

Revision Statement

This is the first publication NES is releasing using its new Workforce Data Warehouse.

The data in this warehouse was compiled using the same source data that was used to produce the previous publications. However, some improvements to our processes and technology mean that there are some differences in the data published in this release compared with previously published data.

The main revisions are summarised below, and users are advised to refer to the current publication if seeking to refresh any historical time series and point-in-time data.

Headcount

Our methodology for calculating headcount relies on a count of unique employee National Insurance Numbers (NIN). In some of the source data systems, employees will occasionally have a temporary NIN recorded which serves as a placeholder until the source system can be updated with the correct information. This introduced the possibility of double counting, where an employee may have had more than one employment contract and more than one NIN associated with them, i.e., a combination of valid and temporary NINs.

We have improved the structure of how NINs are recorded against employees in the new warehouse. Employees will now always have only a single NIN recorded for them, and as temporary NINs are replaced by valid ones, employment records that would previously have been unlinked will be correctly identified as belonging to the same individual. The elimination of this double counting has had the effect of reducing some previously published headcount statistics. The differences in headcount for any given census point are typically below five, although the size of the differences increases with more recent census dates which have included data from the Turas People system whose records tend to contain a higher proportion of Temporary NINs.

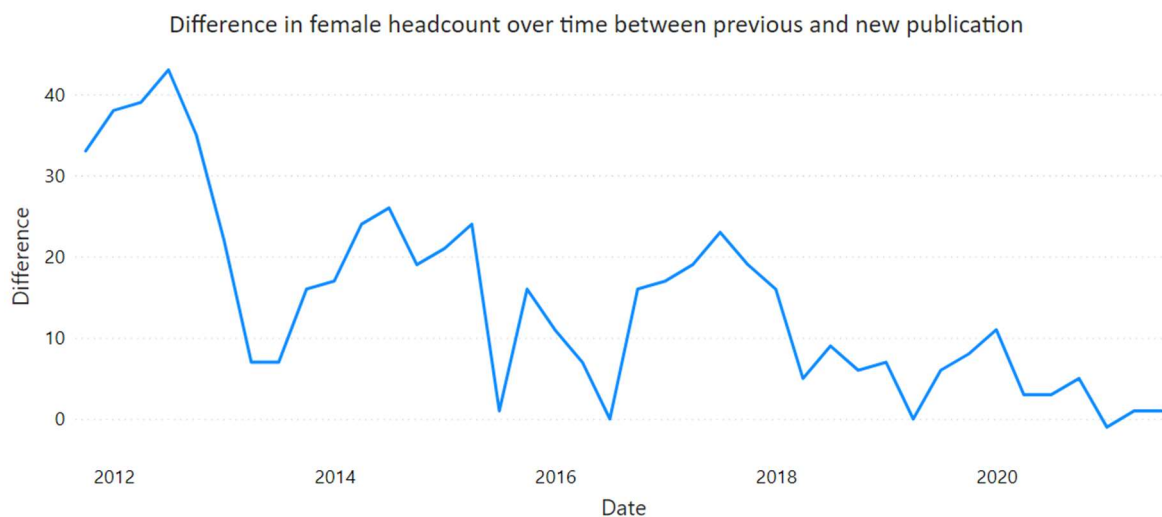
During the process of loading the historical source data into our warehouse, our quality assurance processes identified differences in the headcount figures for three census points that could not be resolved using the source data alone.

In June and September 2012, in the previously published trend tables, there were approximately 1500 staff in the Unknown / Not Assimilated job family. This related to the transfer of staff from the Highland Council to NHS Highland as part of the development of Highland's integrated model of health and social care. These staff numbers were initially added directly to the publication tables for these census points despite not being included in the source data. They appeared in the source data from December 2012 and our own warehoused data and publications now reflect this.

For the 30 September 2015 census, 40 staff were included in previously published trend tables but were not present in the source data. These staff are therefore not present in our warehouse and not included in newly published figures for this census point.

Sex

Occasionally incorrect information is entered into HR systems about the sex of an employee. In the new data warehouse, an employee can only have one sex recorded; if this changes, then the previous sex is overwritten. This means that the Sex breakdown in some previous census points has changed slightly. This affects older census points more than current census points as there has been more time available to update the data from older census points. The differences are very small at an overall level. The chart below shows the difference between the number of Women (the sex that makes up the majority of the workforce) in the current publication compared to previous publications.



Turnover

Since we are now better able to count and link individuals, even if they update their National Insurance numbers, we are better able to count joiners and leavers. Again, there are small differences from previous publications, summarised in the table below.

Year	Joiners and leavers difference	Turnover Difference
2011/12	95.0	0.1%
2012/13	60.0	0.1%
2013/14	62.0	0.1%
2014/15	21.0	0.1%
2015/16	28.0	0.1%
2016/17	30.0	0.1%
2017/18	26.0	0.0%
2018/19	11.0	0.1%
2019/20	34.0	0.1%
2020/21	35.0	0.4%

Sickness Absence

Sickness absence data are sourced from SWISS. These data are reported in the June release of the NHSScotland Workforce Official Statistics publications for the previous financial year by NHS Board. The data in these publications have historically been extracted from SWISS by the ISD Workforce team, and the NES Data Group from 31 March 2020 onwards.

A similar set of sickness absence data – also sourced from SWISS – are sent monthly to every NHS Board from the national eESS/SWISS team.

During the warehouse development process, the decision was made to ingest the historic data that was circulated by the national team, and not the extracts previously used for publication. Feedback from stakeholders had indicated that an increase in detail and temporal frequency would be beneficial for these data, and these monthly data sets include a slightly wider range of variables than the previously published data. Ingesting

only one of the two available data sets also supports best practice in minimising the data held on a given topic.

There are very minor changes when comparing the historic publication outputs with the outputs published from December 2021 using the data circulated by the national team. For most years, the sickness absence rates are within one decimal place of each other. The largest discrepancy that a user will see is for financial year 2020/21 where the timing of the extracts was slightly different. It is best practice to take extracts at the earliest three weeks after the end of the financial year to allow time for data entry in the data's source systems. The data previously published was taken earlier than the three weeks which means that there is a slight increase to previously published rates. For financial year 2020, the NHSScotland absence rate is 5.44% (previously published figure was 5.31%).

Summary

The revisions detailed here reflect improvements to our data management and reporting practices. Differences from previously published statistics are on the whole minor and do not affect trends or key messages. We trust that these changes will not inconvenience any of our stakeholders and we will be happy to discuss any changes in further detail where this would be helpful.
