

Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement

Easy Read version

March 2024

Scottish Government



Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement



About this document



This is an Easy Read document.



It will tell you about the **Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement** for 2024 to 2025.



Equality means treating people fairly and giving people the same chances and choices.



A **budget statement** is the Scottish Government's information about how it plans to spend money during the year.



This budget statement is about how the Scottish Government is planning to make life fairer for people in Scotland.

About the Budget



The Scottish Budget is the plan to say how much money the Scottish Government will spend over a year.



This budget year runs from April 2024 to March 2025.



The Scottish Budget for this budget year is almost 60 billion pounds.



Most of this money is being given to public organisations that give services to people living in Scotland.





Hospital



Council

The 2 groups of public organisations that are getting most of the money are:

- health care – like hospitals
- local government – like councils



1 of the biggest problems this year is the **cost of living crisis**.

The **cost of living crisis** is the problem of many of the basic things we need to live – like food and heating – being so expensive at the same time.

The Scottish Government wants this budget to help there be less:



- **poverty** – this means not having enough money to buy basic things like food and clothes or to pay for heating



- **inequality** – this means not having the same chances and choices as other people

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5 ↑

Last year social security got more than 5 billion pounds to pay for things like **benefits**.

But this year social security will get more than 6 billion pounds.



Benefits is money given to people to help them pay for the important things they or their family need for day to day life.

Our decisions about tax and social security



Tax is money we pay to the Scottish Government when we:

- buy some things
- earn money



Taxes are collected and used to pay for the things our communities need.

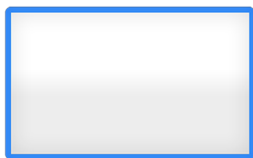
Things like:



- health care

- roads

- police



- schools



The Scottish Government have looked carefully at the decisions they made about:



- tax
- social security

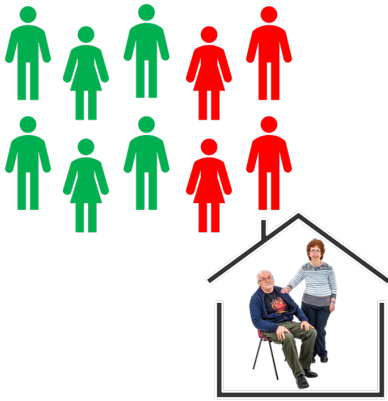
They have found out these things:



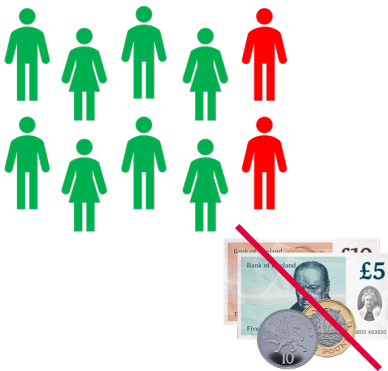
- the way Scotland organises tax and social security is now better for people who have less money than for people who have more money



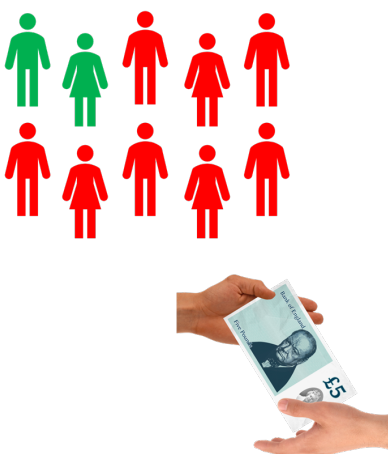
- the way Scotland organises tax and social security is more helpful for people with less money than the way it is done in other parts of the UK



- 6 out of every 10 households in Scotland will be better supported



- 8 out of every 10 households in Scotland will not pay any more tax this year



- 2 out of every 10 households will pay more tax this year

These are the households who are earning the most money.

What is in the Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement for 2024 and 2025



The Budget Statement looks at how the budget will make life easier or harder for people in Scotland.



It takes a very close look at how the budget plans for fairness and equality.



There are many different parts to the Budget Statement.

Some of the parts are called **case studies**.



A **case study** is a very close look at 1 project or event, to see if it went well and what can be learned.



Our case studies look very closely at the money being given to these 8 things:



1. alcohol and drugs policy



2. dentist services



3. childcare and early learning



4. social security



5. equality, inclusion and human rights



Inclusion means making sure that everyone can join in and no one is left out.



Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to everyone.



6. Concessionary Fares – this means cheaper travel prices for some groups of people



7. Getting jobs



8. Scottish National Investment Bank

What the Budget Statement tells us



It is complicated to work out how people are affected by the budget decisions.



This is because so many parts of life are connected to others.



The Budget Statement shows that different kinds of inequality and unfairness are being reduced.

They are being helped by projects like Best Start Foods.



Best Start Foods is a project which gives some pregnant women and babies money to buy healthy foods.



The Budget Statement says that people who do not earn much money will be helped by lots of different kinds of support.



For example, when money is given to make sure pay is fair.



The Budget Statement says that people with **protected characteristics** are supported by the new budget.

Protected characteristics are shared by groups of people.



They include groups like:

- older people
- disabled people
- people who share the same religion
- people who are the same sex



People with protected characteristics are supported by things like:

- cheaper travel costs
- childcare help
- the Independent Living Fund



The Budget Statement says that the budget is stronger this year.



This is because there was a lot of extra thinking about how things can be made fairer.



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