

COVID-19 : Implications for the Human Right to Social Security in Scotland

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Introduction

COVID-19 has had a major impact on the lives and livelihoods of millions of people throughout Scotland and the rest of the UK. In addition to the measures required to ensure the safety and health of the population, COVID-19 has also triggered the need for a significant socio-economic response. Whilst we do not know how long the health pandemic will last it is clear that economic hardships will continue, and in some cases worsen. The health pandemic has lifted the veil on pre-existing inequalities in Scotland and across the UK, with the most economically vulnerable falling through an inadequate social security 'safety net'.

Despite the introduction of some necessary measures at a UK level to preserve or boost incomes such as: the job retention scheme, a small increase in Universal Credit standard allowance and working tax credits; as well as the introduction in Scotland of an additional payment to people in receipt of the Carer's Allowance Supplement, and funding for the: Wellbeing Fundⁱ, Scottish Welfare Fund, Hardship Fund and Food Fundⁱⁱ, households across Scotland are still struggling to stay afloat. Particular groups are suffering disproportionately more than others, specifically women, children, persons with disabilities and low-income familiesⁱⁱⁱ.

The right to social security is enshrined in international human rights law and provides, in basic terms, the right to access and maintain social security, whether in cash or in kind, without discrimination of any kind, in order to secure protection from social risks and contingencies such as is current. However, beyond guaranteeing a basic means for survival, the right to social security is essential for the realisation of the right to an adequate standard of living and provides the opportunity for people to participate in society. This brief is designed to provide information about the right to social security as set out in international law and insight into the current effect of COVID-19 on people's enjoyment of socio-economic protections, specifically their right to social security.

The Right to Social Security

The Right to Social Security in International Law

The right to social security has been protected long before the formulation of international human rights, however, it was first introduced as a universal human right in 1948, by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Since its original formulation, the right to social security has been laid down in a range of binding international treaties (as set out in Box 1 below), including its key provision in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The ICESCR was ratified by the UK in 1976 and places specific obligations upon both the UK and Scottish government, via the Scotland Act 1998^{iv}.

Box 1: Key Articles on Social Security

Art. 22 of the UDHR

‘Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.’

Art. 25 of the UDHR

‘Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family... and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control’.

Art. 9 of the ICESCR

‘The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to social security, including social insurance’.

The right to social security is broad in definition, leaving States with a degree of flexibility in how they manage and maintain their social security system.^v In order to guide States, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the Committee) have outlined specific elements of the right to social security which must be met, as set out in Box 2 below.

Box 2: Specific elements of the right to social security

- **Availability:** The right to social security requires, for its implementation, that a system, whether composed of a single scheme or variety of schemes, is available and in place to ensure that social security is provided for the relevant social risks and contingencies. Furthermore, public authorities must take responsibility for the effective administration or supervision of the system.
- **Adequacy:** Social Security, whether in cash or in kind, must be adequate in amount and duration in order that everyone may realize his or her rights to family protection and assistance, an adequate standard of living and adequate access to health care.
- **Affordability:** If a social security scheme requires contributions, those contributions should be stipulated in advance. The direct and indirect costs and charges associated with making contributions must be affordable for all, and must not compromise the realization of other Covenant rights.
- **Accessibility:** All persons should be covered by the social security system, especially individuals belonging to the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups, without discrimination on any of the grounds prohibited. Social security services must be affordable and should also have physical access where necessary.

Further detail on the General Obligations set out by ICESCR relating to how to Respect, Protect, and Fulfil the Right to Housing are included in Appendix 1.

The Implications of COVID-19 for the Right to Social Security in Scotland

Financial Stress

The impact of COVID-19 has undoubtedly shone a spotlight on the inadequacy of the current UK social security system. Ten years of contractionary fiscal policy (i.e. austerity) by successive UK governments has reduced the levels of support available to people. This, coupled with an increase in insecure, low paid jobs, means that hundreds of thousands of people in Scotland now require financial support via social security in order to meet their basic needs.

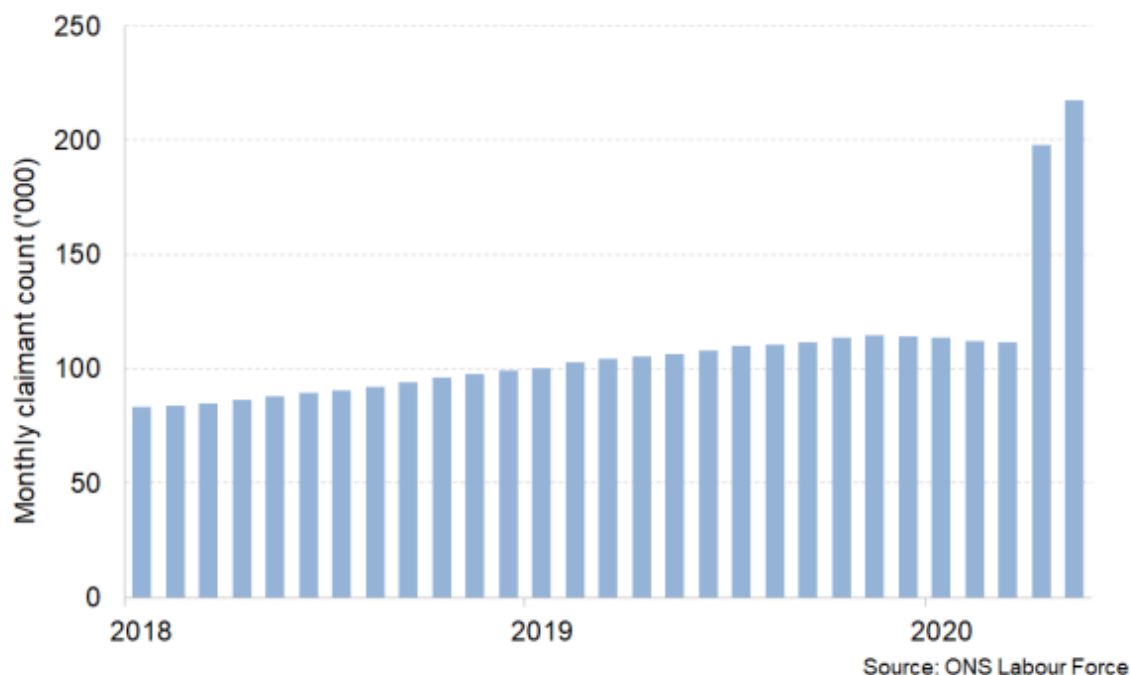
The significance of this has prompted deep concern from a number of UN Treaty Bodies^{vi} and the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty^{vii} about the various changes introduced by the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. Particular concern has also been expressed by the Committees and the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty about the adverse impact of these changes and cuts on the enjoyment of the rights to social security and to an adequate standard of living by disadvantaged and marginalised individuals and groups, including women, children, persons with disabilities and low-income families^{viii}.

With large-scale job losses in a wide range of sectors, it is inevitable that more people will need to claim and rely upon social security.

Experimental claimant count data for Scotland^{ix} during April and May 2020, revealed 218,000 claims were made (double that of pre-COVID times) – equivalent to a rate to 7.8 per cent^x (see Graph 1 below).

These figures suggest that unemployment in Scotland in May was around 187,000 (a rise from 127,000 in April). Unemployment is likely to rise further – the extent will depend on what happens with the 628,000 workers who are currently furloughed in Scotland (up to 31 May)^{xi}.

Graph 1: Claimant Count in Scotland^{xii}



The economic situation in Scotland is becoming severe. The Standard Life Foundation Financial Impact Tracker, set up to provide data on the effect of COVID-19 on household finances, shows that 28 per cent of all household in the UK are under severe financial stress^{xiii}. At present 60 per cent of adults living in poverty in Scotland, live in working households^{xiv}, many of whom have seen a cut in household income due to being furloughed and only 80 per cent of their wages and/or reduced hours. Even more concerning, is the data highlighting that nearly half (49 per cent) of households with dependent children in Scotland find themselves in the two most serious categories of financial stress^{xv}.

The Child Action Poverty Group have highlighted that an out of work family with two children, relying on social security, is currently left with an income 20 per cent below the poverty line^{xvi}. These families are reporting increased financial stress and associated anxiety, loneliness, and more complex mental health problems^{xvii}. This reveals the hidden cost of inadequate social security payments on families, and its damaging effect on society as a whole. Without further direct financial support for those who are currently in need of social security, Scotland runs the risk of thousands plunging below the poverty line.

A range of other evidence is also emerging highlighting the growing precariousness of many households' finances. This includes a noted rise in requested for social security support information requests made to Citizens Advice Scotland – with a 44 percent rise in visits to their online site compared to April 2019^{xviii}. The Scottish Welfare Fund has also had more than 50% higher number of crisis grant applications in March 2020 compared to March 2019^{xix}. Also, the Trussel Trust and Independent food banks across the UK have all noted significant increases in the number of food parcels distributed by food banks compared to the same months in 2019 (81 and 59 percent respectively) ^{xx}.

Of increasing concern is the disproportional effect of COVID-19 on women. For a range of reasons, women are the most likely to be living in both in-work and out-of-work poverty in the UK^{xxi}. This means women, on average, rely on access to social security for a larger proportion of their income than men. Women also have a disproportionate responsibility for caring for children and account for 91 per cent of lone parents, meaning women's poverty is inextricably interlinked with child poverty^{xxii}. Additionally, beyond problems with Universal Credit, Women are also less likely to qualify for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), due to low pay or zero-hours contracts necessitated by child or care responsibilities. This is coupled with the fact women make up 70 per cent of those on jobs not eligible for SSP whilst also making up 77 per cent of those in 'high risk' jobs thus leaving them more likely to require SSP^{xxiii}. The COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated this already unacceptable situation for women throughout the country^{xxiv}.

Reserved Social Security

When discussing the right to social security in Scotland, it is important to recognise the limited power of Scottish Government in the reserved area of social security. This includes many of the key areas of concern within the social security system that have been further highlighted by the arrival of COVID-19 and an increase in the number of claimants. For example: the low level of support provided by Universal Credit; the five week wait to commence Universal Credit^{xxv}; the increased risk of domestic abuse^{xxvi} and in particular financial abuse due to the single payment point in a household receiving Universal Credit^{xxvii}; the benefit

cap; the two child limit and the 'bedroom tax'. Other issues have become particularly problematic following the arrival of COVID-19 such as the low rate of statutory sick pay - £95.85 a week, just over a quarter of a full-time job at national minimum wage (£322.64 per week)^{xxviii}, a rate which could potentially discourage people who should self-isolate from doing so due to potential loss of earnings.

These are not issues that the Scottish Government can change directly.

Devolved Social Security

In 2108 the Social Security (Scotland) Act established a framework for the new system and devolved 11 existing social security entitlements to Scotland. The new public authority 'Social Security Scotland' is new and still to fully implement its mandate^{xxix}.

The recently devolved powers do offer the Scottish Government the opportunity to diverge further in policy from the UK and provide additional support in Scotland. This is not without financial cost. COVID-19 has already resulted in a steep increase in the numbers of people in Scotland claiming the reserved entitlement of Universal Credit. Whilst the increased cost of Universal Credit will be borne by the UK Government, some Scottish entitlements (e.g. Best Start Grant and Council Tax Reduction for example) are passported from Universal Credit (i.e. entitlement to Universal Credit means entitlement to other provisions). Those costs will be borne by the Scottish Government alone and therefore these additional entitlements will bring additional cost to Scotland.

Current Scottish Social Security Provisions

In addition to some changes in the way that Universal Credit is administered^{xxx}, the Scottish Government has so far used its social security powers to introduce the following new entitlements:

- Best Start Foods^{xxxi}
- Carer's Allowance Supplement^{xxxii}
- Young Carer Grant^{xxxiii}
- Best Start Grants (Pregnancy, Early Learning & School Age)^{xxxiv}

- Funeral Expense Assistance^{xxxv}

The Scottish Government was also set to provide or assume responsibility for a range of other entitlements in 2020/2021, including:

- Scottish Child Payment
- Job Start Payment
- Child Disability Payment (CDP)^{xxxvi}
- Disability Assistance for Working Age People (DAWAP)^{xxxvii}
- Disability Assistance for Older People (DAOP)^{xxxviii}
- Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA)
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB).

However, due to the impact of COVID-19, in particular on the capacity of Social Security Scotland, the planned social security programme has been delayed. The Scottish Child Payment is being prioritised for delivery early 2021 but a new timetable for other new entitlements is not yet published. In the meantime, current disability entitlements will continue to be delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Local authorities in Scotland also provide a range of relevant support through: the Scottish Welfare Fund (access to crisis grants); council tax reduction scheme; discretionary housing payments (in part to compensate for the 'bedroom tax') and free school meals^{xxxix}. To support increased demand for these provisions at this time, Local authorities have received a £100m boost^{xl}.

COVID-19 additional support

In order to help alleviate some of the impacts of COVID-19, the Scottish Government has introduced emergency legislation^{xli}, which has included a combination of administrative and financial measures to support those most in need.

Time limits for Best Start Grants have been temporarily relaxed, so that people don't miss out if applications are late due to COVID-19. This includes time limits for: making an application; a redetermination

request; a decision on a redetermination; and appealing to the First tier Tribunal.

For those in receipt of Carer's Allowance, carers will be allowed a temporary break in caring where the carer or the person they care for has COVID-19 or is self-isolating because of symptoms. There has also been a temporary relaxation on the requirement that care must be provided with the physical presence of a cared for person, thereby allowing the provision of emotional care remotely if necessary.

The Scottish Government has made additional funding available as part of a £350m package announced on 18 March 2020.^{xlii} This included:

- An increase from £35.5m to £80.5m of the Scottish Welfare Fund and an amended process making it easier to get more than 3 payments per year^{xliii}.
- An additional £50m allocated for council tax reduction and Scottish social security entitlements to meet the anticipated increased need.
- A £70m 'food fund' has been created, in part, to provide support for families who are unable to access free school meals.

Those in receipt of the Carer's Allowance Supplement will also now receive a one-off top-up payment of £230 in June 2020 to provide some more support for carers during coronavirus^{xliiv}.

The Scottish Government has also announced an extra £5 million funding for students in hardship, which can be applied for by students directly via their college or university. This is being funded through redirected travel and childcare funds which are no longer required.

Concerns raised by COVID-19 Impacts

A number of concerns have been raised by a wide range of organisations that relate both to the administration of social security as well as the extent to which the Scottish Government has used its available powers to offset the impact COVID-19 on an already insufficient safety net.

Administration of social security in Scotland

The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 has provided for extended deadlines for social security applications as well as allowing discretion for Social Security Scotland and Tribunal regarding re-determinations and appeals which have been missed because of COVID-19. It has also extended the time that can be taken for re-determinations by an additional nine weeks if required. Whilst Social Security Scotland states that re-determinations will still be made as speedily as possible, the ways in which COVID-19 is delaying re-determination should be monitored. In addition, it will be important for the Scottish Government to collect and monitor equalities data around discretionary decisions on re-determinations and appeals to ensure non-discrimination of access to this entitlement.

Digital Divide

UK and Scottish Governments have been pursuing a digital transformation agenda for many years. This means that public services, including the provision of much social security are now digital first, and citizens need to develop essential digital skills in order to engage. In Scotland the policy and best practice guidance for this agenda falls out of the Digital Strategy^{xiv}.

Prior to the pandemic, concerns already existed about the 'digital divide' and the potential that a digital first strategy could further marginalise already disconnected communities and groups. In Scotland, around one in four of the adult population do not currently have the essential skills that they need in order to make the best use of digital services^{xvi}. A number of initiatives have been created to help people develop these skills^{xvii} but the digital skills gap is a significant and serious concern.

Those without skills are more likely to be disabled, living in social housing and from lower socio-economic groups so digital access and skills is often framed as a social justice issue^{xviii}. The UN Special Rapporteur for Poverty addressed the issue of Digital Services in his comment on the UK in November 2018 noting that "*the impact on the human rights of the most vulnerable in the UK will be immense*"^{xlix}. He

was significantly critical of the UK Government's move to digital by default for public services such as social security.

The Scottish Government has already launched a new £5m Connecting Scotland programme, in response to the pandemic which aims to 'connect the most vulnerable'ⁱ, ensuring this is happening will be key for many to be able to access social security entitlements.

Scottish Child Payment

The Scottish Government has indicated that although delayed, it will prioritise the delivery of the Scottish Child Paymentⁱⁱ. It is, however, not likely that the first payments will be delivered before 2021 and this leaves a clear gap in direct financial support for families with children. A wide range of organisations, community groups, academics, trade unions, faith groups and the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland have noted that there is a clear and immediate need for emergency financial support to be provided to all low income families to tackle the severe financial hardship being experienced now and to support the government's commitment to ending child povertyⁱⁱⁱ.

Suggestions for exploration include making use of a combination of the following vehicles to provide an equivalent boost to household income of at least the £10 per week that the Scottish Child Payment will eventually provide:

- Best Start legislation and payment systems
- Scottish Welfare Fund
- School Clothing Grant payments.
- Topping up benefits that go to families to help with the costs of raising children
- Local government powers
- Best Start Foods.
- Crisis grants for families awaiting their first Universal Credit payment.
- Discretionary Housing Payment budget

Access to food

Supported with Scottish Government funding, Local authorities have been responsible for provide support for families with children who would ordinarily be eligible for free school meals. Most Local authorities have developed a mix of approaches to deliver this entitlement including: home delivery of food packages, vouchers, direct cash payments and food parcels for collection at schools. The Poverty Alliance have noted from their lived-experience evidence that in some areas the use of vouchers has prevented people from being able to access adequate food. Where vouchers were not redeemable online; relevant stores were not accessible locally; and travel to schools was required to collect food, some people (especially those who are shielding) have been unable to access this support^{liii}.

The Right to Food is discussed in full in another of the Commission's policy responses on COVID-19^{liiv}. A key issue raised in that paper explores how the current crisis has highlighted Scotland's dependence on charitable action to ensure the delivery of core socio-economic rights. This current reliance on charitable food banks, risks their further institutionalisation into society. For the right to food to be realised in Scotland, State aid and food support cannot be replaced by charitable action. All avenues to provide funding for vulnerable families must be explored. Direct cash payments to families is considered to be the most efficient and rights-based response, with other models restricting the choice and autonomy of families.

Recommendations

The Social Security Scotland legislation sets out clear guiding principles against which it should deliver social security in Scotland. At the heart of these principles is the fact that social security is itself a human right and essential to the realisation of other human rights. The government committed to taking a human rights based approach to the design and implementation of social security in Scotland. Taking a rights based approach is especially critical within the context of COVID-19. It will support the continued implementation of the government's obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the right to social security through improving

the Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Quality of devolved social security.

The Commission welcomes the Scottish Government's various efforts to realise people's right to social security at this time, however, more could be done (as is highlighted in Box 3 below) and responding to the following recommendations would further reflect the government's commitment in taking a human rights based approach.

Box 3: Recommendations

1. Social Security Scotland should ensure the ways in which COVID-19 is delaying re-determination is monitored, and that equalities data around discretionary decisions on re-determinations and appeals is collected and monitored to ensure non-discrimination of access to this entitlement.

2. The Scottish Government must ensure that both the Digital Strategy and the Connecting Scotland programme are bridging the 'digital divide'. It is important that their potential and actual impact are assessed. Impact Assessments are critical to ensure strategies and programmes target the right people and do not have any unintended consequences.

3. The levels of contact social security advice services are receiving should be monitored to ensure that adequate resourcing from government is provided to enable such advice services to provide the necessary level of support for people regarding their rights to social security.

4. The provision of the Scottish Child Payment should be expedited. This should include looking at provision through the power to 'top up' an entitlement as provided for by the Social Security (Scotland) Act. In the event DWP are unable to provide the payments due to the huge increase in Universal Credit claims, other avenues must be explored by the Scottish Government, including increasing the lump sum paid through the Best Start Grant and the Scottish Welfare Fund.

5. Consideration should be given by the Scottish Government to building on the one-off increase to Carer's Allowance Supplement provided in June 2020, with an additional top-up during the next round of payments in December 2020. This should also be considered as a step towards permanently increasing the value of the payment in the longer-term to support carers' right to an adequate standard of living.

6. Scottish Government guidance to local authorities on how they delivery food supplies to families with children who would ordinarily be eligible for free school meals should be updated to prioritise the delivery of cash-based approaches to support the realisation of people's right to food.

7. Maintain progress towards a new Act of Scottish Parliament that protects people's economic social, cultural and environmental rights and ensures policy and decision-making has everyone right at its heart.

Appendix 1: State Obligations in Relation to the Right to Social Security

States who have signed and ratified ICESCR have freely undertaken international legal obligations to ensure the protection of the social, economic and cultural rights, including the right to social security for their citizens. Any country that is a signatory to ICESCR is mandated to: *“take steps... to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures”*.^{lv}

To support the practical application of the obligation to fulfil, a human rights standards have been interpreted from Article 2(1) of ICESCR. Some of these norms are expected to be achieved *progressively* (generally norms focused on **results or outcomes**), but others are *immediate* (norms focused on **conduct or action**). The Committee have also noted that non-discrimination applies uniformly throughout the rights contained within the Covenant.^{lvi}

The commitment of States to respect, protect, and fulfil applies to all human rights, whether civil and political or socio-economic, and enables governments and civic organisations alike to break down human rights into clear and tangible obligations. How this relates to the right to social security, is set out in Box 4 below.

Box 4: Respect, Protect and Fulfil in the context of Social Security

Obligation to Respect – Requires States parties to refrain from interfering directly or indirectly with the enjoyment of the right to social security. States must refrain from denying or limiting equal access to adequate social security; arbitrarily or unreasonably interfering arrangements for social security or interfering with institutions that have been established to provide social security.

Obligation to Protect – Requires States parties prevent third parties from interfering in any way with the enjoyment of the right to social security. It obligates the adoption of necessary and effective legislation

and other measures to restrain third parties from denying equal access to social security schemes. For example

Obligation to Fulfil – Requires states parties to adopt the necessary measures, including the implementation of a social security scheme, directed towards the full realisation of the right to social security. This includes, for example, promoting appropriate education and public awareness concerning access to social security schemes.

Additionally, States parties are also obliged to provide the right to social security when individuals or a group are unable to realise that right themselves.

As provided by the Committee, ‘States parties have a core obligation to ensure the satisfaction of, at the very least, minimum essential levels of each of the rights enunciated in the Covenant’.^{lvii} These are immediate obligations and apply irrespective of a States resources, in times of war, and in health pandemics. In relation to core obligations for the right to social security, the Committee have explicitly set out six key obligations (see Box 5 below).

Box 5: The Committee’s Core Obligations

- a) To ensure access to a social security scheme that provides a minimum essential level of entitlements to all individuals and families that will enable them to acquire at least essential health care, basic shelter and housing, water and sanitation, foodstuff, and the most basic forms of education.
- b) To ensure the right of access to social security systems or schemes on a non-discriminatory basis, especially for disadvantaged and marginalised individuals and groups;
- c) To respect existing social security schemes and protect them from unreasonable interference;
- d) To adopt and implement a national social security strategy and plan of action;

e) To take targeted steps to implement social security schemes, particularly those that protect disadvantaged and marginalised individuals and groups;

f) To monitor the extent of the realisation of the right to social security.

This briefing has been supported by research input from Aidan Flegg, Doctoral student on a SHRC/Universities of Glasgow and Stirling Collaborative PhD.

i <https://scvo.org.uk/p/38035/2020/05/08/new-round-of-wellbeing-fund-to-help-charities-and-social-enterprises-support-those-impacted-by-coronavirus>

ii See https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Local_Gov/20200421ActoConvener.pdf

iii See Women's Budget Group: Crisis Collide: Women and COVID – 19: <https://wbg.org.uk/analysis/reports/crises-collide-women-and-covid-19/> and Scottish Government analysis: <https://data.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/index.html>

iv Scotland Act 1998, Para 7(2)(a) Schedule 5

v According to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the Committee), 'the right to social security is of central importance to guaranteeing human dignity for all persons when they are faced with circumstances that deprive them of their capacity to fully realise their Covenant rights. Additionally, the Committee have been keen to highlight the intrinsic interrelated and interdependent nature of human rights protection, highlighting the key role the right to social security plays within the realisation of other rights. See: UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), General Comment No. 19: The right to social security, UN Doc E/C.12/GC/19.

vi UPR 2017

<https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session27/GB/MatriceRecommendationsUK.docx>

ICCPR 2015

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CCPR/C/GBR/CO/7&Lang=En

ICESCR 2016

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=E/C.12/GBR/CO/6&Lang=En

CRC 2016

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CRC/C/GBR/CO/5&Lang=En

CEDAW 2019

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CEDAW/C/GBR/CO/8&Lang=En

CRPD 2017

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CRPD/C/GBR/CO/1&Lang=En

vii See Statement on Visit to the United Kingdom, by Professor Philip Alston, United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23881>

viii UPR 2017

<https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session27/GB/MatriceRecommendationsUK.docx>

ICCPR 2015

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CCPR/C/GBR/CO/7&Lang=En

ICESCR 2016

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=E/C.12/GBR/CO/6&Lang=En

CRC 2016

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CRC/C/GBR/CO/5&Lang=En

CEDAW 2019

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CEDAW/C/GBR/CO/8&Lang=En

CRPD 2017

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CRPD/C/GBR/CO/1&Lang=En

Statement on Visit to the United Kingdom, by Professor Philip Alston, United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23881>

ix ONS Labour Force data accessed via:

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2020/06/towards-robust-resilient-wellbeing-economy-scotland-report-advisory-group-economic-recovery/documents/towards-robust-resilient-wellbeing-economy-scotland/towards-robust-resilient-wellbeing-economy-scotland/govscot%3Adocument/towards-robust-resilient-wellbeing-economy-scotland.pdf>

x The experimental claimant count data covers claims for Jobseeker's Allowance and those claimants in the Universal Credit "searching for work" conditionality.

xi <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme-statistics-june-2020>

xii See <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2020/06/towards-robust-resilient-wellbeing-economy-scotland-report-advisory-group-economic-recovery/documents/towards-robust-resilient-wellbeing-economy-scotland/towards-robust-resilient-wellbeing-economy-scotland/govscot%3Adocument/towards-robust-resilient-wellbeing-economy-scotland.pdf>

xiii Scotland made up 8% of the sample, but as yet we haven't got a full breakdown of Scottish results apart from a disaggregation of respondents to questions about financial wellbeing. The results, and other commentary in the report, suggest that responses Scotland are broadly in line with other parts of the UK. See <https://www.standardlifeoundation.org.uk/our-work/coronavirus-finance-tracker2>

xiv Scottish Government, Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2016-19, 26th March 2020,

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2016-19/>

xv <https://www.ippr.org/blog/covid-19-how-are-families-with-children-faring-so-far>

xvi <https://cpag.org.uk/news-blogs/news-listings/open-letter-first-minister-coronavirus-support-low-income-families>

xvii Ibid.

xviii <https://news.stv.tv/scotland/four-fold-increase-in-scots-seeking-help-over-employment?top>

xix See <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-framework-decision-making/>

xx See <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-framework-decision-making/>

xxi <https://wbg.org.uk/blog/dwp-data-reveals-women-continue-to-be-worst-affected-by-poverty/>

xxii <https://cpag.org.uk/news-blogs/news-listings/open-letter-first-minister-coronavirus-support-low-income-families>

xxiii <https://wbg.org.uk/media/low-paid-women-at-highest-risk-of-exposure-to-covid-19/>

xxiv The extent to which women are disproportionately shouldering the financial hardship caused by the current pandemic cannot be captured in this brief, however the Women's Budget Group have released a detailed report illustrating key areas where the current social security system creates a disadvantage for women, alongside recommendations for its improvement. See Women's Budget Group: Crisis Collide: Women and COVID - 19

xxv Studies throughout the UK have elucidated the impact of Universal Credit and its waiting period as severe, with increased psychological stress, debt, use of emergency foodbanks and ability to live a life with dignity. The psychosocial and financial burden caused by the Universal Credit will now be effecting thousands more in Scotland and millions throughout the UK. See: <https://www.cas.org.uk/news/universal-credit-5-week-wait-leads-people-debt-stress-foodbanks-and-ill-health>

xxvi <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-52433520>

xxvii <https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Benefits-or-barriers-4-nations-report.pdf>

xxviii See Women's Budget Group: Crisis Collide: Women and COVID - 19

xxix Once it is fully operational, it had been anticipated that Social Security Scotland would administer a total of 14 entitlements, providing £3.5 billion in payments every year to approximately 1.4 million people.

xxx The Scottish Government cannot change the levels of UC that are paid.

xxxi Replacement for UK Government's Healthy Start Vouchers scheme. Paper vouchers will be replaced by a Payment Card giving eligible low income families more choice and flexibility to buy healthy food such as: fresh/frozen/tinned fruit and vegetables; cow's milk and infant formula; eggs; and dried or tinned pulses e.g. peas, lentils beans and barley. Best Start Foods is a prepaid card that can be used to buy foods for children under 3. The card can be used in shops and online.

xxxii in 2020, Carer's Allowance was increased by 13 per cent, providing an extra £452.40 per carer, lifting the income of over 90,000 carers.

xxxiii In autumn 2019 a yearly payment of £300 was introduced for young people aged 16 to 18 who care for someone 16 hours or more each week.

xxxiv this comprises of three possible payments for parents or carers who are already in receipt of certain social security or tax credits. These replace the Sure Start Maternity Grant for pregnancy and birth payment, with additional payments at early learning and school stages.

xxxv providing assistance for relatives on low-income social security with the cost of funerals.

xxxvi this will replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA) (Child).

xxxvii This will replace Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

xxxviii This will replace Attendance Allowance (AA)

xxxix In Scotland, every child who attends a local council school can access free school lunches in primary 1, 2 and 3, irrespective of a family's financial circumstances.

^{xi} See https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Local_Gov/20200421ACtoConvener.pdf

^{xii} <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2020/7/contents/enacted>

^{xlii} <https://spice-spotlight.scot/2020/04/01/coronavirus-covid-19-scottish-social-security/>

^{xliii} £22m of which to be distributed immediately according to the usual formula, and £23m to be distributed later based on need

^{xliv} This would amount to an additional £19.2 million investment.

^{xlv} <https://www.gov.scot/policies/digital/>

^{xlvi} <https://www.lloydsbank.com/banking-with-us/whats-happening/consumer-digital-index.asp>

^{xlvii} See for example the digital participation charter: <https://digitalparticipation.scot/>

^{xlviii} https://d1ssu070pg2v9i.cloudfront.net/pex/carnegie_uk_trust/2019/02/21143338/LOW-RES-3999-CUKT-Switched-On-Report-ONLINE.pdf

^{xlix} See Statement on Visit to the United Kingdom, by Professor Philip Alston, United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23881>

^l See <https://www.gov.scot/news/getting-people-online/>

^{li} See <https://spice-spotlight.scot/2020/04/01/coronavirus-covid-19-scottish-social-security/>

^{lii} See: [https://fraserofallander.org/poverty/getting-money-to-families-in-financial-hardship-what-can-scotland-do/?utm_source=Fraser%20Blog%20and%20subs%20list&utm_campaign=6fdb4937f2-Email-Blog-RSS&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c855ea57f7-6fdb4937f2-75691849;](https://fraserofallander.org/poverty/getting-money-to-families-in-financial-hardship-what-can-scotland-do/?utm_source=Fraser%20Blog%20and%20subs%20list&utm_campaign=6fdb4937f2-Email-Blog-RSS&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c855ea57f7-6fdb4937f2-75691849;file://scotland.gov.uk/dc2/fs3_home/n320068/Poverty%20Alliance.pdf)
file://scotland.gov.uk/dc2/fs3_home/n320068/Poverty%20Alliance.pdf;
<https://cpag.org.uk/news-blogs/news-listings/open-letter-first-minister-coronavirus-support-low-income-families>

^{liii} See file://scotland.gov.uk/dc2/fs3_home/n320068/Poverty%20Alliance.pdf

^{liv} See <https://www.scottishhumanrights.com/media/2050/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-the-right-to-food-final.pdf>

^{lv} Article 2(1) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (herein after ICESCR).

^{lvi} Article 2(2) ICESCR

^{lvii} See General Comment No. 3: The Nature of States Parties' Obligations, UN Doc E/1991/23.