



WP4 Quantitative Analysis of Young Adults' Social and Living Conditions

Executive Summary Scotland

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YOUNG-ADULLLT is a European funded H2020 research project that focuses on understanding and analysing **Lifelong learning (LLL)** policies addressed to **young adults**, in situations of near social exclusion at the **local and regional level**.



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Executive summary

This report applies harmonised indicators that were derived for 9 European countries to analyse the contextual living conditions of young adults over the period from 2005 through 2015 in two functional regions within Scotland: the Glasgow City Region and Aberdeenshire. It is well-known in Scotland that risk profiles of young adults correlate with socioeconomic background, as for instance manifested in the education attainment gradient and access to universities: issues that are the subject of an ongoing public debate. The analysis presented here also illustrates regional differences across several domains.

Fortuitously, the four NUTS2 statistical regions in Scotland represent an approximate fit with the major metropolitan areas of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, in addition to the Highlands and Islands. Therefore, useful insights can be gained from using harmonised indicators. However, many policies operate at a smaller spatial scale and therefore such aggregate data is often unsatisfactory. There are good examples of rich datasets maintained at a UK-level, but also specifically for Scotland. However, these are limited in terms of timeliness and the ability to regionalise results. Efforts are being made to rationalise, link and exploit administrative data sources in Scotland more effectively, but this is still at an early stage.

Population: Scotland has a rising dependency ratio, albeit from a lower level than the UK. Greater Glasgow is in line with the Scottish average, but Aberdeenshire is starting from a lower base.

Economy: GDP per capita in Scotland is slightly below the UK average. Whilst greater Glasgow is further below this average, Aberdeenshire, with its oil and gas industry, is one of the UK's most affluent regions.

Youth employment in Scotland on average is slightly stronger than in the UK as a whole, and markedly so in Aberdeenshire. On the whole the UK compares favourably to an EU average.

Education and labour market: In terms of the share of tertiary education in the working age population, Scotland is the most educated country in Europe. Overall, the UK compares favourably on this metric. However, this claim is doubtful when the share of less qualified workers is examined. In this regard, Scotland and the UK compare unfavourably with Eastern Europe and German-speaking countries.

Social protection: Average household disposable income (GDHI) in Scotland was just over EUR 16,000 in 2013, which is about EUR500 below the UK average. Greater Glasgow trails the Scottish average by about EUR1,000, whilst Aberdeenshire is approximately EUR3,000 above the average.

Overall, regional variation in GDHI is stark across the UK and the range of spatial inequality is far higher than in any other European country. This casts doubt on the analytical merit of benchmarking Scotland against a UK average, as the UK average masks a stark contrast between the Southeast of England and the rest of the UK. Gross disposable household income in Inner London, where it is highest, is nearly three times that of the West Midlands, where it is lowest.