



# Impact of COVID-19 on the advice sought from the Scottish Citizens Advice network – May 2021

This is the monthly summary of data from the Citizens Advice network in Scotland since the COVID-19 outbreak and covers May 2021. It shows data from the 59 Citizens Advice Bureaux in Scotland and our online advice site.

## Key points

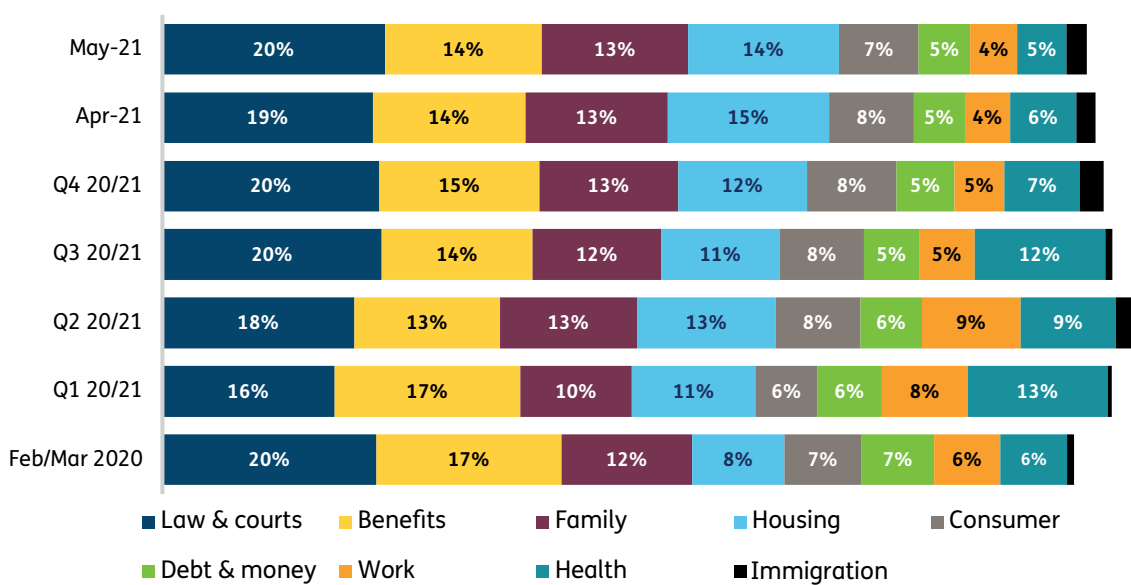
- > In May 2021 Citizens Advice Bureaux issued **80,483** pieces of advice.
- > In May 2021 pages on the website were viewed a total of **342,725** times.
- > There were **202,010** website users in May 2021, **76%** of these being new users.

## Web pages: May 2021

- > Number of unique page views (UPV) in May 2021: **342,725** (2% increase from April 2021)
- > Number of website users in May 2021: **202,010**. **76%** of these being new users.

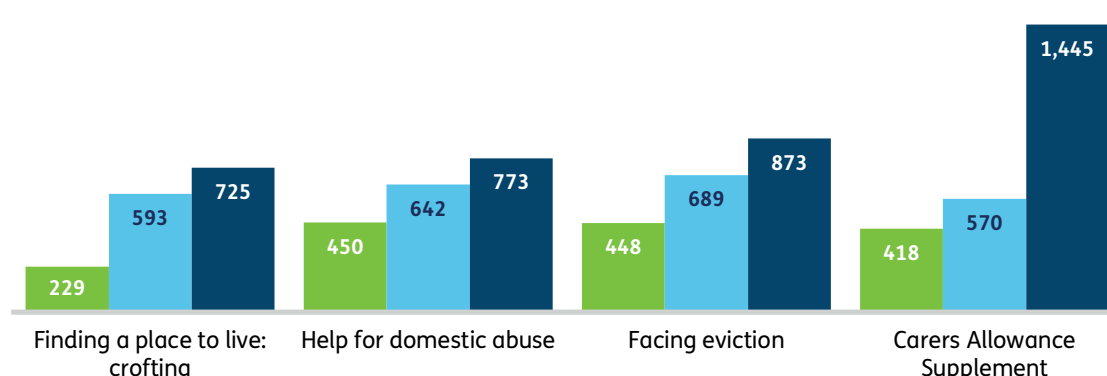
Trend data for visits to the Advice for Scotland website, as a proportion of all unique page views on the site, shows little variation between April and May 2021.

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



A number of individual advice pages did, however, see increased traffic during May 2021 with that relating to Carers Allowance Supplement showing the largest change, increasing by **153%** from April 2021. Visits to this page, along with three others showing increased traffic during May 2021, also exceed those recorded pre-pandemic.

Web pages showing increased traffic from April to May 2021, and in comparison to pre-pandemic levels

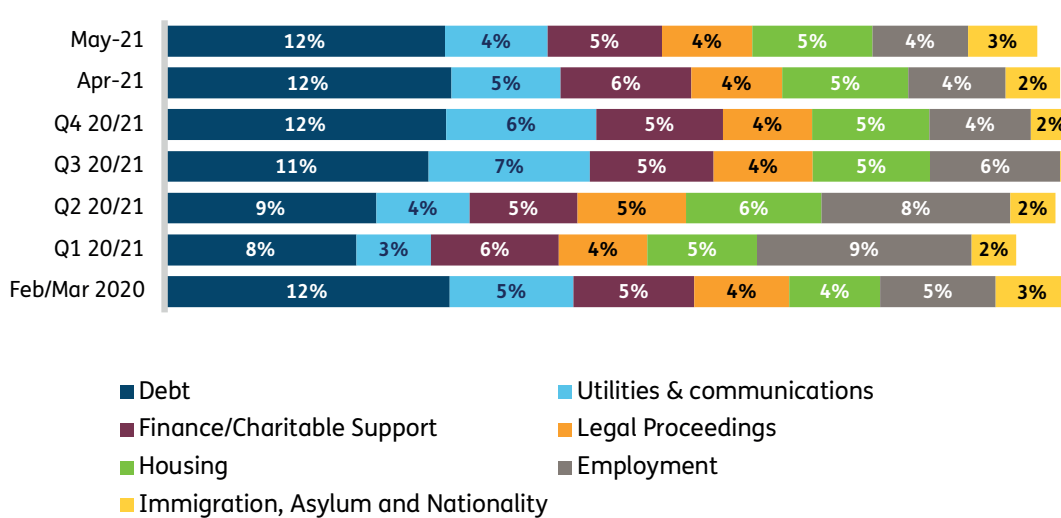


## Citizens Advice Bureaux

- > **19,110** clients
- > **80,483** pieces of advice

Trend data shows that the need for benefits advice was higher than average in February/March 2020 at **50%** of all advice provided but otherwise has remained broadly constant at around **47%** of all advice provided. After considerable variation early in the pandemic period advice relating to both debt and employment has returned to what could be considered as 'normal' levels.

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



Of the top advice needs seen at Citizens Advice Bureaux during May 2021 the only increase of note was in relation to immigration advice (up **26%**), this having been driven in by a rise in advice provided around settled status.

As face-to-face advice in bureaux slowly increases (up by **44%** from April to May 2021), advice sought in relation to debt (up **30%**) and utilities (up **24%**) was higher for this contact method during May 2021 than it was in April 2021. Contacts made through the SCAH were higher still in relation to utilities (up **31%**), and also much higher for immigration-related advice which increased by **56%** between April and May 2021.



Advice most commonly sought via **SCAH**:



Benefits



Housing



Immigration



**Face-to-face advice on Utilities was up 24% in May 2021.**



Advice most commonly sought **face-to-face**:



Benefits



Immigration



Debt

**Advice on Utilities via SCAH was also up 31% in May 2021.**

## Month in focus: Supporting vulnerable people.



Figures from our advice website showed a considerable increase in advice being sought around Carers Allowance Supplement, both in the past month and in comparison to the pre-pandemic period. Although numbers are relatively small, with 107 pieces of advice provided during May 2021 by our bureaux, advice sought in relation to caring for someone with a mental health issue increased by **80%**. Views of our advice site pages on facing eviction and domestic abuse are also currently in excess of pre-pandemic levels, with the same being true for the latter in terms of advice sought from our bureaux. During the pandemic vulnerable people have needed support, and the Citizens Advice Network has played a key role in ensuring they get support.