

Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS), our 59-member Citizen Advice Bureaux (CAB) and the Extra Help Unit (EHU), form Scotland's largest independent advice network. Scotland's Citizens Advice Network is an essential community service that empowers people through our local bureaux and national services by providing free, confidential and independent advice.

We use people's real-life experiences to influence policy and drive positive change. We are on the side of people in Scotland who need help and we change lives for the better. During 2022-23, the Citizens Advice network provided advice and assistance to over 187,000 people. The network putting over £142 million back into people's pockets during this time, with every £1 invested in core advice funding returning £14 in gains for people.

This is the latest monthly summary of data from the Citizens Advice network in Scotland and covers April 2024. It shows data from the 59 Citizens Advice Bureaux in Scotland and our online advice site.

Month in Focus

In April 2024, CABs helped over 24,000 people, giving almost 97,000 pieces of advice. Meanwhile, online advice pages received over 397,000 unique page views (UPVs).

Online, there were significant increases in page views relating to Universal Credit. Views increased by 41% from March 2024 and 24% from April 2023.

The webpage that seems to be driving this increase is ['Check how much Universal Credit you'll get'](#) which increased by 98% compared to the same time last year. People have been feeling the impact of high bills and spending pressures for the past couple of years as the cost of living crisis wiped out their financial resilience, leading to many trying to maximise their incomes as much as possible.

Meanwhile, across the CAB network, there was a 10% increase in debt advice from March to April.

Finally, demand for advice on terms and conditions of employment increased by 36% from March 2024, and by 26% from April 2023. In particular, there was a rise in advice on having terms and conditions in writing, increasing 75% from April 2023.

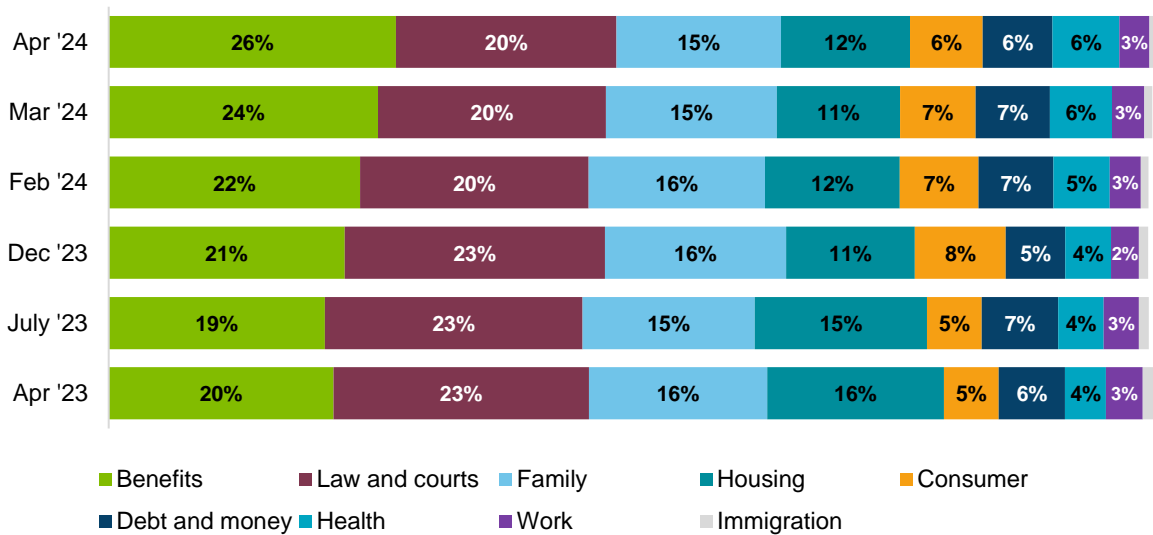


Webpages

396,500 views

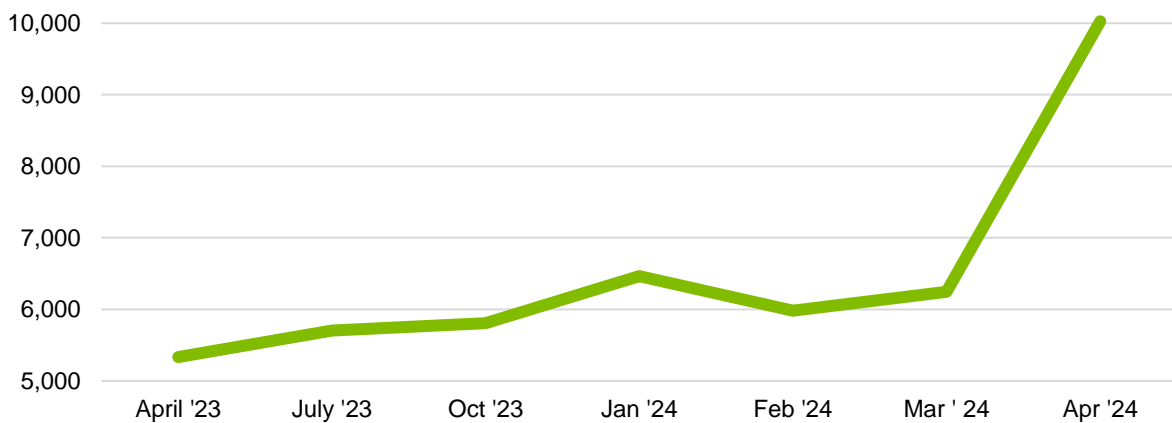
From March to April 2024, page views across all advice areas remained broadly static. However, a longer-term consideration shows an increase of 63% in views of health-related pages from April 2023. Views of pages providing advice in relation to consumer issues (up 33%) and benefits (up 28%) also increased over the same period. The largest long-term decrease could be seen for views of immigration-related pages (down 30%) and housing (down 27%).

Advice sought on the 'Advice for Scotland' website, as a proportion of all advice



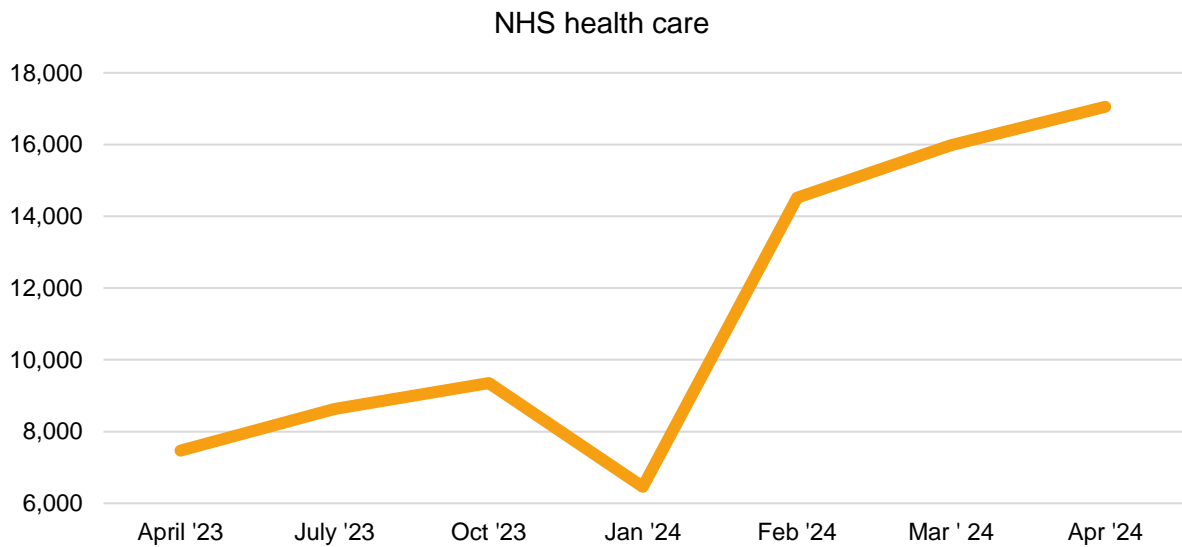
A significant increase in page views relating to Universal Credit can be seen, both short- (up 41%) and long-term (up 23%). The primary driver for this appears to be advice being sought in relation to how much Universal Credit a person can get, which increased as a proportion of all UC advice by 98% from April 2023.

Universal Credit





Advice relating to NHS health care has also seen a significant increase in page views during 2024 so far, with an increase of 17% in page views as a proportion of all health-related advice. Of note within this category is a 48% increase in page views relating to NHS dental services.



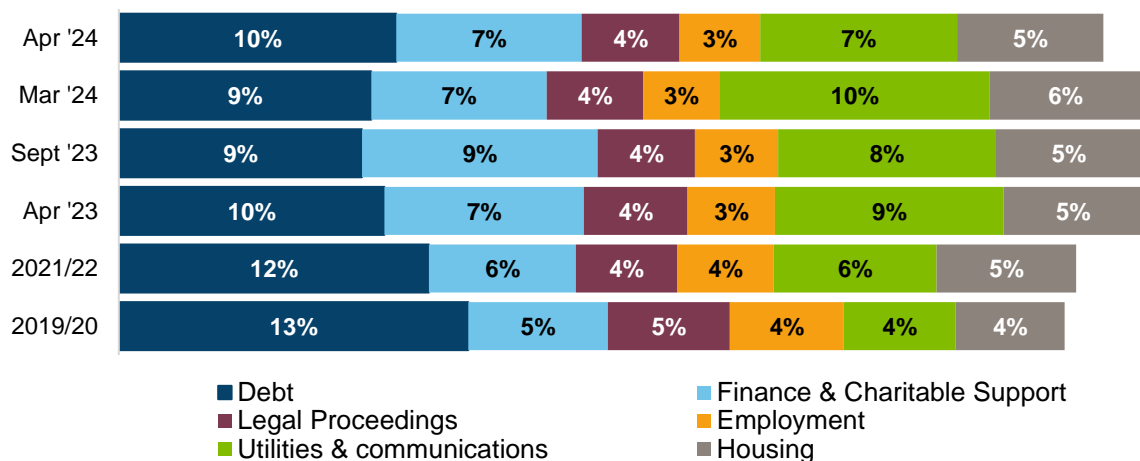
CAB network statistics

97,532 pieces of advice
24,033 clients

The most notable change in advice provided by CAB from March to April 2024 was a 27% decrease in relation to utilities/communications advice. A small increase over the same period could be seen in relation to debt advice (up 10%) but all other categories, including benefits, remained stable. The same was true in the longer-term, with only advice relating to utilities/comms showing a decrease of 14%.

Outside of the top advice areas, the most notable short-term change was in relation to advice on NHS concerns/complaints, which increased by 29% from March to April 2024, and 31% from April 2023. A 20% increase could also be seen for immigration-related advice in the short term.

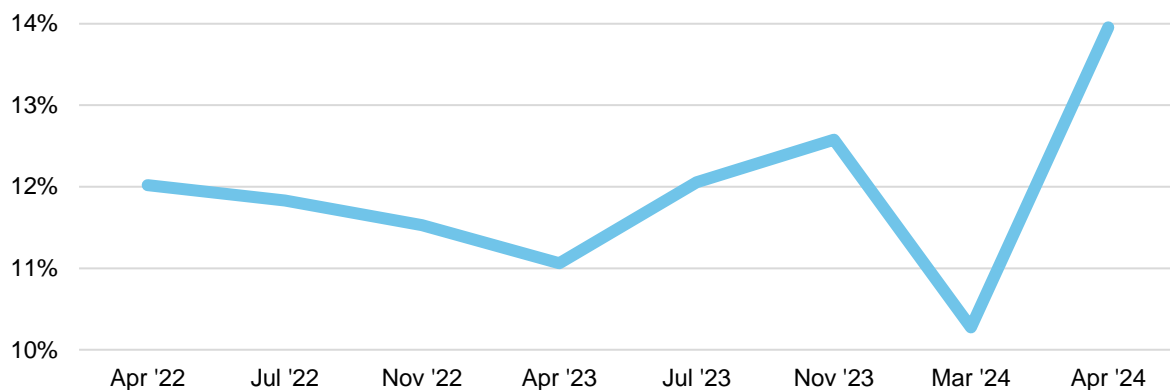
Top advice areas, as a proportion of all advice (excluding benefits)





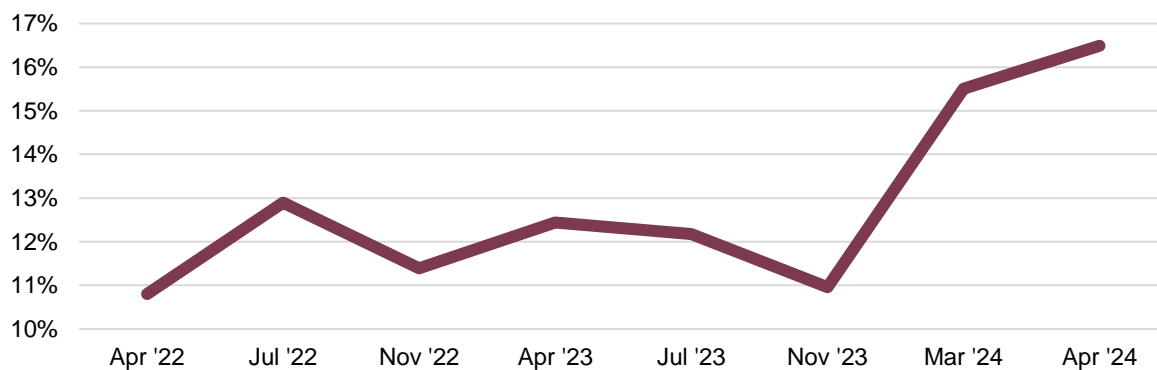
Advice on terms and conditions of employment increased by 36% from March to April 2024, and by 26% from April 2023. One driver of this increase appears to be a rise in advice on having terms and conditions in writing, with a rise of 75% from April 2023

Terms and conditions of employment



Similarly, a 33% increase in advice relating to nationality/citizenship was evident from April 2023. Only a small change of 6% could be seen from March to April 2024. A sub-category of this advice, relating to 'child registration, more than doubled from April 2023.

Immigration: Nationality/citizenship



www.cas.org.uk

The Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux - Citizens Advice Scotland. Scottish charity (SC016637) and company limited by guarantee (89892)