



POVERTY AND
INEQUALITY
COMMISSION

Annual Report

Our work between April 2021 and March 2022



April						
Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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29	30					



March						
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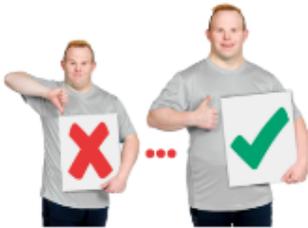


What does the Poverty and Inequality Commission do?



The Poverty and Inequality Commission works to:

- give advice to Scottish Ministers about poverty and inequality in Scotland



- check to see if things are changing and what work is still needed



- check if money, materials and staff are being used well to **reduce** poverty

Reduce means to have less.



- tell people why reducing poverty and inequality is important and get people to work together to reduce it

Our main priority – what we want to do first:



Make sure that experts by experience are part of deciding:

- what work we need to do
- how we will do that work
- how we check if work is going well



The **Experts by Experience Panel** are a group of people who know a lot about poverty because they are experiencing it now.

The Commission made guidance about involving experts by experience.

It used information from reports to do this.

What work does the panel do?



The panel has 19 people from different parts of Scotland with a mix of people who have had different experiences.

The panel first met in August 2021.

Its work includes:

- telling the Poverty and Inequality Commission about important issues about poverty and inequality

The Commission can also bring issues to the Panel.



- giving information to the Commission using their expert knowledge

This helps the Commission to make decisions including deciding what work to do.





- making sure that the experiences of people and communities are understood by **Commissioners**

Commissioners are people who work for the Poverty and Inequality Commission.



The first thing the Panel worked on was the Commission's advice to the Scottish Government on the Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

The Panel talked about the issues that families face and discussed work that the Scottish Government could do to make this better.



The Panel and the Commission made **recommendations** for the Scottish Government.

A **recommendation** is what they think should happen.



The Panel has also:

- given information to the Commission's response to the Scottish Government consultation about help with heating



- talked about a Scottish Government plan for rented homes



Panel members gave presentations and participated in 'Questions and Answers' at the Commission's public meeting in March 2022.

Priority 1: Making sure that having less poverty and inequality is an important part of all Scottish Government policy, plans and work.



The Commission has:

- checked if work to meet the child poverty targets is going well

A **target** is what they are trying to achieve.



- given advice to Scottish Government on the next Child Poverty Delivery Plan



- given information to other consultations

Poverty and Inequality Commission Child Poverty Scrutiny Report 2020-21



This report was published in June 2021.

The Commission had workshops with parents to talk about the work that was done in 2020-2021 to reduce child poverty.

We worked with:

- Aberlour
- Contact
- Fife Gingerbread
- Amina – Muslim Women’s Resource Centre



The workshops included:

- single parents
- black and minority ethnic parents
- parents with disabled children
- parents with learning disabilities



Most of the parents who took part were women.



We say thank you to all the parents who took part and the organisations that supported them.



We decided that unless there was a lot of new work done straight away, with a lot more money, the Scottish Government would miss child poverty targets by a long way.

This would mean a lot of children and families would still be living in poverty.

Advice on the Scottish Government Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26

We had discussions involving representatives from:



- voluntary and community organisations
- **think tanks** – groups that do research and give advice and ideas
- **academics** – people teaching in universities
- experts by experience
- Scottish Government and local government officials



These discussions were very helpful and we say thank you to everyone who took part.

The Commission [published the advice to the Scottish Government in January 2022.](#)



The report said that Scottish Government would have to use its powers to do more work and do it quickly, to end child poverty.

The Scottish Government published its, [Best Start, Bright Futures plan](#) in March 2022.



A **commitment** is something they have agreed to do.

The plan included new commitments that the Commission recommended including:



- putting up the Scottish Child Payment to £25 per week by the end of 2022
- more money for work to help people get jobs

Government **modelling** published with the Delivery Plan says some child poverty targets will be met, but not all of them.



Modelling is a way of using facts, figures and information to say what could happen in the future.

Consultation responses



In 2021-2022 the Commission and Experts by Experience Panel also gave information to some Scottish Government consultations.

Priority 2: Make sure there is better use of facts, figures and information when developing policies and checking if they are making a difference



The Commission gave comments on the Child Poverty Measurement Framework.

We recommended that the Scottish Government need to:



- say how work will be checked to see if it makes a difference

- make better use of facts, figures and information



- include information from experts by experience in designing and checking policies and work



An **impact assessment** checks how plans and policies affect people.

The 2022 to 2026 Scottish Government Child Poverty Delivery Plan included an impact assessment.

This was something the Commission had recommended.



The Commission also funded research about poverty and inequality in Scotland.

This research is described below.

Intersectionality: poverty and inequality in Scotland



Intersectionality means looking at how policies and laws affect people and their different identities – for example their gender or disability.

IPPR Scotland did [research](#) that was published in May 2021.

It shows how experience of poverty cannot be separated from other inequalities.

In 2022-23 the Commission and Experts by Experience Panel will make a plan to have intersectionality as part of all its work.



Modelling how work to reduce child poverty in Scotland will make a difference



The Fraser of Allander Institute and Manchester University developed modelling that looked at how benefits, employment and housing policies could make a difference to child poverty.



The [research](#) was published in June 2021.

The Commission used this modelling work in its advice to the Scottish Government on the 2022-2026 Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

Good jobs in Scotland



The Commission published a [research report](#) by The Learning and Work Institute in January 2022.

It gave recommendations on how the Scottish Government can support having more good jobs in Scotland to reduce child poverty.



Employment should be a way out of poverty.

Many people in work are still in poverty because of:

- low pay
- not being able to work enough hours
- **insecure work** – when you do not know if your job will last for long, or if you will get the same amount of work every week



Priority 3:

Ask for a response to COVID-19 that changes the things that cause poverty and inequality



Some people are more likely to be in poverty.



This includes disabled people and lone parents, who are mainly women.



In our child poverty advice we made recommendations about:

- reducing the **disability employment gap** - the gap between:
 - the number of disabled people who have a job
 - and the number of people who are not disabled who have a job



- pushing up pay in the care and childcare organisations

This type of work has a mostly female workforce.



- action on fair work – making sure employees are treated fairly



The Commission has asked for recommendations from the [Social Renewal Advisory Board](#) to be done.

Covid-19 public inquiry aims and principles – what it wants to achieve and how it wants to work



A **public enquiry** is an investigation ordered by the government.

We told the Scottish Government:

- the aims should include information on how Covid has made a difference to poverty and inequality

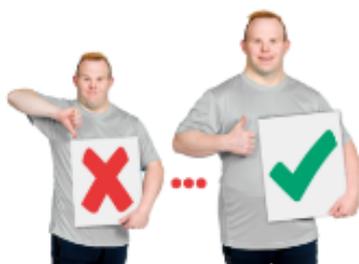


- it should not just look at **impacts** on their own

It must look at how things link together to make poverty and inequality worse.



- the Inquiry should look at:
 - which groups have been most affected by the pandemic, particularly people with [protected characteristics](#) and people experiencing inequality
 - how the work done so far has supported the needs of these groups
 - how policies must make sure they do not make inequalities worse



Resource Spending Review Framework consultation



The Commission gave information to [the Scottish Government's Resource Spending Review Framework consultation.](#)



We said that work must be more joined up between the work Scottish Government wants to do on:

- having less child poverty
- having a stronger and fairer Scotland that looks after the environment
- **climate change** - the way the world's weather and temperature are changing because people are using oil, gas and coal for their homes, factories and transport



Meeting the child poverty targets needs money and work that:

- makes sure workers are treated fairly
- gives people transport they can afford and the childcare they need
- looks at ways to make sure men and women are able to do the job they want





- looks at ways:
 - to make it easier for disabled people, women and people from minority ethnic groups to get work
 - to stop the discrimination these groups have to deal with

Taking part in the Scottish Government Minimum Income Guarantee Steering Group



The Commission Chair takes part in this group that wants there to be:

- a **minimum income guarantee** for Scotland – a way to make sure everyone has a level of income to have a good standard of living and get the services that they need
- to develop and test work to support the delivery of a minimum income guarantee using the powers that the Scottish Government has



Priority 4: Get people to listen to the Commission to change the way people think, talk and act about poverty and inequality in Scotland

In 2021-2022 the Commission did work to tell more people about poverty and inequality and to encourage people to discuss work to reduce poverty and inequality in Scotland.



This included:

- holding a public meeting
- speaking at events and meetings
- giving evidence to the Scottish Parliament
- giving information to TV, radio and newspapers



Our annual public meeting 2022



The Commission had an online public meeting in 2022 so people could:

- find out more about the work of the Poverty and Inequality Commission
- hear from our Commissioners and lived experience panel members

We encouraged people who were living on a low income to attend.



At the public meeting we wanted to:

- share our child poverty advice
- show examples of good work that is happening to make sure there is less poverty

Evidence to a Scottish Parliament committee



The Commission gave information about how to meet the child poverty targets to the Scottish Parliament's Social Justice and Social Security Committee.

Events, meetings and media activity



Over the last year members of the Commission have met with some Scottish Government Ministers to talk about poverty and inequality.



Our Commissioners have spoken at a range of events and in the media, and our child poverty advice was covered by some **media** – newspapers, TV and radio.