

# User Guidance

## 1. Introduction

The figures in this Statistical Factsheet cover participants on the Youth Employment Scheme (YES), which was introduced by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) in July 2012 with the aim of assisting young people aged 18-24 to find work. Referrals onto YES began in August 2012. The scheme was originally launched as a three year initiative intended to run until the end of March 2015. Referrals to the scheme in its current form ended in March 2015. Further YES components have subsequently been introduced but the focus of this statistical factsheet is the original programme from July 2012 to March 2015.

## 2. Eligibility

YES is an entirely voluntary scheme for 18-24 year olds who are unemployed or economically inactive. Young people aged 18-24 who are claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and who, by September 2014, will have been claiming JSA for 9 months will be mandated to DEL's employment programme Steps 2 Success and will therefore not be eligible for YES. Young people aged 18-24 who participated on Step 1 or Step 2 of DEL's Steps to Work programme were also not eligible to join YES.

## 3. Programme Design

There are three strands to YES, which were introduced at different stages during 2012:

- **Work Experience Placements (WEP)** – real work experience opportunities with an employer for between three and eight weeks. WEP offers participants the chance to try particular types of work, improve confidence and develop skills to gain employment. Participants receive a Training Allowance equal to how much they would receive in employment benefits, plus an extra £45 a week. Travel costs over £4 per week are also covered by the scheme. Referrals to this strand began in August 2012.
- **Skills Development Programme (SDP)** – work placement opportunities for up to six months, focusing on job specific skills training and opportunities to achieve accredited qualifications. Participants receive a Training Allowance equal to how much they would receive in employment benefits, plus an extra £45 a week. Travel costs over £4 per week are also covered by the scheme. Referrals to this strand began in December 2012.
- **Enhanced Employer Subsidy (EES)** – subsidised employment for participants for up to twelve months. Referrals to this strand began in October 2012.

## 4. Source of Data

DEL's Client Management System (CMS), installed in JobCentres/Jobs & Benefits Offices throughout Northern Ireland, is an IT system used to facilitate the interface with DEL's customers. It maintains a basic client record; allows the preferred occupation stated by clients to be matched against suitable vacancies; records actions such as interviews, referrals to training opportunities, placing into jobs etc.

The relevant data are extracted from CMS each month to form the YES Database which is maintained by DEL's Programme Information and Analysis Branch (PIAB) within Analytical Services. Various quality assurance checks are carried out on the YES Database to enhance the validity of the data.

The data for this Statistical Factsheet were extracted from CMS on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2015. The data presented are derived from the YES database.

## 5. Definitions

The following notes explain the definitions underlying the data presented in this Statistical Factsheet except where these are self-explanatory – e.g. gender.

- **Participant** – A participant is defined for statistical purposes as an individual on YES. A young person can participate in YES more than once.
- **Starts** – Refers to the number of participants starting YES who are on provision for at least one day. As a young person can participate in more than one strand of the scheme, the number of starts on each strand do not add to give the total number of starts on the scheme overall. Only the first start date is used for multiple participations within each strand.
- **Financial year** – Refers to 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March.
- **Occupancy** – Refers to the number of participants on the scheme/a strand of the scheme at a particular point in time.
- **Approved duration** – Refers to the expected duration of the placement, as set by the employer.
- **Leavers** – Refers to the number of participants leaving YES. As a young person can participate in multiple strands of the scheme or in the same strand more than once, leavers data is recorded for each participation. Only the last end date is used for multiple participations within each strand.
- **Early leavers** – An 'early leaver' is defined as a participant who leaves their placement one week or more before their approved duration.
- **JobCentre regions** – Refers to the region in which a participant's JobCentre is located. The Belfast Region includes the following JobCentres: Andersonstown, Ballynahinch, Bangor, Belfast North, Downpatrick, Falls Road, Holywood Road, Knockbreda, Lisburn, Newtownabbey, Newtownards, Shaftesbury Square and Shankill. The Northern Region includes the following JobCentres: Antrim, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Foyle, Larne, Limavady, Lisnagelvin and Strabane. The Southern Region includes the following JobCentres: Armagh, Banbridge, Cookstown, Dungannon, Enniskillen, Kilkeel, Lurgan, Magherafelt, Newcastle, Newry, Omagh and Portadown.

## Equality Definitions

- **Community Background** – DEL records information reported by the participant, who may indicate if they are from a Catholic, Protestant or Other background. Participants who do not respond are classified as Not Known.
- **Disability** – DEL records information reported by the participant, who may indicate whether or not they consider themselves to have a disability (where disability is defined as ‘any physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities and which has lasted or is likely to last for more than 12 months’). Participants who do not respond are classified as Not Known.
- **Dependants** – DEL records the number of dependants as reported by the participant. Each participant is asked to indicate the number of dependants they have. By dependants DEL means that they are the main carer for a child (aged 16 or under), a person with a disability or an elderly person.

## 6. Revisions

Over time, as more information becomes available, estimates can be revised to improve quality and accuracy, which will provide a better picture of that being measured. The on and off flow nature of YES may lead to the revision of statistics. In addition there may be a lag in recording some information on the administrative system and therefore statistics may be updated in the future to improve accuracy.

## 7. Quality Measures

- **Relevance** – This Statistical Factsheet has been drafted following consultation with customers. The key customers within Government use the data to monitor performance of the scheme and consider operational impacts of delivering the scheme. There will be ongoing interaction with users to ensure the data are still relevant and meet their needs.
- **Accuracy** – The statistics included are representative of the administrative database (CMS) at the time of extraction. The administrative system has in-built validation checks to minimise user error and can be interrogated to assess data quality and cross check statistics. Validation checks are also carried out on the YES database. A small number of erroneous records are excluded from the YES database.
- **Timeliness and Punctuality** – Data in this Statistical Factsheet include all those participants who commenced YES on or before the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The time gap between this date and the publication date is due to time taken to complete validation/processing and to allow the recording of outcomes.

- **Accessibility and Clarity** – This Statistical Factsheet is part of a quarterly series published by DEL. It is available free of charge on the DEL website and in other formats upon request. The Statistical Factsheet includes text, charts and infographics.
- **Comparability** – This Statistical Factsheet provides data by month and financial year since the scheme was introduced in Northern Ireland to enable comparisons over time. When methodological changes or other effects such as changes to the scheme are made, every effort is made to ensure that all previous data are amended to make them directly comparable.