



Information Paper

European statistical areas (NUTS and LAU)
in Scotland

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The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland was established by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, with responsibility for keeping under review local government areas and electoral arrangements in Scotland. We have produced this series of Information Papers explaining local government boundaries in Scotland and related topics.

Under the terms of s.8 of the Scotland Act 2016, responsibility for reviews of Scottish Parliament boundaries passed from the Boundary Commission for Scotland to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland with effect from 18 May 2017. Section 28 of the Scottish Elections (Reform) Act 2020 renamed the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland as Boundaries Scotland and came into force on 14 May 2021.

Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) is a set of statistical areas defined for all of the European Union. Each member state is responsible for nominating their NUTS areas and notifying them to Eurostat, the European **Commission's statistical body**. Detailed information on NUTS is available on the Eurostat website¹.

NUTS areas have a series of hierarchical levels, with NUTS-1 being the least detailed (all of Scotland is a single NUTS-1 area), NUTS-2 and 3 being more detailed, and further levels of detail provided by Local Administrative Unit (LAU) levels 1 and 2. LAU areas were introduced in 2003, and the role of LAU-1 and 2 corresponds to that of NUTS-4 and 5 which existed before then.

Eurostat recommends that NUTS-1 areas should have a population between 3 million and 7 million, NUTS-2 between 800,000 and 3 million and NUTS-3 between 150,000 and 800,000, but these population limits are not strictly enforced.

Each NUTS area has a code and a name. The latest NUTS areas are referred to as NUTS 2021 and came into force on 1 January 2021. The table below lists the NUTS areas for Scotland and their relationship with Scottish local government areas.

Level	Code	Name	Council areas
1	UKM	SCOTLAND	
2	UKM5	North Eastern Scotland	
3	UKM50	Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire	Aberdeen City Aberdeenshire
2	UKM6	Highlands and Islands	
3	UKM61	Caithness & Sutherland and Ross & Cromarty	Highland (part)
3	UKM62	Inverness & Nairn and Moray, Badenoch & Strathspey	Highland (part) Moray
3	UKM63	Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh, Arran & Cumbrae and Argyll & Bute	Argyll and Bute (part) Highland (part) North Ayrshire (part)
3	UKM64	Eilean Siar (Western Isles)	Na h-Eileanan an Iar
3	UKM65	Orkney Islands	Orkney Islands
3	UKM66	Shetland Islands	Shetland Islands

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/background>

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Level	Code	Name	Council areas
2	UKM7	Eastern Scotland	
3	UKM71	Angus and Dundee City	Angus Dundee City
3	UKM72	Clackmannanshire and Fife	Clackmannanshire Fife
3	UKM73	East Lothian and Midlothian	East Lothian Midlothian
3	UKM75	Edinburgh, City of	City of Edinburgh
3	UKM76	Falkirk	Falkirk
3	UKM77	Perth & Kinross and Stirling	Perth and Kinross Stirling
3	UKM78	West Lothian	West Lothian
2	UKM8	West Central Scotland	
3	UKM81	East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire and Helensburgh & Lomond	Argyll and Bute (part) East Dunbartonshire West Dunbartonshire
3	UKM82	Glasgow City	Glasgow City
3	UKM83	Inverclyde, East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire	East Renfrewshire Inverclyde Renfrewshire
3	UKM84	North Lanarkshire	North Lanarkshire
2	UKM9	Southern Scotland	
3	UKM91	Scottish Borders	Scottish Borders
3	UKM92	Dumfries & Galloway	Dumfries and Galloway
3	UKM93	East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire mainland	East Ayrshire North Ayrshire (part)
3	UKM94	South Ayrshire	South Ayrshire
3	UKM95	South Lanarkshire	South Lanarkshire

Most council areas are contained in one NUTS-2 and one NUTS-3 area. The exceptions at NUTS-2 are Argyll and Bute council area and North Ayrshire council area which are each divided between UKM6 and UKM9. At NUTS-3, the exceptions are the council areas of Argyll and Bute; and North Ayrshire which are divided between UKM63, UKM81 and UKM93.

The 2003 European regulation defining the NUTS system states that changes to underlying boundaries (in the case of Scotland this means electoral wards), NUTS-3 areas will only be amended if more than 1% of the population of the NUTS-3 area is affected.

NUTS are revised every 3 years or so, but revisions do not necessarily lead to any changes in Scotland. The periodic changes to NUTS areas are documented by Eurostat².

² <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/history>

*European statistical areas (NUTS and LAU) in Scotland
Appendix B – Past NUTS areas in Scotland*

NUTS 2 and 3 areas in Scotland from 2021

