



Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement 2023-24





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Foreword

This year's budget has been set in exceptional circumstances. It follows on from the lingering impact of the UK's exit from the European Union, the COVID-19 pandemic and the invasion of Ukraine. All of these have contributed to a cost of living crisis that will not be felt equally. We have produced equality analysis of the budget for over 10 years now and this is more important than ever this year due to the difficult decisions required during this crisis and in the current economic environment.

Making decisions faced with these pressures and economic uncertainty is challenging but it is critical we make the right decisions to make Scotland fairer and more equal. The evidence shows that low income households are most at risk in the current circumstances, and the risk is even greater for those where this low income intersects with other forms of disadvantage. This means when budget decisions need to be made, and made quickly, it is important they are made with an understanding of who will be affected, and how.

The Scottish Government's 2023-24 Budget aims to address three key priorities: eradicating child poverty; transforming the economy to deliver a just transition to net zero; and achieving sustainable public services. Delivery of these priorities should play a substantial part in continuing our work to make Scotland more equal and fairer.

In order to support our ambition to eradicate child poverty, and help those in need address the cost of living crisis, the Scottish Government has made further significant investment in the social security system, increasing the funding by over £1 billion compared to 2022-23. This funding allows us to provide support through the five family payments, including the Scottish Child Payment, support for disabled people to live independently and support for those in need. In the 2023-24 Budget we have taken the significant step of uprating all Scottish benefits in April 2023 in line with September CPI (10.1%), having already uprated the Scottish Child Payment in November 2022. We have also substantially invested in the Scottish Welfare Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments in order to mitigate the ongoing impact of UK Government cuts during this difficult time.

This Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement sets out how the government has assessed the impact that the budget makes to equality and fairness, and how these considerations have influenced our budget decisions. This statement demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that all of Scotland's people can fulfil their potential regardless of who, and what their circumstances are.

We remain committed to ensuring equality and human rights underpin our budget processes. This past year we have expanded the remit of the Equality Budget Advisory Group to include Human Rights. We are continuing to look to the Equality and Human Rights Budget Advisory Group both to provide challenge and support for analysis such as is presented in this document, and as we further embed the principles of Transparency, Participation and Accountability in our budget processes.



John Swinney
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet
Secretary for Covid Recovery



Shona Robison
Cabinet Secretary for Social
Justice, Housing and Local
Government

About the Scottish Budget

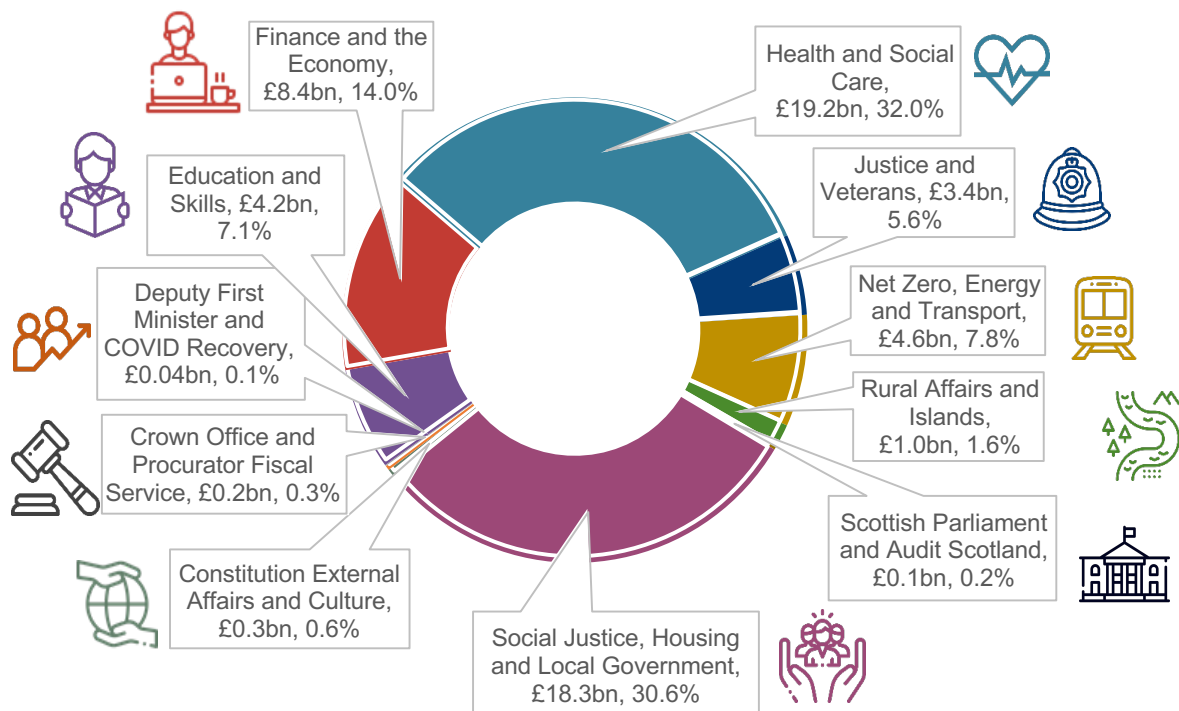
This budget is for the 2023-24 financial year, which runs from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

After the Scottish Government publishes the budget, the Scottish Parliament examines it. The Scottish Parliament then votes on whether it should be changed, or created as it has been proposed.

The Scottish Budget in 2023-24 is **£59.8 billion** (including annually managed expenditure).

The graph below shows that Health and Social Care and Social Justice, Housing and Local Government (which includes social security payments) are the two biggest areas of spend this year. Each of these make up just under one third of the total Scottish Budget.

For more information about this year's key changes in spend and how these impact on equality, see [Chapter 1 of the Scottish Budget 2023-24](#).



A lot of the budget goes directly to a range of public bodies. They then decide how to use this funding, thinking about the impact on equality. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and the Scottish Parliament and Audit Scotland have separate budget lines in the Scottish Budget. These are shown in the graph above.

Most public bodies are required to produce a mainstreaming report to show how they use their funding to tackle inequality. For example, more information about how funding for the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service impacts on equality can be found on [their website](#).

Where does the money in the Scottish Budget come from?

The Scottish Government's funding comes from a range of sources. For public services that the Scottish Government controls, it receives funding linked to a population share of related UK Government spending. The Scottish Budget also includes money collected from taxes that the Scottish Government controls.

Income tax is one of the main levers at the Scottish Government's disposal for redistributing household income and tackling income inequality. Analysis published alongside the 2023-24 Scottish Budget shows that the policy decisions taken at this Budget continue to be highly progressive. The highest earning taxpayers and households contribute to the largest increase in the amount of tax paid, which will be used to invest in and maintain our vital public services. Almost 39% of adults in Scotland – around 1.8 million individuals – will not pay income tax in 2023-24 as they will earn less than the Personal Allowance (£12,570) and they are therefore not directly affected by our Income Tax policy decisions.

Further information can be found in the Scottish Government Budget documents, in particular in [Annex A](#).



What is the Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement?

The Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement looks at the impact that the Scottish Budget might have on people in Scotland.

It assesses what the Scottish Government is proposing to spend public money on and how this is changing. It considers if these decisions are likely to benefit some types of people more than others, and how it might help reduce inequality between different groups of people.

The Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement is published alongside the Scottish Budget every year.

What is inequality?

Equality is about ensuring everyone has equal status, rights and opportunity. It is also the belief that no one should have fewer or poorer chances in life due to:

- protected characteristics
- the resources they or their family have.

We know in Scotland this is not always the case and we want to use the money allocated by the budget to address inequality.

Inequality means that for some groups of people parts of their lives are harder or worse than for other groups of people due to the barriers they face in trying to improve their circumstances. This could involve their access to health, education or income.

For example, certain groups of people, may find it harder to gain employment, be more likely to attain lower exam scores in school or be more likely to be victims of crime compared to other groups. They also may not see themselves represented in positions of power or may be discriminated against.

What groups of people are we talking about?

We have laws that say we must consider these differences between people according to certain characteristics. These are:

- Age (e.g. children, older people)
- Disability (disabled people)
- Gender reassignment (trans people)
- Pregnancy and maternity (mothers)
- Race (e.g. Black Scottish, White Gypsy/Traveller)

- Religion or belief (e.g. Christians, Muslims, Sikhs)
- Sex (men, women)
- Sexual orientation (e.g. lesbian, gay and bisexual people)
- Socio-economic disadvantage (e.g. people with low incomes or wealth, people who live in a deprived area)

We have a duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. We also have a duty to reduce inequality for adults and children who experience poverty.

These duties also mean we must consider how inequalities are compounded for people with more than one of these characteristics. For example, a minority ethnic disabled renter on income-related benefits, an asylum seeking woman, or a rural low income, lone parent family headed by a mother with caring responsibilities.

We recognise for these groups of individuals that the intersection of disadvantage compounds structural inequality and this is especially evident in this cost of living crisis. This year, Scottish Government developed its approach to intersectional policy making and analysis including [publishing revised approaches](#).

More Detailed Information

This document provides a summary of the impacts. More information can be found in the annexes:

- Annex A: Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Budgeting
- Annex B: Social and Economic Context
- Annex C: Equality and Fairer Scotland and the Resource Spending Review
- Annex D: Detailed analysis of equalities and Fairer Scotland issues by portfolio



National priorities

National Performance Framework

The Scottish Budget directs spend in a way that promotes the 11 outcomes of the [National Performance Framework](#) (NPF) and its overall purpose:

"To create a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increased wellbeing and, sustainable and inclusive economic growth."

Programme for Government

Every year, the Programme for Government sets out the Scottish Government's aims for the coming year. The budget then allocates money to support these goals.

The [2022-23 Programme for Government](#) focused on protecting people through the cost crisis. Due to inflation, the 2022-23 budget is worth around 10% less in real terms than the previous year.

Plans include:

- setting out the future of Scotland's energy system
- preparing an updated Climate Change Plan
- delivering the first stages of our National Strategy for Economic Transformation
- significant reform to health and social care, with the creation in law of a new National Care Service for Scotland
- improving safety and championing the voice of patients
- progressing major reforms in the justice system
- reforming our education system, improving public health, protecting our environment, and making our economy more sustainable

Human Rights

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to everyone. There are many rights and freedoms that come under this umbrella including civil and political as well as, economic and social rights. For example, the right to adequate living standards and the best standard of health care. In the portfolio sections below we have set out which human rights are most applicable to the portfolio. This illustrates how the budget content aligns to key human rights.

Human rights should influence the process of setting the budget, alongside the content of the budget. In Annex A we have shown how embedding Human Rights principles of Transparency, Participation and Accountability has informed the budget.



Summary of impacts by budget area

This section summarises the impacts of the budget by Scottish Government portfolio. For more detail see [Annex D](#).



Constitution, External Affairs & Culture

Budget purpose:

Enhance Scotland's reputation, increase prosperity and wellbeing, and promote Scotland as a great place to live, visit, work, study, and do business.

Primary national outcomes:



Communities



International



Culture

Key human rights:

- Right to take part in cultural life
- Right to freedom of expression
- Right to an adequate standard of living

Impact on Equality & Fairer Scotland:

Reducing inequality and ensuring all groups are able to participate in, enjoy and access careers in our diverse culture, heritage and events sectors is at the heart of the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture portfolio. Our culture and heritage investment aims to protect and support our public bodies and organisations across Scotland. The budget enables funded organisations to deliver an active programme of cultural activity and events that take into account the preferences and circumstances of groups who experience structural disadvantage, and those from lower income groups. Examples include the work of our national performing companies in ensuring improved access and inclusion for disadvantaged and low income groups.

In 2022-23, the International Development Fund increased from £10 million to £11.5 million in line with the 2021 Programme for Government commitment to increase the fund to £15 million over the course of this Parliament. On the new Women and Girls Empowerment Fund within the new Equalities Programme, we will refocus £500,000 of the budget on promoting equality of women and girls, and supporting their rights. Through establishing a Global Citizenship Fund as part of the future programme we will provide more funding directly in-country to smaller, local civil society organisations.



Deputy First Minister & COVID Recovery

Budget purpose:

Support the delivery of the COVID Recovery Strategy, establish and support the COVID-19 Scottish Public Inquiry, co-ordinate policy on elections, freedom of information, inter-governmental relations, Cabinet business and the legislative programme, build Scotland's resilience to hazards and threats, and support participation and public service reform.

Primary national outcomes:



Communities



Human Rights

Key human rights:

- Right to free elections
- Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Right to freedom of expression
- Right to an adequate standard of living
- Right to non-discrimination in the exercise of all of these rights

Impact on Equality & Fairer Scotland:

The portfolio co-ordinates and provides grant resource to partners to build capacity to support delivery of the Covid Recovery Strategy, which commits us to a strong equality led approach. The terms of reference for the independent Scottish public inquiry into the handling of COVID-19 require it to demonstrate how a human rights based approach has contributed to its findings in facts and recommendations.

A further key area of spend is on improving equality of participation in elections, working with partners in the electoral community to increase voter registration and active participation in elections by underrepresented groups, including young people and non UK citizens. This spend will also be used to undertake field trials of tactile ballot papers designed to enable people with sight loss to vote independently and in secret.

The Central Analysis Division will contribute evidence and data informing policy and delivery across the work of the portfolio in 2023-24, including for wellbeing and resilience, cost of living and Ukrainian displaced persons, all with a strong equality focus.



Education & Skills

Budget purpose:

Change children and young people's lives for the better in and beyond educational settings and ensure that all children and young people are able to reach their full potential.

Primary national outcomes:



Education



Children and Young People



Economy



Poverty

Key human rights:

- Right to education
- Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Right to an adequate standard of living
- Right to take part in cultural life

Impact on Equality & Fairer Scotland:

Advancing equality and reducing inequality is at the heart of investment in Education and Skills. Spend within the Education and Skills portfolio is targeted to tackle the differences in development and attainment levels for children and young people with protected characteristics or experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

Continued funding for the expanded statutory entitlement to funded early learning and childcare will maximise the opportunity to ensure that all children in Scotland get the best possible start in life. Continued investment in the delivery of the Scottish Attainment Challenge, the expansion of free school meals and school clothing grants will ensure that the progress made in embedding the principle of equity in schools and will continue to maximise the life chances of children and young people from the most deprived backgrounds. The Higher Education Student Support budget will continue to provide bursaries, student loans and free tuition – supporting young people and adult learners to access educational opportunities and entry to future employment.

Investment in our tertiary education and skills system will provide lifelong learning opportunities linked to the future needs of the economy.



Finance & the Economy

Budget purpose:

Support sectors and businesses in their transition out of the pandemic into recovery. Support and strengthen the labour market, promote fair work practices and investment in a diverse workforce, and support investment in low carbon businesses and infrastructure. Co-ordinate an outcomes-focused approach including the focus set out in the NPF, and set public pay, pension and tax policy.

Primary national outcomes:



Economy



International



Fair Work & Business



Environment

Key human rights:

- Right to work (and to work in just and favourable conditions)
- Right to an adequate standard of living
- Rights for women, minority ethnic groups, disabled people, children
- Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health
- Right to freedom from forced and compulsory labour
- Right to respect for private and family life

Impact on Equality & Fairer Scotland:

The National Strategy for Economic Transformation sets out our vision for a wellbeing economy: a society that is thriving across economic, social and environmental dimensions, and that delivers prosperity for all Scotland's people and places. Advancing equality and reducing inequality is at the heart of the portfolio's objectives.

The commitments set out in the National Strategy for Economic Transformation are intended to drive Scotland's overall economic prosperity to the benefit of all our people. However, just as every person is an individual with individual characteristics and circumstances, their experiences of economic activity and the impacts that Scotland's economy has on their lives are different. We have targeted the actions proposed in

the Strategy towards people with protected characteristics and people experiencing poverty. Targeting and taking a person-centred approach to considering policies and their implementation can help address entrenched inequality and cumulative impacts on people, particularly those who experience disadvantage.

We will pursue a more equal and fairer Scotland when delivering core Scottish Government functions such as the Scottish Budget and will continue to use our powers over Income Tax in a progressive manner, raising vital revenue to help fund high quality public services for all.



Health and Social Care

Budget purpose:

Improve population health and tackle health inequality.

Primary national outcomes:



Health



Children and Young People



Human Rights

Key human rights:

- Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health
- Right to an adequate standard of living
- Right to a healthy environment
- Right to benefit from healthy ecosystems that sustain human wellbeing
- Right to access to information

Impact on Equality & Fairer Scotland:

The cost of living crisis is causing profound hardship for many in our society meaning this year's Budget is required to identify additional resources to support those hardest hit and ensure we deliver a balanced budget. This will have an impact on the portfolio's ability to increase the levels of positive impact on behalf of those from protected characteristic groups. However, despite repurposing some spending, the Health and Social Care portfolio budget will, overall, support people with protected characteristics and/or those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. The portfolio budget may also mitigate existing inequalities. Spending on mental health, tackling alcohol, drugs, tobacco and obesity and workforce will likely have a demonstrable impact in tackling inequalities and improving the population's health. Human rights and equality will be at the core of National Care Service development.

We will ensure access to person-centred and trauma-informed services which can flex to meet the range of needs that any one individual might have. Alongside this, we fund condition and circumstance specific support based on need. To support our work we fund a range of groups which

enable us to draw on equalities expertise and lived experience from across the population to support policy development and service design.



Justice & Veterans

Budget purpose:

Keep our communities safe and secure, support veterans, and manage justice in its different forms: civil, criminal and administrative.

Primary national outcomes:



Communities



Human Rights

Key human rights:

- Right to liberty and security of person
- Right to a fair trial
- Right to freedom from punishment without law

Impact on Equality & Fairer Scotland:

The portfolio remains committed to advancing equality and addressing the causes of inequality, including tackling all forms of gender inequality such as violence against women and girls. It helps to create an inclusive and respectful society in which all people and communities live in safety and security. Through our funding of justice partners, we are investing in a range of system-wide measures to prevent crime, reduce re-offending and ensuring an effective system of civil law, as well as supporting victims and witnesses of crime. Over 80% (£2.7 billion) of the portfolio's budget is allocated to justice partners, who are required under the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Fairer Scotland Duty, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between groups of people with shared protected characteristics when taking strategic decisions.



Net Zero, Energy & Transport

Budget purpose:

Make sure that Scotland's economy achieves net zero carbon emissions. Protect and enhance our environment, natural resources and transport infrastructure. Support public transport, roads, accessible transport and active travel and lead on strategic infrastructure planning.

Primary national outcomes:



Economy



Poverty



Children and Young People



Environment

Key human rights:

- Right to an adequate standard of living
- Right to a healthy environment
- Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

Impact on Equality & Fairer Scotland:

The impact of climate change will not be felt equally and has direct links to poverty and inequality. That is why the Scottish Government is committed to a Just Transition to deliver Net Zero and a climate resilient nation. Key equalities issues for the portfolio focus on public transport and domestic energy.

Public transport services are important for and used more frequently by particular groups of people; women, older people, younger people and those on lower incomes use bus services more. The provision of public transport services continue to be challenging as a result of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis is also exacerbating issues faced by those on low incomes. By continuing to invest in public transport we will ensure that those reliant on public transport can continue to access key services, employment and education. Improving access to public transport and reducing car use underscores our commitment to a Just Transition.

Domestic energy costs and fuel poverty are also likely to disproportionately affect those on lower incomes and particular groups such as disabled people, older people, and lone parents. Our Heat in Buildings Strategy commits us to a set of guiding principles that give a direction for programme and policy development recognising the twin challenges of decarbonising and tackling fuel poverty. We are continuing to design, assess and target interventions that seek to support people to heat their homes.



Rural Affairs & Islands

Budget purpose:

Support rural, island and coastal communities in Scotland, as well as Scottish Government's overarching ambition to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss.

Primary national outcomes:



Economy



Environment



Communities

Key human rights:

- Right to property
- Right to an adequate standard of living
- Right to take part in cultural life
- Right to a healthy environment

Impact on Equality & Fairer Scotland:

Rural and coastal communities face a range of challenges including access to services, higher living costs and population change. The RAI portfolio addresses issues around rural disadvantage through supporting traditional rural industries and through direct funding to community groups to support rural development across Scotland. Most spend in these areas is not directly focused on reducing inequality for groups with protected characteristics or those from the most socio-economically deprived groups. However, there are specific schemes for supporting women in agriculture and aquaculture.

The Scottish Government has committed to creating equality of opportunity within agriculture and to ensuring the sector is more diverse and representative. Agricultural support schemes help to support wider rural communities and businesses and ensure a productive landscape. Research is planned to help us understand the impact of changes to agricultural support payments in rural areas and the role of local food economies in creating an affordable and sustainable national food system. However, unfortunately, there is little evidence on the direct and indirect impacts of the RAI budget on groups with protected characteristics and, aside from age and gender, there is little available data.



Social Justice, Housing & Local Government

Budget purpose:

Create a fairer Scotland, tackle poverty and especially child poverty, deliver affordable housing, and promote equality and human rights.

Primary national outcomes:



Communities



Human Rights



Children & Young People



Poverty

Key human rights:

- Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence
- Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Right to an adequate standard of living
- Right to a healthy environment
- Right to social security and social protection
- Right to non-discrimination

Impact on Equality & Fairer Scotland:

We are committing over £5.2 billion in benefits expenditure, providing support to over one million people in Scotland. We will continue progress “Best Start, Bright Futures” with our £50 million commitment over the lifetime of the plan and our £5 million investment in 2023-24 will contribute towards meeting the interim statutory targets. We focus on priority family types, including minority ethnic families, single parent families and families where a member has a disability.

£3.5 billion investment this parliament in increased supply of affordable and social homes, will support those facing socioeconomic disadvantage. Up to £11 million capital investment supports older and disabled housing association tenants to make adaptations to their homes.

Core funding for Local Government is distributed using a needs-based formula which includes, disadvantage, age, disability and levels of deprivation.

The Equality and Human Rights Fund provides £8 million per annum to support organisations to deliver direct work tackling inequality and discrimination; infrastructure support and policy work, across Human rights and also in areas of protected characteristics for example age, disability, gender, sexual orientation and race.



Summary of impacts by groups of people

This section provides an overview of parts of the Scottish Budget that are particularly important for people with the characteristics set out in the introduction. It responds to the inequalities discussed in the Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement templates, and so it only highlights a selection of key budget responses.

It should be noted that many measures will benefit people from different characteristics. For example, in relation to measures to tackle child poverty 90% of families with children in poverty are in the Scottish Government's identified Priority Groups, including households with a disabled person, lone parents (usually women), young mothers and minority ethnic families. We also fund direct intervention which cuts across all areas including the Equality and Human Rights Fund providing £8 million per annum to support organisations to deliver direct work tackling inequality and discrimination and advancing human rights.



Socio-economic disadvantage

- Committing over £5.2 billion in benefits expenditure - an increase of over £1 billion compared to 2022-23
- Funding for Scottish Child Payment, which provides £25 per week per eligible child, will help eligible parents on low incomes
- Expanding eligibility for Best Start Foods. An estimated £17 million will be spent on Best Start Foods in 2023-24
- Spending £86 million on Discretionary Housing Payments, helping those on low income benefits and £41 million for the Scottish Welfare Fund
- Our five family payments could be worth over £10,000 by the time a first child turns six, and £9,700 for subsequent children. In 2023-24 this is an investment of £479 million, £251 million more than in 2022-23
- In education, investment of up to £200 million in 2023-24 to support recovery from the pandemic and to tackle the poverty related attainment gap
- Allocating £25 million to continue funding the Education Maintenance Allowance

- Maintaining funding for the International Development Fund and Humanitarian Emergency Fund at the same levels as for 2022-23 at £11.5 million and £1 million respectively
- Protecting investment in our employability commitments in 2023-24 through No One Left Behind and Fair Start Scotland
- Maintaining funding on Drug Related Deaths at current levels, enabling the delivery of the National Drugs Mission Plan
- Continuing funding of almost £1.5 billion to Scottish Police Authority (SPA) in 2023-24, following around £1.4 billion in 2022-23, which will allow them to maintain policing services across Scotland including in the most deprived communities



Children & young people

- Continuing delivery of Best Start Bright Futures and fulfil our commitment of investment of a £50 million Tackling Child Poverty Fund over the lifetime of the plan 2022-26
- Supporting more children through Best Start Foods in 2023-24 as eligibility is expanded
- Continued funding for the expanded statutory entitlement to funded early learning and childcare, which increased from 600 hours to 1,140 hours in August 2021
- Supporting mental health services – including overall increases to mental health spending
- Continued free national concessionary bus travel for those aged under 22 years old
- Continuing to deliver towards the commitment to provide free bikes to school children that cannot afford one
- Funding of £2.5 million towards the initial development of the Scottish ‘Bairns Hoose’ model for child victims of traumatic crimes



Older people

- Continued work on the National Care Service through co-design to ensure the optimal delivery model is created and value for money in all decisions
- Funding to ensure the minimum hourly rate for workers providing direct adult social care rose to £10.50 per hour from April this year
- Enabling Police Scotland and other justice partners to continue their work to support the most vulnerable including older people affected by cybercrimes
- Support through the Scottish Veterans Fund which was increased to £500,000 per annum in 2022-23 and maintained at that level in 2023-24



Disability

- Investing over £4.1 billion across our various disability benefits in 2023-24
- Funding of free bus travel for eligible disabled people (as well as over 60s)
- Supporting local authorities by investing £15 million this year to increase the number of pupil support assistants for children and young people with additional support needs
- Maintaining overall budget commitments for supporting disabled students as for 2022-23
- Funding our Workplace Equality Fund, aimed at removing labour market barriers for certain priority groups, including the over 50 year old workforce, racialised minorities, disabled people and women
- Over £15 million of funding to community safety partners in 2023-24, following £14 million in 2022-23, to enable funded organisations to continue to deliver their projects that support those most vulnerable in society and address all forms of discrimination, including discrimination against disabled people



Gender reassignment

- Maintaining the budget for Gender Identity Services in the NHS
- Proving analytical and statistical support to help understanding, including a further £3.1 million is provided for ongoing costs of the Census in 2023/24, (which for the first time included a voluntary question on trans status or history for those over 16 and provide the first official estimate of the trans population in Scotland)
- Funding to continue in 2023-24 for the hate crime charter which offers training for public transport operators and raises awareness of issues that affect vulnerable groups
- Funding of the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service and other justice partners, courts and tribunals which will continue to have an important role in protecting vulnerable people and addressing discrimination and hate crime



Pregnancy & maternity

- Continued support for more pregnant women and families with children through Best Start Foods in 2023-24 as eligibility is expanded
- Funding to build a system of school age childcare to support children and families, particularly those on the lowest incomes
- Co-funding of the MBRRACE-UK Programme and The National Maternity and Perinatal Audit
- Continued funding for Prison Visitor Centres, enabling ongoing support for families affected by imprisonment
- Provide continued subsidies for bus services through the Network Support Grant, which are particularly important to women including pregnant women and mothers with children



Race

- Following a key recommendation from the Expert Reference Group on Covid-19 and Ethnicity, we are establishing an independent Observatory to provide a range of functions in relation to anti-racism and to start bringing about the required systemic change to create equity for all of Scotland's communities
- Funding of the migration strategy, increasing to £4 million in 2023-24 to sustain our work and deliver new commitments such as the Talent Attraction and Migration Service
- Developing a health & social care action plan to address racism and racialised health inequalities, including workforce and data improvement
- Over £15 million of funding to community safety partners enabling funded organisations to continue to deliver their projects that support those most vulnerable in society and address all forms of discrimination
- Support for the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit under the One Community Programme which offers help and support to people from ethnic minority communities within Glasgow



Religion & belief

- Over £15 million of funding to community safety partners enabling funded organisations to continue to deliver their projects that support those most vulnerable in society and address all forms of discrimination
- Funding of £12 million for Funeral Support Payment helping over 6,000 people meet the costs of a funeral (those applying for Funeral Support Payment are more likely to identify as having a religion)
- Funding to continue in 2023-24 for the hate crime charter which offers training for public transport operators and raises awareness of issues that affect vulnerable groups



Sex

- Funding for Scottish Child Payment will help eligible parents on low incomes, whilst Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods will also support low income families with a pregnant woman or young children
- Continuing funding for key projects to tackle violence against women and girls including the continued funding of the Scottish Women's Rights Centre (SWRC) relating to legal advice and advocacy services
- Investing £6 million to support legal aid reform and strengthen access to justice, including measures to assist victims of domestic abuse
- Increasing the minimum pay for commissioned services twice in the last year from £9.50 per hour to £10.50 per hour (approximately 77% of the health and social care workforce is female)
- Continued subsidies for bus services, which are particularly important to women, through the Network Support Grant



Sexual orientation

- Continued investment in self-harm services (as the LGBTI+ community experience a higher rates of self-harm than those of the general population)
- Support for a new Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy to ensure it is informed by lived experience, evidence based and underpinned by equality and human rights
- Continued funding in 2023-24 for the hate crime charter which offers training for public transport operators and raises awareness of issues that affect vulnerable groups



Further resources & contact

Read the Scottish Budget 2023-24 at:
<https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781805250425>

[Scottish Parliament](#) also provide useful resources to help you understand the Scottish Budget.

Contact us

We very much welcome feedback on this Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement.

You can contact us via MainstreamingEIHR@gov.scot

You can also use this email address to contact the Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Budget Advisory Group (Dr Angela O' Hagan) via the Secretariat.

Further resources

- National Performance Framework website: nationalperformance.gov.scot
- Report on [Scotland's Wellbeing: The Impact of COVID-19](#)
- Report on [COVID-19: Impact on Equality](#)
- [Race Equality: Immediate Priorities Plan](#)
- [Equality Data Improvement Programme](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Budget Advisory Group](#)
- Equality Evidence Finder: equalityevidence.scot
- [Resource Spending Review: Equality and Fairer Scotland Statement](#)
- [Emergency Budget Review: equality and fairness - evidence summary](#)
- You can find more evidence about equality [on the Scottish Government website](#).

Annexes

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