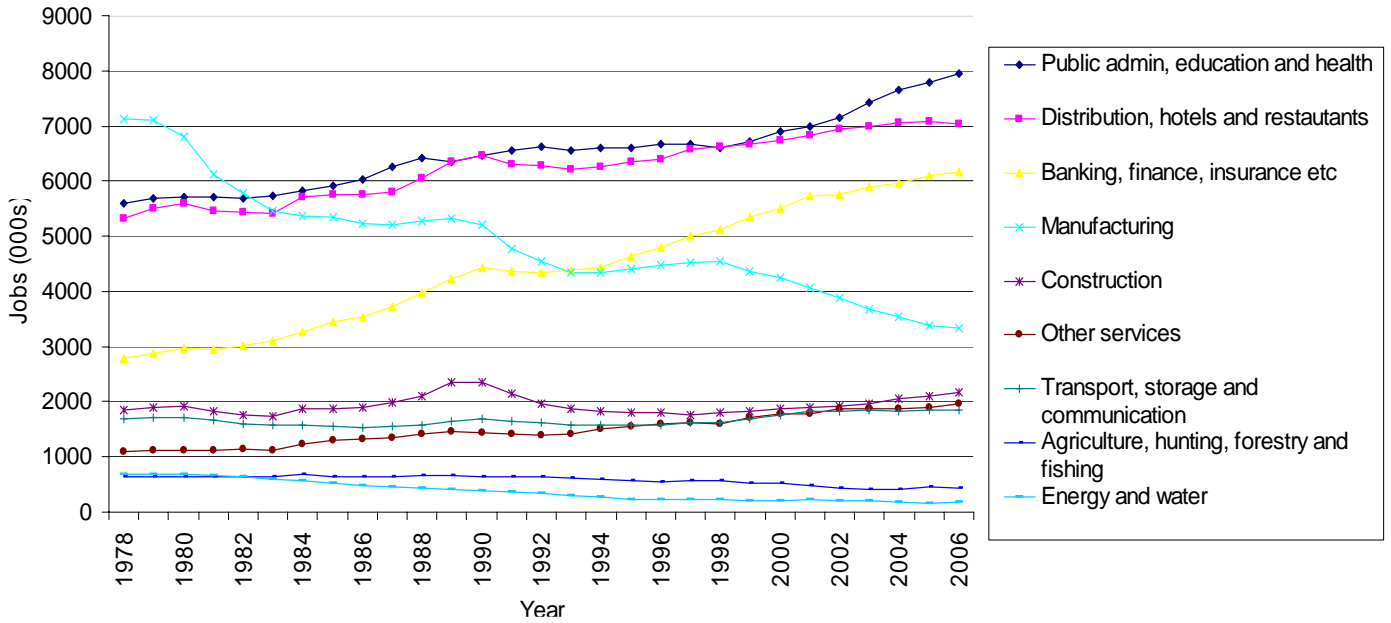
“the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” (European Parliament, 2000).

The increased emphasis on a knowledge based economy has created the demand for a different set of basic skills, which include Information Technology and Communication (ITC) skills and media literacy (European Commission, 2001). This is reflected in the following Lisbon summit target:

“developing a European framework to define the new basic skills to be provided through lifelong learning: IT skills, foreign languages, technological culture, entrepreneurship and social skills; a European diploma for basic IT skills, with decentralised certification procedures, should be established in order to promote digital literacy throughout the Union” (European Parliament, 2000).

The move towards a knowledge based economy is reflected in changes to the pattern of employment in the UK. Direct employment in engineering and manufacturing has declined over the last 20 years (Futureskills Scotland, 2005a). This change is illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Number of jobs (thousands) in the UK by industry between 1978 and 2006



Source: Office of National Statistics (2007).

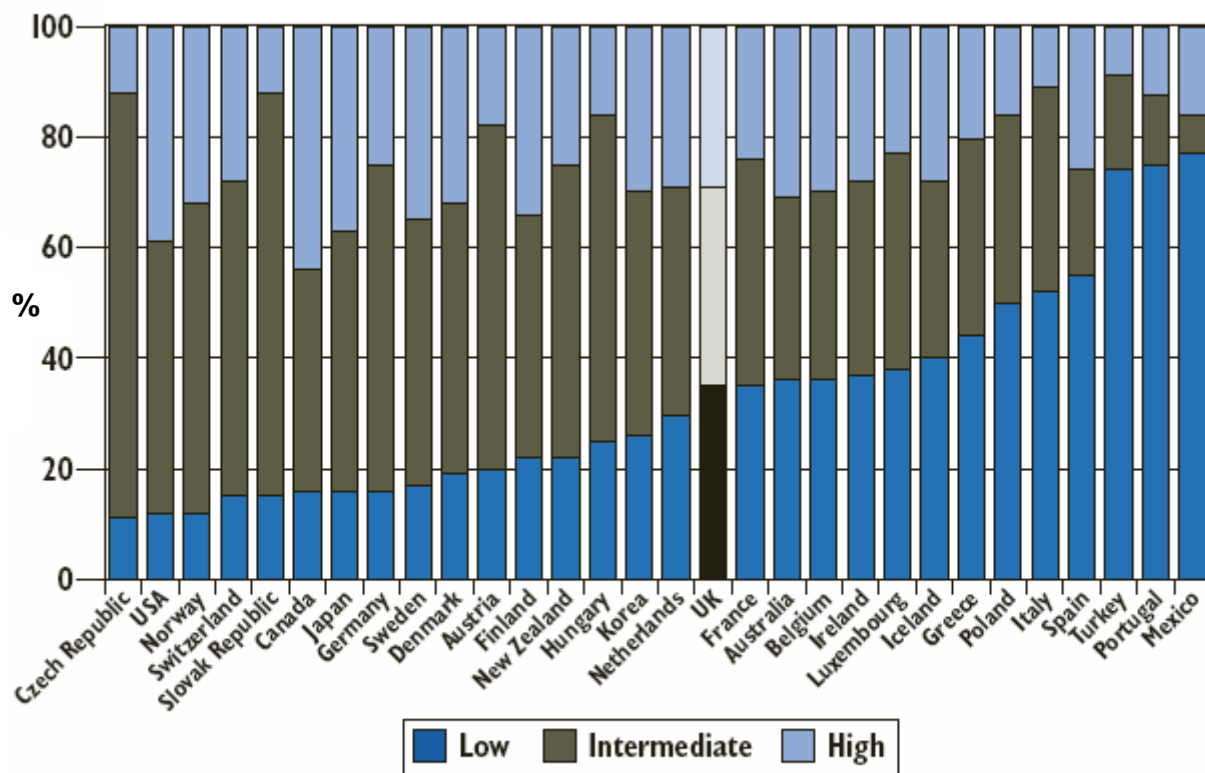
CURRENT LEVEL OF SKILLS

In its report, Skills in the Global Economy, the Treasury (2004) stated that a large proportion of UK workers have a low level of skills including poor literacy and numeracy. It reported that 33% of people of working age in the UK do not have a level 2 qualification (equivalent to SCQF level 5). This finding was echoed in a recent review of skills in the UK carried out by Lord Leitch:

“...the UK’s skills base remains mediocre by international standards. 7 million adults lack functional numeracy and 5 million lack functional literacy. The proportion of adults aged 25 to 64 with low or no qualifications is more than double that in Sweden, Japan and Canada. The proportion with high skills is internationally comparable, but not world leading” (HM Treasury 2006c).

Figure 4 shows the level of qualifications held by adults in the UK in comparison with other OECD countries.

Figure 4: International comparisons of qualifications profiles



Note: Under the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) low is equivalent to under level 5, intermediate is equivalent to level 5 and 6 and high is equivalent to level 8².
 Source: HM Treasury (2006c)

In comparison with England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Scotland has a higher proportion of people holding higher level qualifications and a lower proportion of people with low level qualifications. This is illustrated in Figure 5.

² For a comparison with the England, Wales & Northern Ireland National Qualifications Framework see SCQF (2005).

Figure 5: UK comparisons of qualifications profiles



Base: UK working age population
Source: Scottish Executive (2006c)

SKILL SHORTAGES AND SKILL GAPS

Some commentators, including business representatives, believe that there is currently a low level of skills in the workforce and this is creating major difficulties for employers through skills shortages and skill gaps (Herald, 2006). An alternative view is that the problems faced by some sectors when trying to fill vacancies result from low wages and a lack of career progression rather than a deficit of skills in the workforce (Holyrood Magazine 2007).

A skill shortage is a mismatch between supply and demand in the labour market. Skill shortages are characterised by difficulties filling job vacancies due to applicants lacking the required skills, qualifications and experience (Futureskills Scotland, 2007).

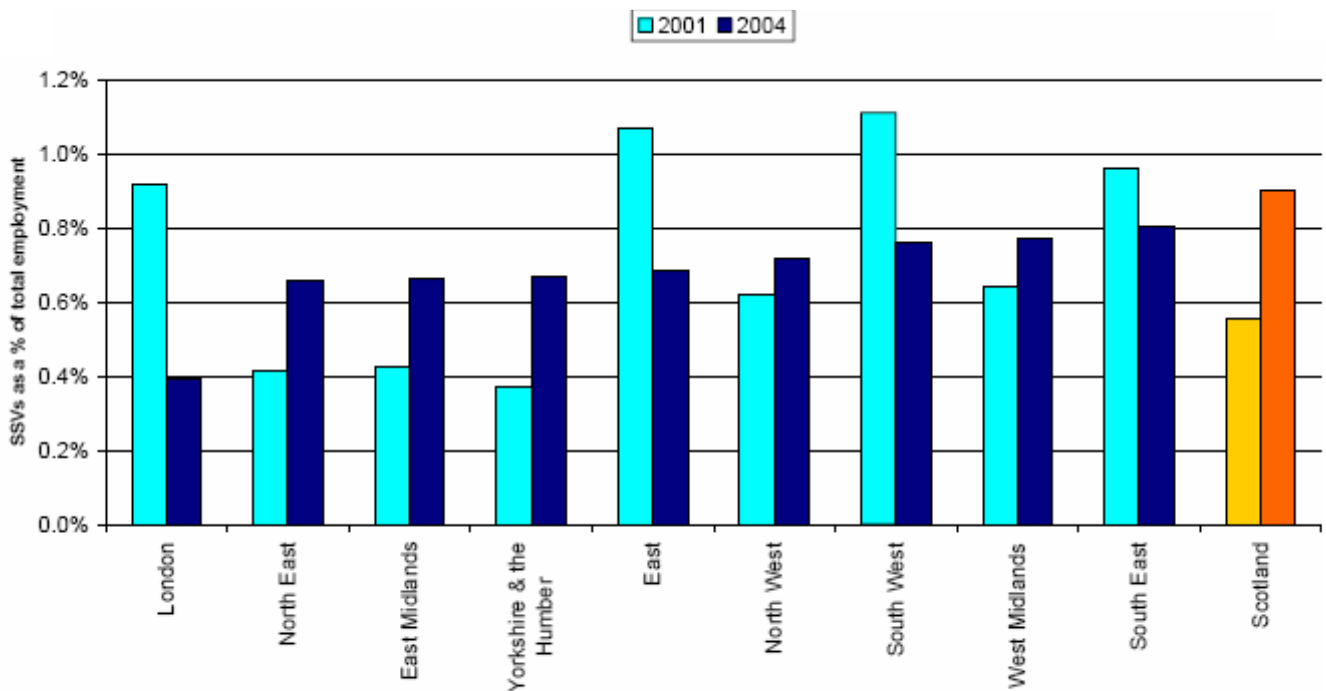
Futureskills Scotland (2007) found that in 2006 there were 76,700 vacancies in Scotland (compared with 2,060,000 employees giving a vacancy rate of 3.7%³). Of these vacancies 23,200 (30%) were skill shortage vacancies. Skill shortage vacancies, as a proportion of vacancies by occupation, were found to be highest in management and senior official vacancies (57%), skilled trade occupations (45%), and associate professional⁴ occupations (40%). The skill shortage vacancy rate was also found to be higher in small workplaces than large workplaces.

A study by Lloyds TSB found that companies in Scotland had more difficulties recruiting staff than companies in other UK regions. Of the Scottish companies who responded to their survey 64% reported problems recruiting skilled staff and 30% reported difficulties with recruiting unskilled staff (Lloyds TSB, 2007). Figure 6 shows that in 2004 there were more skills shortage vacancies as a percentage of employment in Scotland than any of the English regions and that unlike some of the English regions the rate has increased since 2001 although it remains at under 1% of all employment (Scottish Executive, 2006d).

³ In 2004 the vacancy rate was 3.6%, in 2003 it was 3.4% and in 2002 it was 3.1%.

⁴ Associate professional includes occupations such as IT service delivery, science and engineering technicians, nurses and paramedics.

Figure 6: Skill shortage vacancies as a percentage of employment by region



Note: Data for Scotland compare 2002 and 2004
 Source: Scottish Executive (2006d).

A skill gap is thought to exist when a person in a job is judged by their employer not to be fully proficient. Whilst skill shortages refer to people applying for jobs, skill gaps refer to people already in employment (Futureskills Scotland, 2007).

Futureskills Scotland (2007) found that skill gaps were more prevalent than skill shortages. In 2006 skills gaps affected 164,800 employees (8% of all employees). Skill gaps were found to occur more frequently in jobs that require lower levels of skills and were found to relate to soft skills such as organisation and planning, customer handling, problem solving and team working.

Skill gaps can be overcome by training and changes to working practices within an organisation. The Scottish Executive uses four indicators to monitor workforce development and adult learning in Scotland:

- the proportion of those in employment who have undertaken training in the last 13 weeks
- the number of, and level of employment in, Investors in People accredited companies
- current and recent adult participation in learning
- future intentions to learn among the adult population

In its report *Measuring Progress towards a Smart, Successful Scotland* the Scottish Executive (2006d) stated:

“Despite a slight decline over the last year, the proportion of the workforce engaging in education and training has been increasing over the last six years. However, evidence from the NIACE Survey on Adult Participation in Learning suggests that in Scotland a smaller proportion of adults are currently, or have recently, been engaged in learning than in any other UK region. Furthermore, adults in Scotland also demonstrate much less intention to undertake learning in the future.”

SKILLS POLICY

This section highlights the tripartite responsibility for training and skills shared between individuals, employers and the government (at the European, UK and Scottish level). It outlines training policy in Europe and the UK and highlights the organisations and initiatives involved in improving adult skills throughout the UK.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRAINING

Individuals, employers and the government can all benefit from improving skills and there is tripartite responsibility for the funding of lifelong learning. This idea of shared responsibility is reflected in the European Commission's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning which states:

"Lifelong learning will be put into practice on the basis of shared responsibility and a partnership between the Member States and the European Commission, between the social partners, between firms and educational and training establishments, and between various fields in education and training." (European Commission, 2000).

Over time the responsibility for lifelong learning has changed from centralised approaches to more localised initiatives. In his review of skills, Lord Leitch states that the drive to improve adult skills has often been supply-driven, focusing on trying to predict the future skills needs of organisations. He argues that there is a need to move to a demand-led system that responds to the demands of individuals and employers rather than being planned centrally, as this is the only way to get employers and individuals to invest more in skills (HM Treasury, 2006c).

SKILLS POLICY IN EUROPE

At the Lisbon European Council in 2000, EU government leaders set out a 10 year strategy to make Europe "*the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world*" (European Parliament, 2000). In 2001 Ministers of Education adopted a [report on the future objectives of education and training systems](#) (Council of the European Union, 2001). In 2001 the European Commission adopted the communication on [Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality](#). This provided guidance to Member States on developing their lifelong learning strategies.

At the [European Council in Barcelona](#) (Council of the European Union 2002a) the Ministers of Education agreed on three main goals to be achieved by 2010:

- to improve the quality and effectiveness of EU education and training systems
- to ensure that they are accessible to all
- to open up education and training to the wider world

In June 2002, the Education Council adopted a [Resolution on Lifelong Learning](#) which supported the Commission's 2001 communication on lifelong learning (Council of the European Union, 2002b).

In 2002 the Education Ministers and the European Commission adopted the [Copenhagen Declaration](#) (European Commission, 2002) which specified priorities for European vocational education and training (VET) (European Commission, Education and Training). These priorities were further specified in the [Maastricht Communiqué](#) in 2004 (European Commission 2004). The [Helsinki Communiqué](#) of 2006 (European Commission, 2006b) sets out the priorities and strategies for the European cooperation in vocational education and training until 2008. [Cedefop](#) is the European Agency to promote the development of VET in the European Union.

[Education and Training 2010](#) (European Commission, 2007a) reflects an agreement made by Ministers of Education for shared objectives in relation to education and training, including VET. An overview of the main policy initiatives and outputs resulting from the work of the European Commission in the field of education and training since the Lisbon European Council can be found here.

The European Commission (2007b) has a [Lifelong Learning Programme](#) of grants and subsidies that can be used to assist learners of all ages. This programme was established following Decision 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning. It will run from 2007-2013 and will have a budget of €6.97 billion⁵. The Lifelong Learning Programme has sub-programmes:

- Comenius programme aimed at children in pre-school and school education
- Erasmus programme aimed at people in formal higher education
- Leonardo da Vinci programme focused on people in vocational education and training
- Grundtvig programme focused on people in all forms of adult education

Another key way in which the European Commission supports lifelong learning is through the European Social Fund (ESF), which is one of the Structural Funds:

"of the €60 billion available through the ESF over the period 2000-06, at least €12 billion was jointly earmarked for lifelong learning - representing between 8% and 40% of each Member State's allocation". (European Commission, 2006c)

This trend will continue during the 2007-2013 funding period as one of the key priorities for ESF monies is given as supporting Member States in increasing the adaptability of its workers, enterprises and entrepreneurs by promoting lifelong learning (European Commission, 2007c).

SKILLS POLICY IN THE UK

Skills policy in the UK is devolved. In Scotland the Scottish Executive's [Enterprise Transport and Lifelong Learning Department](#) (ETLLD) is responsible for improving skills and employability. In Wales, skills policy falls under the remit of the [Department for Education, Lifelong Learning, and Skills](#) (DELLS). In Northern Ireland the relevant department is the [Department for Employment and Learning](#) which aims to promote learning and skills. In England the [Department for Education and Skills](#) (DfES) is responsible for lifelong learning policy.

The Treasury is also involved in shaping skills policy in the UK. In 2004 the Treasury commissioned Lord Leitch to lead an independent review to examine the future skill needs of the UK economy. The final report [Prosperity for all in the Global Economy: World Class Skills](#) was published on the 5 December 2006 (HM Treasury, 2006c). The review recommended that: *"the UK should commit to becoming a world leader in skills by 2020"*.

The other recommendations were to:

- increase adult skills across all levels
- route all public funding for adult vocational skills in England, apart from community learning, through Train to Gain and Learner Accounts by 2010
- strengthen employer voice by creating a new Commission for Employment and Skills, reporting to central Government and the devolved administrations
- increase employer engagement and investment in skills

⁵ Decision 1720/2006/EC stipulates that a minimum of 13% of the funds must be spent on Comenius, a minimum of 40% must be spent on Erasmus, a minimum of 25% of the funds must be spent on Leonardo Da Vinci and a minimum of 4% of the funds must be spent on Grundtvig.

- launch a new ‘Pledge’ for employers to voluntarily commit to train all eligible employees up to Level 2 in the workplace. In 2010, review progress of employer delivery. If the improvement rate is insufficient, introduce a statutory entitlement to workplace training at Level 2
- increase employer investment in Level 3 and 4 qualifications in the workplace
- increase people’s aspirations and awareness of the value of skills to them and their families. Create high profile, sustained awareness programmes
- create a new integrated employment and skills service

The Leitch Review aims to have an impact across the UK. It states that:

“The Review has worked closely with the administrations from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in developing its ambitions. The Devolved Administrations (DAs), as well as the UK Government, are considering the implications of the Review’s recommendations for their policies and targets. In Scotland, the themes of this report will now be taken into and debated under the auspices of the Scottish Executive’s consultation Lifelong Learning – Building Success: A discussion of specific issues related to lifelong learning in Scotland.”

UK WIDE ORGANISATIONS AND INITIATIVES

The Skills for Business Network including Sector Skills Councils

The [Skills for Business network](#) (SfBN) (Sector Skills Development Agency) aims to identify and tackle skills gaps and shortages on a sector by sector basis in order to boost the productivity and profitability of the UK. The SfBN is made up of the network of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) and the Sector Skill Development Agency (SSDA). The SSDA is responsible for funding, supporting and monitoring the network of SSCs. All SSCs are licensed by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, in consultation with Ministers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. A list of the SSCs can be found in Appendix 3.

[Sector Skills Alliance Scotland](#) (SSAScot) aims to be a leading authority on lifelong learning issues in Scotland. It provides a forum for the exchange of information on skills issues and promotes awareness and understanding of SSCs and Sector Skills Bodies.

To assist the Skills for Business Network deliver projects in Scotland the Scottish Executive established the Scottish Skills Fund. An evaluation of this fund was published by the Scottish Executive in 2004 (Scottish Executive, 2004a).

The Scottish Executive (2006e) carried out a [Review of the Skills for Business Network in Scotland](#). It reported that the role of SfBN, as set out in the English Skills Strategy (DfES, 2003), does not easily translate into a Scottish context, although the overall goals and objectives of the UK and Scottish policies are similar. This research made recommendations, for the Scottish Executive, SSDA, SSCs, DfEs and other stakeholders, to allow for the development of a successful SfBN in Scotland.

New Deal

[New Deal](#) (Job Centre Plus) is part of the UK Government’s strategy to help people move from welfare into work. The programme aims to provide people with the skills and training to help them join the workforce (Jobcentre Plus). The New Deal programmes are: New Deal for Young People, New Deal for 25 Plus, New Deal for 50 Plus, New Deal for Lone Parents, New Deal for Disabled People, New Deal for Partners and New Deal for Musicians.

SKILLS POLICY IN SCOTLAND

LIFELONG LEARNING POLICY

In 2001-02 the Scottish Parliament Enterprise and Lifelong Committee undertook an inquiry into lifelong learning in Scotland, publishing its [Final Report on Lifelong Learning](#) in October 2002. The Committee identified six areas of change which would influence future provision of lifelong learning in Scotland. These were:

- economic
- demographic
- social justice
- citizenship
- skills shortage
- technological advances

(Davies and Wakefield, 2003).

Following this inquiry, the Scottish Executive published its lifelong learning strategy for Scotland [Life Through Learning: Learning Through Life](#) (Scottish Executive, 2003). The Scottish Executive's vision for lifelong learning in Scotland is:

“The best possible match between the learning opportunities open to people and the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours which will strengthen Scotland's economy and society.”

The strategy has 5 goals. These are, a Scotland where:

- people have the confidence, enterprise, knowledge, creativity and skills they need to participate in economic, social and civic life
- people demand and providers deliver a high quality learning experience
- peoples' knowledge and skills are recognised, used and developed to best effect in their workplace
- people are given the information, guidance and support they need to make effective learning decisions and transitions
- people have the chance to learn, irrespective of their background or current personal circumstances

The Scottish Executive (2006f) is currently undertaking a consultation [Lifelong Learning - Building on Success: A Discussion of Specific Issues Related to Lifelong Learning in Scotland](#).

The consultation focuses on the following themes:

- engagement with employers
- flexible learning opportunities, entitlement and discretionary support
- information, advice and guidance
- community learning and development
- journeys into and through learning

RELATED SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE POLICIES

Other Scottish Executive policies that are related to developing adult skills in Scotland are outlined below.

[A Smart Successful Scotland](#) (Scottish Executive, 2004b), which is the Scottish Executive's enterprise strategy and strategic direction for Enterprise Networks, has skills and learning as one of its themes.

[Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland](#) is the Scottish Executive's initiative to address low levels of adult literacy and numeracy in Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2001). Part of this strategy is the [Big Plus](#), an awareness campaign, which was launched in January 2004. The Big Plus was designed to encourage adults in Scotland who need help with reading, writing and numbers to access local support.

The Scottish Executive is currently developing an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) strategy. This has resulted from an increased level of demand and the recognition that language skills play an important role in enabling individuals to function effectively in society. The Scottish Executive commissioned a national study of (Rice et al, 2004) and a consultation in 2005. The analysis of the consultation responses were published in May 2006(g).

[Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities](#) is the Scottish Executive's guidance for Community Planning Partnerships on community learning and development. It highlights three national priorities one of which is achievement through learning for adults, which relates to:

“Raising standards of achievement in learning for adults through community-based lifelong learning opportunities incorporating the core skills of literacy, numeracy, communications, working with others, problem-solving and information communications technology” (Scottish Executive, 2004c)

[More Choices, More Chances](#) is the Scottish Executive's strategy to reduce the proportion of young people (between the ages of 16 and 19) who are not in education, employment or training (Scottish Executive, 2006h).

ORGANISATIONS AND INITIATIVES TO DEVELOP ADULT SKILLS IN SCOTLAND

[Learndirect Scotland](#) was established by the Scottish Executive to support its lifelong learning strategy. Learndirect Scotland aims to help individuals and small businesses across Scotland to realise their potential through learning. Learndirect Scotland services are delivered by the Scottish University for Industry. [Learndirect Scotland for Business](#) aims to enhance the competitiveness of Scotland's small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), by providing information for employers about the range of training opportunities available.

The Scottish Executive also established [Careers Scotland](#), which is a career planning service for individuals of all ages and employers. The priorities of Careers Scotland are:

- investing in the workforce of the future - there are over 1.5 million people in school or tertiary education all of whom need to develop lifetime career planning skills
- reducing economic inactivity among young people - whilst there are over 300,000 people who are out of work but who want to work, the key focus is on the 33,000 young people aged 16-19 years who are unemployed or at risk of disengaging from employment and learning
- improving productivity through personal career planning - targeting adults who are facing redundancy, returning to the labour market or who are not achieving their potential in their current work (Careers Scotland, 2006)

[Scottish Enterprise](#), funded by the Scottish Executive, is Scotland's main economic development agency. One of its key priorities is to: *“help people gain the knowledge and skills they will need for tomorrow's jobs”*. Scottish Enterprise works with Scottish business in both the public and private sector. There are four main services for introducing new employees to business:

providing research and information services to the Scottish Parliament

- Get Ready for Work supports young people, between the ages of 16 and 18, make the transition between school and work
- Training for Work offers training and on-the-job experience for adults aged 25 or over who have been unemployed for at least six months in the previous 52 weeks
- Skillseekers is a training programme which allows young people address their future skills needs.
- Modern Apprenticeships offer people aged over 16 the chance of paid employment linked with the opportunity to train for jobs

Scottish Enterprise invests approximately £115million annually in skills development. The Scottish Enterprise Skills Strategy aims to ensure their skills interventions contribute to maximising productivity and opportunity in the economy (Scottish Enterprise, 2007). The Skills Strategy has three strategic priorities these are:

- Growth - ensuring that the drivers of productivity are addressed in a joined-up manner by further integrating skills activities with activities to enhance enterprise, innovation and investment within the economy
- Groups - promoting opportunity in the labour market by generating demand in the economy and giving individuals the skills that match with demand. There will be a focus on three main groups - workless adults, young people and globally competitive workers
- Geographies - ensuring that economic activities and opportunities are joined up at the local, city region and national levels and providing the skills and support to allow businesses and individuals to benefit from opportunities

[Highlands and Islands Enterprise](#) is the Scottish Executive's economic and social development agency for the north of Scotland. It aims to support businesses and the delivery of training and learning programmes. [Learningworks](#) is the network's online training and learning resource.

The [Older Learners Programme – Experience Counts](#) is the Scottish Executive's programme to encourage SSCs to collaborate with colleges and learning providers to develop taster courses for learners over the age of 50.

Higher Education Institutions and Further Education Colleges also play an important role in delivering lifelong learning in Scotland. Further information can be found in the SPICe subject profile on further and higher education in Scotland (Davies and Wakefield, 2003).

Scotland's colleges and universities receive funding from the [Scottish Funding Council](#) (SFC) which was established in 2005 through the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005. Part of this Act stated that the "*Council must establish a committee (a "skills committee") for the purposes of advising the Council on matters relating to skills*". The [Skills Committee](#) is responsible for collecting, monitoring and evaluating the evidence on the skills needs in Scotland and the supply of and demand for further and higher education and advising on how improvements in meeting skills needs can be made through the Council's funding, regulation and support for colleges and universities.

Funding Adult Learning

[ILA Scotland](#) is the Scottish Executive scheme to help people, over the age of 18, in Scotland pay for learning. People who earn less than £15,000 a year or are on benefit may qualify for up to £200 a year to contribute towards a range of courses. People who earn more than £15,000 a year can get up to £100 towards some computer courses.

The [Scottish Union Learning Fund](#) was established in 2000 to promote activity by trades unions in support of the Scottish Executive's vision for lifelong learning in Scotland (Scottish Executive, *providing research and information services to the Scottish Parliament*)

2004d). Since August 2000 there have been four rounds of projects involving a total of 46 projects from 21 unions. A total of £2.7m has been awarded to these projects. Current funding stands at £800k each year (Scottish Executive, 2005).

[Career Development Loans](#) (CDLs) are loans between £300 and £8,000 that can be used to help individuals fund up to two years of learning (or three years if the course includes one year of relevant practical work experience). They are available for people, over the age of 18, across the UK. The loans are currently available from three high street banks, with the interest being paid by the DfES during the course and for up to a month afterwards (DirectGov). The Scottish Executive has commissioned research to assess awareness of and demand for CDLs in Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2006i).

PREDICTING THE FUTURE NEED FOR SKILLS

Predicting the future need for skills is important to ensure a functioning labour market and growing economy. Ensuring people with the right skills are available to fill job vacancies at the right time is essential for ensuring the successful operation of the labour market (Futureskills Scotland, 2005a).

[Futureskills Scotland](#), part of Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, is responsible for labour market predictions in Scotland. Futureskills Scotland aims to:

- analyse the Scottish labour market to inform policy-making in Scotland and further afield
- improve the availability, quality and consistency of labour market information and intelligence across Scotland
- work closely with Careers Scotland to provide the organisation and its clients with labour market information

Futureskills Scotland (2005a, 2006) predicted significant increases in higher level occupations between 2004 and 2014. Higher level occupations include managerial, professional, associate professional⁶ and technical occupations. It also predicted a decline in machine and transport operatives, and skilled trade and elementary occupations⁷. In another Futureskills Scotland report (2005b) Professor Francis Green suggested that as well as growth in high skilled occupations there will also be increases in non-routine but low skill occupations leading to a polarisation in skill requirement.

In a climate of fast changing technology and free competition, indicators of future skills needs and labour market predictions must be taken with a degree of caution. However, Lord Leitch stated:

“History tells us that no one can predict with any accuracy future occupational needs. The Review is clear that skill demands will increase at every single level. Better skills will be needed at higher levels to drive leadership, management and innovation – these are key drivers of productivity growth. Intermediate skills must be improved to implement investment and innovation. Basic skills are essential for people to be able to adapt to change. People lacking basic skills will be most at risk of exclusion in a global economy” (HM Treasury, 2006c).

⁶ Associate professional includes occupations such as IT service delivery, science and engineering technicians, nurses and paramedics.

⁷ Elementary occupations include jobs such as cleansing services, security and safety services etc.
providing research and information services to the Scottish Parliament

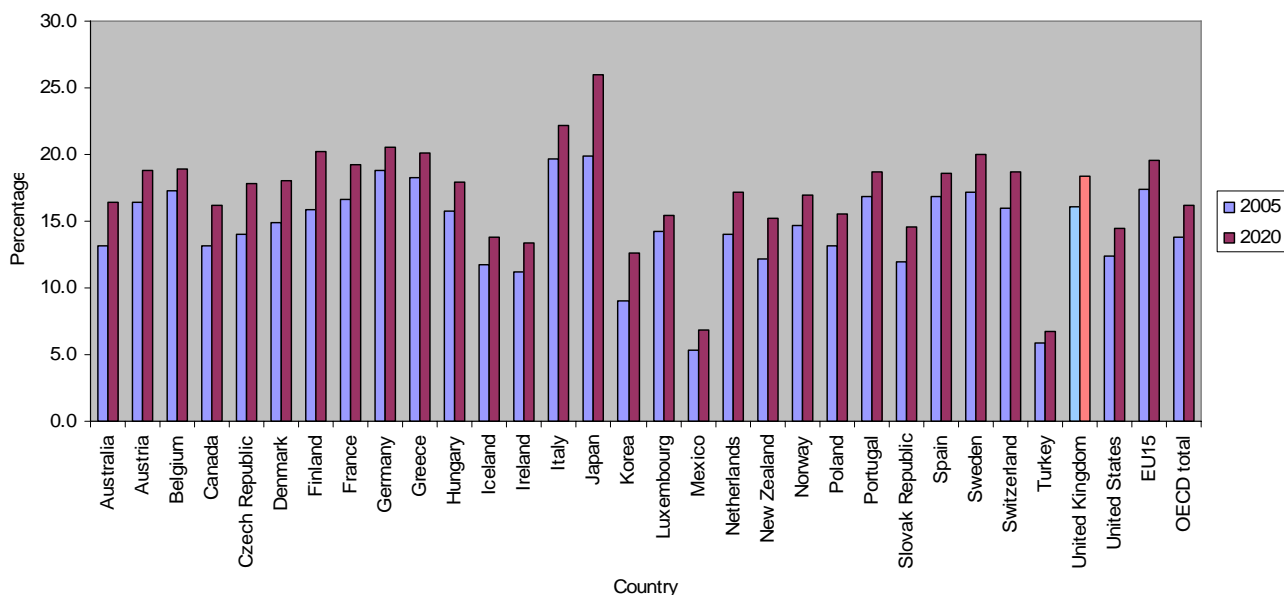
APPENDIX 1: SCQF TABLE OF MAIN QUALIFICATIONS

SCQF level	SQA National Units, Courses and Group Awards	Higher Education	Scottish Vocational Qualifications
12		Doctorates	
11		Masters	SVQ 5
10		Honours Degree Graduate Diploma/Certificate*	
9		Ordinary Degree Graduate Diploma/Certificate*	
8		Higher National Diploma Diploma in Higher Education	SVQ 4
7	Advanced Higher	Higher National Certificate Certificate in Higher Education	
6	Higher		SVQ 3
5	Intermediate 2 Credit Standard Grade		SVQ 2
4	Intermediate 1 General Standard Grade		SVQ 1
3	Access 3 Foundation Standard Grade		
2	Access 2		
1	Access 1		

* These qualifications are differentiated by volume of outcomes and may be offered at either level

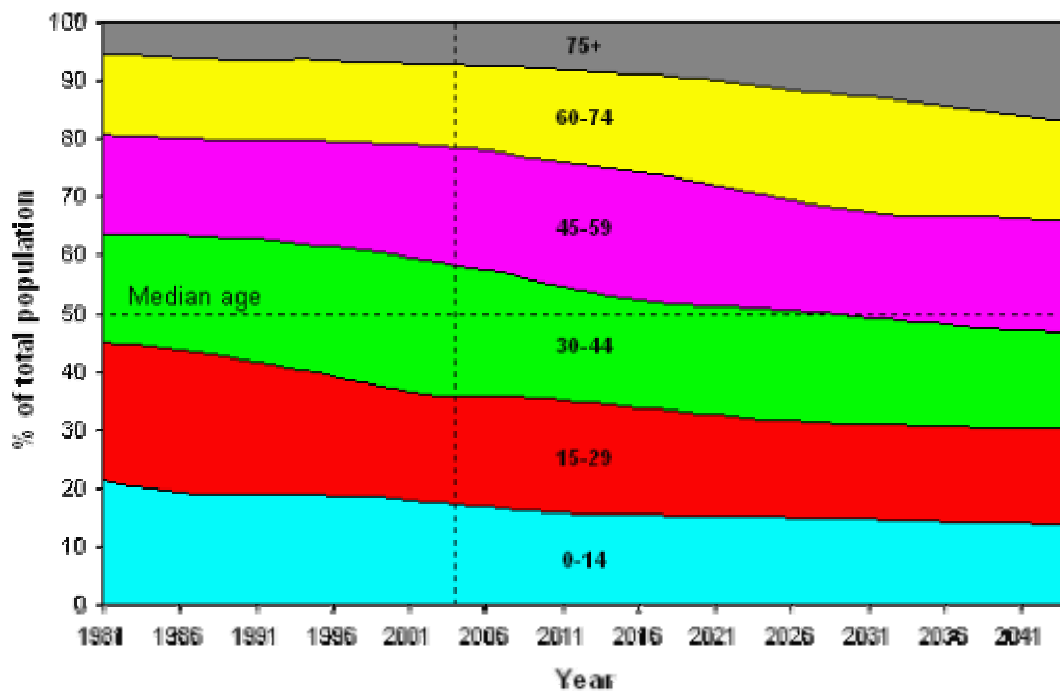
APPENDIX 2: POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Figure 2.1 Ratio of the population aged 65 and over to the labour force



Source: OECD Factbook (2006b)

Figure 2.2 The changing age distribution of Scotland's population



Source: Government Actuary's Department

APPENDIX 3: LIST OF SECTOR SKILLS COUNCILS AND SECTOR COVERAGE

[Asset Skills](#) property services, housing, cleaning services and facilities management

[Automotive Skills](#) the retail motor industry

[Cogent](#) chemicals, nuclear, oil and gas, petroleum and polymers

[ConstructionSkills](#) construction

[Creative and Cultural Skills](#) advertising, crafts, cultural heritage, design, music, performing, literary and visual arts

[Energy & Utility Skills](#) electricity, gas, waste management and water industries

[e-skills UK](#) information technology and telecommunications, and lead body for contact centres

[Financial Services](#) financial services.

[GoSkills](#) passenger transport

[Government Skills](#) central government

[Improve](#) food and drink manufacturing and processing

[Lantra](#) environmental and land-based industries

[Lifelong Learning UK](#) employers who deliver and/or support the delivery of lifelong learning

[People 1st](#) hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism

[Proskills](#) process and manufacturing industries

[SEMTA](#) science, engineering and manufacturing technologies

[Skillfast-UK](#) apparel, footwear, textiles and related businesses

[SkillsActive](#) active leisure and learning

[Skills for Care and Development](#) social care, children and young people

[Skills for Health](#) the health sector

[Skills for Justice](#) custodial care, community justice, court and prosecution services, policing and law enforcement

[Skills for Logistics](#) freight logistics

[Skillset](#) audio visual industries

[Skillsmart Retail](#) retail

[SummitSkills](#) building services engineering

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