

Record number of Scots businesses



Construction is a big growth area and this picture was taken during the conversion of The Grey Horse in Balerno into a gastro pub.
Picture by Nigel Duncan Media

The number of businesses in Scotland is at the highest level since records began.

Official statistics show there were 365,600 private sector businesses (registered and unregistered) operating in Scotland as at March 2017 – up by more than 50 per cent since 2000 – providing more than two million jobs in Scotland.

The figure represents an increase of 11,110 over the year taking the number of businesses in Scotland to its highest level in the 17 years since the figures were first recorded.

The number of these firms which are VAT/PAYE registered is up for the sixth year in a row, by 2,405 from 173,995 in 2016 to 176,400 in 2017 – and is also at a record high.

And the estimated number of unregistered businesses (the smallest firms with an annual turnover below the VAT threshold of £83,000 and do not have employees) rose from 180,500 in 2016 to 189,200 in 2017 – an increase of 8,700.

Scottish Government Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy, Paul Wheelhouse, said: “These figures show Scotland’s business scene is thriving.

“We’re committed to helping businesses to start-up and grow, and our Small Business Bonus Scheme is benefitting the occupiers of more than 100,000 properties this year by either

eliminating or substantially reducing their business rates bill.”

The number of businesses operating in Scotland is up by 52.4 per cent since 2000.

The Business in Scotland 2017 report shows that the two largest industry sectors were professional, scientific and technical activities (52,985 enterprises) and construction (45,940 enterprises).

Together, these two sectors make up 27 per cent of all private sector enterprises in Scotland.