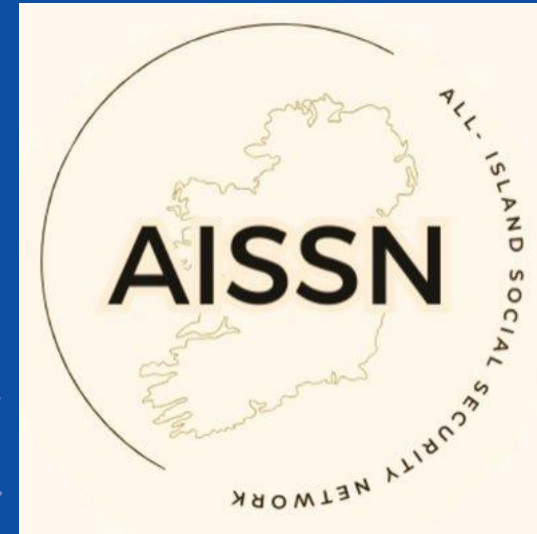


Scottish Child Payment

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Presentation to All-Island Social Security Network, 11th May 2026

Structure

- Background to the Scottish Child Payment
- Key features of the Scottish Child Payment
- Impact of the Scottish Child Payment
- Scottish Child Payment in Context

Background to the Scottish Child Payment #1

- Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017: ‘eradicate’ poverty = 4 targets met by 2030/31:
 - <10% of children in Relative poverty (2024/24 interim target <18%)
 - <5% of children in ‘Absolute’ poverty (2024/24 interim target <14%)
 - <5% of children in Combined Low Income and Material Deprivation (2024/24 interim target <8%)
 - <5% of children in Persistent poverty (2024/24 interim target <8%)
- Child Poverty Delivery Plans:
 - 2018-22: *Every Child, Every Chance*
 - 2022-26: *Best Start, Bright Futures*
 - 2026-30/31: *Bringing Hope, Building Futures*
- Annual Progress reports
- Poverty & Inequality Commission - annual scrutiny and advice report



Background to the Scottish Child Payment #2

- 2016: £5 Child Benefit top-up would reduce child poverty in Scotland by 30,000, after housing costs (Keung and Bradshaw)
- 2017: CPAG 'Give Me Five' campaign
- 2021: Scottish Child Payment introduced - £10 per week to families with a child aged under 6 years old
- Two child limit does not apply
- April 2022: SCP doubled to £20 per child pw
- November 2022: increased to £25 pw and extended to under 16s
- Uprated annually with CPI inflation rate
- 2026 value = £28.20 per child pw
- 2026 Scottish Government Budget: SCP premium of £40 pw for children aged under 1 year old from 2027



Key Features of the Scottish Child Payment

- 321,375 children benefiting from SCP in December 2025
- 94% take up rate
- 2025/26 cost = £471m
- Total cost to date = £1.3 billion
- Equivalent UK benefit would cost £4.2 billion per year
- For speed and efficiency SCP was introduced as a top up to existing UK benefits (chiefly Universal Credit)
- Administered by Social Security Scotland but tied to UC
- Potential 'cliff edge': SCP is not tapered, so withdrawn if household loses UC eligibility
- Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2025 could be used to make SCP stand-alone

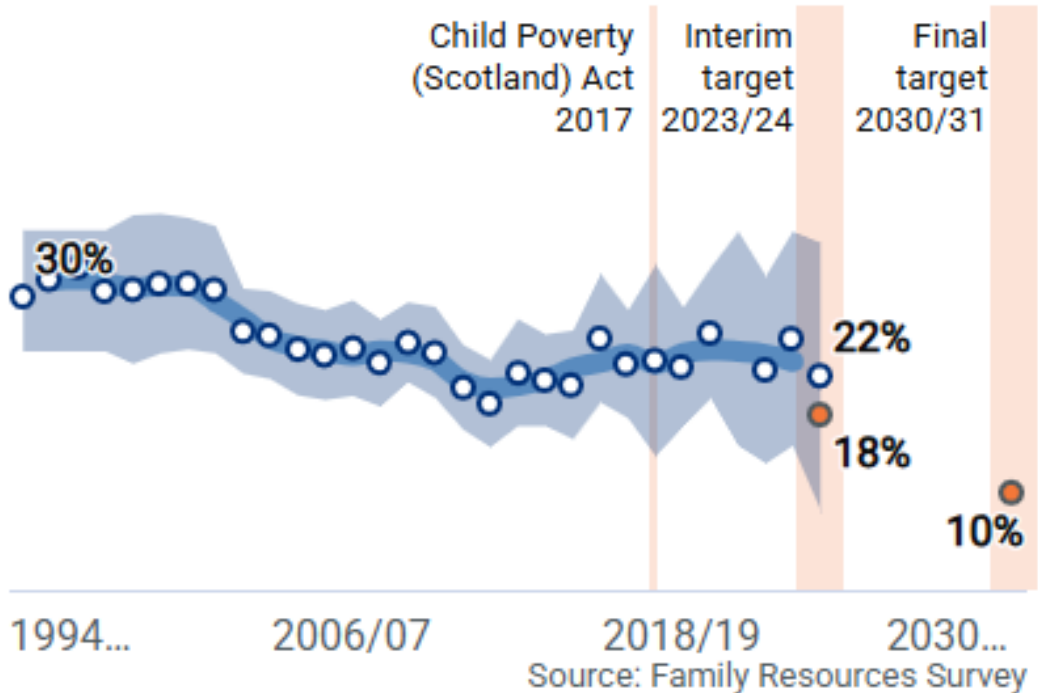
Impact of the Scottish Child Payment #1

- Danny Dorling: SCP is the single intervention that produced the largest fall in child poverty anywhere in Europe in the last 40 years
- Child Poverty Action Group estimates SCP prevents approx. 40,000 children in Scotland from experiencing poverty
- Poverty & Inequality Commission 2025 scrutiny report: modelling suggests SCP delivering around a 4 percentage point reduction in relative child poverty
- Impact not clear in annual poverty statistics due to *Family Resources Survey* limitations
- Testimony from families: ‘The Scottish child payment has been a “game changer” for me. It has enabled me to invest in a more nutritious diet that fuels my son adequately during his school day.’ (Lisa, single parent, *Changing Realities* project)

Impact of the Scottish Child Payment #2

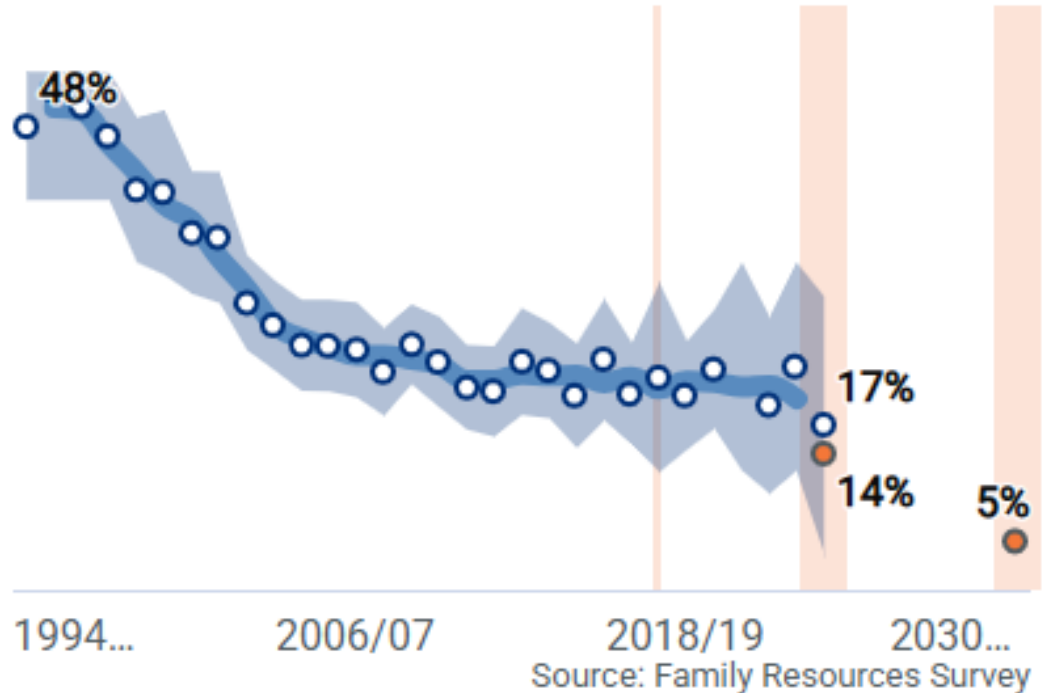
Relative poverty

Measures low income relative to the rest of society



Absolute poverty

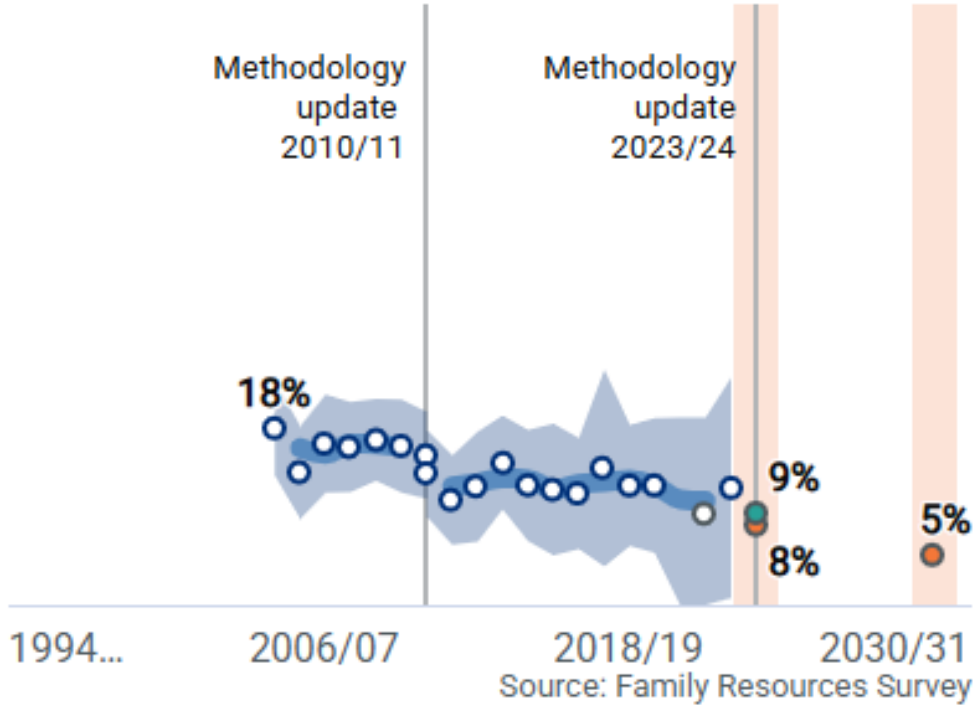
Measures low living standards relative to 2010/11



Impact of the Scottish Child Payment #3

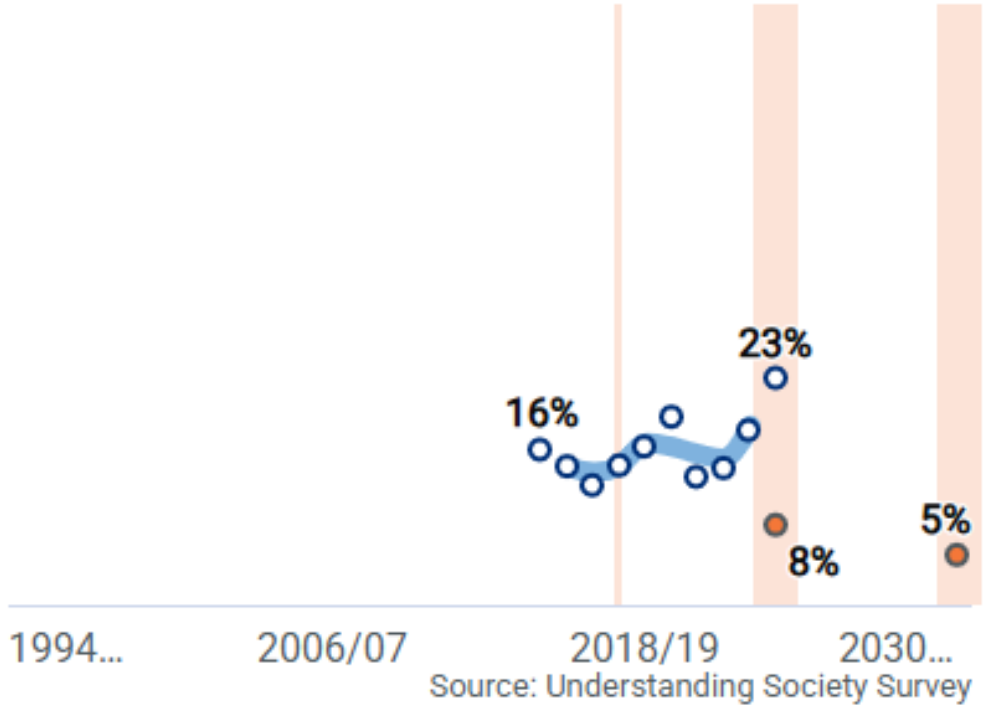
Low income and material deprivation

Measures if unable to afford basic necessities



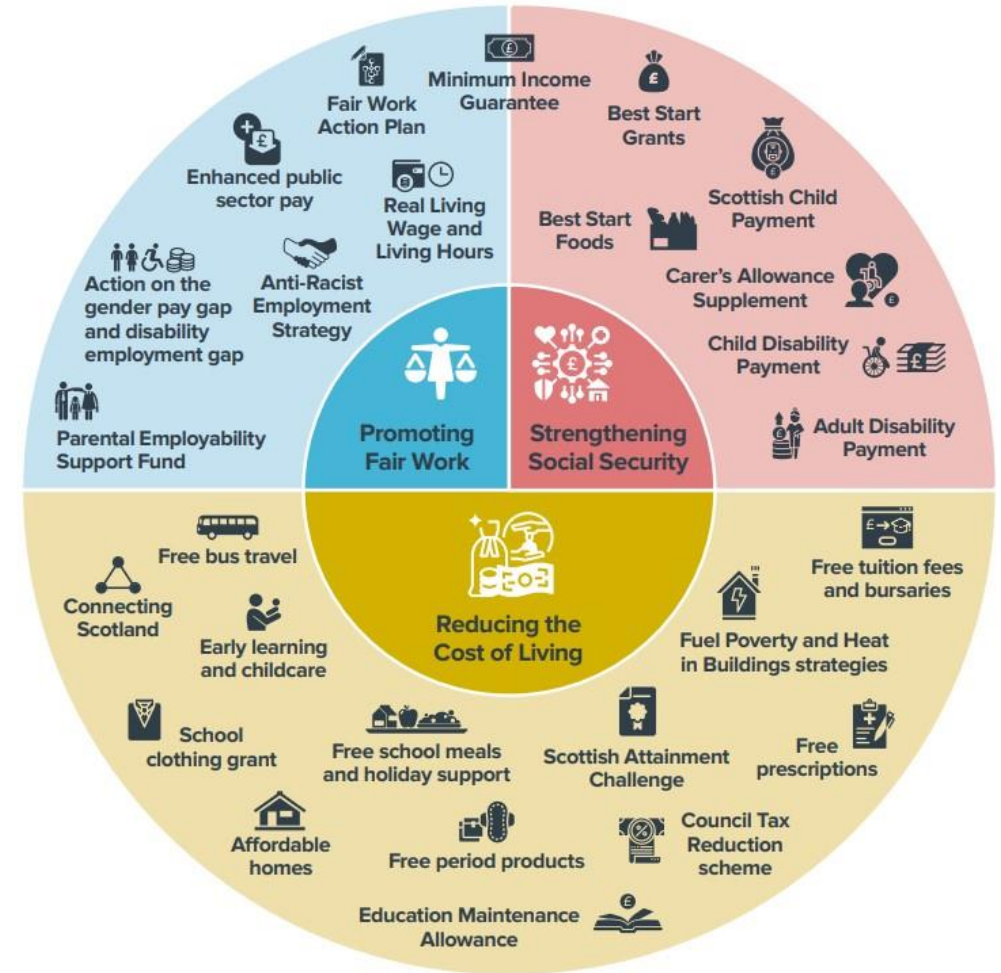
Persistent poverty

Measures if in poverty for several years



Scottish Child Payment in Context

- SCP is part of a wider child poverty strategy
- ‘Five Family Payments’ SCP +
 - Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment
 - Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment
 - Best Start Grant School Age Payment
 - Best Start Foods
- Other ‘Social Wage’ components:
 - Baby Box
 - Free school meals
 - Childcare
 - Mitigating UK government policies



Thank you for listening

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