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# Logistics: underpinning Scotland's economy

The logistics sector's role in driving inclusive growth



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## Contents

Logistics: underpinning Scotland's economy ..... 3

A public-private partnership to boost productivity and inclusive growth across Scotland ..... 4

Logistics creates opportunities across Scotland and enables its international trade..... 5

Innovative and integrated infrastructure..... 6

A just transition to a green economy ..... 8

Skills partnerships to support a thriving sector ..... 10

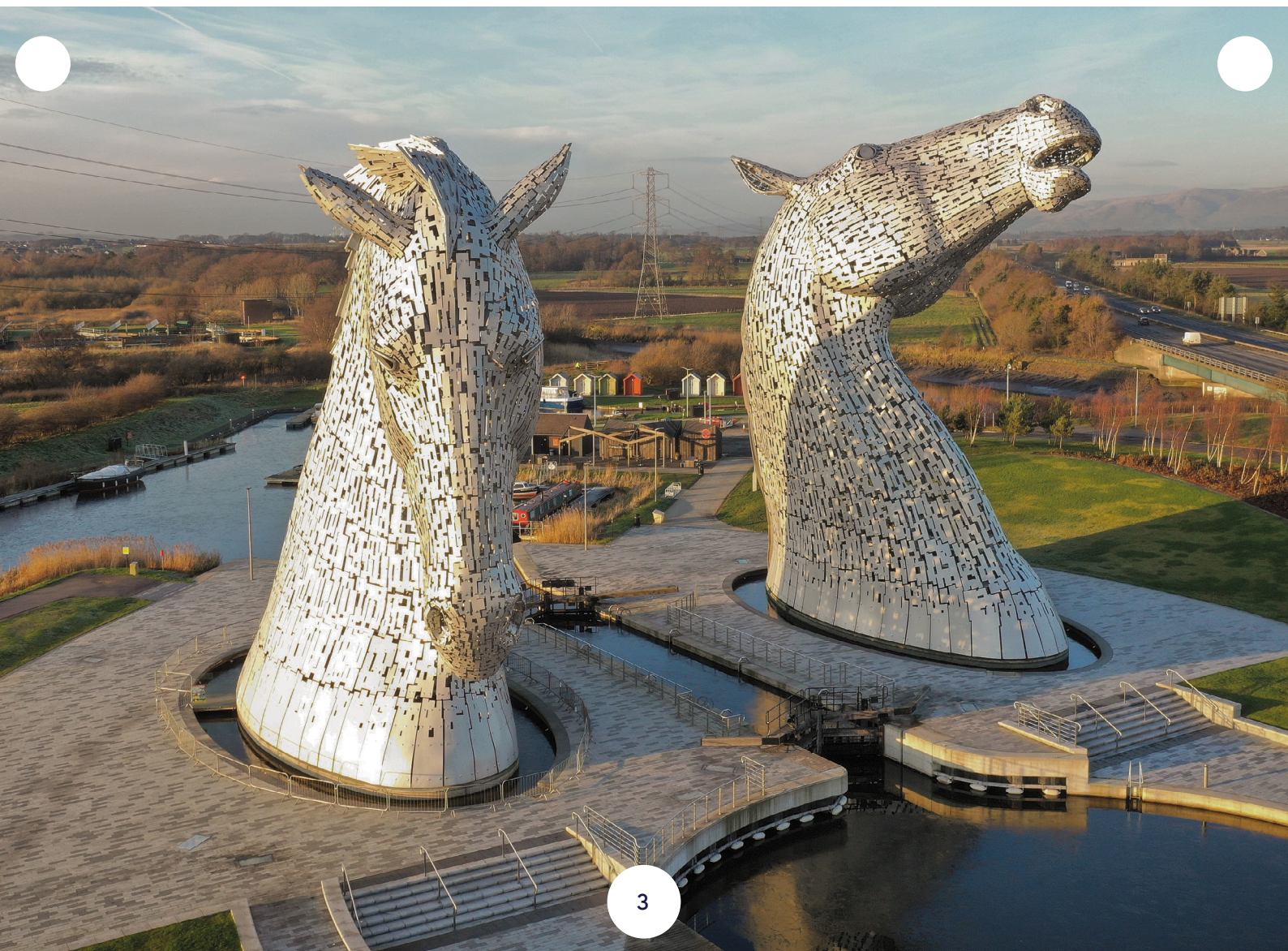


## Logistics: underpinning Scotland's economy

Logistics underpins the Scottish economy, safely and efficiently delivering for its households, businesses and public services, every day. Nothing moves without it.

To unleash the power of logistics to drive inclusive growth, Scotland needs:

- A public-private partnership to unlock investment and enable logistics to maximise the benefit it can deliver.
- Innovative and integrated infrastructure, with Scotland playing a key part in a UK logistics network, connecting it to domestic and international markets. This must be based on long-term transport and infrastructure plans and the development and adoption of new technologies to deliver goods in the most safe, sustainable and efficient way.
- A just transition to a green economy that keeps costs down and supply chains resilient, underpinned by a public-private roadmap for logistics decarbonisation and investment in infrastructure to support modal shift.
- Skills partnerships to support a thriving sector, with careers in logistics backed by effective strategies, increased skills funding and a sustained commitment to attracting people, ensuring businesses have a strong pipeline of talent to draw from and nurture.

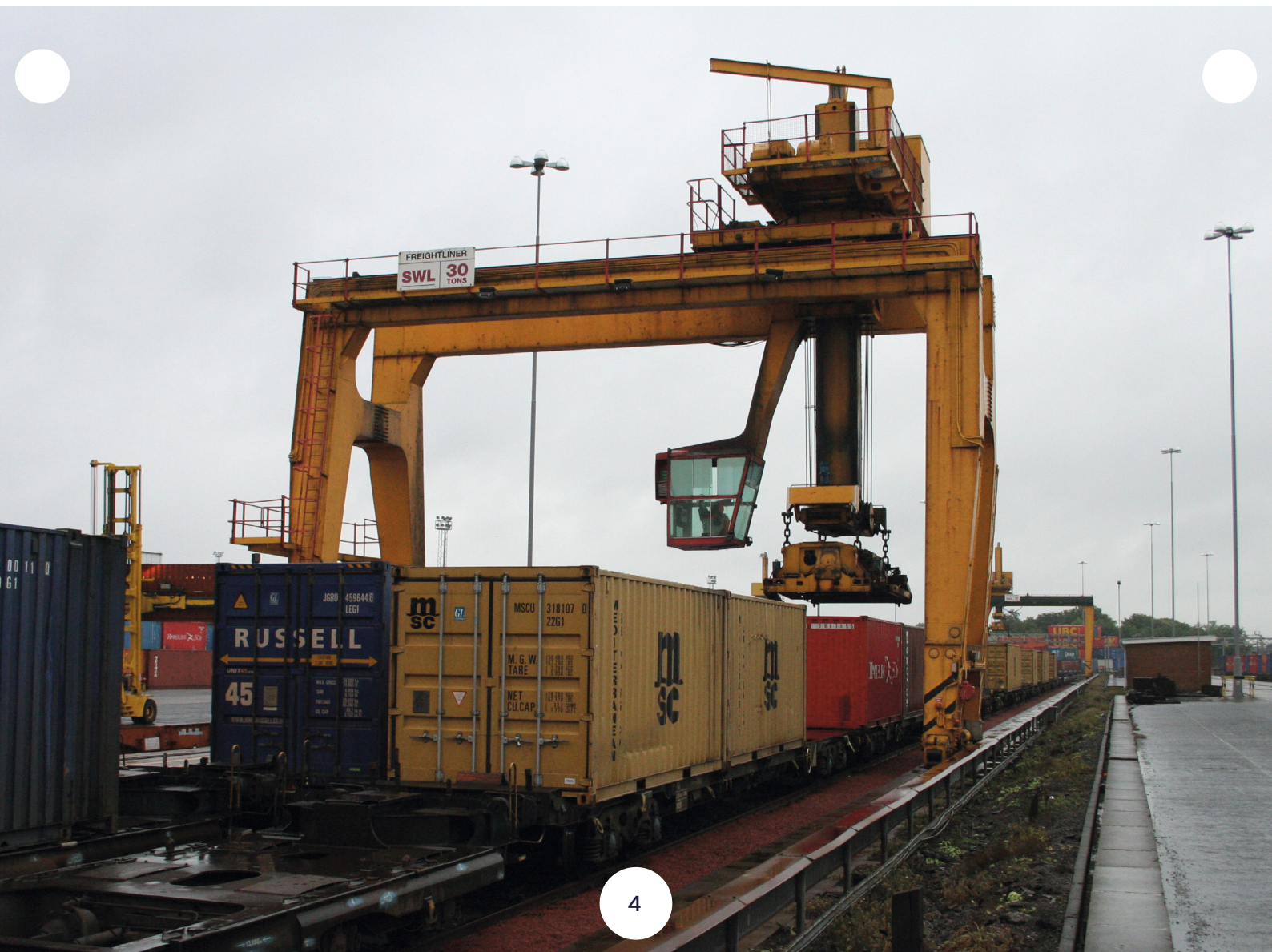




## A public-private partnership to boost productivity and inclusive growth across Scotland

Logistics has a key role to play in delivering Scotland's inclusive growth. The Scottish government needs a partnership with logistics businesses to unlock investment and enable the sector to maximise the benefit it can deliver to the economy and communities.

- Logistics underpins the Scottish economy, delivering for its households, businesses and public services, every day, via road, rail, sea and air.
- Logistics creates opportunities across Scotland. Its key hubs are significant employers and catalysts for growth, helping places to thrive and linking businesses to domestic and global markets.
- Logistics delivers for the future. It transformed Scotland, from its ports, railways and roads and, from the second half of the twentieth century onwards, enabled revolutions in global trade and e-commerce. It is now innovating to deliver decarbonisation and even greater safety and efficiency.
- According to research by Oxford Economics in 2023, with the right policy and infrastructure environment, our sector could deliver up to £8 billion more in productivity-led growth per year.





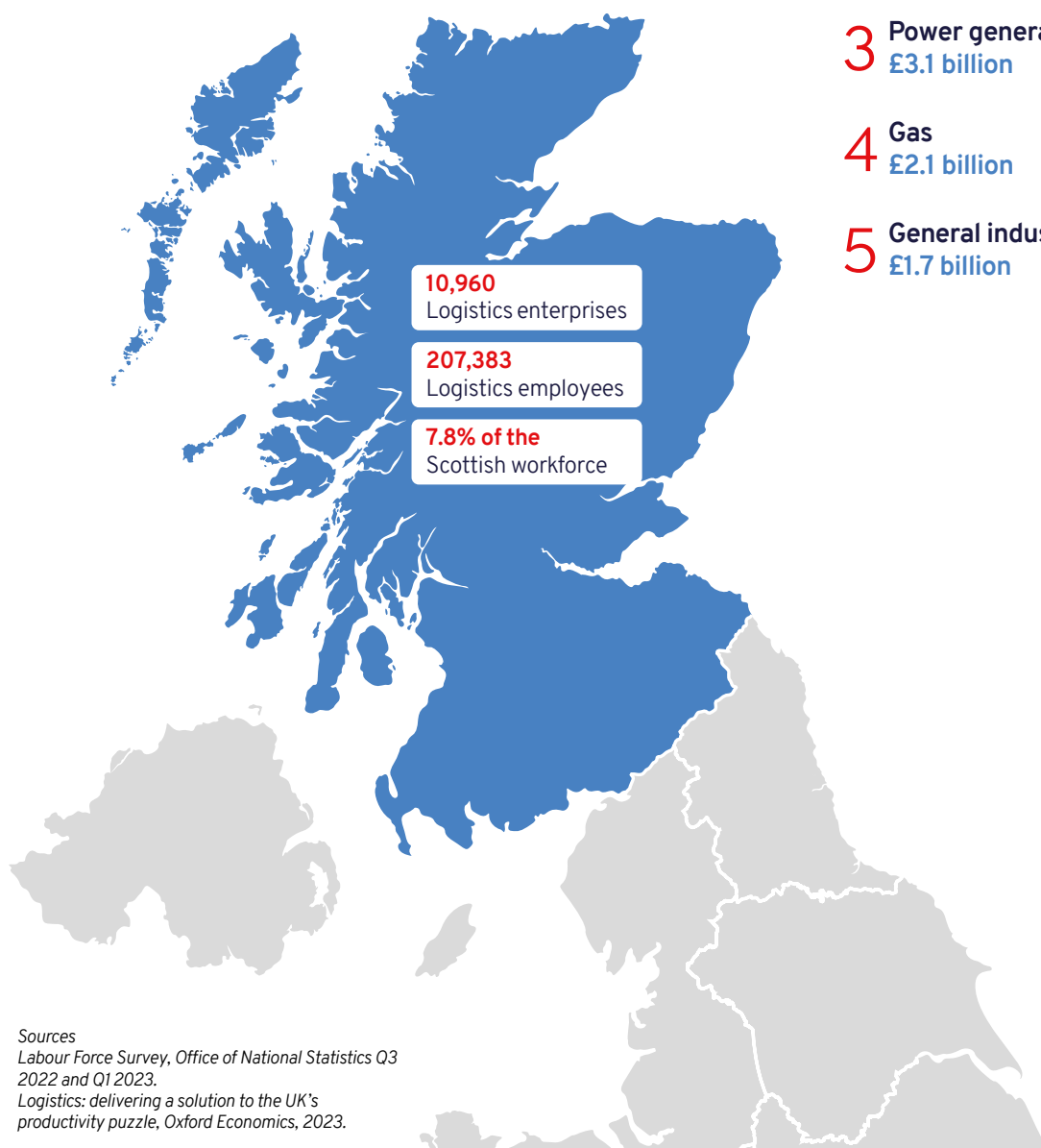
## Logistics creates opportunities across Scotland and enables its international trade

### Logistics underpins Scotland's economy and communities.

More than 200,000 people are employed in logistics roles and there are over 10,000 logistics businesses in Scotland, making, selling and moving goods.

### The value of each of Scotland's top five exported commodities in the year ending Q3 2023.

- 1 Oil  
£9.3 billion
- 2 Drink  
£5.6 billion
- 3 Power generating machinery  
£3.1 billion
- 4 Gas  
£2.1 billion
- 5 General industrial machinery  
£1.7 billion





## Innovative and integrated infrastructure

Scotland needs innovative and integrated infrastructure to enable the delivery of goods in the most safe, sustainable and efficient way, and to link Scotland to international markets. This must include long-term infrastructure plans, playing a key part in a UK logistics network and supporting the development and adoption of new technologies to support logistics efficiency.

The logistics sector is becoming ever smarter and more integrated, within businesses and between logistics sites and transport modes – and the infrastructure it relies on needs to become more integrated and multimodal too.

### Investing in Scotland's logistics network

Scotland's National Transport Strategy<sup>1</sup> makes clear that the effective movement of goods is essential for trade and sustainable economic growth, that delays on the transport system negatively impact businesses' ability to deliver quality goods, on time, and that freight movements are forecast to increase significantly.

Logistics UK's infrastructure priorities to enable goods to be moved in the most safe, sustainable and efficient way are:

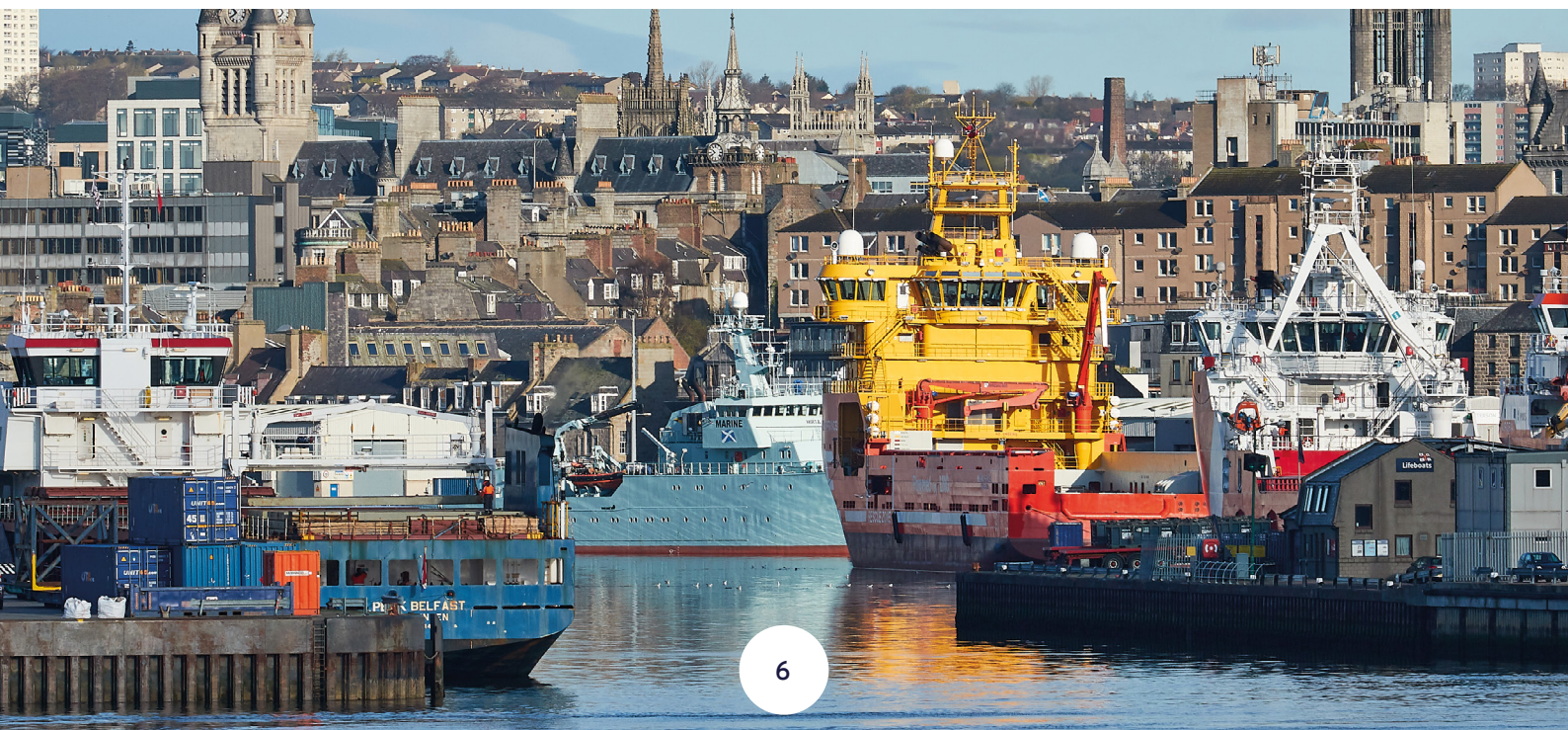
- Completing the planned dualling of the A9, to improve journeys the length of Scotland.
- Investment in the A75 and A77 to improve Northern Ireland – Scotland links.

- Dualling of the A1 north of the border to Edinburgh to improve Scotland – England links.
- Rail capacity improvements and electrification to the Port of Aberdeen, as well as capacity improvements to the Port of Grangemouth.
- Support for increased use of coastal shipping around Scotland and efficient links with wider UK and European ports.

### Driving logistics efficiency through innovation

Innovation plays a key role in enabling logistics to work as an efficient system. Logistics is leading the way in the use of robotics and AI, businesses are implementing new systems to support modal shift, adopting green technologies to reduce carbon emissions and are training people in new data-based skills. In fact, logistics is at the centre of introducing such cutting-edge technologies into the workplace. The logistics sector, SME innovators, investors and the Scottish government must work together to create opportunities to develop new solutions.

<sup>1</sup> National Transport Strategy 2, Transport Scotland, 2020







To deliver the innovative and integrated infrastructure that Scotland needs to thrive, we are calling for the Scottish government to:

- Invest in its key freight transport corridors and coordinate its investment plans with the UK government to deliver a UK-wide logistics network. Investment should be backed by 30-year infrastructure strategies and five-year delivery plans focused on tackling congestion hotspots and enabling the safe, sustainable and efficient movement of goods.
- Invest in better maintenance of existing strategic and local infrastructure to improve reliability and safety.
- Deliver planning reforms to give the development of logistics sites equal prominence and protection to housing, backed by a study on the valuation of freight and a standardised methodology for calculating logistics needs.
- Champion innovation that is delivering an increasingly safe, efficient, green and interconnected logistics system, including by providing funding to support SMEs to develop logistics solutions.



## A just transition to a green economy

The logistics sector is committed to playing its part to help achieve net zero and recognises its responsibilities. However, the sector is equally clear this must be a just transition that keeps costs down and supply chains resilient.

This just transition must be underpinned by a public-private roadmap for logistics decarbonisation, for long distance and last mile journeys, and include investment in energy infrastructure, low carbon fuel production and modal shift.

### A variety of approaches are needed

The logistics system is comprised of multiple transport modes and infrastructure types meaning that a variety of approaches will be needed. Logistics businesses are investing in zero tailpipe emission vehicles, on-site energy upgrades for HGV and van charging and shore power for berthed vessels, introducing low carbon fuels and sustainable aviation fuel, backing plans for rail electrification and clean maritime, and are investing in modal shift to rail and water.

Improving Scotland's transport corridors is also key. Investing in key road corridors will reduce congestion and emissions, and investing in rail and maritime infrastructure will make modal shift more economically viable.

### Managing costs, maintaining resilience and seizing opportunities

The sector is investing in decarbonisation while operating on small margins, so must progress carefully to avoid inflationary impacts for households, businesses and public services. It is also responsible for maintaining resilient supply chains, so the technologies it adopts must work consistently.

Getting the transition right will create opportunities to unlock green investment in Scotland, in ports and other logistics hubs, delivering benefit for the logistics sector and beyond. It will also deliver healthier communities, as a result of reduced emissions.

### Policy and infrastructure challenges


With net zero deadlines approaching, there is a growing risk that the energy infrastructure needed will not be

delivered at the pace the sector requires, especially public sector operators that have more stringent deadlines. Public charging is not being delivered with logistics in mind and zero tailpipe emission HGVs remain unproven for long-distance operations. There is also no agreed plan for the role low carbon fuels will play in the transition, despite being able to reduce emissions by up to 80%<sup>2</sup> and provide a green solution for the many internal combustion engine vehicles that will be in use for decades to come.

Addressing these policy gaps is vital, and we welcome Transport Scotland's HGV Decarbonisation: Pathway for Scotland report, which the logistics sector fed into and recognises many of the key challenges to be overcome.



2 Source: Zemo Partnership, Market opportunities to decarbonise heavy duty vehicles using high blend renewable fuels, 2021



## To deliver a just transition to a green economy, we are calling for:

- Scotland to support the development of a UK-wide co-created logistics roadmap to net zero and the phase-out of fossil fuels, based on the availability of technology and infrastructure.
- Investment in public charging for commercial vehicles, rail electrification and the energy infrastructure to support depot charging as well as shore power at ports.
- The potential for Scotland to be a leader in clean energy, low carbon fuel and hydrogen production to be fully exploited.
- Investment in rail capacity and electrification, as well as maritime infrastructure, to support modal shift.



## Skills partnerships to support a thriving sector

To ensure resilient supply chains that can adapt for the future, businesses must have a strong pipeline of talent to draw from and nurture. This requires careers in logistics to be backed by effective skills strategies, increased skills funding and a sustained commitment to attracting people into the sector.

With roles in logistics unlocking opportunities from driving to robotics and delivering strong potential for social mobility, it is vital that the Scottish government and educators work in partnership with our sector.

### Boosting access and appeal

The logistics sector is introducing cutting-edge technologies which are set to reshape the workplace, while also managing the pressures that come with an ageing population. However, too few people understand the breadth of the sector and the job opportunities it brings.

To challenge perceptions and attract new entrants, the sector is leading the Generation Logistics campaign – a collaboration between Logistics UK, CILT(UK) and over 40 businesses. The programme is now in its third year and between August 2022 and September 2024, it has achieved:

- Over 1.37 million website hits.
- Over 6.9 million social engagements.
- 1.673 billion opportunities to see.
- Raised awareness of the logistics sector by 37%.
- Increased positive sentiment about careers in logistics by 212%.

Attracting people to logistics must be a team effort. As part of this, we want the Scottish government, Skills Development Scotland, and education providers to ensure young people and those looking for a new career have a true picture of our sector.

To support the welfare of logistics workers, and attract new and more diverse talent, Scotland also needs improvements to facilities for logistics drivers as well as prioritised identification to identify new sites for additional safe facilities for logistics drivers. Transport Focus data published in August 2023 shows that most vehicle managers regard the UK's rest stops as being of poor quality.

### Reforming skills funding to support Scotland's long-term needs

Continued skills shortages in key logistics roles, including vehicle technicians, are a symptom of a system that is not delivering for the future. This situation risks worsening as more electric and alternatively fuelled vehicles are introduced, which require different skills to maintain.

The Scottish government's approach to the Apprenticeship Levy rightly allows funds to be spent on wider training beyond apprenticeships but lacks transparency over how the funds are allocated.

The sector and skills providers must come together, underpinned by the necessary funding to support the delivery of the right courses, to train up a new generation of logistics professionals and upskill the existing workforce.





To deliver skills partnerships in Scotland to support a thriving logistics sector, we are calling for:

- A collaborative effort to promote the industry to young people and job seekers.
- Appropriate funding for training providers to ensure key logistics courses are available.
- The Scottish government to make its approach to the Apprenticeship Levy more transparent by publishing annual reports on the allocation of this funding.
- Faster planning approvals for facilities to improve the welfare of logistics workers, and such facilities made integral to road investment schemes.
- The proactive identification and development of transferable and cross-cutting skills needed by the current and future logistics sector, and the updating of courses.





Logistics UK is one of the country's largest business groups, representing the entire logistics industry and supporting, shaping and standing up for safe and efficient logistics.

Our membership of more than 20,000 includes global, national and regional businesses and SMEs spanning the road, rail, maritime and air industries as well as the buyers of freight services, such as retailers and manufacturers.

As an organisation, we deliver services, representation and thought leadership, helping members and policymakers to seize new opportunities for the sector and the economy as a whole, right across the country.

To discuss how logistics underpins Scotland's economy and can drive inclusive growth, contact:  
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