

Our Capital, Our College

Edinburgh College: Scotland's Capital College

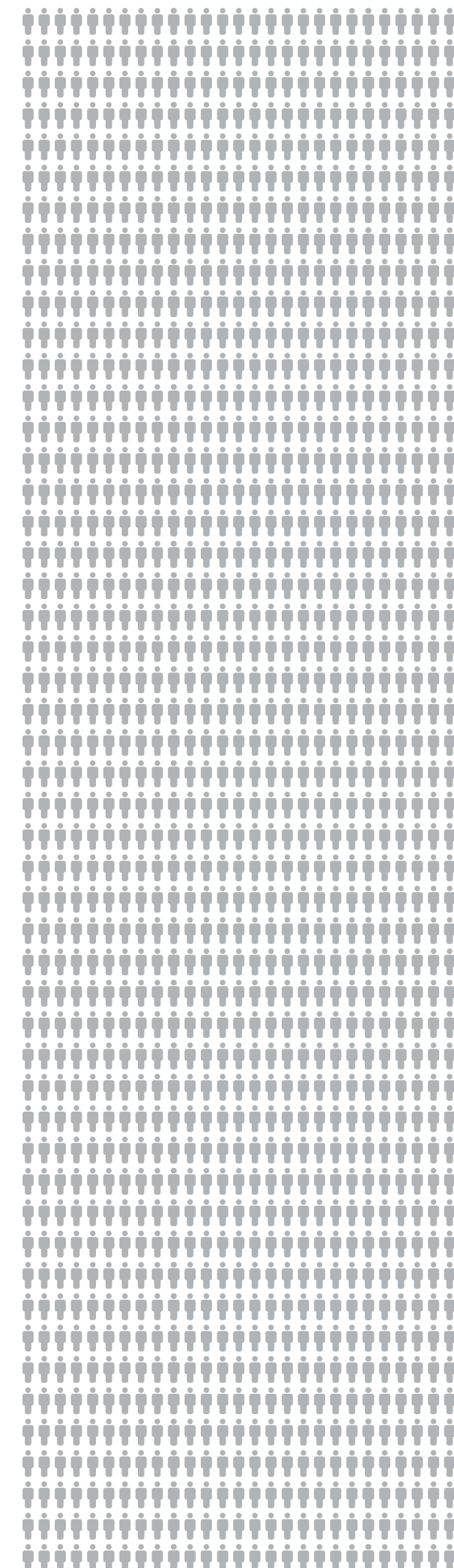
Scotland's colleges are central to the nation's social wellbeing and economic development. Together, they provide more than 71 million learning hours to more than 230,000 students per year¹. As well as providing life-changing opportunities for individuals, they are also key anchor institutions for the regions they serve; supporting businesses, improving productivity and driving sustainable economic growth. A 2023 report by the Fraser of Allander Institute² found that the college graduate cohorts from 2016/17 – 2021/22 will, through increased skills and improved productivity, make the Scottish economy better off by around £52bn over their working lives.

Edinburgh College is Scotland's largest college, delivering around 10% of all college sector activity annually. We are also the primary skills provider in Scotland's capital and the surrounding region, making the College a significant player in the national skills development landscape. We have a long and proud history of excellence in delivering world-class educational opportunities to the communities we serve, supporting the region's development through plugging skills gaps, tackling youth unemployment and providing opportunities to people from all backgrounds.

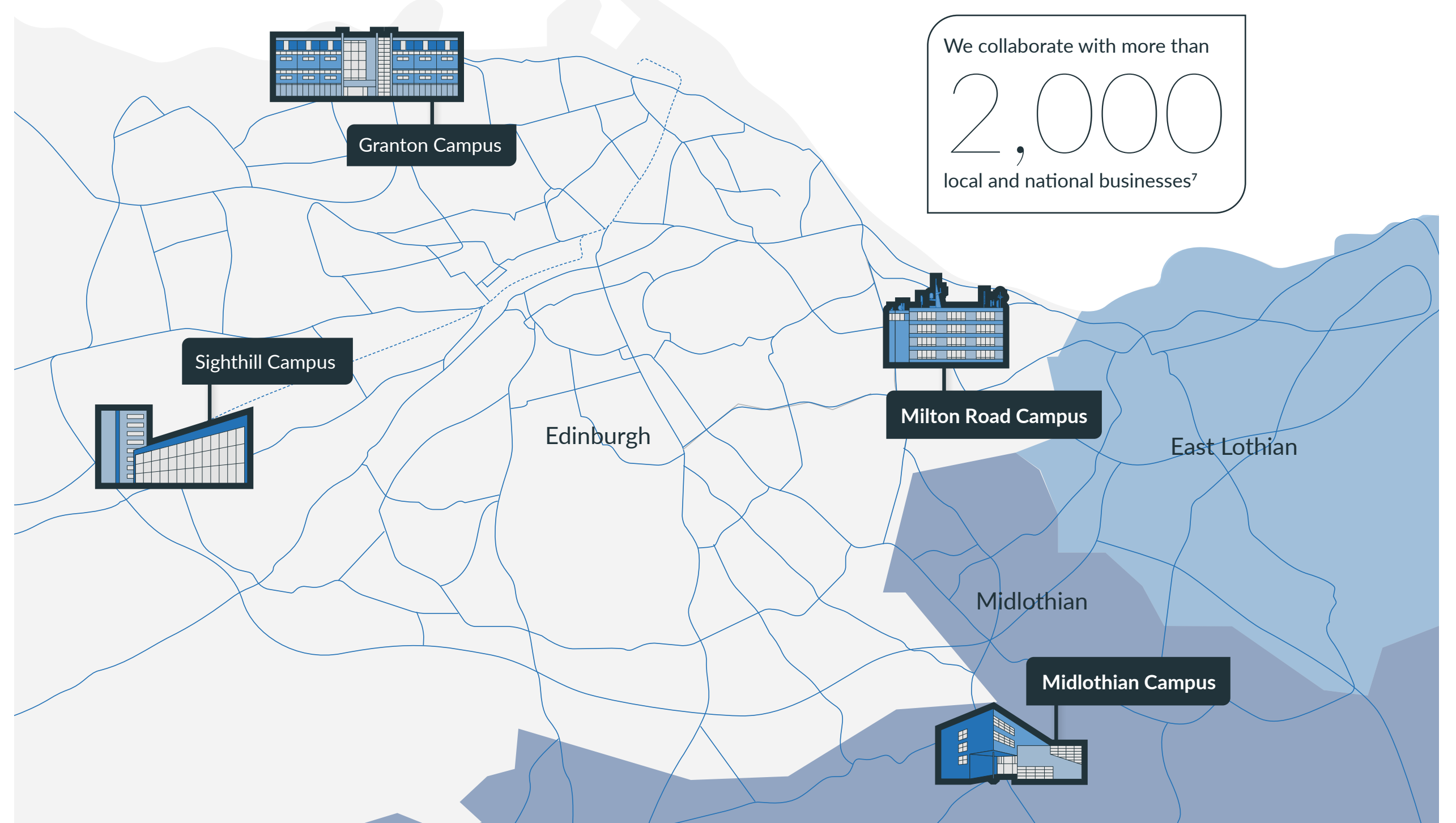
The College's vision for the future is shaped by a clear focus on our people, our sense of place, and our combined performance, the three strategic themes that underpin our new strategy. In pursuing this strategy, the College's work will contribute to the delivery of key national policy priorities, such as the National Strategy for Economic Transformation³ and align with the themes of Equality, Community, and Opportunity at the centre of the programme for government⁴.

This report aims to give an overview of Edinburgh College's reach, an insight into its social and economic impact, and a snapshot of the crucial role it plays not just as a place of social sanctuary and cultural diversity, but of economic innovation, for the Edinburgh city-region. It will be the first of a series of upcoming reports examining the college's social and economic impact.

Over **27,000** students⁵ and around **1,200** staff⁶

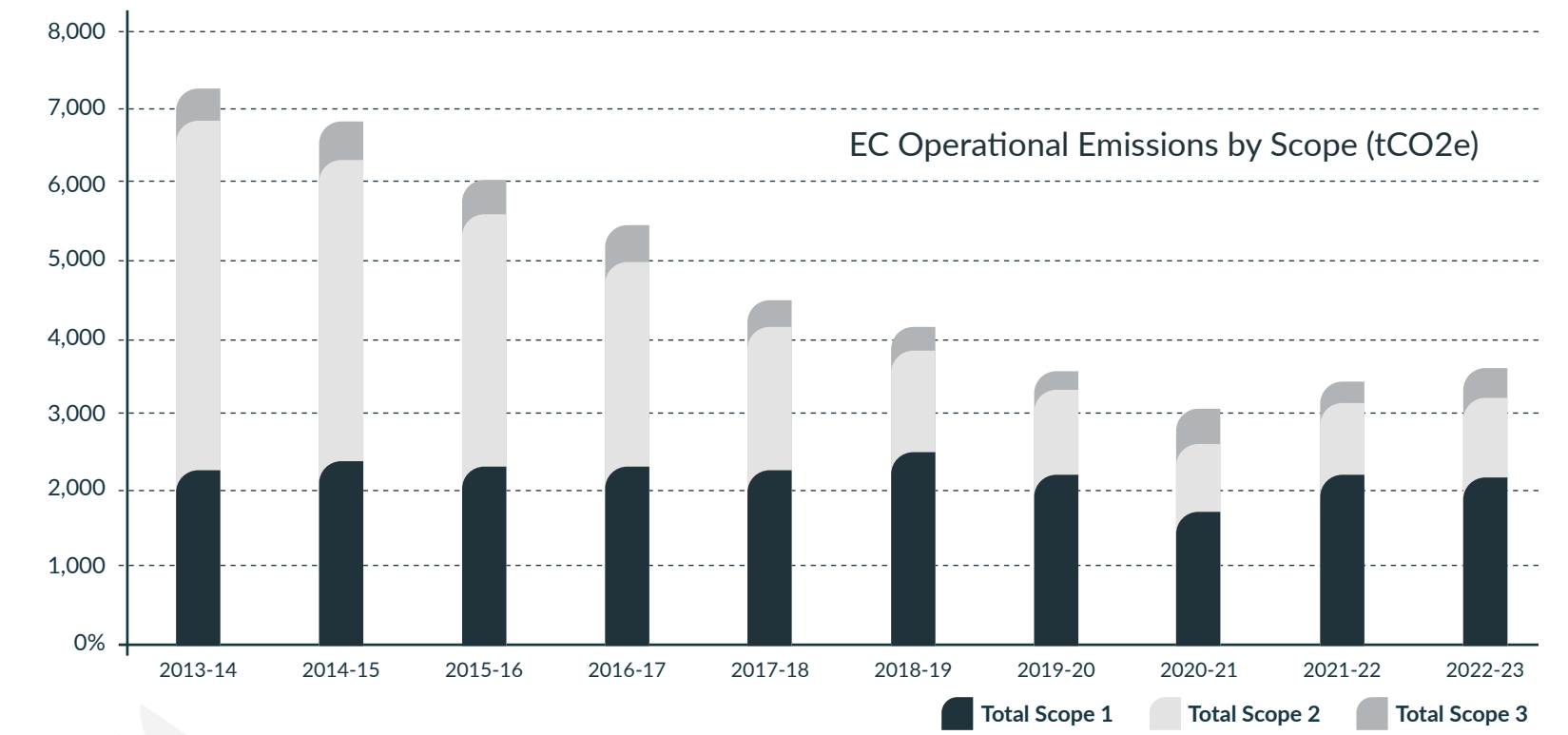


We deliver over **700** courses



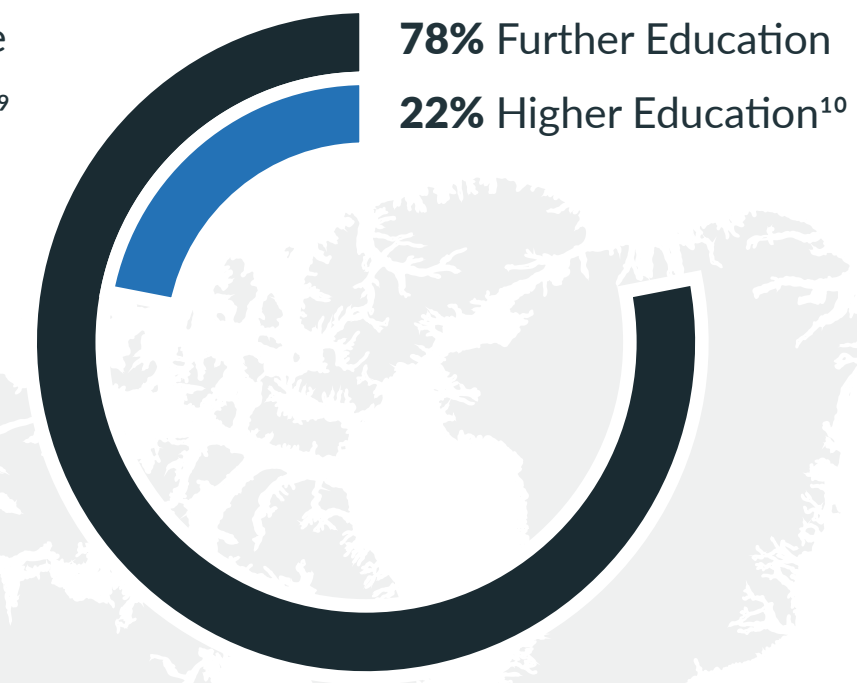
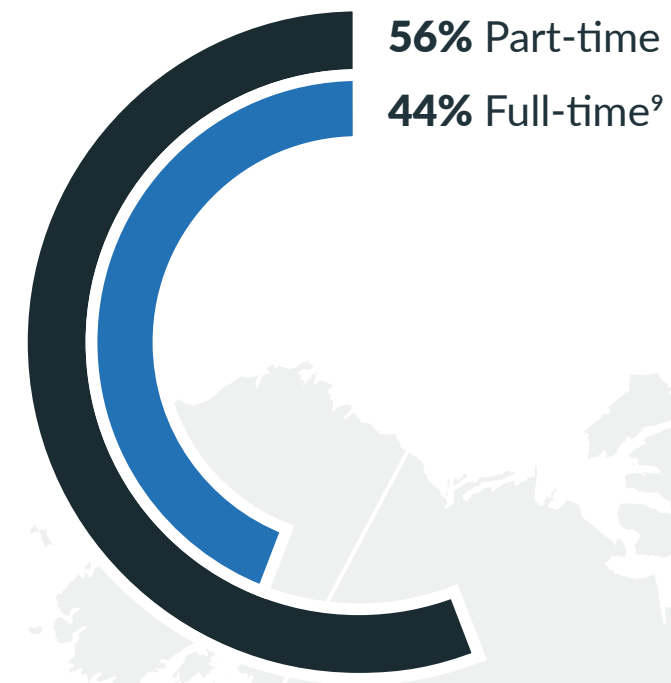
Our College at a Glance

We've reduced our emissions by 50% since 2013/14⁸



We collaborate with more than **2,000** local and national businesses⁷

Our Students at a Glance

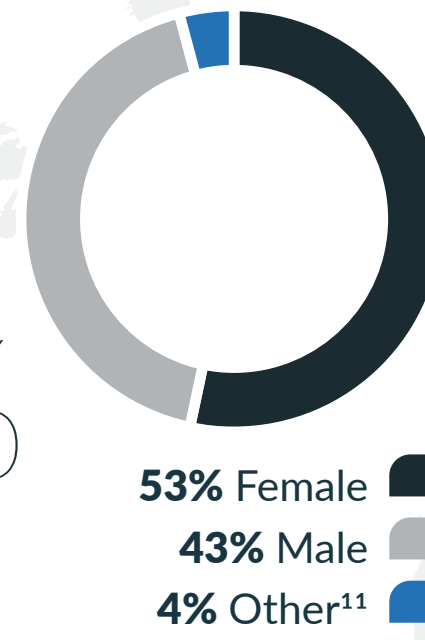


96%
of our students go on to a positive destination¹⁷

90%
of our students stay for the duration of their course¹⁸

90%
of students are satisfied with their overall college experience¹⁹

57.6%
of our students articulating to university did so with advanced standing²⁰

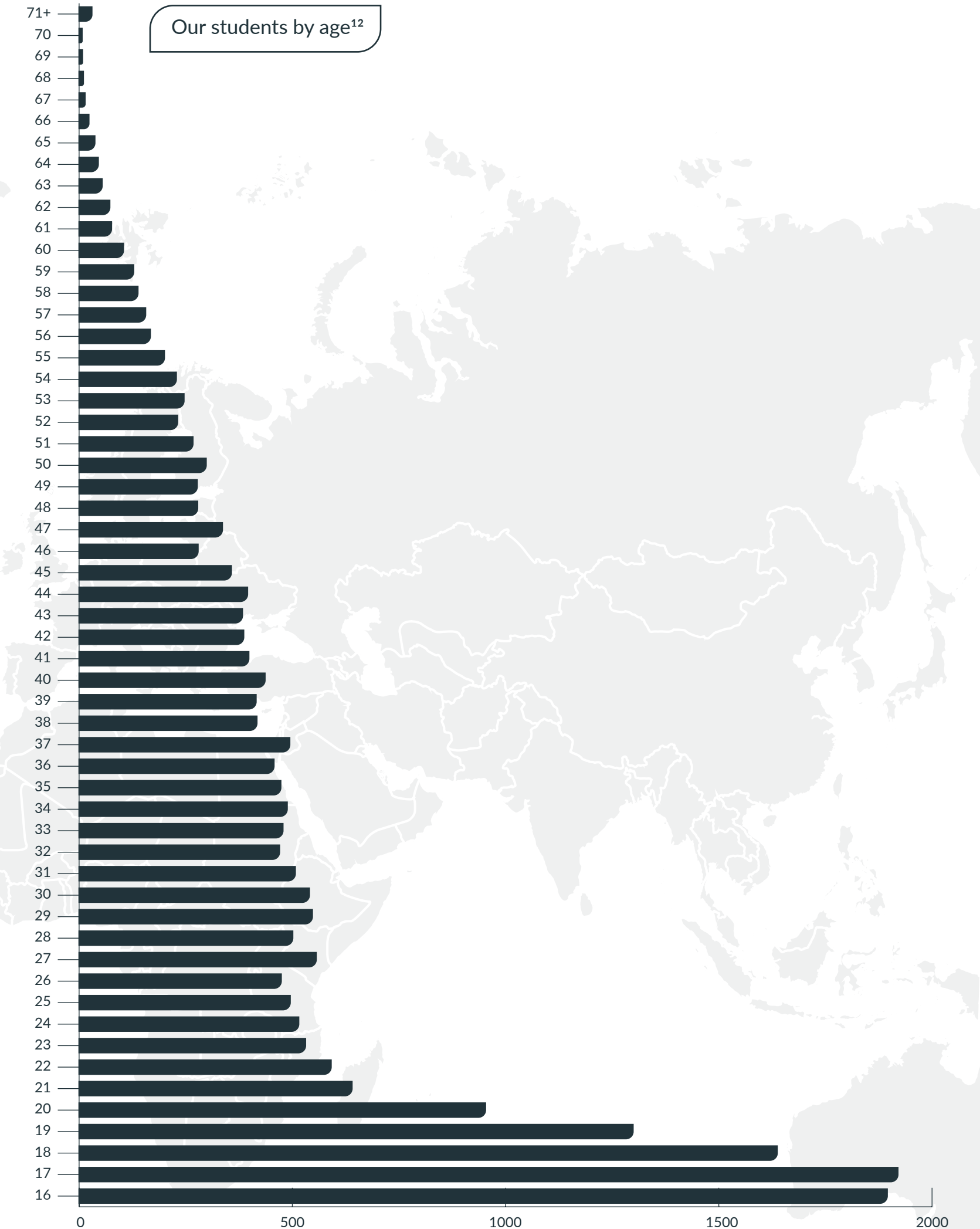


Around 10.4% of our students come from a Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAME) background¹⁴

20% of students report having a disability¹⁵

1,213 of our students are care experienced¹⁶

Our students come from more than **135** countries¹³



Our Region

Edinburgh is not just Scotland's capital, but also its economic powerhouse.

The region's economy is made up of more than 23,000 businesses²⁰²¹²². The vast majority of these are SMEs, but there are also around 135 large enterprises across the region, that provide significant employment. The concentration of businesses in high value sectors, such as banking, insurance, and science and technology, means the Edinburgh, East and Midlothian region has the highest productivity of any region in Scotland. Indeed, Edinburgh is among the UK's highest productivity cities, with GVA (Gross Value Added) per hour worked 15% higher than the UK average²³, and output per hour around 35% higher in the capital than in Glasgow²⁴.

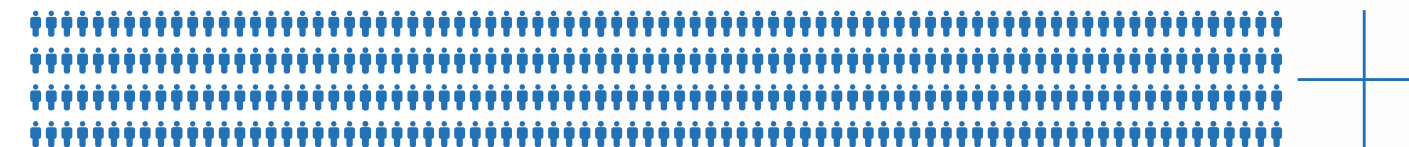
Driving these sectors, and this high productivity, is a highly-skilled workforce, that Edinburgh College plays a key part in developing. The College is a key partner in the employability and skills strand of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, and is a keen supporter of regional regeneration and economic development, working with partners to ensure initiatives, such as the Forth Green Freeport, are supported by a future-proofed skills pipeline.

In Scottish terms, the Edinburgh, East and Midlothian region, is also an area of consistent population growth. Edinburgh College therefore sits at the heart of an economically dynamic and expanding region.

That being said, our region – like all regions – is diverse and the three local authority areas the College serves have distinct profiles, that will be explored in the preceding sections. There are also social and economic challenges to face, for example, areas of high poverty, areas of higher than average unemployment and disparities in health and wellbeing outcomes across the region. Working with key partners, Edinburgh College is at the forefront of tackling these issues, providing support and opportunity to the individuals and local communities who need it the most.

Combined, our region, encompassing the local authority areas of Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian:

Is home to around **730,000** people²⁶.



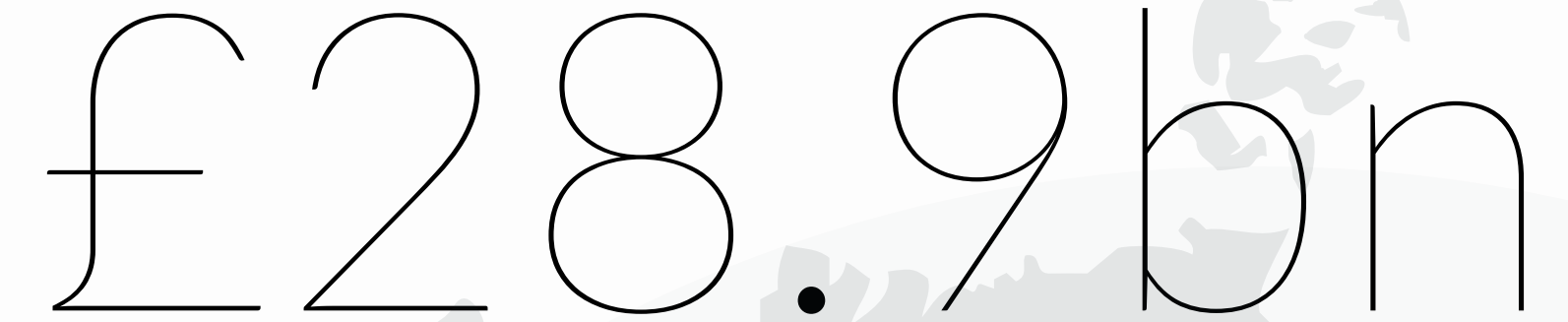
This population is expected to rise to **828,000** by 2043²⁷.

Has a workforce of



Is home to more than **23,000** businesses³⁰.

Produced



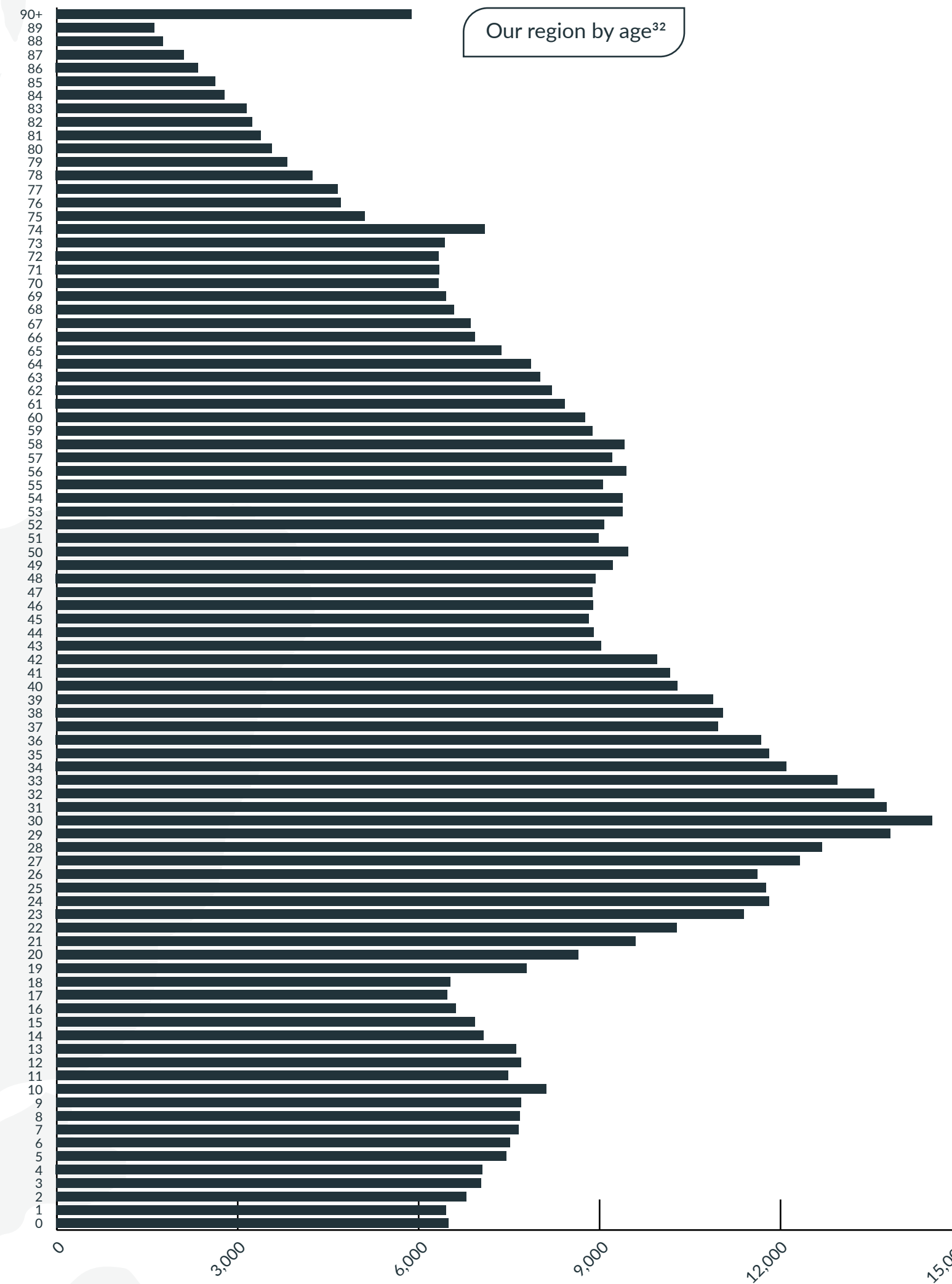
worth of goods and services (GVA) in 2023, equivalent to



of Scotland's total output²⁹.

Combined, our region, encompassing the local authority areas of Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian:

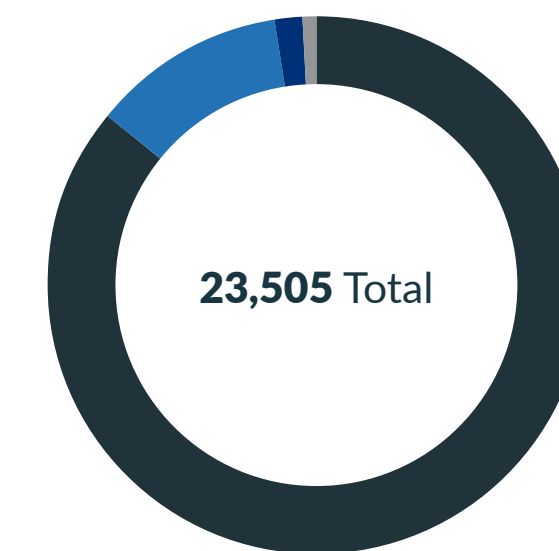
Had the highest productivity of any region in Scotland³¹



Is supported by a City-Region Deal worth around³⁵

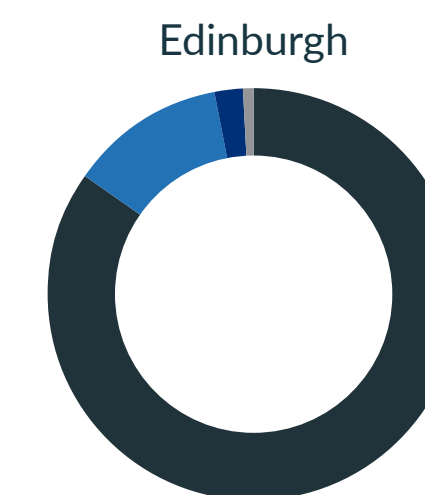
£1.3bn

10.55%
of the regions data zones are in Scotland's 20% most deprived³⁶

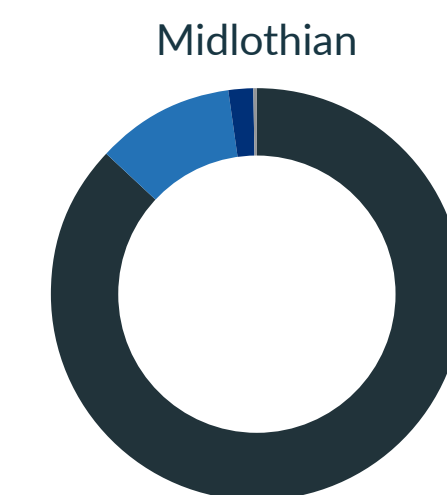


Our region's businesses by size³³

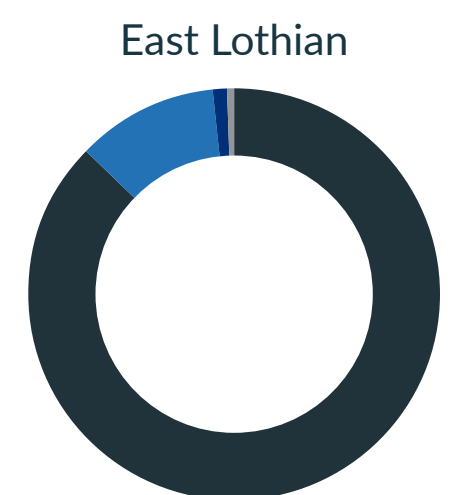
- 20,235/86% Micro
- 2,685/11% Small
- 450/2% Medium
- 135/1% Large



- 15,325 Micro
- 2,070 Small
- 365 Medium
- 120 Large



- 2,190 Micro
- 275 Small
- 45 Medium
- 5 Large



- 2,720 Micro
- 340 Small
- 40 Medium
- 10 Large

Finance & Insurance Real Estate Professional, Scientific & Technical Services Human Health & Social Work

are the highest value sectors in the region³⁴

Our Communities: Edinburgh

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Population of Edinburgh³⁷

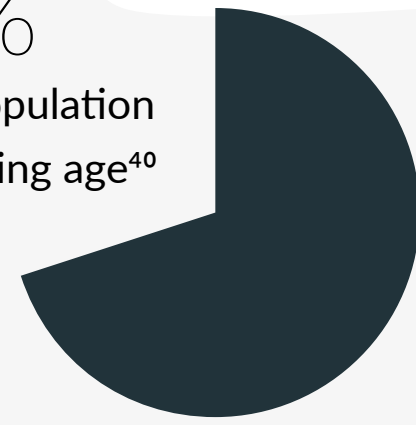
Projected to rise to 586,566 by 2043³⁸.

Output of

£25.33bn

(GVA)³⁹

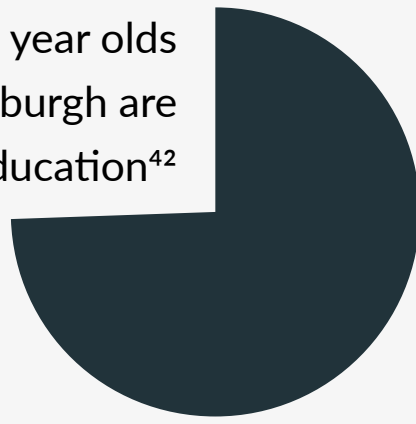
70%
of the population
are working age⁴⁰



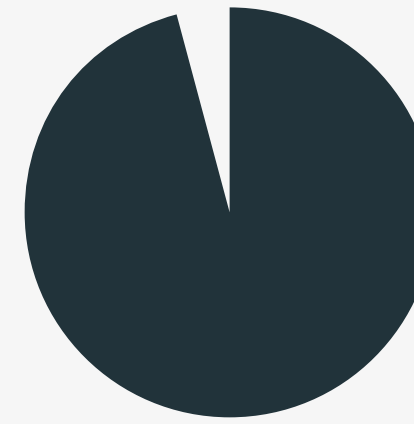
82.8%
of the working
age population is
in employment⁴¹



74.6%
of 16-19 year olds
in Edinburgh are
in education⁴²



96%
of school leavers
go on to positive
destinations⁴³



Working Age Population⁴⁶

- 14.97% 0-15 years
- 69.59% 16-64 years
- 15.44% 65+ years

Population Employment⁴⁷

- 82.8% Employment
- 2.3% Unemployment
- 14.9% Economically inactive

School Leaver Destinations⁴⁸

- 25.4% Employment
- 23.7% Further Education
- 43.3% Higher Education
- 2.5% Training
- 0.7% Voluntary Work

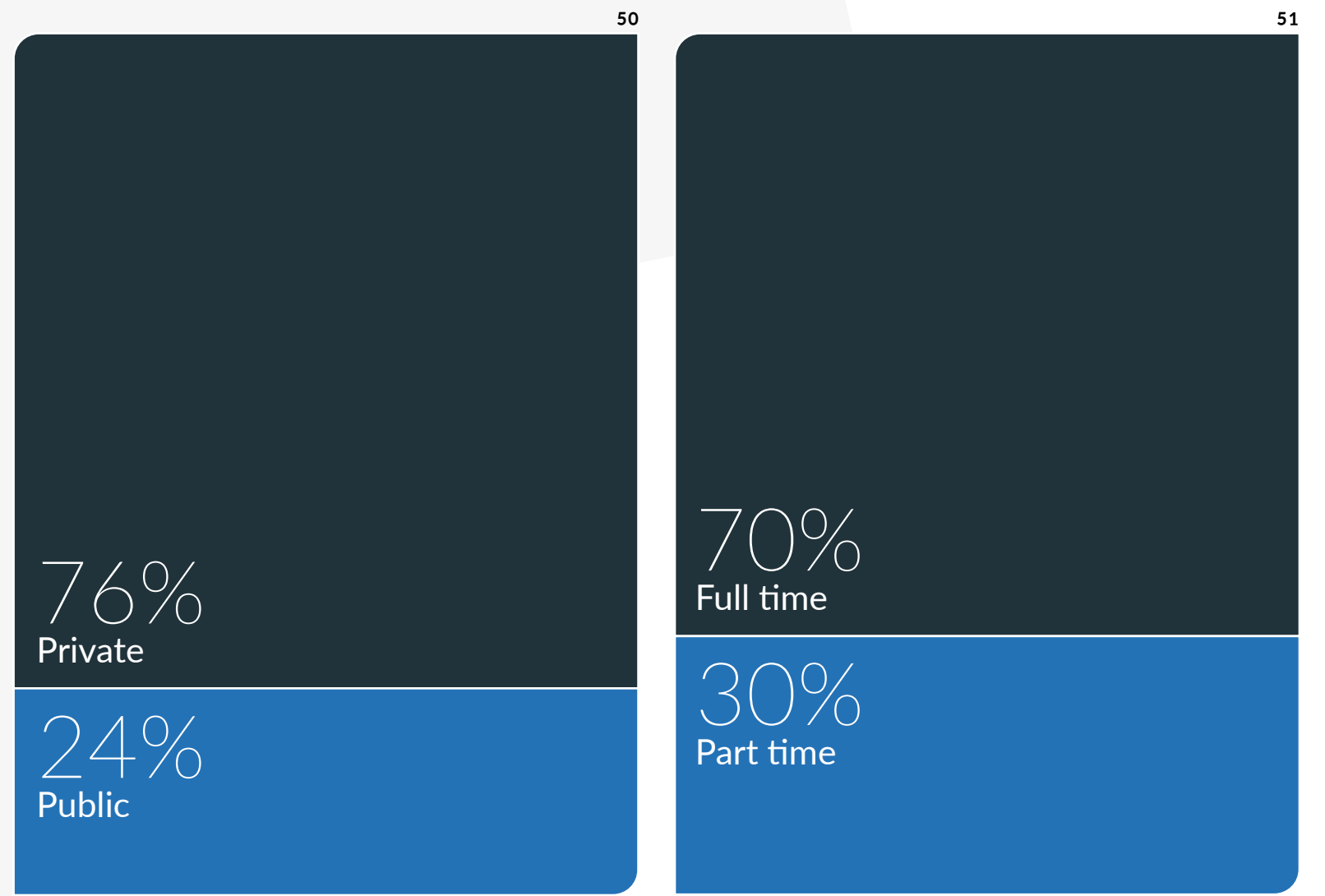
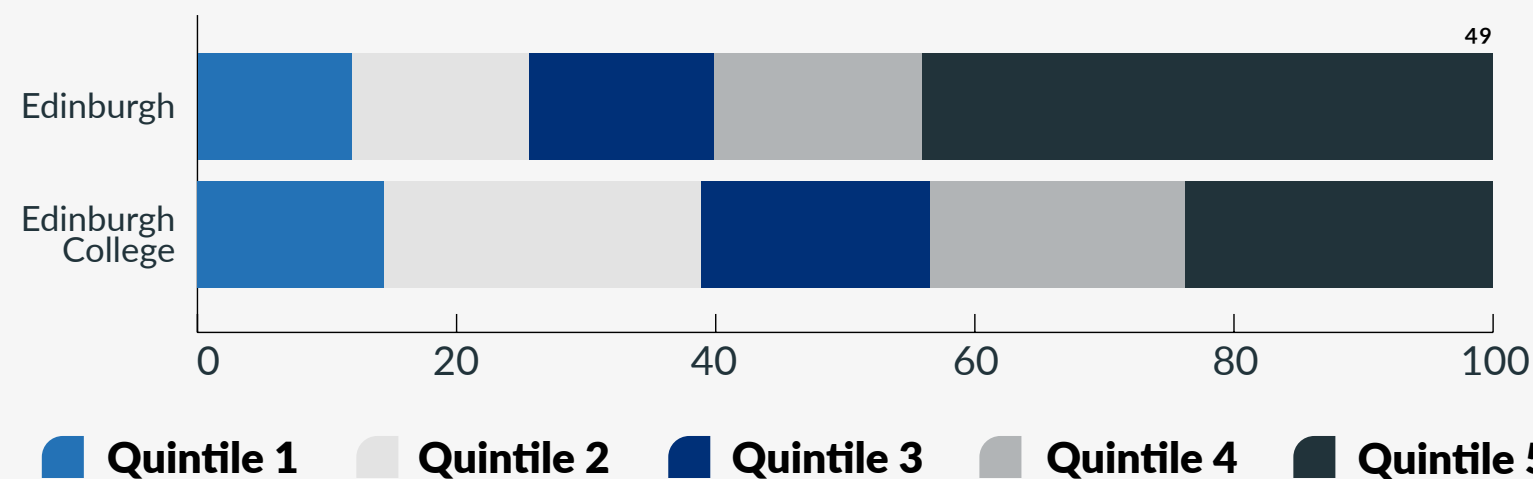
Top 3 industries for employment⁴⁴:



Sectors with largest forecast
employment growth⁴⁵:



11.89% of datazones are in SIMD20



Our Communities: East Lothian

109,580
Population of East Lothian⁵²

Projected to rise to 121,743 by 2043.⁵³

Output of

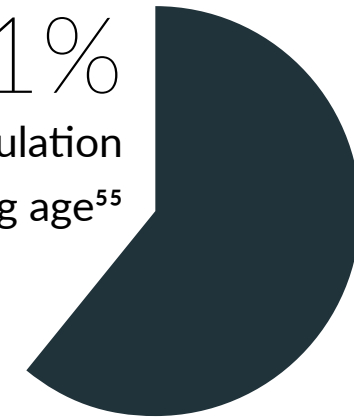
£1.876bn
(GVA)⁵⁴



Our Capital, Our College

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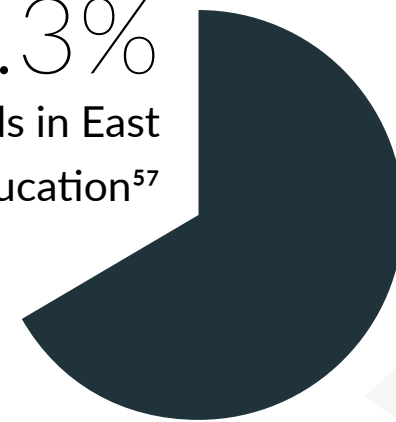
61%
of the population
are working age⁵⁵



79.7%
of the working
age population is
in employment⁵⁶



68.3%
of 16-19 year olds in East
Lothian are in education⁵⁷



95.6%
of school leavers
go on to positive
destinations⁵⁸



Working Age Population⁶¹

- 18.09% 0-15 years
- 61.04% 16-64 years
- 20.87% 65+ years

Population Employment⁶²

- 79.7% Employment
- 3.8% Unemployment
- 16.5% Economically inactive

School Leaver Destinations⁶³

- 35.3% Employment
- 20.2% Further Education
- 37.3% Higher Education
- 1.6% Training
- 1.2% Voluntary Work

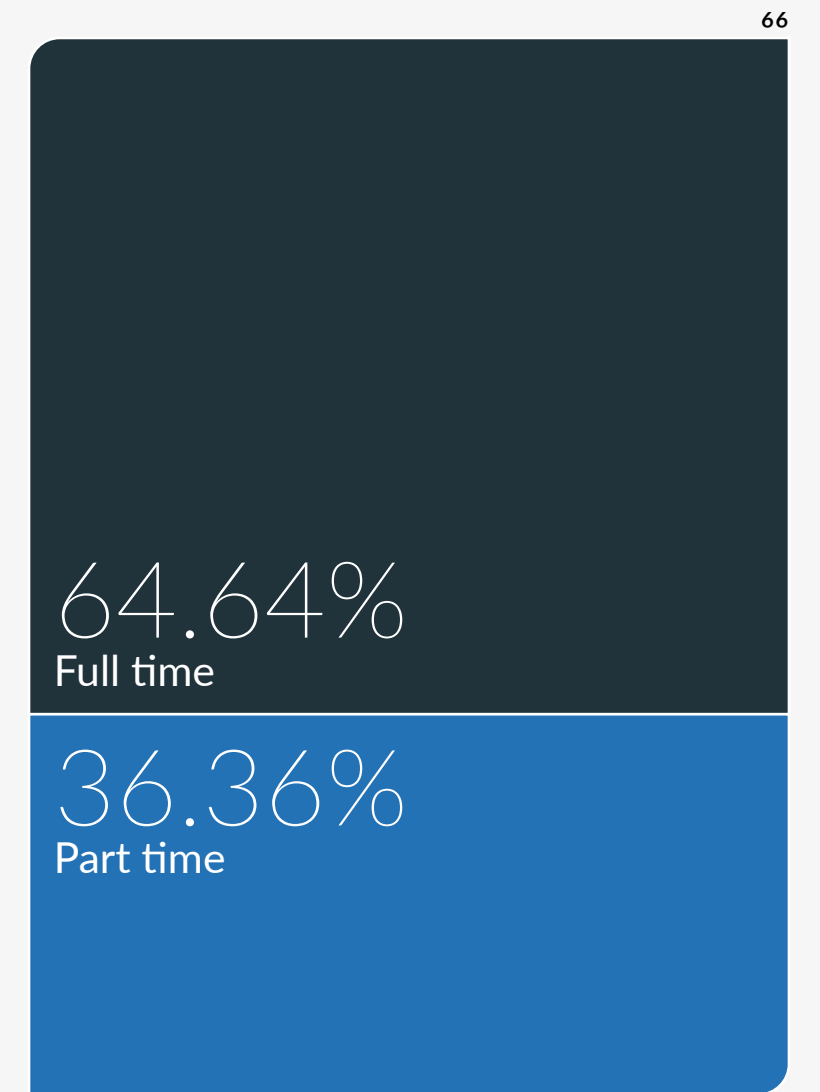
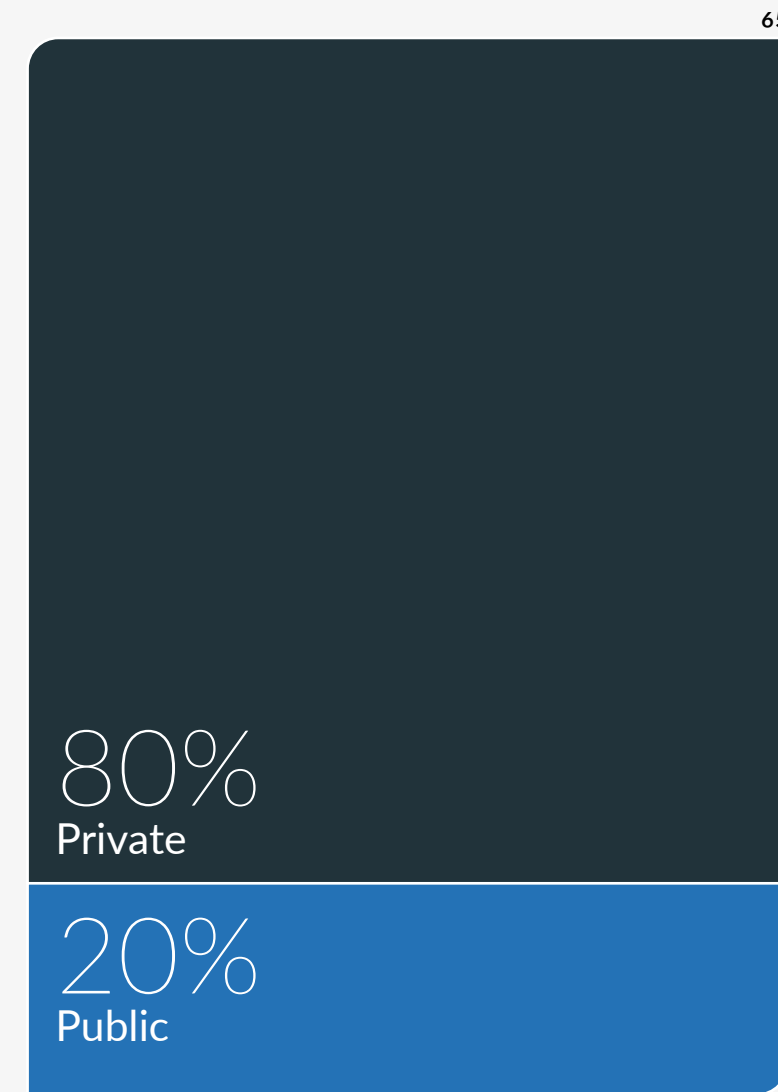
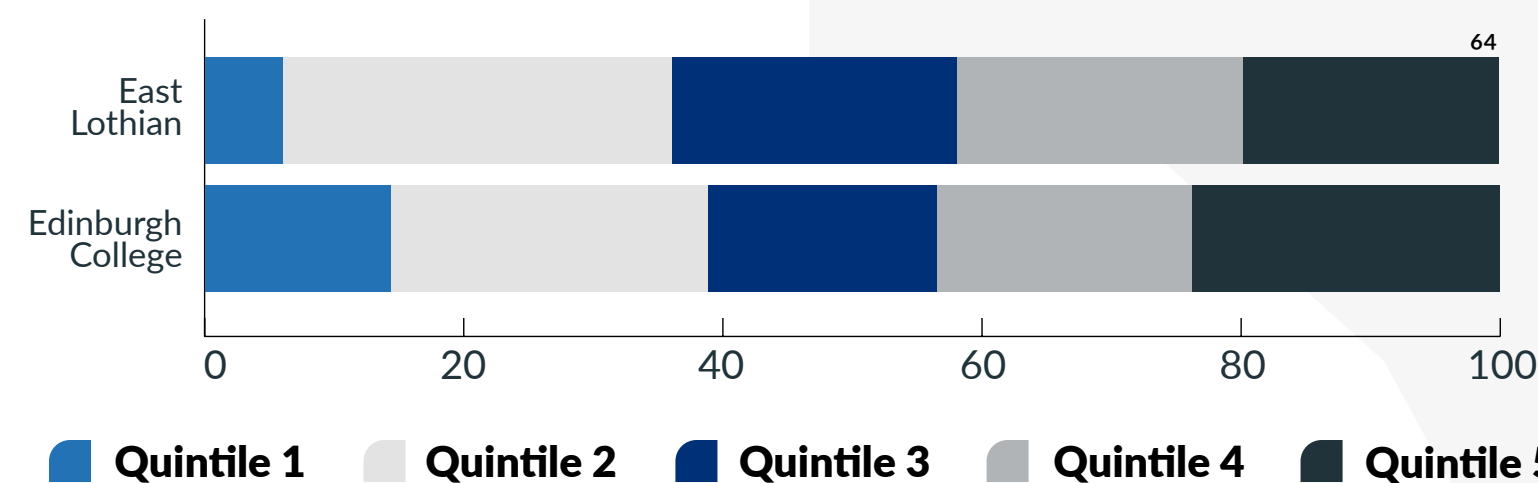
Top 3 industries for employment⁵⁹:



Sectors with largest forecast
employment growth⁶⁰:



6.06% of datazones are in SIMD20



Our Communities: Midlothian

94,680
Population of Midlothian⁶⁷

Projected to rise to 119,637 by 2043⁶⁸.

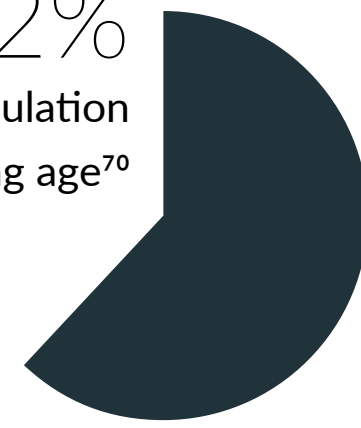
Output of
£1.7bn
(GVA)⁶⁹



Our Capital, Our College

07

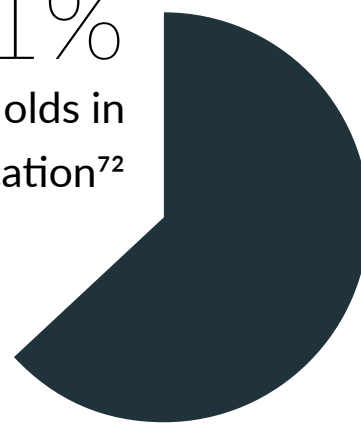
62%
of the population
are working age⁷⁰



84.2%
of the working
age population is
in employment⁷¹



63.1%
of 16-19 year olds in
Midlothian are in education⁷²



95.5%
of school leavers
go on to positive
destinations⁷³



Working Age Population⁷⁶

- 19.31% 0-15 years
- 61.82% 16-64 years
- 18.87% 65+ years

Population Employment⁷⁷

- 84.2% Employment
- 1.9% Unemployment
- 13.9% Economically inactive

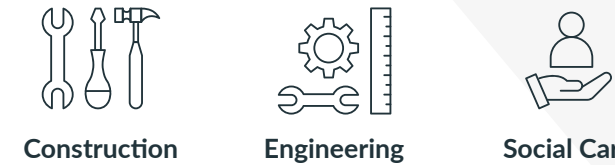
School Leaver Destinations⁷⁸

- 35.2% Employment
- 20.4% Further Education
- 36.2% Higher Education
- 2.5% Training
- 0.6% Voluntary Work

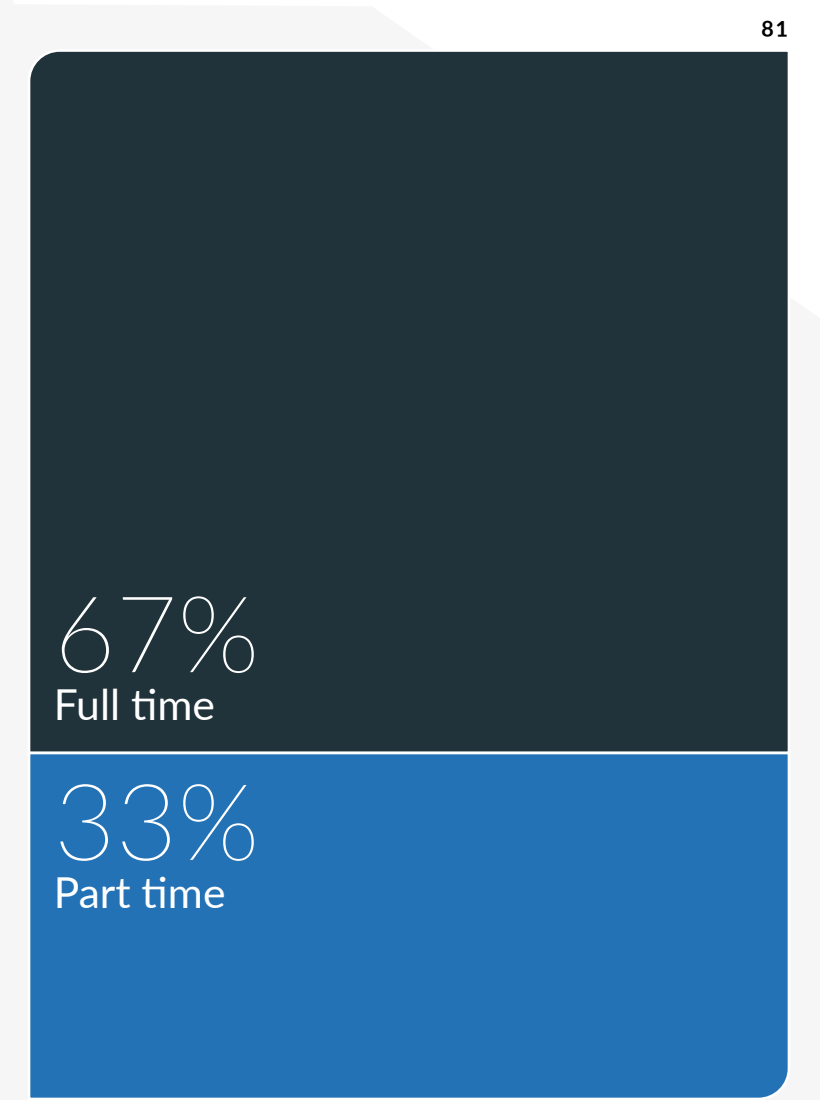
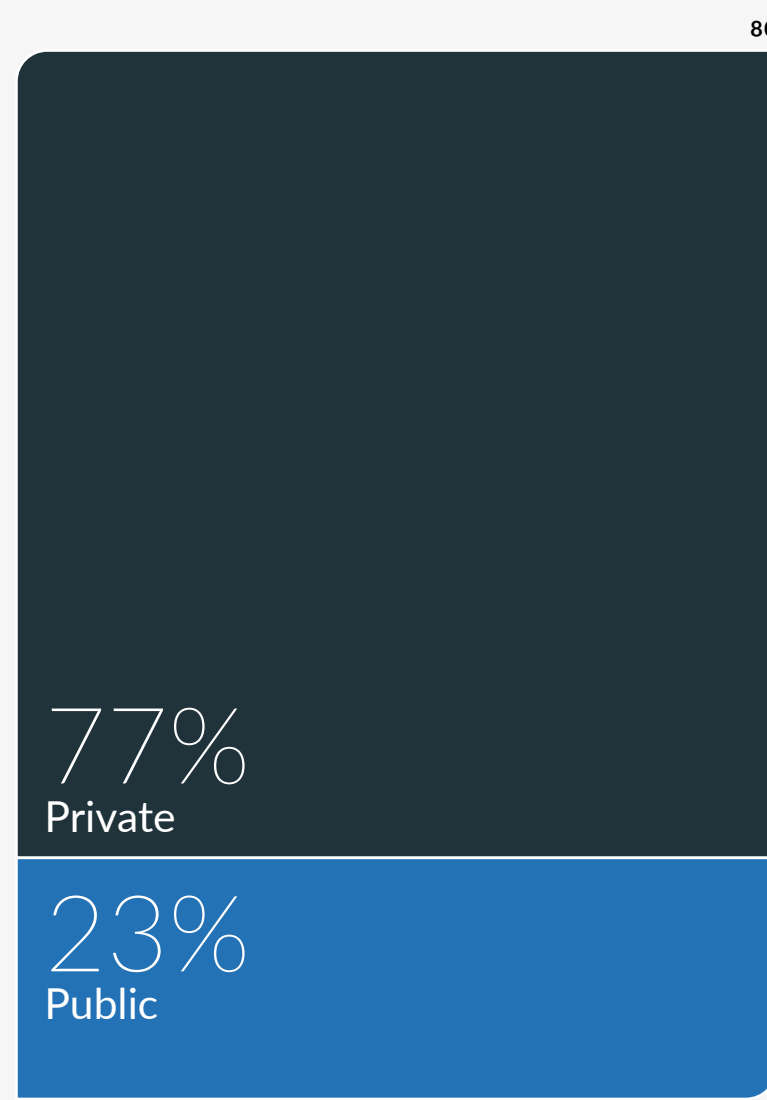
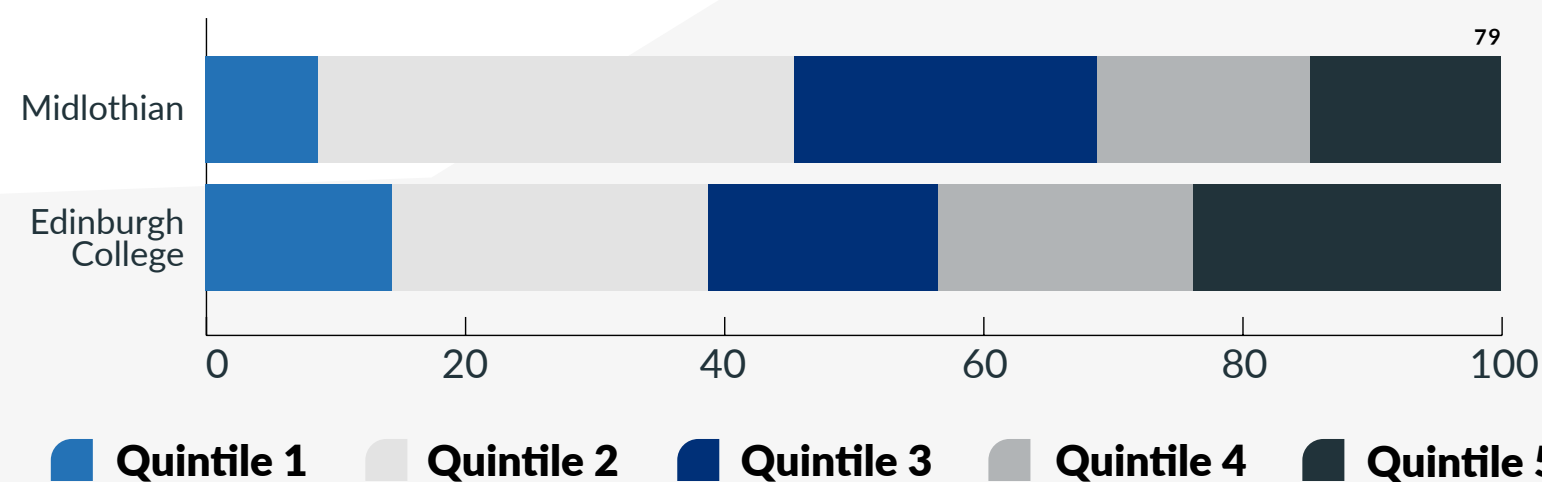
Top 3 industries for employment⁷⁴:



Sectors with largest forecast
employment growth⁷⁵:



8.7% of datazones are in SIMD20



80

81

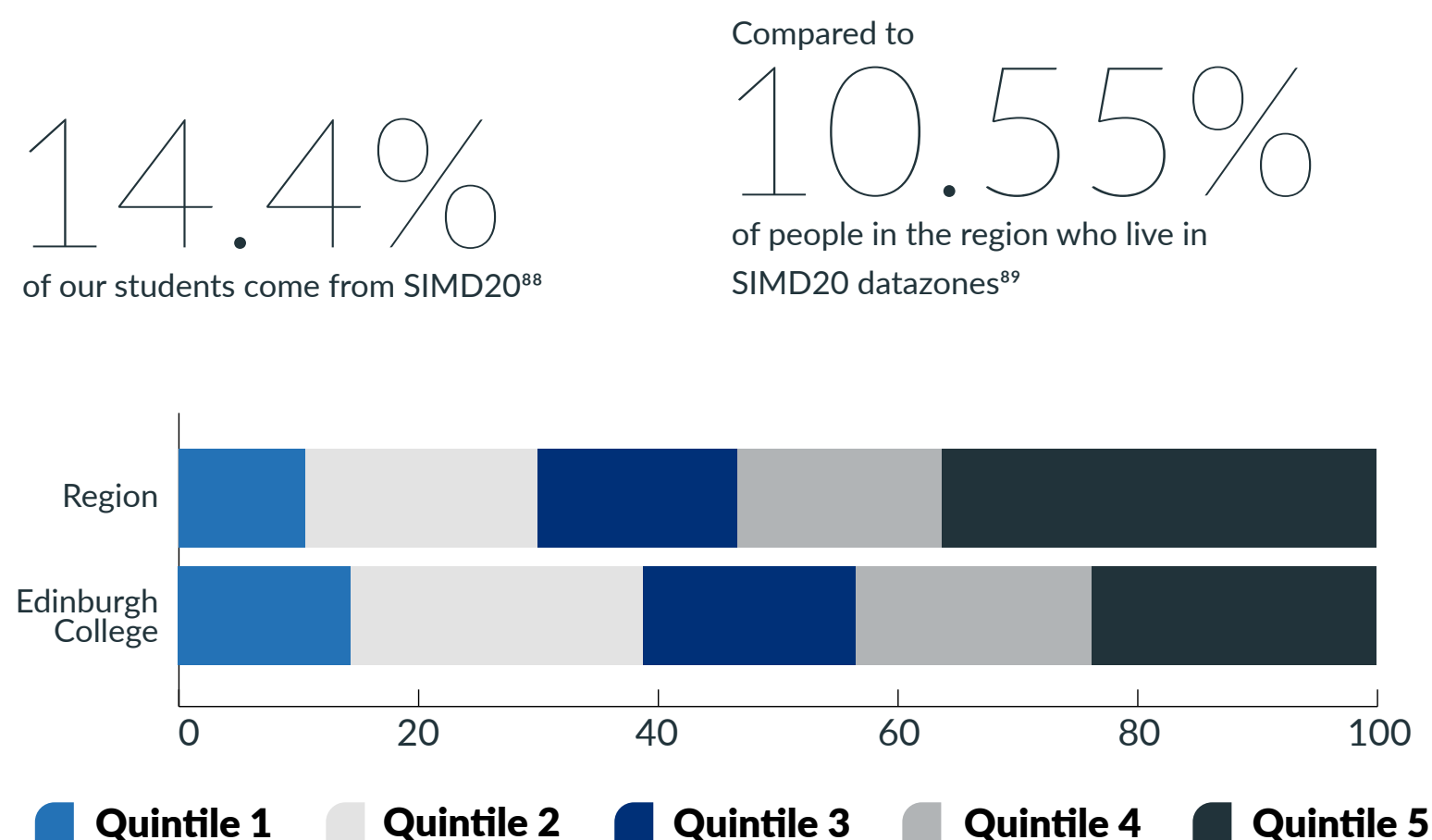
Equality

Scotland's colleges are at the forefront of tackling socio-economic inequality. For many years, the college cohort in Scotland has had an over-representation of learners from deprived backgrounds, with 36% of school leavers from SIMD20 moving into Further Education⁸². Consistent with this national trend, Edinburgh College enrolls a much higher proportion of students from SIMD20 and SIMD40 than the local population share. It follows that Edinburgh College – like all of Scotland's colleges – is an important academic progression pathway for students from deprived backgrounds. Nationally, 46% of full-time first-degree entrants to Scotland's universities from the 20% most deprived progressed to university after graduating from college⁸³.

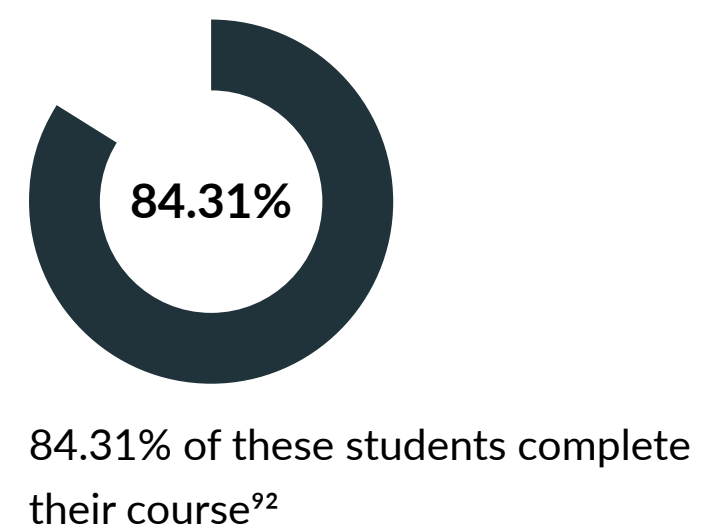
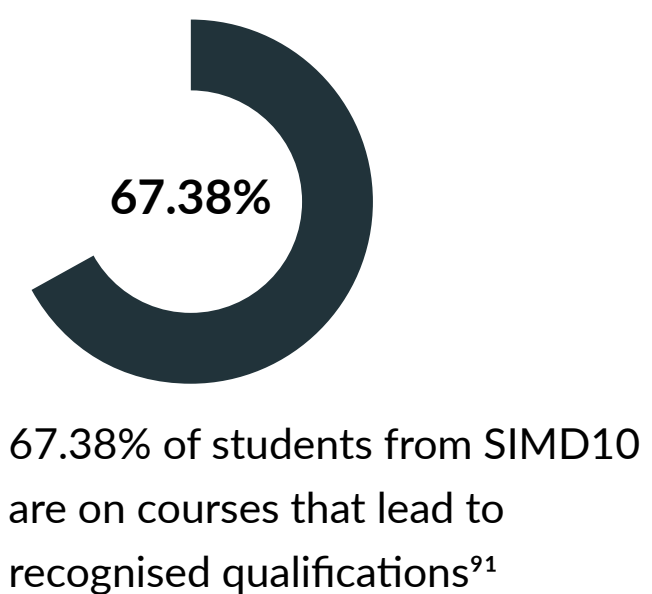
The pandemic and the subsequent cost-of-living crisis have exacerbated levels of poverty, and the myriad of associated challenges poverty creates. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that almost four million people experienced destitution in the UK in 2022 (a 148% increase in just five years)⁸⁴. While our region is more affluent than the national average, around 1 in 5 children still live in relative poverty⁸⁵. An independent survey carried out on behalf of the Edinburgh Partnership found that “deprivation is the most significant factor affecting the experience of life, living in Edinburgh, and receiving services” with “those in the 20% most deprived areas having an experience that is significantly and substantially worse than people who live in other areas of Edinburgh”⁸⁶. Poverty and inequality therefore remain exigent issues for many people in our region.

The College is committed to playing its part in tackling this national issue at a local level and has also taken an increasingly active role in providing a social safety net in recent years. In partnership with the Edinburgh College Students' Association, for example, we provided 19,350 free breakfasts to students in need during the 22/23 academic year⁸⁷. The College remains committed to supporting students' in the most need, both in the immediate term by providing interventions to mitigate the impact of poverty, and in the longer term, by providing them with the skills and opportunities to find fulfilling work or advance their career.

Equality: By Numbers



1,855 students from SIMD10 enrolled in 2021/22⁹⁰

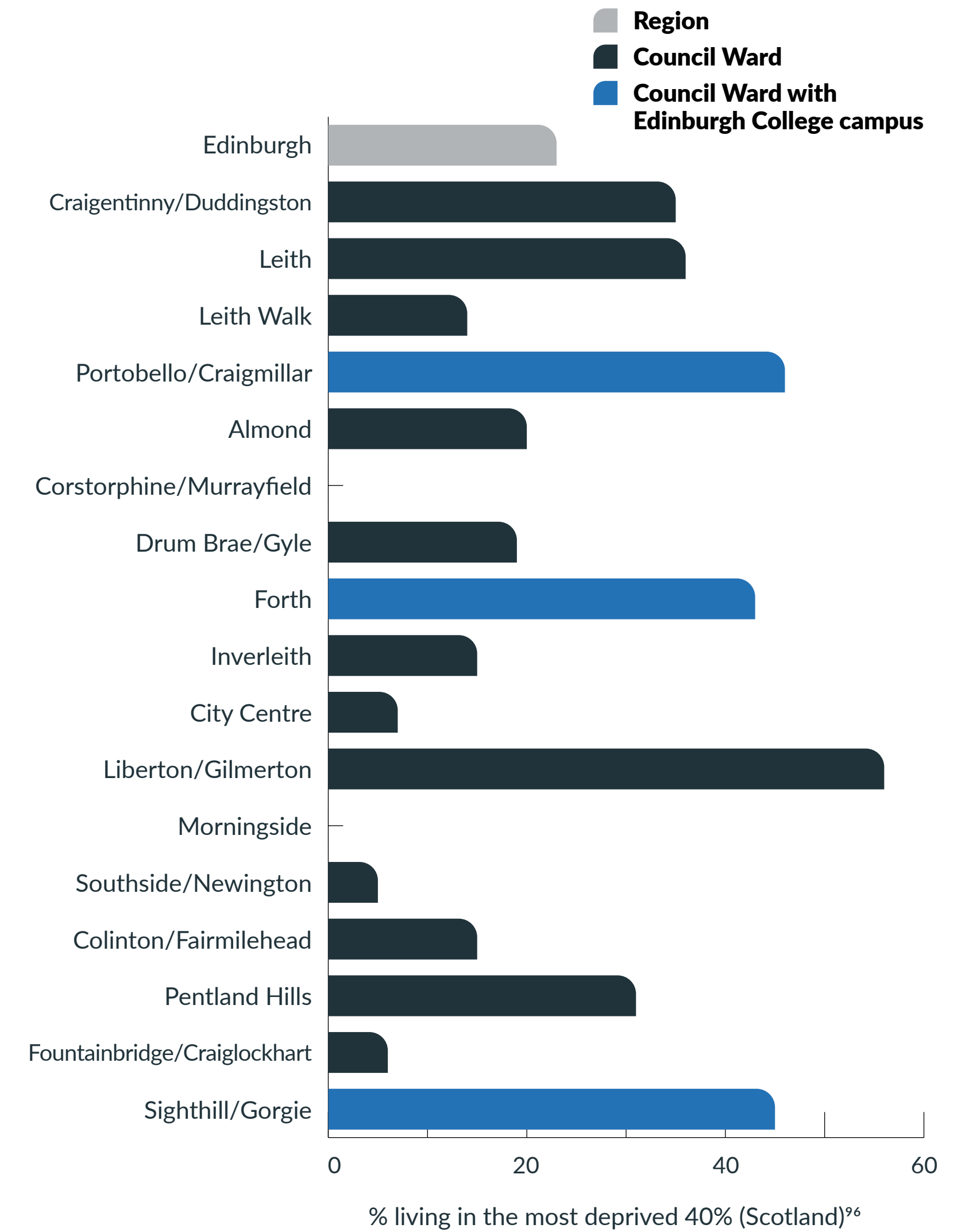
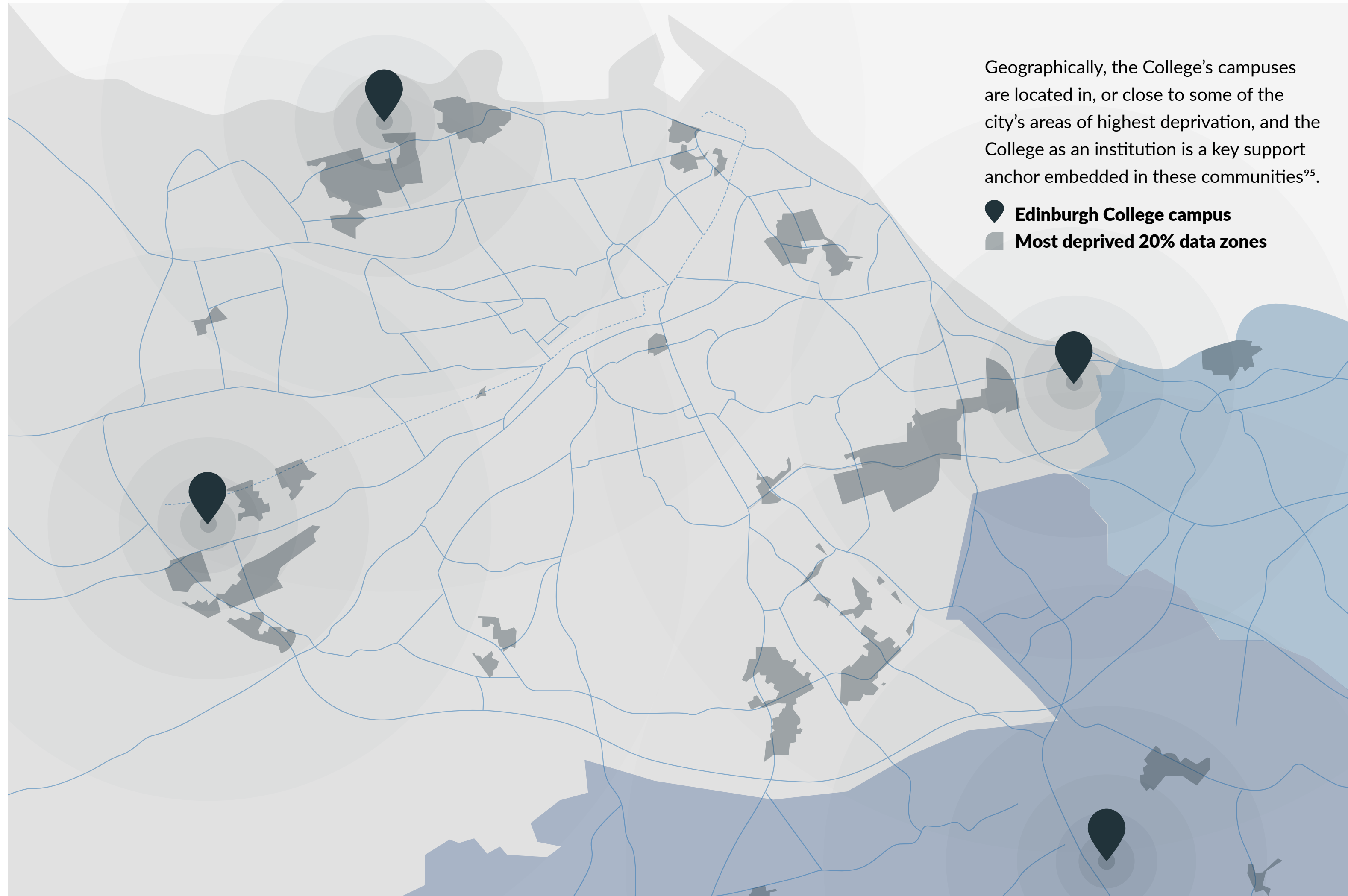


In partnership with the Edinburgh College Students' Association, we provided 15.2% of our students who progress to Higher Education with advanced standing come from SIMD20⁹³.

19,350 free breakfasts to students in need during the 22/23 academic year⁹⁴.



Equality



Equality

Although our capital has a high productivity economy, and many jobs in high-paying sectors, unemployment, low pay and in-work poverty all remain challenges across the region, with some areas and sectors particularly badly affected by these issues.

Edinburgh College works closely with partners across the region, and, in recent years, initiatives such as the Edinburgh Guarantee, the Edinburgh Living Wage Action Group and the End Poverty in Edinburgh campaign have all supported progress towards tackling these issues locally.

However, in January 2024, the claimant count (those claiming unemployment-related benefits) across the Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian region still stood at 11,255⁹⁷, with a further 21,698 claiming universal credit while in employment⁹⁸.

While a multi-faceted approach is required to tackle these issues, there is no doubt that ensuring individuals have the right skills to access employment opportunities locally, and have opportunities to upskill and progress in their career, is fundamental. For an individual, acquiring new skills or retraining can boost employment prospects and, at a sector or economy level, improved skills can also drive productivity and wage growth.

Edinburgh College is therefore committed to working with partners throughout the region to ensure it continues to play a key role in addressing these issues in the years ahead.

11,255
individuals across the region are claiming unemployment-related benefits⁹⁹.

An estimated
28,000
people in Edinburgh work in jobs that pay below the real Living Wage¹⁰⁰.

21,698
people across the region are in work but still reliant on Universal Credit¹⁰².

And 12,000 are employed through zero hours contracts¹⁰¹.

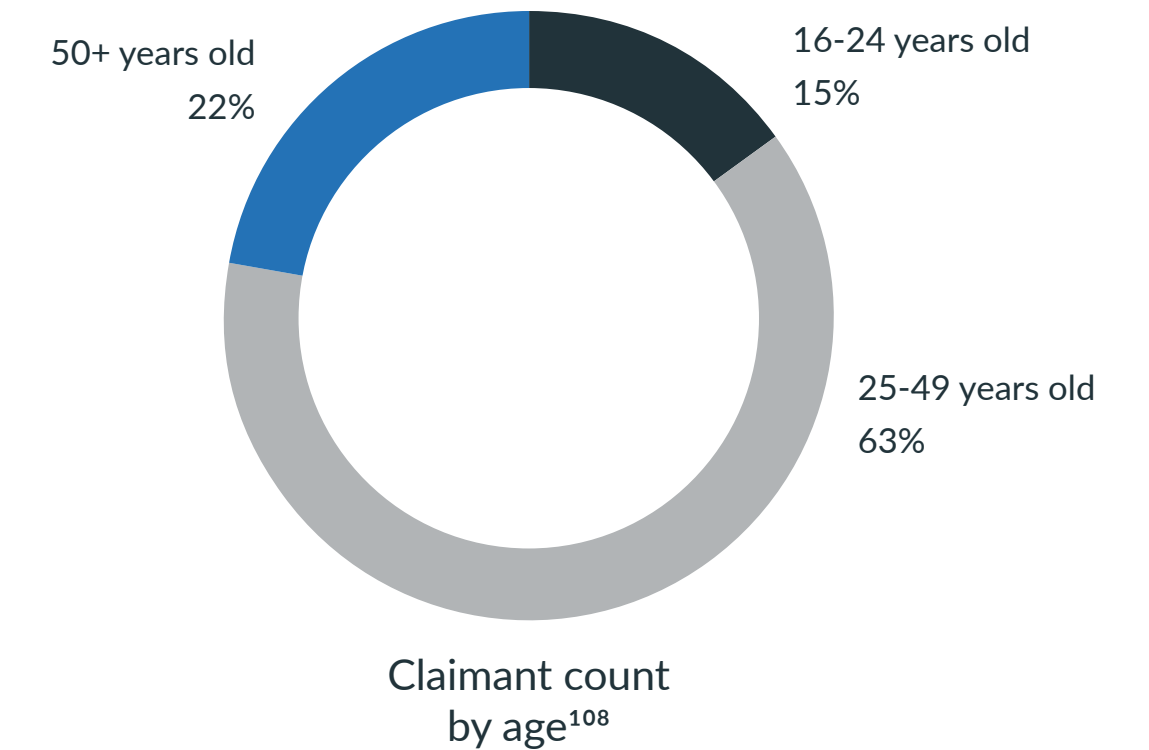
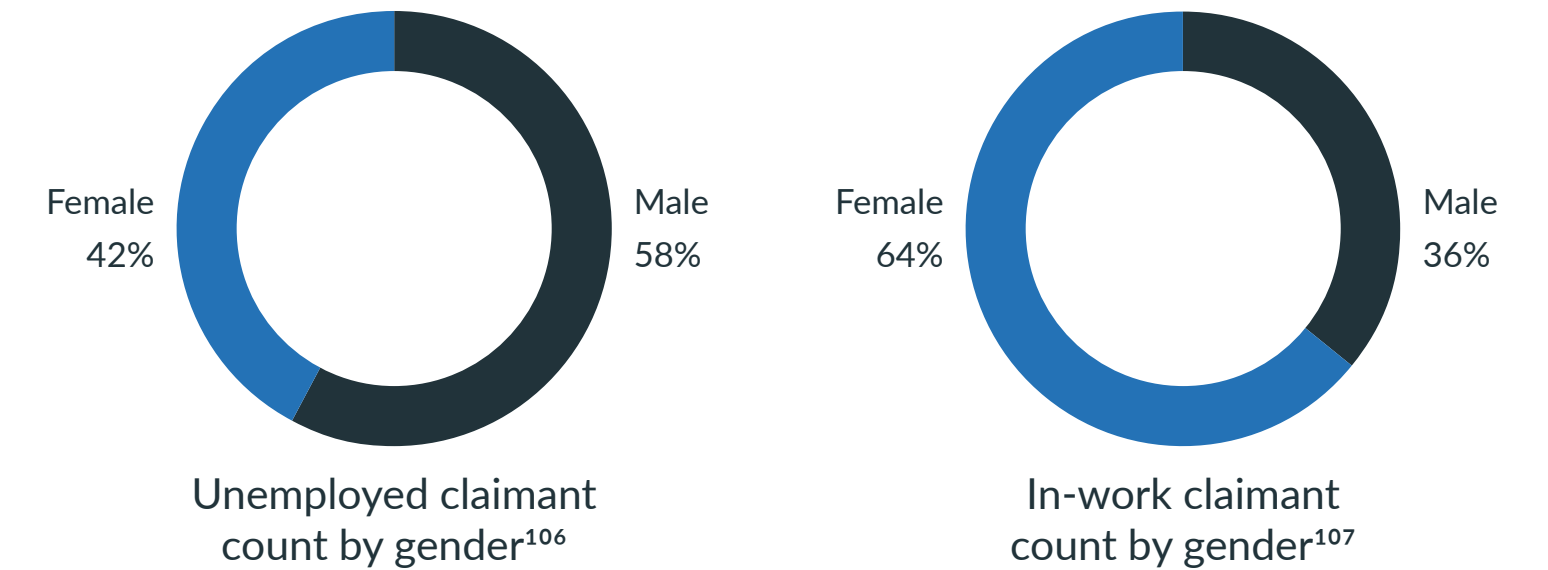
71,700
people across the region are economically inactive, with around 8,900 people across Edinburgh and East Lothian (Midlothian data not available) actively looking for work¹⁰²

There are
39,900
workless households across the region¹⁰³.

In 22/23,
3,287
households in Edinburgh were assessed as homeless and

On average, a total of
£3.5 million
of debt is owed by clients seeking advice from Citizen's Advice in Edinburgh each year¹⁰⁵.

4,431
were in temporary accommodation¹⁰⁴.



Community

Edinburgh College is deeply embedded in community life throughout the region. We work closely with public, third sector and private partners through a range of formal and informal networks to ensure we play an active role in helping our communities to thrive. The Edinburgh College community and outreach team deliver a wide range of programmes in local communities all across the city, providing learning opportunities to those who may otherwise be unable to access them due to their individual circumstances.

An example of the depth of the College's community engagement can be seen in our ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Language) offer, including our community-based ESOL courses, delivered at sites across the city and targeted at those in the community whose first language is not English, to develop the language skills to live, work and study in the UK. In particular, our English for work and training courses support students who have the required skills for the workplace but don't have the language level to fully utilise these skills, get back into the workplace.

Many of those who undertake our ESOL programmes (either in the community or college-based) are asylum seekers or refugees and the College has a long history of supporting those arriving in the city to integrate and feel welcome in their new communities. In 2023, the College was nominated for a College Community Learning award for our work with Ukrainian refugees and, in particular, our partnership with local charity, Dnipro kids, the Scottish Government and the City of Edinburgh Council, to provide safe living accommodation for a group of refugees in the halls of residence at our Milton Road Campus.

The College is an active member of the Community Planning Partnerships in each of the local authority areas in our region and continuing and deepening our role as a community anchor is a key priority in our new strategy.



Of those surveyed by the Edinburgh Partnership (excluding "don't knows"), 91.8% were satisfied with the service Edinburgh College provides in their community¹⁰⁹.

We delivered courses to
3,920
people through our community outreach programmes¹¹⁰.

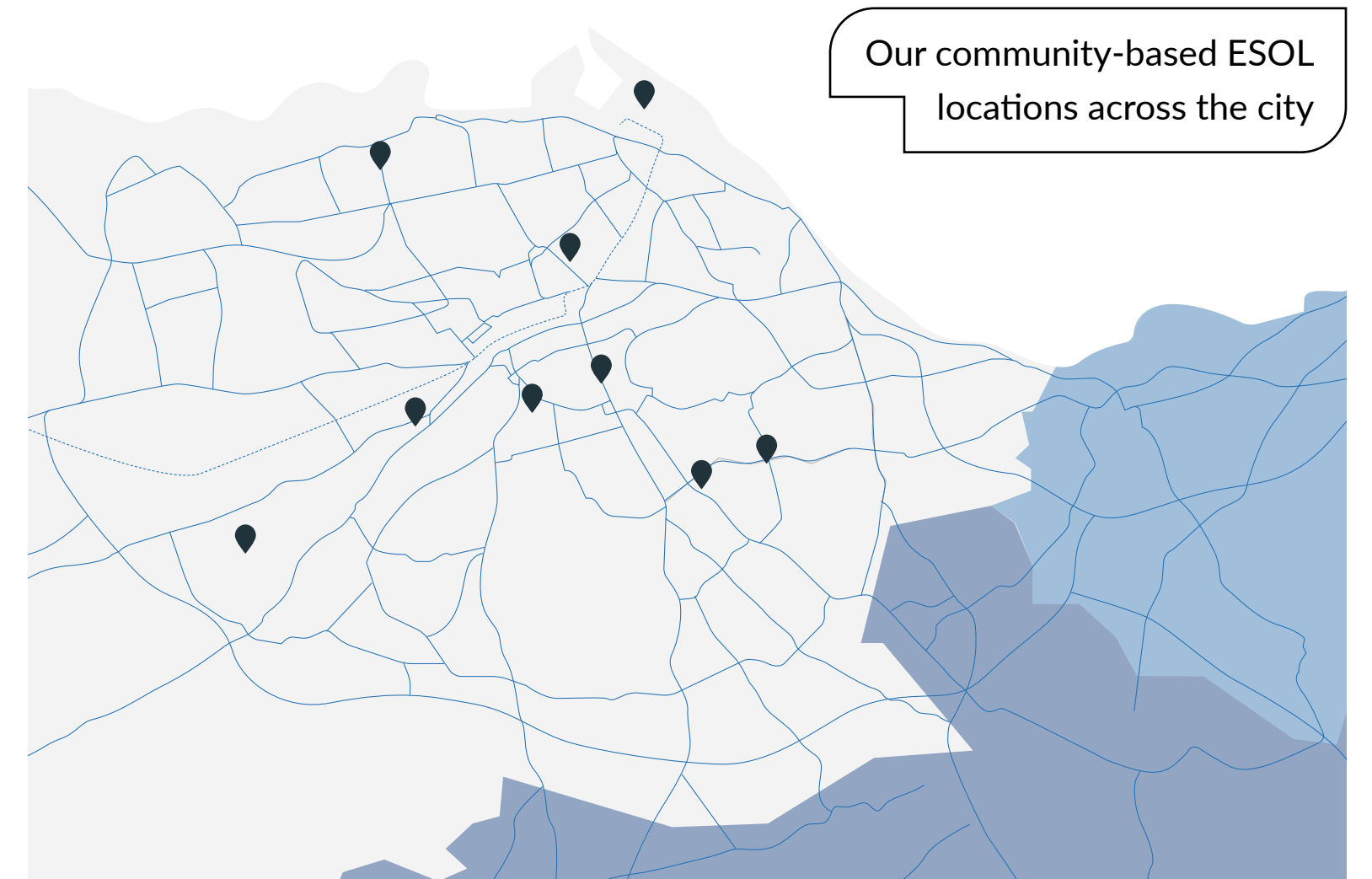
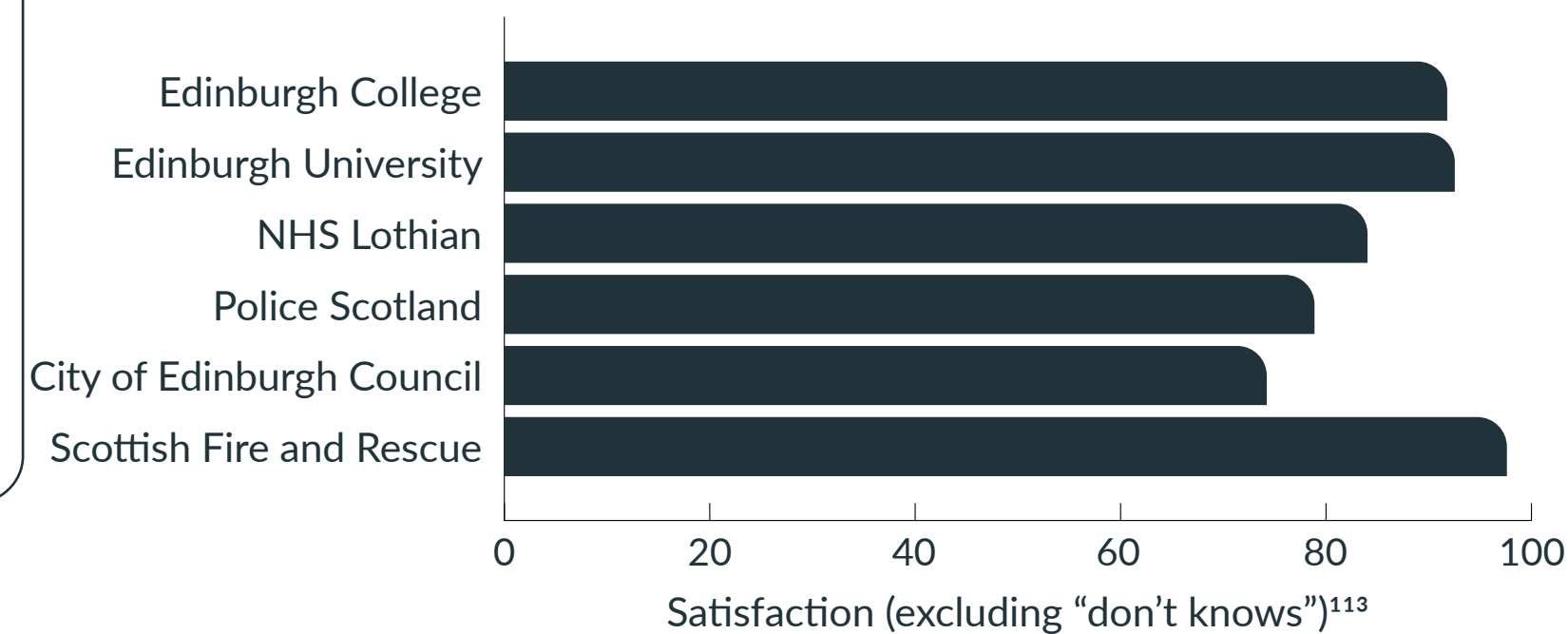
More than
750

Ukrainian refugees have arrived in Edinburgh through the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, with 20,000 more arriving in Scotland sponsored by the Scottish Government¹¹¹.

In 2022/23, delivered courses to
568
refugees, including 498 refugees from Ukraine¹¹².

60

Ukrainian refugees lived in the halls of residence at the College's Milton Road Campus from March 2022.



Opportunity

Providing opportunity for our students is a key part of the College's mission.

At the heart of this mission, is the belief that by equipping our learners with the right skills and capacities, we support them to unlock higher-quality employment opportunities.

The College's capacity to provide opportunity to learners therefore relies on our ability to align our offer with emerging trends in the labour market locally and nationally, and our capacity to respond quickly to the shifting skills needs of the region's businesses and employers. To do this, we are continuously developing our curriculum and our approach to ensure we are equipping our students with the right skills to take advantage of the local and national employment opportunities, while, at the same time, providing a pipeline of work-ready talent for employers in our city-region.

The College has also invested in state-of-the-art facilities linked to areas of future employment demand. Examples include a Renewables Centre to upskill and reskill current and future professionals in green technologies and two Digital Care Hubs that equip students with the transferrable skills required to fulfil a successful career in areas including Health and Social Care and Dental and Pharmacy, with a particular emphasis on technology-enabled care.

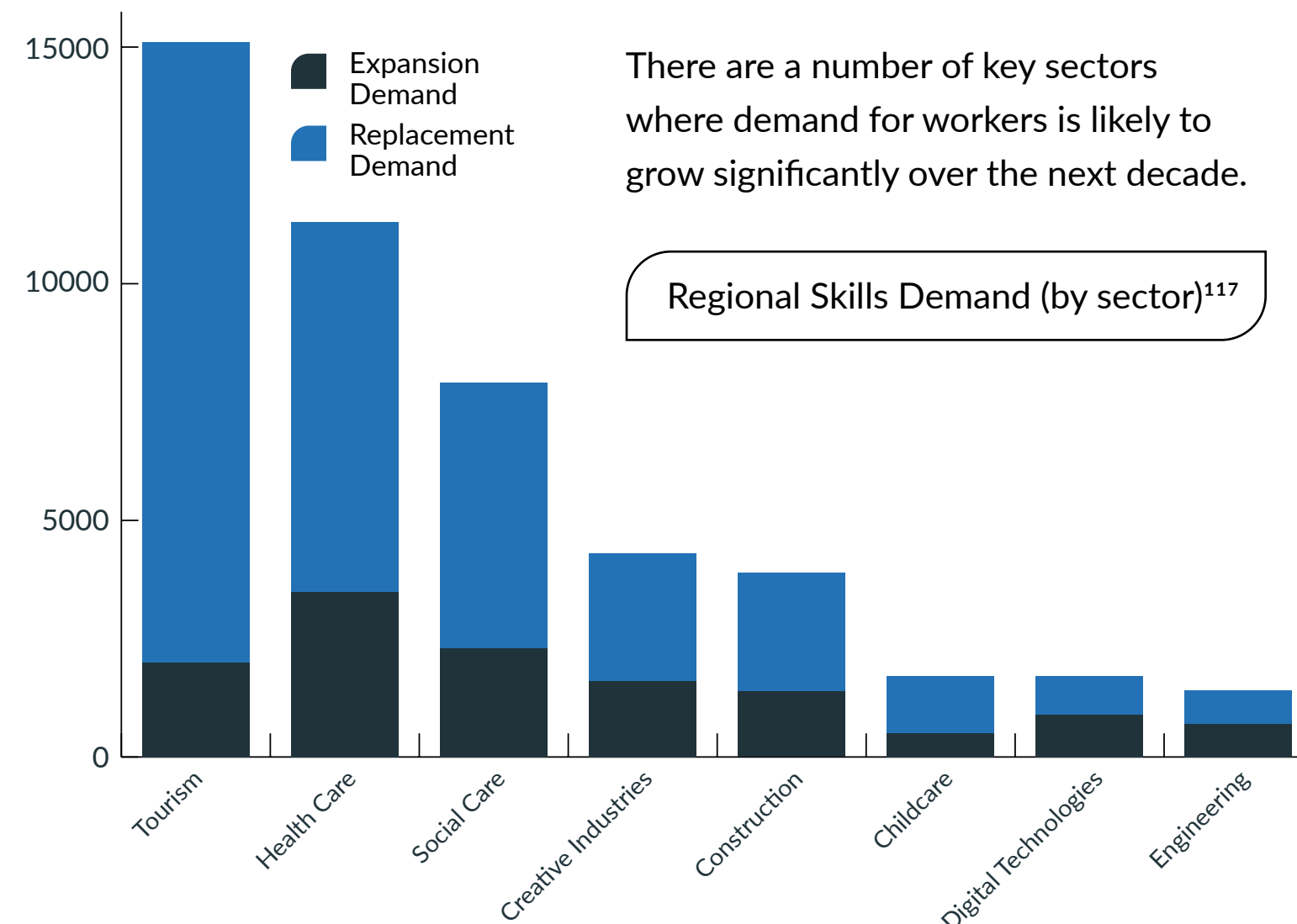
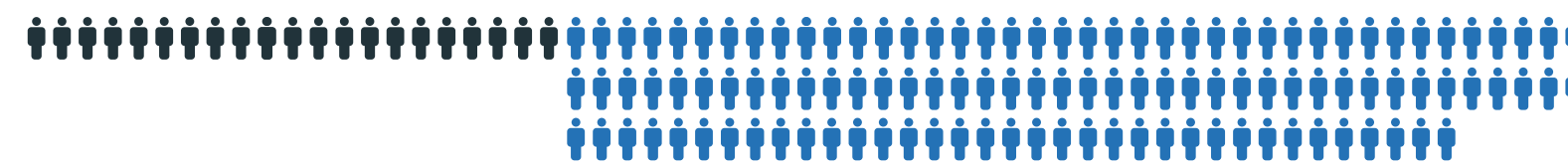


Regional Skills Demand

By 2033, forecasts suggest there could be a workforce requirement for

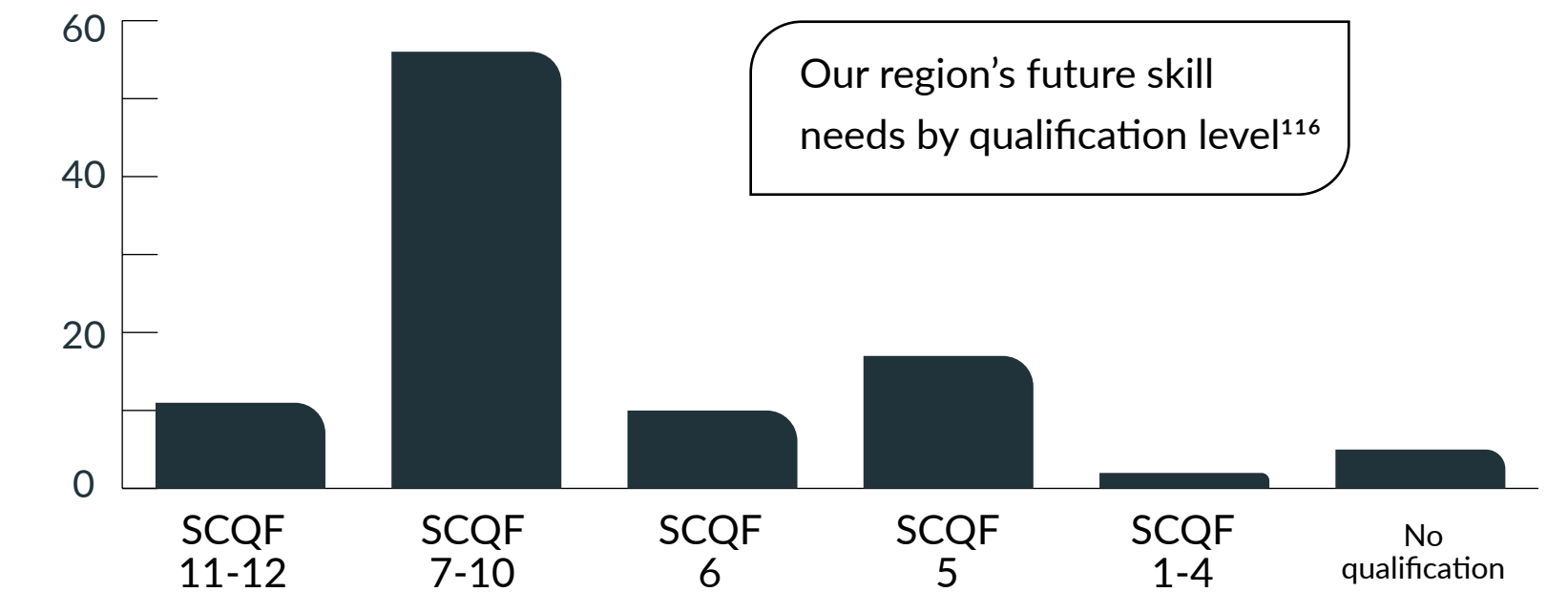
136,400
extra people in the region¹¹⁴.

This is made up of 21,200 new jobs (expansion demand) and 115,200 vacancies created by people leaving the workforce (replacement demand)¹¹⁵.



There are a number of key sectors where demand for workers is likely to grow significantly over the next decade.

The majority of these jobs will require well-skilled people



Edinburgh College's role in Regional Skills Supply

Edinburgh College provides education and training for some

27,000
people per year¹¹⁸.

Per year we have¹¹⁹:

- 1,220 enrolments in Catering/Food/Leisure Services/Tourism
- 11,563 enrolments in Health Care/Medicine/Health and Safety
- 1,952 enrolments in Performing Arts/Arts and Crafts
- 2,148 enrolments in Construction
- 1,512 enrolments in IT
- 1,729 enrolments in Engineering

Edinburgh College in the Region's Education Landscape

Colleges are a vital part of Scotland's education system. They are an important partner for schools, an important destination for school leavers, and an important stage for many on the journey to university or employment. All of these roles are at times under-appreciated. A report by CDN (College Development Network) found that in 2019/2020 around a fifth of senior phase school pupils were involved in a schools-college partnership¹²⁰ programme. Where university is concerned, colleges play a particularly important role in widening access, with nearly half of those from the most deprived backgrounds who go to university doing so via college¹²¹.

Edinburgh College is an integral part of the capital region's education ecosystem. The College engages with thousands of school pupils every year and more than a fifth of school leavers in each local authority in our region progress to Further Education or Higher Education in a college-setting. We also have strong links with the city's universities and progression from Higher National (HN) level study to university is a priority for us. The College has one of the highest proportions of articulating students in Scotland, with more than half of those progressing to university doing so with advanced standing. To support articulation, we continue to work closely with key regional partners on the Pathways app (launched in 2020) to facilitate the learner journey.

Nationally, 26% of school leavers went into further education¹²²

This rises to 36% of school leavers from SIMD20¹²³

And 50% of S4 leavers¹²⁴

4,836

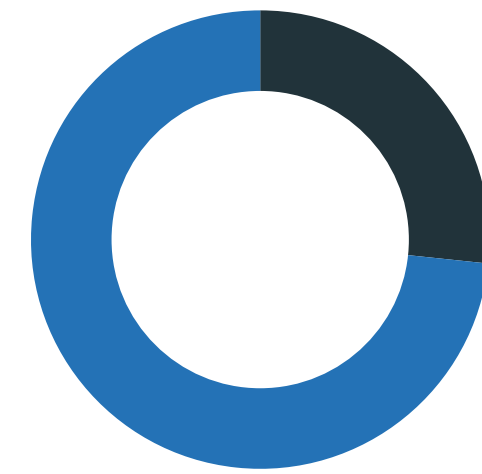
school pupils (around 17% of secondary pupils in the region¹²⁸) study with us¹²⁹

We work closely with

33

High Schools across our region¹³⁰

296 pupils are on SCP courses leading to recognised qualifications, including 79 Foundation Apprenticeships and 217 Modern Apprenticeships¹³¹.



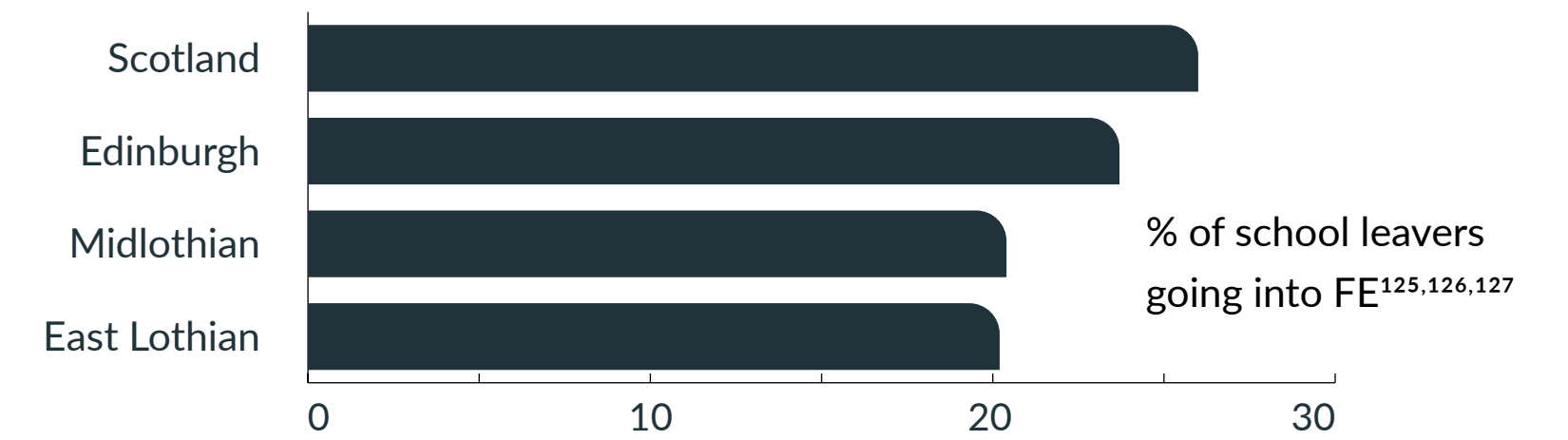
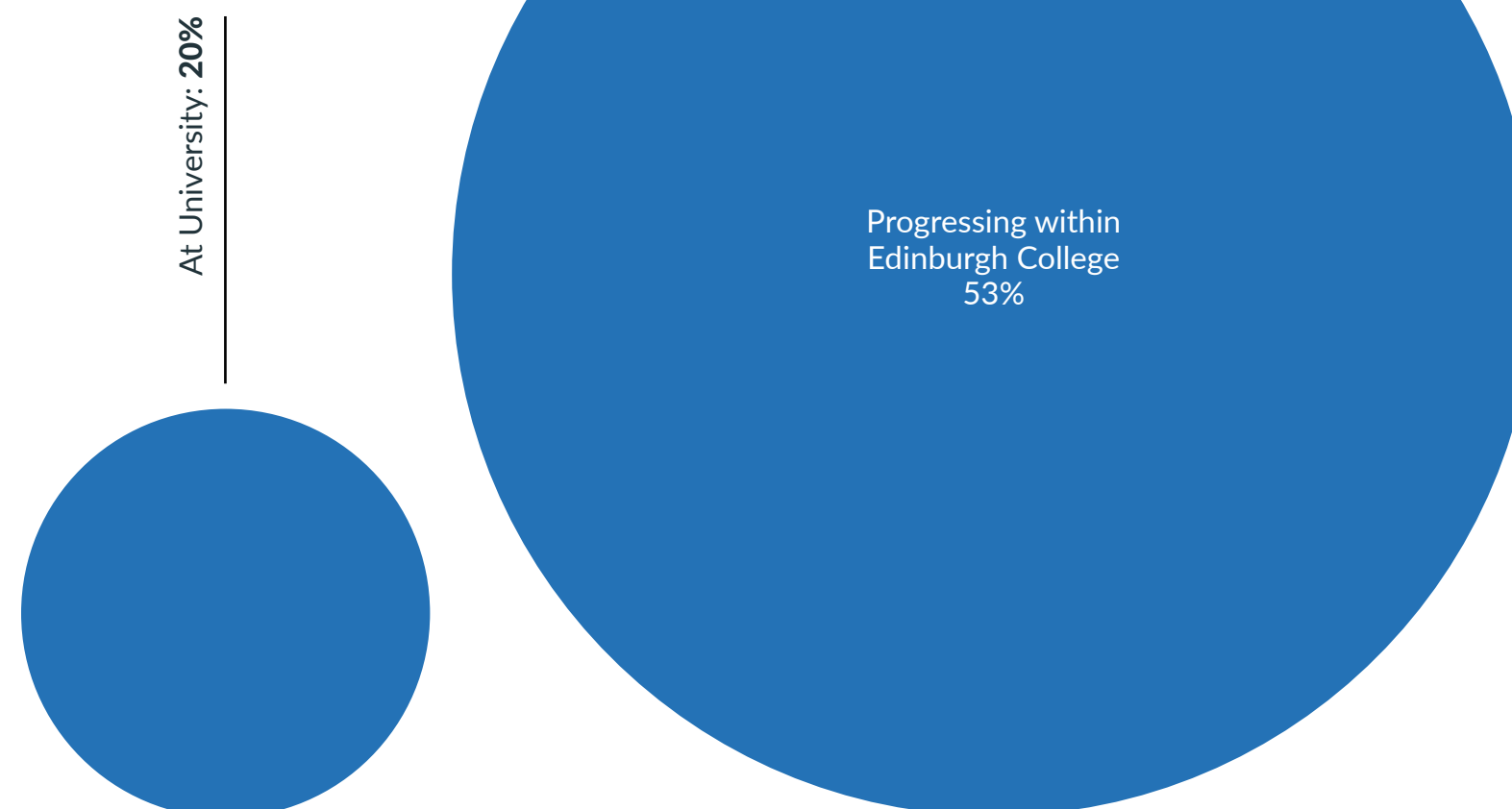
79

Foundation Apprenticeships

217

Modern Apprenticeships

Where students go after Edinburgh College¹³²



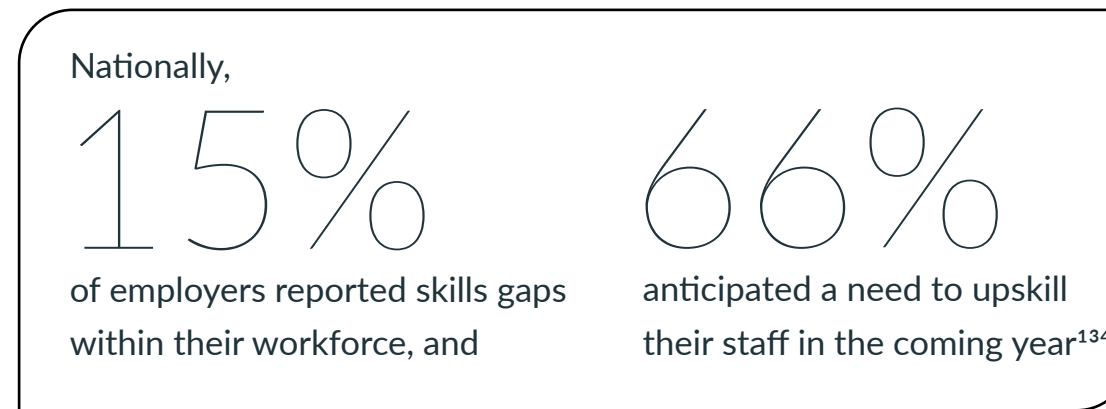
Delivering Foundation Apprenticeships in:



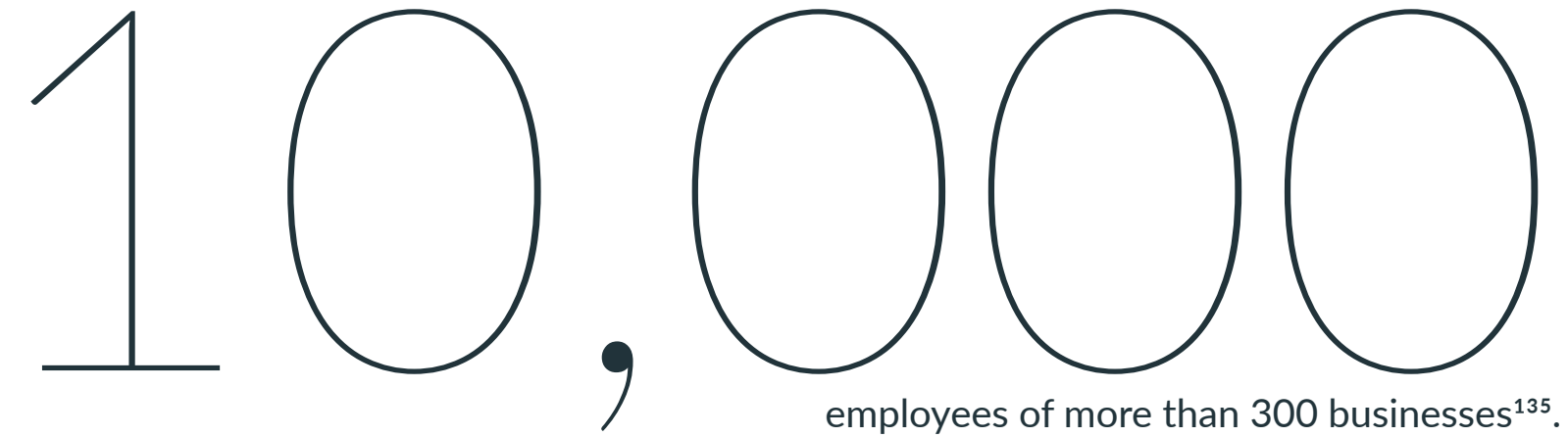
Working with Employers

Through driving improved productivity, employee upskilling and reskilling can be an important driver of economic growth. Nationally, 25.5% of those in employment undertook some form of on the job training in the past three months¹³³. While the loss of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund is bad news for colleges, employers, and the Scottish economy as a whole, Edinburgh College continues to work closely with local employers, as the go-to training provider in supporting them tackle areas of skill shortage by upskilling and reskilling their workforce.

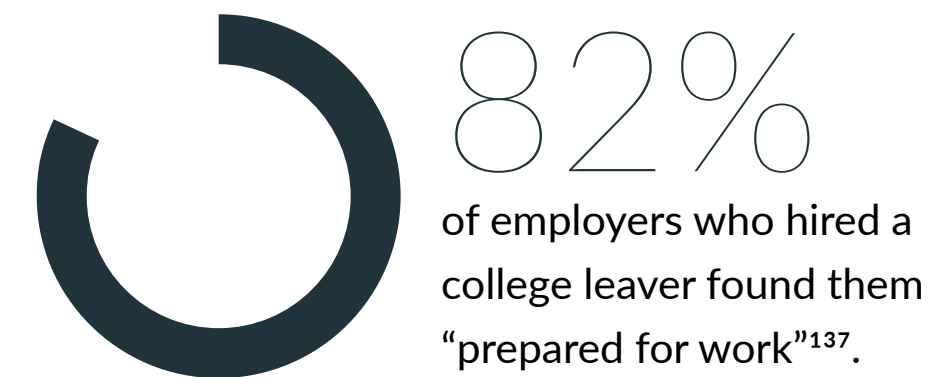
Edinburgh College also works closely with employers on innovation, another important driver of productivity growth in the region. The College has partnered with a number of business throughout the region, using innovation grants and vouchers as a mechanism through which to collaborate on projects aimed at enhancing an industry product, process or service. An example of the success of this approach came when the College, and partners, Anturas, were named winners of the Innovation in Business Award at the annual Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Business Awards in March 2024.



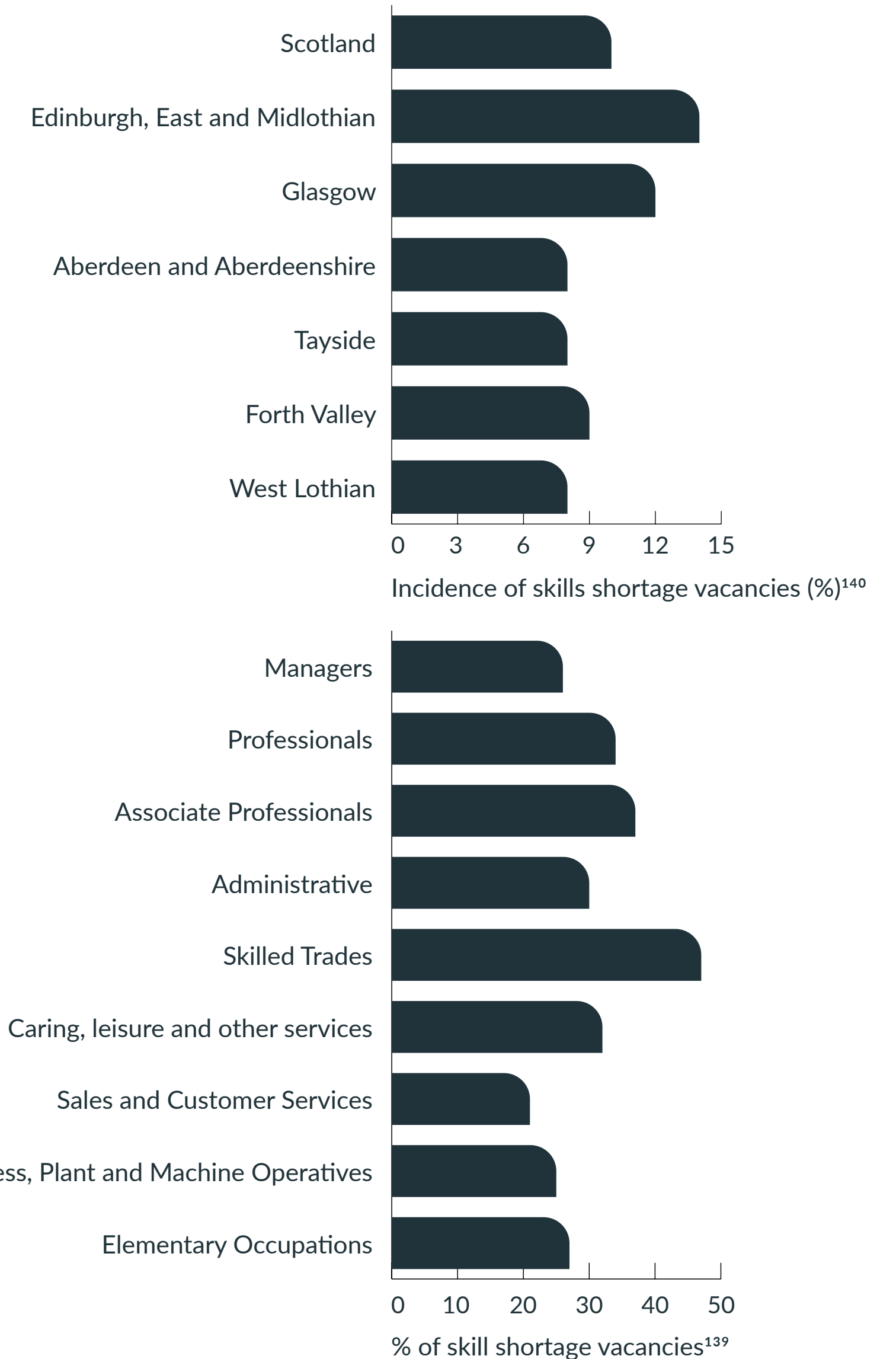
Through the Flexible Workforce Development Fund, we provided training to more than



That's equivalent to more than **1 in 50** workers in the region benefitting from training with us through this fund.



22% of people surveyed in Edinburgh were planning to learn a new skill, or study for any academic or professional qualifications in the next year¹³⁸.

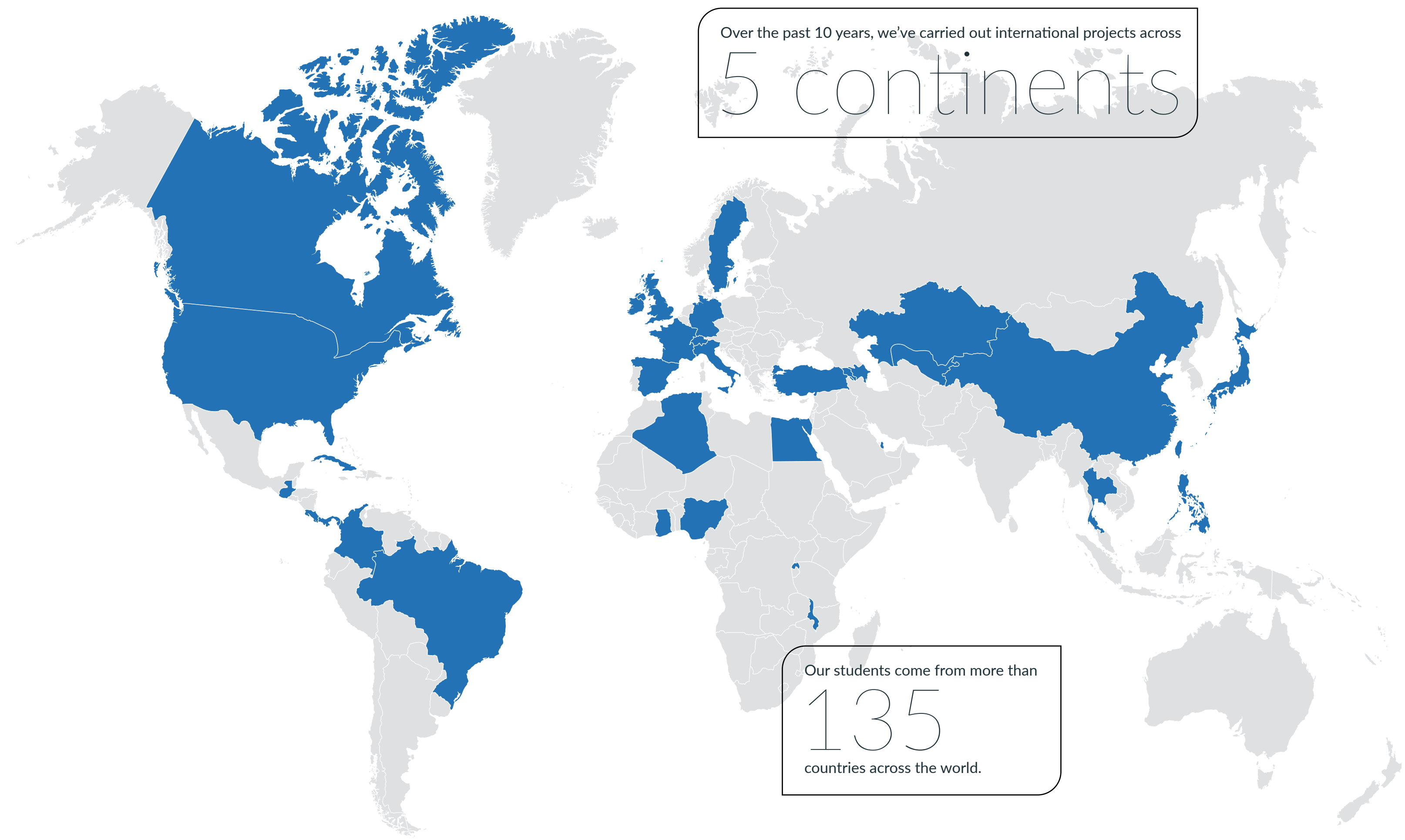


Connecting our Capital with the World

Edinburgh College is one of the UK's most internationally active colleges. Our extensive international work includes developing and delivering tailor-made professional training programmes, providing teacher training and professional development courses, supporting curriculum review and development across a wide range of subject areas and supporting international accreditation and capacity building in the TVET sector.

This international project work, as well as our ongoing international student recruitment, plays an important role in connecting the communities we serve with the wider world. International connections, often developed over a number of years, help to internationalise our campuses and give opportunity to our students to broaden their horizons and become global citizens. Through our network of homestay families, we embed our international students in local communities, bringing an international presence to areas beyond the city centre.

We work with more than **50 homestay families** in communities throughout the city, to provide a home-away-from-home for international students.



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- ¹² Internal Data (22/23)
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