

No One Left Behind – Partnership in Practice – Update March 2026

As we approach the end of the Scottish parliamentary session, we would like to once again thank our partners who have worked with us to deliver on our shared priorities to transform employability in Scotland through our No One Left Behind approach.

Our shared commitment

In September 2024, the Scottish Government and COSLA published the [No One Left Behind Employability Strategic Plan 2024-27](#), our shared approach to delivering an all-age, place-based, person-centred model of employability support in Scotland. This three-year plan set out our strategic priorities and range of actions to deliver improvement and more effective outcomes for people using services.

In December 2025 we published the [No One Left Behind Employability Strategic Plan 2024-2027: First Annual Report 2025](#). This report demonstrates progress made on the priorities and actions set out in the plan, delivered through partnership working, harnessing the expertise of organisations and taking a cross sectoral, collaborative approach to delivering improvements to Scotland's employability services.

2025 also saw us work in partnership to implement Specialist Employability Support through the No One Left Behind approach. This ensures that enhanced provision for disabled people and people with long term health conditions is in place across all 32 Local Authority areas, strengthening Employability service's important contribution to the ambition to halve the disability employment gap by 2030, and reduce economic inactivity rates in Scotland.

Programme for Government

The employability commitments set out in [Programme for Government 2025-26](#), recognised the crucial role of employability services in delivering on ambitions shared between Scottish and Local Government, such as tackling child poverty.

A review of employability services undertaken in response to PfG, with a view to maximising their effectiveness, indicated ongoing support for the existing approach. Feedback has indicated that No One Left Behind has begun to simplify the employability landscape and that positive improvements in user experience is being made at local level and there is recognition of the strength in maintaining the flexible, local approach to employability supported with elements of national coherence.

Our review highlighted that there are opportunities for further action to maximise the impact of employability services. In addition to taking forward the actions in the Employability Strategic Plan, we are working to establish a number of projects that build on the well-established commitment to continuous improvement. The engagement we have taken to date will be supplemented by independent evaluation activity over the coming months. As these projects are intended to supplement the actions set out in the Strategic Plan, we will publish information in the Annual Reports moving forward.

Scottish budget and Child Poverty Plan

The [Scottish Budget 2026–27](#) reaffirms the commitment to the No One Left Behind approach by protecting funding for Local Employability Partnership in the coming financial year. The Scottish Spending Review also commits to investing £90 million in devolved employability services each year, running to 2028/29. This will help respond to the delivery challenges posed by annualised funding raised by partners and stakeholders.

Steps have been taken to protect over £40 million for Parental Employability Support in 2026/27. This reflects a continued commitment to support parents - with a specific focus on the six priority family groups - to move towards, enter, and progress in sustainable work as part of our wider efforts to tackle child poverty. We will also continue to provide an additional £2.5 million to fund Employability Child Poverty Coordinators for a third consecutive year, enabling families to access flexible and responsive wrap-around services.

The publication of the third Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan (2026-31) [Bringing Hope, Building Futures](#), on 12 March 2026, takes a joined up approach to drive further progress for parents to increase their income from employment. This includes an in-work support offer and actions to improve employer engagement, with the aim of supporting access to flexible and sustainable fair work opportunities. The Plan also includes a Transport to Employment package for parents most at risk of experiencing poverty to help reduce the barriers caused by the cost, accessibility and availability of travel.

Continued progress

In February 2026 [Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: No One Left Behind Statistical Summary for April 2019 to September 2025](#) was published. The statistics show that services delivered under the No One Left Behind approach have supported 99,242 people between April 2019 and September 2025, with 30,857 people having been supported to enter employment to date.

Disabled people, people with long term health conditions, parents and minority ethnic participants have increased each year as a proportion of starts since we implemented a local delivery model in April 2022. The statistics reports for the first time on the number of people receiving Specialist Employability Support. 675 people were reported as receiving Specialist Employability Support between April and September 2025.

Scottish and Local Government will continue to work together with partners to assess the impact of progress delivered to transform our employability system and services. We will build on the progress of the first year of the Employability Strategic Plan with a focus on continuous improvement, to ensure we are supporting improved experiences and outcomes for people accessing our services. We will also use the learning from independent evaluation activity to inform and drive improvement to policy and delivery.



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