Outer Hebrides

- Total population was **26,830** in 2018, a decrease of 3.1% from 2011.
- Population density (9 people per sq. km) is lower than that for the Highlands and Islands (12 people per sq. km) and considerably lower than the Scottish average (70 people per sq. km).
- An older age profile than both the Highlands and Islands and Scotland.
- An Economic Activity rate (80.3%) in line with the Highlands and Islands (80.9%) and higher than Scotland (77.9%).
- A self-employment rate (10.6%) in line with that of the Highlands and Islands (11.0%) and higher than Scotland (8.7%).
- An employment rate (78.2%) in line with the Highlands and Islands (78.6%) and higher than Scotland (74.7%).
- An unemployment rate lower than the Highlands and Islands and Scotland. In September 2019, the rate was 2.2%, compared to the Highlands and Islands with 2.3% and Scotland with 3.2%.
- School leaver positive destinations rates (i.e. not into unemployment) above the Scottish average.
- Productivity in the Nuts 3 area of Na h-Eileanan Siar **87.6%** of UK level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL POPULATION</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outer Hebrides</td>
<td>27,690</td>
<td>26,830</td>
<td>-3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlands and Islands</td>
<td>467,043</td>
<td>469,365</td>
<td>+0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>5,299,900</td>
<td>5,438,100</td>
<td>+2.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NRS Mid-year estimates 2018

By age breakdown, the Outer Hebrides had an older age profile than both the Highlands and Islands and Scotland. In 2018, some 55.6% of the Outer Hebrides population was aged over 45 years, compared to 52.5% in the Highlands and Islands and 46.5% in Scotland, while 23.2% of the population was aged 0-24 years, compared to 25.6% of the Highlands and Islands and 27.6% of Scotland’s population.
Employment
Compared with the Highlands and Islands and Scotland, the Outer Hebrides had a higher share of employment by industry in agriculture, forestry and fishing and public administration and defence. Employment in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector is particularly important to the Outer Hebrides, with 28.1% of the areas workforce employed in the sector, more than double that of the Highlands and Islands (11.7%) and more than eight times the figure for Scotland (3.2%).

Unemployment
The Outer Hebrides unemployment rate has been below that of the Highlands and Islands and Scotland since July 2017. The latest figures for September 2019 show that the Outer Hebrides had a rate of 2.2%, compared to the Highlands and Islands at 2.3% and Scotland at 3.2%.