

Framing a Minimum Income Guarantee

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**Report produced on behalf of the Minimum Income
Guarantee Expert Group**

Progressive Partnership



Contents

Executive summary	4
Background and objectives	4
Research methods	4
Limitations	5
Key findings	5
Perceptions and understanding of poverty and financial insecurity	5
Responses to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee	6
Persuasive advantages of a Minimum Income Guarantee	7
Framing options	8
Recommendations/implications	9
Background and objectives	11
Background	11
Research aims	11
This report	12
Development of framing options	13
Framing options	14
Qualitative research method and sample	15
Research method	15
Sample profile	15
Limitations	16
Quantitative research method and sample	17
Research method	17
Sample profile	17
Analysis and reporting	19
Limitations	19
Qualitative research findings	20
Perceptions and understanding of poverty	20
Experience of financial insecurity	20
What is poverty	20
Who is most vulnerable	21
Causes	22
Impacts	23
Solutions	24
Response to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee	25
Response to the framing options	27

Reassurance/safety net	28
Security for everyone/global events.....	29
Freedom/opening opportunity	31
Advantages of a Minimum Income Guarantee	33
Advantages for individuals	33
Advantages for society.....	34
Most effective framing options	35
Reassurance/safety net	36
Freedom/opportunity.....	36
Fairer society	37
Global events	37
The name ‘Minimum Income Guarantee’	37
Quantitative research findings.....	39
Framing options tested	39
Perceptions and attitudes towards poverty and financial insecurity	40
Poverty and financial insecurity in Scotland.....	40
Extent to which financial insecurity and poverty is a problem in Scotland	40
Levels of concern about financial insecurity and poverty in Scotland.....	41
Extent to which Scottish Government should prioritise helping people in poverty.....	42
Attitudes towards poverty and financial insecurity	42
Analysis by attitudes towards poverty.....	47
Response to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee	48
Initial levels of support for the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee	48
Anticipated impact of a Minimum Income Guarantee	49
Response to the framing options	51
Preferred frame.....	53
Reasons for selecting preferred frames.....	55
Benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee for individuals and communities	57
Benefits for individuals that would increase support for a Minimum Income Guarantee	57
Benefits for communities/society that would increase support for a Minimum Income Guarantee	58
Naming options	59
Any other comments	59
Conclusions and recommendations.....	61
Appendices	66

Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire	66
Screeners/quotas	66
Survey Questions.....	67
Appendix 2: Sample profile	78
Appendix 3: Technical appendix	81
Method: quantitative.....	81
Data processing and analysis	81
Method: qualitative	82

Executive summary

Background and objectives

The Minimum Income Guarantee is a policy response which seeks to deliver financial security for all, to reduce inequalities and to tackle poverty. It is a guaranteed minimum level of income beneath which no individual living in Scotland would fall, ensuring an acceptable standard of living that promotes dignity and a decent quality of life.

The Scottish Government committed to delivering a Minimum Income Guarantee in the longer term in its 2021-22 Programme for Government. A Steering Group has been established, which includes a cross-party Strategy Group and an Expert Group of external representatives from academia, think tanks and poverty and equality organisations, to consider issues of design and delivery of the Minimum Income Guarantee.

The Scottish Government, on behalf of the independent Expert Group, commissioned Progressive Partnership to conduct market research in order to test levels of support for a Minimum Income Guarantee and to support future communication and framing around it. The overall aim of the research was to provide robust and timely advice on how a Minimum Income Guarantee should be framed. It aimed to identify how this policy can be communicated effectively to ensure public awareness and understanding, with a focus on testing preferences for framing.

Research methods

The research was designed to follow a staged approach, as follows:

- Project inception and development of framing options: This included a review of key documents provided by the Expert Group to inform the development of the research tools. Conversations were also held with a total of six members of the Expert Group, to provide background understanding and inform the development of the framing options to be tested in the primary research. Four frames were developed based on the themes of: reassurance/safety net; security for everyone/global events; a fairer society for everyone to live in; and freedom/opening opportunity.
- Qualitative research: A series of 24 in-depth interviews was conducted with members of the general public to explore the concepts identified during the inception stage and gain feedback on options for framing a Minimum Income Guarantee. The sample included a mix of respondents in terms of age, gender and socio-economic group, and with representation from groups of particular interest, including minority ethnic groups, those with health issues/disabilities, those with no educational qualifications, priority families¹, rural/island communities, unpaid carers and care leavers. Interviews were conducted online and lasted an average of 50-60 minutes. Based on findings from the qualitative research, some adjustments were made to the framing options to be tested in the quantitative survey.

¹ Lone parent families, families where someone is disabled, families with 3+ children, minority ethnic families, families with a child under 1 year old, families where the mother is under 25.

- Quantitative research: An online self-completion survey was conducted to test the three most promising Minimum Income Guarantee framing options with the general public via a nationally representative online survey. The survey collected views from 1,053 adults aged 18+, with quotas set to ensure the sample was representative of the Scottish adult population in terms of gender, age and socio-economic group.

Limitations

Please note that qualitative research does not provide statistically robust data, due to the sample sizes involved and the methods of respondent selection. This means that results cannot be applied to, or described as being representative of, the general population. However, this phase of research provided valuable insight into the key perceptions and initial responses to the Minimum Income Guarantee framing options, which was followed by more robust testing in the quantitative survey. There are also limitations associated with any quantitative survey method – e.g. as the survey was conducted online, the sample necessarily excludes people who do not have internet access. However, the quantitative sample does include robust sub-samples of respondents from lower socio-economic groups, those living in the most deprived SIMD quintile, and those on lower incomes – it is no longer the case that online samples are heavily weighted towards more affluent respondents. The sample design provides as representative a sample as possible within the constraints of the available timescale and budget.

Key findings

Perceptions and understanding of poverty and financial insecurity

Almost all qualitative respondents had personal experience of financial insecurity, either now or in the past, or through people they knew. Cost of living issues/rising prices were commonly mentioned, and several respondents were currently struggling financially. Qualitative discussions also suggested that people generally have a good understanding of which groups in society are most vulnerable to poverty, with older people and children/families particularly likely to be mentioned.

The quantitative research also found that people see poverty and financial insecurity as a serious issue and a high priority for action: nine in ten respondents said this was a very (52%) or moderately (38%) serious problem, three quarters (77%) said they were personally concerned about it, and seven in ten (71%) said that helping those affected should be a top/high priority for the Scottish Government.

Evidence suggests that some negative attitudes and contradictory narratives about poverty persist. When thinking about the causes of poverty, qualitative interviewees were most likely to mention causes in wider society/the economy, but some did blame individual factors too, such as people ‘cheating the system’ and being ‘too lazy’ to work etc. The survey results also suggest that there are some persistent negative views of those affected by financial insecurity – e.g. two fifths of respondents (38%) agreed that if people work hard they can avoid being unable to pay for basic needs, and a quarter (24%) agreed that people experiencing poverty have usually made poor choices in life.

This supports previous research findings that people often hold contradictory positions when thinking about poverty – there was evidence in the interviews of some doubts about

those in financial hardship being 'deserving' of help, but also sympathy and a recognition that the problem is real when thinking about cost of living increases and wider social issues (e.g. housing and employment), and when testing the original framing options and proposed benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee in the qualitative interviews, any messaging that was seen to place blame on those in financial difficulties did not work well.

Responses to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee

Initial responses to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee were positive: three fifths (60%) of survey respondents scored their level of support as 8~10 out of 10, and just over three in ten (31%) gave the highest possible score of 10. Qualitative respondents were also broadly supportive of the idea, with key positive elements including: it would ensure the most vulnerable in society are supported/nobody would fall below a certain standard of living; it includes good quality work and services, not just benefits; it felt quite aspirational and positive; and people saw that it could have wider benefits for society as well as individuals. However, interviewees tended to assume that they were unlikely to benefit personally from the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee.

Survey results also suggest some altruism in responses to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee. While three quarters of survey respondents (75%) thought that a Minimum Income Guarantee would have a positive impact on society as a whole, people were less likely to anticipate benefits for themselves personally: just under half (49%) said it would be positive for them. These findings indicate that while there is perhaps a need to communicate a strong message about why a Minimum Income Guarantee would have a positive impact on everyone, people do still support the idea even when they assume it will benefit others rather than themselves.

Certain sub-groups of the population had different attitudes towards financial insecurity, and this was reflected in their initial responses to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee. For example, those who were better off (in higher socio-economic groups, currently managing well financially, not living in areas of deprivation etc.) tended to be less supportive of a Minimum Income Guarantee and were less likely to say it would have a positive impact than those who were less well off.

It should also be noted that respondents raised a lot of questions about how a Minimum Income Guarantee would work in practice. When first hearing about the idea, qualitative respondents raised a number of (mainly practical) questions/concerns: how it will be funded/paid for; how it will be administered (e.g. whether it will be means tested, how eligibility will be determined, who would be eligible); what the minimum threshold would be and how it would be calculated; how to ensure it was not abused; how to ensure the minimum levels set did not disincentivise work; and queries around fairness (e.g. someone earning just below might get a top up, while someone earning just above gets nothing). Similar queries were raised in the population survey.

Persuasive advantages of a Minimum Income Guarantee

Talking about the benefits for both individuals and for wider society can help people think more positively about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee – but the advantages for individuals were most effective in increasing support for the policy.

For example, qualitative respondents found the potential benefits for individuals to be the most persuasive and relatable – greater financial security for individuals being the benefit that stood out the most. People responded particularly well to specific examples of situations that could lead to needing help – common things like ill health, job loss, relationship breakdown etc, which people found relatable. The advantages of a Minimum Income Guarantee for wider society (such as better public services, reduction in crime etc.), while seen to be worthwhile, were felt to be less achievable/realistic and so did not work as well to gain support for the policy.

In the survey, the individual benefit that people said was most likely to increase their support for the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee was allowing people to live a decent/dignified life, not worrying about whether to ‘heat or eat’ (38% ranked this first from the list of individual benefits) – this also reflects the qualitative findings, as the ‘heat or eat’ messaging resonated with people as something that highlighted the realities and impacts of financial insecurity. However, qualitative findings were mixed in relation to use of the word ‘dignified’ in this context, e.g. implying that people on low incomes were **not** dignified.

Providing greater financial security for when things happen out of people’s control was also ranked highly (24% selected this first). Similarly, the benefit for communities/society that was ranked first (by 31%) was reassurance that a financial safety net is there for everybody. A reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour and better public services were much further down the list of persuasive community benefits. Qualitative findings also suggest that focusing on crime and anti-social behaviour is less effective, since people feel this is placing blame on those in poverty.

Framing options

Three framing options were tested in the survey, following some adjustments based on the qualitative research, and the removal of a fourth framing option about security in relation to global events which did not test well. These were as follows:

Frame/theme	Description
Reassurance/safety net	The cost-of-living crisis has demonstrated that no one is entirely protected from financial hardship, and that we must go further in providing a safety net. Anyone might need a helping hand at some point in their life, and a Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through a combination of fair and accessible paid work, high quality services and adequate social security, would be there as a reassurance for all – no matter your current position in life or what might happen in the future – you are promised a minimum standard of living.
A fairer society for everyone to live in	Inequality and poverty are harmful to society, not only for those at the sharp end of it, but for everyone. Inequality can be linked to some social problems, so reducing poverty will help to alleviate strain on the NHS and reduce crime, which in turn will lead to higher levels of trust and stronger community life. By introducing a Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through a combination of fair and accessible paid work, high quality services and adequate social security, we will not only be improving the living standard for those who need it most, but also for society as a whole.
Freedom/opening opportunity	There are people in our communities who do not get the opportunity to live decent, healthy and financially secure lives, and are, for example, being forced to choose between whether 'to heat or to eat'. This is unacceptable in our modern society, and something that we need to collectively rectify. The Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through social security benefits, fair work/good jobs, and the provision of key basic services, would ensure a minimum standard of living to all, allowing people to pursue life's opportunity and live fulfilling lives.

Results indicate that all three of the final frames tested in the survey have potential to be effective in communicating about a Minimum Income Guarantee across the general population – levels of support for the idea were slightly higher after respondents read each of the three frames, compared to initial support levels. It is worth noting that it is relatively difficult to increase scores substantially when support for the idea is already high.

The reassurance/safety net theme worked best overall. When asked to select which of the three frames made them feel most positively about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee, the 'reassurance safety/net' concept was most likely to be chosen, with 37% ranking this first – although views were relatively evenly split overall, with substantial minorities choosing the 'fairer society' (33%) and 'freedom/opportunities' (30%) themes.

As noted previously, certain sub-groups of the population had different attitudes towards poverty which was reflected in varying levels of support for the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee. Since those opposed to the idea are the most in need of being convinced of the need for the policy, analysis focused on how those with the most negative attitudes responded to the framing options.

Encouragingly, those who had initially been opposed to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee did increase their level of support after hearing the more detailed framing descriptions – and this was particularly the case for the reassurance/safety net theme (43% of this group gave a higher score after seeing this frame). When asked to rank their preferred themes, reassurance/safety net also performed particularly well among those who had the most negative attitudes towards financial insecurity/tended to blame individuals for their situation, and among those who had initially opposed the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee.

Recommendations/implications

1. People understand that poverty and financial insecurity exist in Scotland, and they see the need for action. Findings indicate that the Scottish population is open to messaging about potential policies to address financial insecurity. All qualitative interviewees also spoke about local issues when asked about poverty, suggesting there is an opportunity for communication about a Minimum Income Guarantee to tap into widespread recognition that poverty is relevant in Scotland today.
2. Spontaneously proposed solutions to tackling poverty included things that a Minimum Income Guarantee would be designed to achieve, suggesting that people are open to the ideas that will be part of the policy. Highlighting all the key elements of the policy in combination is likely to be effective: mentions of better public services and improvements to the world of work were viewed particularly positively, as well as ensuring adequate social security.
3. Some negative attitudes towards poverty persist, and there is an element of blaming individuals for their financial insecurity – this presents a challenge for communicating about/gaining support for a Minimum Income Guarantee. It may be effective to highlight experiences that everyone can understand, and focus on issues affecting everybody, since respondents were very aware of the cost-of-living crisis and rising prices etc. Communications should also avoid messaging which could be interpreted as placing blame on those in poverty/in receipt of benefits.
4. There was broad support for the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee in principle, although there was a tendency to assume it would benefit other people. Communication about a Minimum Income Guarantee should highlight benefits for everyone/wider society, as well as focusing on the advantages for the most vulnerable. There is a greater need to persuade certain sub-groups of the

population of the need for a Minimum Income Guarantee, particularly those who are personally better off financially themselves.

5. While some benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee for wider society may be realised in the longer term, highlighting individual benefits may be more productive in terms of gaining public support in the short term, as these are seen as more achievable and realistic – particularly in the current climate of funding cuts and in the face of some fairly pessimistic views about the problem being ‘too big to solve’. Including specific examples of situations leading to people needing financial help should be included to ensure messaging is relevant/resonates across the population. People will need more explanation of how and why benefits will be delivered for wider society, particularly in relation to reducing crime and improving public services – which some people felt should be addressed anyway, independently of any policy related to a Minimum Income Guarantee.
6. It is recommended that the reassurance/safety net theme is used to frame messaging about a Minimum Income Guarantee, since this was most effective across the population as a whole but particularly among those who need most persuading about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee.
7. The name ‘Minimum Income Guarantee’ had the most consistent levels of support across the sample. It is recommended that the current name for the policy is retained.
8. There are lots of questions about how a Minimum Income Guarantee would work in practice. Communications will need to clearly explain the practicalities and answer the key questions people will have, such as how the policy will be funded, how it will be administered and how the Scottish Government will ensure its operation is fair. It is understood that providing answers to these types of questions about policy operation is part of the wider work of the Expert Group.

Background and objectives

Background

The Minimum Income Guarantee is a policy response which seeks to deliver financial security for all, to reduce inequalities and to tackle poverty. It is a guaranteed minimum level of income beneath which no individual living in Scotland would fall, ensuring an acceptable standard of living that promotes dignity and a decent quality of life².

The Scottish Government committed to delivering a Minimum Income Guarantee in the longer term in its 2021-22 Programme for Government³. A Steering Group has been established, which includes a cross-party Strategy Group and an Expert Group of external representatives from academia, think tanks and poverty and equality organisations, to consider issues of design and delivery of the Minimum Income Guarantee.

The Scottish Government, on behalf of the independent Expert Group, commissioned Progressive Partnership to conduct market research in order to test levels of support for a Minimum Income Guarantee and to support future communication and framing around it. A Research Advisory Group (RAG) was also set up, consisting of representatives from the Expert Group (The Poverty Alliance and IPPR Scotland) and Scottish Government officials.

Research aims

The overall aim of the research was to provide robust and timely advice on how a Minimum Income Guarantee should be framed. It aimed to identify how this policy can be communicated effectively to ensure public awareness and understanding, with a focus on testing preferences for framing. While it was recognised that issues on the content and operation of a Minimum Income Guarantee were likely to be raised during the research, the design of the policy was not within the scope of this project.

The research was designed to follow a staged approach, as follows:

- Project inception: including a project inception meeting, an evidence review and engagement with members of the Expert Group to provide background understanding and inform the development of the framing options to be tested in the primary research
- Qualitative research: a series of in-depth interviews with members of the general public to explore the concepts identified during the inception stage and gain feedback on options for framing a Minimum Income Guarantee
- Quantitative research: a population survey to test the most promising Minimum Income Guarantee framing options with the general public via a nationally representative online survey.

² [Minimum Income Guarantee Expert Group: Interim Report 2023](#)

³ [Programme for Government 2021 to 2022](#)

This report

This report draws together findings from all stages of the project. It outlines the initial development of frames for testing, followed by findings from the qualitative interviews. The quantitative results are then presented, following an explanation of some adjustments that were made to the frames for testing based on the qualitative findings. The conclusions and recommendations take into account findings from both stages of primary research.

Development of framing options

Following the project inception meeting, Progressive reviewed key documents provided by the Expert Group to inform the development of the research tools. Due to the limited project timescale, the work already done by the Expert Group, and the lack of comparable Minimum Income Guarantee-style policies to feed into the review, it was agreed that this stage should focus on the work undertaken by organisations such as IPPR and The Poverty Alliance, rather than a wide-ranging evidence review/literature search.

Key documents reviewed as part of this process included:

- Minimum Income Guarantee Expert Group Interim Report 2023⁴
- Minimum Income Guarantee Expert by Experience panel reports (2022-2024)⁵
- The Poverty Alliance resources e.g. Talking about the Minimum Income Guarantee⁶; note of the Minimum Income Guarantee conference 2023⁷
- IPPR reports: Securing a Living Income in Scotland (2021)⁸; Towards a Living Income (2022)⁹
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation/Frameworks research: Talking about Poverty (2016)¹⁰; How to Talk about Poverty in the United Kingdom (2018)¹¹
- WPI Economics report for the Expert Group: Economic Impact of a Minimum Income Guarantee: Analysis of economic theory and policy evidence (2024)¹²
- Scottish Government Social Security Experience Panels reports (2022)¹³.

Conversations were also held with a total of six members of the Expert Group (representing five organisations), to provide the Progressive team with a full understanding of the project background, and discuss the key issues and challenges associated with framing a Minimum Income Guarantee as well as initial ideas about how best to describe the policy to the general public. Organisations represented in these discussions were: The Robertson Trust; The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR); The Poverty Alliance; One Parent Families Scotland; and the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER).

⁴ [Minimum Income Guarantee Expert Group: Interim Report 2023](#)

⁵ [Minimum Income Guarantee: Experts by Experience Panel report](#)

⁶ [Talking effective about the Minimum Income Guarantee](#)

⁷ [MIG Conference Briefings Collated Jan24](#)

⁸ [Securing a living income in Scotland](#)

⁹ [Towards a living income](#)

¹⁰ [Talking about Poverty](#)

¹¹ [How to talk about poverty in the UK](#)

¹² [Economic Impact of a Minimum Income Guarantee](#)

¹³ [Social Security Experience Panels: publications](#)

Framing options

Based on the evidence review, conversations with the Expert Group and input from the Research Advisory Group, four frames were developed for testing in the qualitative research. These were based around the themes of:

- Reassurance/safety net
- Security for everyone/global events
- A fairer society for everyone to live in
- Freedom/opening opportunity.

The description used for each theme is outlined in the table below.

Table 1: Initial Minimum Income Guarantee framing options for qualitative testing

Frame/theme	Description
Reassurance/safety net	The cost-of-living crisis has demonstrated that no one is entirely protected from financial hardship, and that we must go further in providing a safety net. Anyone might need a helping hand at some point in their life, and a Minimum Income Guarantee would be there as a reassurance for all – no matter your current position in life or what might happen in the future – you are promised a minimum standard of living.
Security for everyone/global events	Global changes, such as climate change, conflicts around the world and technological advances, mean we are likely to see more turmoil in the global economy. Everyone in Scotland, particularly those who are at a greater risk of poverty and insecurity, would have a much more robust safety net with a Minimum Income Guarantee, ensuring their ability to live with dignity and afford the essentials is not jeopardised by far-away events beyond their control.
A fairer society for everyone to live in	Inequality and poverty are a blight on our society, that is damaging not only for those at the sharp end of it, but for everyone. Inequality can be linked to social problems such as violence and ill health – causing strain on the NHS, more drug abuse and higher rates of imprisonment. These in turn lead to lower levels of trust and weaker community life. By introducing a Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through a combination of fair and accessible paid work, high quality services and adequate social security, we will not only be improving the living standard for those who need it most, but also for society as a whole.
Freedom/opening opportunity	There are people in our communities who do not get the opportunity to live decent, healthy and financially secure lives, and are, for example, being forced to choose between whether ‘to heat or to eat’. This is unacceptable in our modern society, and something that we need to collectively rectify. The Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through social security benefits, fair work/good jobs, and the provision of key basic services, would ensure a minimum standard of living to all, allowing people to pursue life’s opportunity and live fulfilling lives.

Qualitative research method and sample

Research method

One-to-one in-depth interviews were conducted with 24 members of the general public. This method was chosen to afford each individual participant a decent amount of time to discuss the topics and consider potential frames for the Minimum Income Guarantee, and for moderators to probe the issues with them in depth.

Respondents were recruited by Progressive's professional recruiters, using their local knowledge and existing contacts. A recruitment questionnaire was used to ensure the final sample met the specification and a broad mix of respondents were included in the research.

Interviews were conducted via online videoconferencing, enabling respondents to take part from home, and meaning the sample could cover a wide geographical area across Scotland. Moderators used a topic guide to ensure all objectives were covered in the discussions. Stimulus materials were used in the research, in the form of descriptions of the proposed frames and benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee which were presented on-screen to respondents, to prompt discussion and gain feedback on the proposed options.

Interviews lasted an average of around 50-60 minutes. As is standard practice in research of this nature, respondents received an incentive of £40 to thank them for their time.

Sample profile

The sample was designed to include a mix of respondents in terms of age, gender and socio-economic group, and to ensure representation from groups of particular interest including minority ethnic groups, those with health issues/disabilities, those with no educational qualifications, priority families¹⁴, rural/island communities, unpaid carers and care leavers, where possible. The sample profile is outlined in the tables overleaf.

¹⁴ Lone-parent families, families where someone is disabled, families with 3+ children, minority ethnic families, families with a child under 1 year old, families where the mother is under 25.

Table 2: Qualitative sample profile: age, gender, socio-economic group

Age	No.	Socio-economic group ¹⁵	No.	Gender	No.
18-24	4	AB	5	Male	9
25-44	7	C1	3		
45-64	7	C2	5	Female	15
65+	6	DE	11		

Table 3: Qualitative sample profile: other sub-groups

Sub-groups ¹⁶	No.
Minority ethnic groups	3
Health issues/disabilities	11
No educational qualifications	4
Rural/island communities	2
Unpaid carers	10
Care leavers/care experienced	2
Priority families ¹⁷	6

Limitations

Please note that qualitative research does not provide statistically robust data, due to the sample sizes involved and the methods of respondent selection. This means that results cannot be applied to, or described as being representative of, the general population. However, this phase of research provided valuable insight into the key perceptions and initial responses to the Minimum Income Guarantee framing options, which was followed by more robust testing in the quantitative survey.

¹⁵ AB: Higher and intermediate managerial, administrative, professional occupations; C1: Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative, professional occupations; C2: Skilled manual occupations; DE: Semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, unemployed and lowest grade occupations.

¹⁶ Please note that respondents could fall into more than one of these sub-groups.

¹⁷ 3 lone parents; 3 with 3+ children; 1 minority ethnic family; 1 with a child <1 year old

Quantitative research method and sample

Research method

An online self-completion survey was administered via sample panels. The survey collected views from a representative sample of 1,053 adults aged 18+ in Scotland, with fieldwork conducted between 7th and 13th October 2024. A copy of the survey questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.

Quotas were set to ensure the sample was representative of the Scottish adult population in terms of gender, age and socio-economic group, and the final data was weighted to adjust for very slight variations in the final achieved samples against quota targets.

Sample profile

An overview of the weighted sample profile is outlined in Table 4a-c below, the base number of this sample is 1,053. Detailed sample tables are included in Appendix 2.

Table 4a: Weighted sample profile (age)

Age group	No.	%
18-24	105	10%
25-34	168	16%
35-44	159	15%
45-54	168	16%
55-64	189	18%
65+	264	25%
Prefer not to say	1	<1%

Table 4b: Weighted sample profile (gender)

Gender	No.	%
Male	504	48%
Female	545	52%
Non-binary	3	<1%
Prefer to self-describe	1	<1%

Table 4c: Weighted sample profile (SEG)

SEG	No.	%
AB	200	19%
C1	336	32%
C2	231	22%
DE	284	27%
Prefer not to say	3	<1%

Analysis and reporting

Analysis has been conducted looking at various sub-groups, including demographics (age, gender, SEG, children in the household, priority families), economic factors (working status, household income, how people feel they are managing financially) and geography (urban/rural classification, SIMD profile). Unweighted base sizes for sub-groups used in the analysis are included in the sample profile tables in Appendix 2.

The sampling technique used was quota controlled to achieve a representative sample of the Scottish general public. Use of quotas means it was a non-probability sample, so the margins of error should therefore be treated as indicative, based on an equivalent probability sample. The overall sample size of 1,053 provides a dataset with an approximate margin of error of between $\pm 0.60\%$ and $\pm 3.02\%$, calculated at the 95% confidence level (market research industry standard).

Only significant differences are reported (at the 95% level, i.e. results indicate 95% confidence that the difference is not due to chance or sampling error). Not every significant difference is noted – results are highlighted where they are notable/meaningful, part of a clear pattern of results across the reporting as a whole, and/or where they add insight in relation to the research objectives.

For ease of reading the results, percentage labels have been left off some of the charts where small percentages are charted. In instances where percentages quoted in the text do not match the sum of two figures in the charts, this is due to rounding.

Limitations

There are limitations associated with any survey method. For example, as the survey was conducted online, the sample necessarily excludes people who do not have internet access. However, the sample does include robust sub-samples of respondents from lower socio-economic groups, those living in the most deprived SIMD quintile, and those on lower incomes (see Appendix 2) – it is no longer the case that online samples are heavily weighted towards more affluent respondents. The sample design provides as representative a sample as possible within the constraints of the available timescale and budget.

Qualitative research findings

Perceptions and understanding of poverty

Experience of financial insecurity

Almost all respondents had personal experience of financial insecurity, either currently or in the past, or through people they knew such as family/friends or through experience at work (e.g. in education or policing). Personal experiences tended to be linked to job losses, family breakdown, being unable to work due to health issues/disability or caring responsibilities, issues with debt, and (more recently) rising living costs. Most people had some experience of 'counting the pennies' and some were currently struggling:

"The thing is not being able to save, just living from hand to mouth really. Everything is expensive. And food, bills going high. Just not being sure what tomorrow will bring really." Female, 25-44, DE

What is poverty

When asked what the word poverty meant to them, almost all respondents focused on descriptions of people who were 'struggling to make ends meet', not having enough money to live on or to cover 'the basics' – i.e. food, heating, clothing and shelter. Respondents commonly mentioned people struggling to pay bills and having to use food banks in order to feed themselves and their families.

There was also a recognition that poverty could affect those in work, not just those who were unemployed or unable to work – the key problem was said to be people not earning enough to meet their basic needs. Some also mentioned not having any kind of safety net or anything to fall back on 'when things go wrong'.

Some respondents raised wider issues of not being able to participate fully in society, e.g. through lack of access to transport, WiFi/mobile phones, not being able to take part in social activities (e.g. children not being able to go on school outings/activities etc.), or to afford treats. A couple of respondents focused on people being made homeless, but for the majority, poverty meant something wider than this.

"They don't have enough money to feed themselves and their family, the basic like three meals a day. They don't have any heating, money for heating, hot water. They maybe don't have enough clothes to suit the season, holes in their shoes. Yeah, they don't have any extra cash for any maybe additional luxuries or classes that the kids might go to. They don't have a car. And yeah, they're probably quite unhappy trying to make ends meet or just the sort of basic things that you take for granted that you have."

Female, 45-64, C1

It is worth noting that very few people talked about global poverty in this context – a couple did mention things like TV adverts for charities working in developing nations, but they also brought the discussion back to local issues fairly quickly.

“I think that's where my mind initially goes is to the adverts on the TV, Christian Aid etc, sort of Children in Need... But I think it's changed a lot in recent years and really it is far closer to home than you really think.” Female, 25-44, AB

This may suggest that recent experiences such as the cost-of-living crisis have made poverty more of a pertinent, top-of-mind issue for people when thinking about their local communities, not just foreign countries. This provides an opportunity for communication about a Minimum Income Guarantee to tap into this recognition that poverty is relevant in Scotland today.

Linked to the descriptions of what poverty meant in terms of lack of income to meet basic needs, people commonly talked about the impacts on individuals when thinking about poverty – highlighting the stress and anxiety it causes; the sense of instability and worry that people experience when they cannot afford the basics. While this is also covered in the section on impacts of poverty, it is worth highlighting that this was top-of-mind when respondents were asked about poverty more generally.

Who is most vulnerable

Respondents were asked who was most vulnerable to being affected by poverty, and the groups commonly mentioned were:

- Older people, particularly those relying on the state pension
- Children/families with young children (especially larger families, as children are expensive!) – children were also a group that gained particular sympathy since they were not responsible for their situation
- Single parents having to look after children on one income
- Those with health issues/disabilities which means they are unable to work (people also mentioned mental health issues here)
- Those who are unemployed, on low incomes/minimum wage, in poorly paid jobs or on benefits
- People living in deprived areas (some highlighted a perceived generational issue of people being raised in a ‘benefits culture’ in certain areas, while others felt those raised in poverty began at a disadvantage and would struggle to achieve financial security themselves)
- People living in rural areas, or island communities where costs are higher for imported goods
- Younger people e.g. they are unable to get on the housing ladder or build up savings
- People lacking in education/skills
- People with addiction and/or other mental health issues
- While few mentioned minority ethnicities specifically, some did mention migrants to Scotland who may have language barriers affecting their ability to work, and immigrants struggling on minimal financial support.

Some did also note that anyone could be affected, and that poverty is now being experienced by a greater proportion of society:

“There used to be that it was only people on very deprived backgrounds, very... How do I say it? Low socio-economic status. But now it's filtering into families where there's people working. And it's really only those top tier of people that are earning a lot of money that seem to be getting by without having to ask for help or use, as I say, I know a lot of people that use food banks now that I would never have thought would.”

Female, 45-64, AB

“You've got thousands in your bank account or 20p in your bank account. Within a split second, that can all change and it really can.” Female, 25-44, DE

Causes

When asked what they thought the main causes of poverty are in Scotland, a range of individual and wider societal factors were highlighted.

Respondents were most likely to talk about issues affecting the economy and society as a whole. They were very aware of the recent cost-of-living crisis/price increases, and generally had high levels of sympathy with those struggling – several mentioned that even those with ‘good’ incomes are now finding things difficult, so it must be even worse for those on the very lowest incomes.

“I notice even such a difference in my shopping bills and I live alone, and my gas and electricity bills. I live alone and I work two jobs. I should really be a bit flush, but I'm still living month to month. So I dread to think what people on a far lower income or just a pension alone are bringing in and how they're coping.” Female, 25-44, AB

The most commonly mentioned social causes were:

- The cost-of-living crisis, high/rising costs of food, bills, housing/rent, energy, childcare etc.
- Low wages/not being able to earn enough even for those in work
- Insecure work (e.g. zero hours contracts/lack of stable work available)
- Lack of jobs (generally, and specifically well paid or highly skilled jobs; loss of traditional/skilled jobs due to de-industrialisation)
- Lack of skills/education
- Living in a community with high levels of poverty (where there may be fewer jobs/opportunities, and/or where a lot of people are out of work etc.)
- Low levels of benefits/lack of support for those who need it, and inflexibility of the benefits system
- Global corporations not paying taxes.

“And I think the wages, there's all these zero contracts kind of things. People they don't have security in their jobs as they used to.” Female, 45-64, AB

“Lack of housing, high rents, probably low paid jobs. What else? There's probably lots of people on benefits that maybe aren't... I don't know. You hear about benefit cheats, but there's people that are on benefits and maybe their benefits aren't enough to pay their bills and high costs in supermarkets and stuff like that. I don't know, I think there's probably quite a wide range of people that I'm not aware of. You know it's probably not something you think about until you're maybe in that situation yourself.” Female, 45-64, AB

While the majority mentioned structural factors, a substantial minority also mentioned individual factors that could cause people to be affected by poverty. These tended to blame individual laziness/unwillingness to work, and/or focused on people ‘cheating’ the benefits system, having children in order to receive support or housing etc. People with addictions, gambling issues and who were ‘bad at managing money’ were also mentioned in this context. Some said that this has become a generational problem of children growing up ‘knowing no different’.

“There is sometimes people that, dare I say, could help themselves through going and getting a job. Because there is people that just don't want to work, but they want everything given to them.” Female, 65+, DE

“I think that it is almost a domino effect that if you don't have the right role models there or that you've grown up in a certain way, that that becomes your personality and that you think that's how you should live because you've always done that. I think it's hard to sometimes break that cycle as well of actually being successful after a rough up bringing.” Male, 18-24, DE

These findings support previous research¹⁸ which suggests that people often hold contradictory positions when thinking about poverty – there was evidence of some doubts about those in financial hardship being ‘deserving’ of help, although there is also sympathy and a recognition that the problem is real when people think about cost of living increases and wider social issues such as housing and employment.

Impacts

The effects of poverty were recognised to be serious for those experiencing it, with respondents tending to focus on the impacts on mental health resulting from the stress and anxiety associated with a lack of finances. People talked about it being ‘mentally draining’ constantly worrying about money, and some noted that the mental health impacts can be serious enough to lead to self-harm or suicide.

“Just being insecure, not knowing what's coming next. Worrying about everything every day.” Female, 25-44, DE

Shame and guilt were also mentioned, particularly for parents struggling to provide for their families/children. There was a recognition that there was a stigma attached to poverty which can prevent people from seeking help.

¹⁸ See for example Talking about Poverty (Joseph Rowntree Foundation/Frameworks, 2016).

“Oh my God, that has a massive impact mentally. And it can be physical as well, like causing anxiety, stress, which can make you ill. But mentally, people would be blaming themselves. Like, I should be able to provide for my family, I need to go out and get another job.” Female, 45-64, C2

“I don’t really know how to ask for help because I am of the opinion that people will judge me... I’m just thinking of the impact, people might go into depression, might not want to talk.” Male, 25-44, DE

Hunger and homelessness were also mentioned as likely impacts of poverty – and hunger was particularly mentioned in relation to children e.g. if they were unable to access school meals during the holidays, or a school lunch was their only proper meal of the day. Being unable to afford food, and not being able to heat homes properly, were also linked to physical health outcomes.

Some people mentioned impacts on quality of life more generally (e.g. for those struggling to heat their homes, or who cannot afford to socialise) – a feeling that people are ‘left to rot’ rather than being able to live a good life, and a general lack of hope/aspiration for those in long-term poverty.

While respondents were less likely to spontaneously mention wider social impacts than the impact on individuals, some did recognise that poverty can affect things like educational outcomes, health services, levels of crime and substance use, and implications for taxes/public finances to support those in need. Some mentioned lack of opportunities e.g. if people cannot access things like transport, education, IT etc. which could lead to longer-term impacts on education and employment.

“The more people that are in poverty, the more the tax will go up as well for other people, because the more houses that are going to be needed for all these people in poverty that can't afford that. It's going to really affect everybody, even the more wealthy ones as well.” Female, 18-24, DE

“In these poorer places you probably see higher crime rates and people more willing to do anything to get by, whether that's burglary or shoplifting and stuff like that.” Male, 18-24, DE

Solutions

There was a perception among some respondents that the problem was too big to solve and there is no ‘easy fix’. People recognise that this issue is complex, there are a lot of interlinked factors that need to be addressed, and there is no simple solution.

“How do you stop poverty?... I feel like that's a question that everybody asks themselves every day all the time. If it was that easy to just answer, then it probably would've been done by now.” Female, 18-24, C2

However, respondents did identify potential ways to improve things. Reflecting the mixture of causes and impacts identified, suggested solutions to the issues raised included a range of Government level policy/actions (aimed at both providing support to those who

need it, and encouraging individuals to help themselves), and local/community based solutions. It is worth noting that a lot of the spontaneously proposed solutions include things that a Minimum Income Guarantee would be designed to achieve, e.g. reducing costs, improving services and ensuring access to well paid work.

A range of actions that Government/local councils could take were suggested, including:

- Increase the minimum wage (although some noted this needs to be balanced against the needs of business/employers)
- Investment in education/training, so people can access better/more skilled jobs
- Provide cheaper/more affordable childcare
- Extend free school meals for children
- Actions to deal with rising costs, e.g. having a better energy cap, reducing the cost of essentials (this was of particular importance to those living in island communities who mentioned the high cost of imported goods)
- Address housing problems e.g. reducing council housing waiting lists, addressing the high costs of housing/rents generally
- Increase taxes (particularly for the most highly paid) to fund the services required
- Improve access to health and mental health support
- Improvements to the benefits system:
 - For some, this focused on making the system more flexible when people's circumstances change or if they are able to access temporary work, making the system more accessible (e.g. if people do not have internet access/mobile data), and/or improving benefits e.g. removing the two-child benefits cap, increasing Universal Credit
 - For others, particularly those who tended to blame individuals for their circumstances, this focused on reducing benefits to encourage people to work, and/or providing incentives to encourage people to work
- Some suggestions focused on providing 'better jobs' and making 'better work opportunities' available, although people tended to be fairly vague about how this could actually happen or who had the ability to improve employment opportunities.

People also mentioned a wide range of community-based solutions, including donating to food banks, provision of free breakfast/after school clubs, and using services such as Olio to access free food while reducing waste etc.

Response to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee

A brief introduction was read out to respondents to introduce the concept of a Minimum Income Guarantee. This aimed to outline the key aspects of the policy in as neutral language as possible, to gain initial reactions to the idea before moving on to considering the different framing options in more detail.

Very few respondents had heard of the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee before (e.g. one thought they had heard John Swinney MSP (First Minister) mention the idea on TV, and a couple of others thought they had heard of it but could not remember where). Those

who were aware of the concept had only a fairly vague understanding of it – as expected, nobody had detailed knowledge in this area.

Most people were broadly supportive of the idea on first hearing about it, with key positives including:

- It would ensure the most vulnerable are supported/nobody falls below a certain standard of living – providing a level of financial security for everyone
- The holistic approach, i.e. including both good quality work and services, not just social security benefits, was liked
- It felt quite aspirational i.e. the focus on improving lives/living a dignified life (e.g. “A dignified life is a life where you can stand up tall, and feel comfortable, and feel confident, and feel like you've got something to fall back on.” Female, 25-44, DE)
- It could have wider benefits for society as well as individuals, if public services are improved, and if people are able to improve their own situation and then ‘pay it back’ by contributing to wider society.

Positive responses included comments such as:

“No [I haven't heard of that] but if they're able to get that up and running, I think it would probably benefit a lot of households... I think it would probably give people a wee bit more financial stability to know that they're going to have a minimum income.” Female, 25-44, DE

“It's just so that we don't sink too low. It's a bottom line that nobody should go below... I think it's a good idea. I think we've got a benefit system in place for a reason. If we could top that up to a certain level and it wouldn't just be about benefits, it would be about work as well. And you know, people are doing zero hours contracts and people not guaranteed a certain amount of work they would be guaranteed these 200 quid a week or whatever it is. I don't know what the figure is, but I think it'd be a better thing for everybody.” Male, 46-64, DE

However, respondents had questions about how a Minimum Income Guarantee would actually work, and some expressed doubts that it was ever likely to be achieved. Many commented that the idea sounds good in principle but that they would need to know much more about how it would work before being able to say if they supported or opposed it.

The main questions people had related to:

- How it will be funded/paid for (“The money has to come from somewhere. So, if they're going to do all these things, where's the money coming from? That's what I want to know.” Female, 65+, C1)
- Practical questions about how it will be administered, e.g. whether it will be means tested, how eligibility will be determined and who would be eligible – particularly if there are different levels of Minimum Income Guarantee for different types of household
- What the minimum threshold would be and how it would be calculated

- How to ensure it was not abused (“I do think that maybe people would take the mickey out of it.” Female, 25-44, DE)
- How to ensure the minimum levels set did not disincentivise work.

When asked who would benefit from a Minimum Income Guarantee, most people mentioned those on the lowest incomes, and the groups already identified as being most affected by poverty. Few assumed that they themselves would benefit – if anything, they thought their taxes would probably increase to fund the policy.

Among the minority who were less positive about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee, the main issues raised related to queries about how it would be funded; concerns that people could cheat/abuse the system or that it may act as a disincentive for people to work; and issues around fairness – e.g. people who are in full-time work and just above the minimum threshold would not receive support, whereas someone working less may receive a top-up payment.

“I think that there are far too many people... that would manage to manipulate and be getting top ups from the government... I would be a little pissed off if it was maybe like I was earning maybe say a £100 a year over the minimum and then there's somebody that's below it that's getting all this extra money, and all I need to do is work maybe ten hours less a week or something like that and I'd be getting this free money that this person's getting as well.... I feel like some people would be like, 'Well, f**k it, I'll just quit my job too. I'll just have six babies under the age of 25 and then I can never work because I'm just going to say that I'm looking after my kids'.” Female, 18-24, C2

Those who were on benefits/low incomes themselves also had queries about how it would affect their personal situation practically, e.g. one had experienced the change to Universal Credit and had found this very difficult, describing the ‘absolute fear’ of not being sure what was going to happen to her income levels.

Finally, those who were in the most financial hardship currently also noted that there is an urgent need for support – they queried the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee being introduced incrementally over the longer term, arguing that action is needed now.

Response to the framing options

Following the initial introduction of the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee, the four framing options were shown to respondents in turn. The order they were presented was rotated across interviews to avoid any order effect on responses. Moderators explored people’s understanding of each description and what they thought of each way of communicating about a Minimum Income Guarantee.

This section presents responses to each of the options; a summary is included later to draw together findings about the most effective way of talking about a Minimum Income Guarantee, taking into account both the themes tested here and the proposed benefits that respondents were also shown (see the next section).

Reassurance/safety net

The cost-of-living crisis has demonstrated that no one is entirely protected from financial hardship, and that we must go further in providing a safety net. Anyone might need a helping hand at some point in their life, and a Minimum Income Guarantee would be there as a reassurance for all – no matter your current position in life or what might happen in the future – you are promised a minimum standard of living.

This frame received a positive response. Respondents described it as reassuring, non-judgmental, and could apply to anyone – it rang true, since people recognise the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and believe the message that anyone could need support at some point.

“I think the safety net is really applicable for a lot of people because a lot of people don't have, what's the word I'm looking for? Don't have savings and things to fall back on. So that's really nice to know that if they were ever in that position, they know that they're going to be essentially reassured or saved by this action.” Female, 25-44, DE

“[It is saying] Listen, although you are safe just now, it's shallow water. You don't know what's going to happen in five minutes, five years, from now. We've got you and there is this help if you need it, and this is where you find it.” Female, 25-44, DE

Reference to reassurance ‘for all’ also resonated strongly, since the message was targeted at everyone, not ‘talking down’ to those in financial hardship or singling out those in poverty.

“I would say it was quite broad. I would say it would appeal to almost everyone because they're basically saying no matter what walk of life you are from, we're going to have a safety net for all of you.” Female, 25-44, DE

Very few respondents found any negatives in this statement. Some did feel it is describing what the current welfare system is already supposed to provide, so it did not feel like a particularly new idea to them:

“Well, I mean that more or less describes the current benefit system, or how it should be working anyway you know. They've always said that it's the safety net... so I don't think that's terribly revolutionary.” Male, 65+, DE

However, this also reflected the fact that some people felt the description did not provide enough information about what a Minimum Income Guarantee actually is, so it seemed a little vague. Please note this relates to the content of the statement shown rather than the theme/concept itself – some of the other framing options included more detail about the elements of a Minimum Income Guarantee.

Most felt that mention of a ‘helping hand’ felt sympathetic and reassuring, although one said this was patronising and made her think of charity donations:

“It's almost patronising... Anyone might need a helping hand at some point in their life? I don't know, it sounds like some charities, like door-to-door charity coming to ask you to send donations or something like that.” Female, 18-24, C2

Only one respondent expressed anything negative in relation to the 'safety net' idea: she associated a net with something that things could slip through, and preferred the term 'security':

"If anything bad happens, don't worry we won't let you fall. But sometimes these things, they get missed and you do fall through that net." Female, 25-44, DE

Security for everyone/global events

Global changes, such as climate change, conflicts around the world and technological advances, mean we are likely to see more turmoil in the global economy. Everyone in Scotland, particularly those who are at a greater risk of poverty and insecurity, would have a much more robust safety net with a Minimum Income Guarantee, ensuring their ability to live with dignity and afford the essentials is not jeopardised by far-away events beyond their control.

This frame did not test particularly well. While some respondents did note that it was correct/factual, and said it was true that global events and climate change affect us all, most struggled to connect this concept to the idea of financial hardship in Scotland.

The most positive comments about this way of thinking about a Minimum Income Guarantee focused on the fact that it communicates the idea that we are 'part of something bigger', and that it feels protective of Scotland and people in local communities, regardless of what happens globally. A couple of people also mentioned the impact of the war in Ukraine on energy prices and felt that the message rang true.

However, respondents generally found it confusing to link global and local issues in this way, and most did not see any obvious (strong) link between global events and the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee or how that could address individual/local issues related to poverty.

"I think it's telling me two different things... I mean climate change and poverty. Okay, maybe climate change and heating, but I know there's global changes and I know there's obviously conflicts in the world. Everyone in Scotland, those that are at a greater risk of poverty? No, I just don't really see that. I just don't think... it makes that much sense to be honest... No, I just don't see that really kind of links together to be honest."
Female, 45-64, AB

Some also felt the message was not really believable – nobody can provide guarantees about what will happen internationally or to do with climate change, so people raised queries about whether this promise could be met.

"It's nice to try to offer people a robust safety net with minimum guarantee. And, I don't know if that's possible. Say that, suddenly there was another war and oil supplies were affected, could the government guarantee that we wouldn't have to pay more for electricity and gas and oil and would they be able to subsidise that? I mean, that's nice if they could, but I guess there's some things that are out with Scottish, British control isn't there?" Male, 45-64, DE

There was also a feeling that, for those most likely to need to know about the Minimum Income Guarantee, global issues are not their main concern, and the focus should be on Scotland. For those struggling to make ends meet, the focus is on day-to-day needs, not far away events.

“The people that are in that situation that have got these financial problems that we’re trying to resolve right now... won’t be giving a damn of what’s happening someplace else. They’re giving a damn about what’s happening in their pocket.” Male, 65+, C1

“If someone was reading this who didn’t have enough money to have all the essentials, I don’t think they would necessarily pay attention to climate change and how that’s going to impact them in the future. They’re just sort of trying to cope day-to-day on their own conflicts and their own struggles.” Female, 45-64, C1

A fairer society for everyone to live in

Inequality and poverty are a blight on our society, that is damaging not only for those at the sharp end of it, but for everyone. Inequality can be linked to social problems such as violence and ill health – causing strain on the NHS, more drug abuse and higher rates of imprisonment. These in turn lead to lower levels of trust and weaker community life. By introducing a Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through a combination of fair and accessible paid work, high quality services and adequate social security, we will not only be improving the living standard for those who need it most, but also for society as a whole.

This framing prompted a mixed response. It worked well in terms of linking the impacts of poverty on society to the need for a Minimum Income Guarantee. People responded particularly well to mentions of impacts on the NHS, and the positive focus on using a Minimum Income Guarantee to address wider social issues. The message communicated by this statement was generally felt to be true – people do recognise the effects of poverty on things like violence and ill health.

“I would love to see community life increase. I like the idea of improving society as a whole. That we are all helping one another. And it seems that the thoughts behind it.... focusing on getting rid of inequality, getting rid of poverty, or trying to diminish it.... I like the idea that these are all linked in very well. And it’s a more of a social way of putting things.” Female, 45-64, AB

“That is basically going right to the heart of what can come out of people being in poverty. You hear all the time on the news about violence, and ill health, and how the NHS is struggling, so it kind of gives you the advantages. I think that’s the main thing I take away from it is the advantages that are going to come out of this fairer society as well.” Female, 45-64, C1

The explanation of the Minimum Income Guarantee in this statement also worked well (e.g. compared to the ‘safety net’ frame which did not include a description of the Minimum Income Guarantee components). Respondents highlighted the combination of all aspects – i.e. it included fair, accessible work and high quality services as well as social security.

Less positive responses to this frame tended to focus on its perceived negative focus – this is perhaps because the wording is couched around inequality, rather than equality, and the negative/damaging impacts of the issues identified, rather than the positive change a Minimum Income Guarantee could bring. Some also felt the statement placed blame on those affected by poverty, implying there is a causal link between poverty and social problems, when there are other causes of violence, drug abuse and crime.

Others noted that it was unlikely that a Minimum Income Guarantee would completely resolve social problems and inequality, so this statement may be seen to be overpromising/unrealistic.

“I think I’ll be blunt and just say I don’t think it’s possible. I think there is going to be inequality no matter what, and that’s a trait of the human race. We’re always looking to achieve things, and we’re always looking at our neighbour and thinking that they have things that are better, and so on. If I thought that [a Minimum Income Guarantee] was going to solve everything, it would be great. I think you’re still going to get the people who won’t apply for everything and won’t know that they can and that will slip through that net.” Female, 65+, C2

“I don't know how believable it is to be fair. Because there's always like, you're tackling the employment side of things, whereas mentioning like violence and drug abuse and even mental health issues that the NHS aren't coping with at the moment. I don't think that [a Minimum Income Guarantee] will reduce that. I think there's still going to be, I mean, you don't have to be living in poverty to have an addiction problem, but still it affects everybody. Regarding the NHS and waiting times and things like that, by doing this, is that going to stop all that? I don't know.” Female, 45-64, C2

Freedom/opening opportunity

There are people in our communities who do not get the opportunity to live decent, healthy and financially secure lives, and are, for example, being forced to choose between whether ‘to heat or to eat’. This is unacceptable in our modern society, and something that we need to collectively rectify. The Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through social security benefits, fair work/good jobs, and the provision of key basic services, would ensure a minimum standard of living to all, allowing people to pursue life’s opportunity and live fulfilling lives.

This frame tested well, with most respondents agreeing with the premise behind it. This statement focuses on the individual level, which resonated with respondents, and was probably the most effective of the frames at describing the experience of poverty: the idea of having to choose whether ‘to heat or eat’ was understood, accepted as being true for some people, and fostered a sense of empathy.

“It's horrible to know that still in this day and age, there is a lot of people that are struggling to either heat their house or be able to have a meal and they shouldn't be left in that situation. Whether it's been to ill health or financial difficulties, things like that, just shouldn't be happening in this day and age, I believe.” Female, 25-44, DE

The positive tone of pursuing opportunity and living fulfilling lives also worked well, with people commenting that it offers some hope.

“It's giving you a bit of a hope, a bit of security.” Female, 45-64, DE

This statement worked particularly well with those who saw education and training as being key to addressing poverty. It also worked well with those who had made earlier comments about individuals taking responsibility to ‘better themselves’ in order to access better jobs etc.

“And it does state about your social security benefits and what I said again about your work and jobs and training and your key services or your childcare things and providing, when I say providing, I mean providing opportunities for people to go and train. There's nothing wrong with that at all.” Female, 45-64, AB

Some also noted that it reflects the idea of society as a whole taking action:

“But I do like the idea that we need to collectively rectify it. It's requiring all people from all everywhere to come together and do something.” Female, 45-64, AB

As with the previous frame, the fact it mentions jobs and services as well as social security resonated with people (though again, this relates to descriptions of what a Minimum Income Guarantee is rather than how to frame it).

“It's hit the nail on the head I think because it's telling you that it's fair work and stuff, but it's saying the basic services, which ensures a minimum standard of being able to live for everyone because it says to be able to pursue life's opportunities and having the money to be able to not have to pick between the two and being comfortable.” Female, 25-44, DE

The only negative responses to this statement tended to be based around perceptions of the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee being ‘money for nothing’:

“It's really telling me that people are not going to have to work because they're going to get a minimum amount of money anyway... It's like utopia, everybody's going to have a minimum standard of living. That's not the way life works. It works if the harder you work, the more money you make. And if this is it, they want everybody to be the same.” Female, 65+, C1

For a minority, mentioning the ‘heat or eat’ choice suggested that the policy was only aimed at the very poorest and/or those on benefits. One respondent also did not like the idea of ‘collectively’ rectifying the issue as she felt the problem is due to the government and they should be responsible for solving it.

Advantages of a Minimum Income Guarantee

A range of anticipated benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee were presented to respondents, for both individuals and for community/society as a whole.

Advantages for individuals

It is hoped that this policy will help individuals by:

Allowing them to live a decent and dignified life, not worrying about things such as whether to 'heat or eat'

Providing them with greater freedoms in life, to seize opportunities, choose a career, enter education, to pursue the life they want to live, rather than living 'hand to mouth' with no time or income to make these choices

Improve health outcomes as poverty has a strong link with poor health, both physical and mental

Greater financial security, when things happen in people's lives that are unavoidable or out of their control, e.g. relationship break down, losing your home, being made redundant, onset of long term health issues (through an accident, cancer, other chronic disease, etc.), etc.

Overall, the advantages of a Minimum Income Guarantee for individuals were what people found most relatable and persuasive, and all four of the points listed were identified as being positive things to aim for.

The 'greater financial security' bullet point stood out to most – this reflects the 'reassurance/safety net' framing, and the specific examples given of what could happen to affect people's finances were especially effective, since everyone knows somebody who has been through a relationship breakdown/illness etc.

"Because I feel it's quite realistic. That is probably where most people are going to need financial help after a relationship breakdown, if you're losing your home, made redundant. Those kind of things are all very realistic and I think they can happen to anybody at any time." Female, 18-24, C2

The links between poverty and health (particularly mental health) were also widely recognised, so improving health outcomes was highlighted as a key benefit of a Minimum Income Guarantee for individuals.

"I think probably the health side of it because if you're not physically or mentally able... you're not able to live a good life, look for work, or enjoy retirement or your childhood, I think. Everything is connected to your health. To remove the pressures of being worried when you are living hand-to-mouth would be a huge thing for some people, I think."
Female, 65+, C2

People also responded well to the 'greater freedoms' point, as it felt hopeful and positive. This was particularly the case for those who were more likely to see poverty as being caused by individual rather than social/economic factors.

"The issue that people normally have with this is that it's people that don't want to work or they don't want to grasp opportunities. They just want things for free. Whereas I think that if you're explaining to them that it's giving them that opportunity to get a job or to educate themselves more, they're not going to be a stain on your society." Male, 18-24, DE

"I like the way that they've also seen that to seize opportunities that some people never do. Whether it be going down education, getting a new job, traveling the world. It's given you hope. It's showing you that there's loads of different ways and how we can help. I really like this." Female, 25-44, DE

References to a 'decent and dignified life' were emphasised by some as being important in communicating about a Minimum Income Guarantee, although this tended to be lower down the list of key advantages compared to the others, and a couple felt that this was not the right wording as it implied that people in financial hardship currently were **not** dignified.

"Well, the first statement, allowing them to live a decent life and dignified life. Because I know, like I said, a lot of people that are in poverty can't afford like clothes and things that they'll get second-hand or hand me downs or whatever. So that sounds good. Like a decent and dignified life and not actually worrying about heating your house or eating... It's a positive statement that I think it would give people hope with that." Female, 45-64, C2

Overall, the benefits for individuals were generally felt to be more realistic and achievable than the advantages for society as a whole (see below).

Advantages for society

The key advantages for communities and society would be:

Reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour

Better public services

Less pressure on NHS, as people's health will improve

The reassurance that there is a financial safety net that everyone is entitled to, if and when they need it – any one of us could need this at some point in our life

A general improvement in the wellbeing of society, knowing that we have a fairer society that supports everyone.

While these advantages of a Minimum Income Guarantee did receive a positive reaction generally, they were judged to be less realistic and achievable than the benefits for individuals, and therefore the messaging was less persuasive/ convincing as a way to encourage support for the idea.

While most agreed that things like easing pressure on the NHS were important, several people commented that issues with the NHS and other public services should be addressed anyway, and/or that it was unlikely a Minimum Income Guarantee would be able to do enough in this area.

“Less pressure on the NHS because you're going to give people more money to obviously buy better food, to have better living conditions. It's good in a sense. But for example, cancer, you can't stop that. The most wealthy person can get it... I don't really think it will have less pressure on the NHS, so that's probably the only one I'll disagree with.” Female, 18-24, DE

Others also found it difficult to see the direct link between poverty and crime reduction, and also felt that this tended to place blame on those in financial hardship – i.e. people other than those in financial hardship commit crimes, and not all people struggling financially resort to crime.

“I think that a reduction in criminal and anti-social behaviour, I don't know how you getting top up on your income and being able to afford things would reduce that. Because it's a certain type of person that does these things and I don't think it matters like money-wise how they behave, you get some people that are just... And there's always going to be crime... I don't think there would be a massive reduction.” Female, 45-64, C2

While some people noted that improving wellbeing in society was a good aim, others felt this point was a bit ‘woolly’ and a less tangible benefit than some of the others listed.

Overall, the points about benefits for society tended to remind respondents of the questions they already had about how the policy would work, and prompted a general sense that this was just ‘more talk’ rather than action:

“I think we've heard the same thing for nearly like 20 years now. We need to see action in investment in public services and getting the police on the streets. That's the first thing. Better public services, we would all love that. I think most of us would be happy to pay more tax if we get something from it. Less pressure on the NHS... I think all these problems resonate with people... but once again, how are we going to do it? Wellbeing society. That's great. A fairer society that supports everybody. Yep. That's brilliant. But once again, who deems what's fair? A financial safety net. I'm cool with that. It's just how we're going to implement it. These are things we hear all the time. It's just a case of like, let's get it done now.” Male, 25-44, AB

Most effective framing options

At the end of the discussion, respondents were asked how supportive they felt about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee now that they had heard more about the concept. For most respondents, their feelings were relatively similar upon first hearing the idea and by the end of the discussion – most were broadly supportive, although they had questions about how it would work in practice and how it would be funded.

Discussion of the elements of a Minimum Income Guarantee related to work and services, as well as social security, was successful in tackling concerns about 'hand-outs'.

"I think I would [support a Minimum Income Guarantee], and I think just purely for that fact that it's not about handing out free money, it's about developing people and making our country better for the people who live here." Male, 18-24, DE

"Yes, I would be supportive depending on how it's set up. That's the most I can say given that there's a lot of idealistic policies are thrown around. How would it work in real life? But yes, ideally as an idea, I would say I am supportive... And making a fair society for all is of huge importance to me. But it kind of leaves me with more questions, but I guess that not a bad thing!" Female, 25-44, DE

It is also worth noting that a substantial minority (roughly one in three) respondents had a more positive view of a Minimum Income Guarantee having discussed the idea in more detail and considered the potential benefits. While these people still had questions about the policy, they were more convinced than they had been on first hearing about it. The frames that worked particularly well with this group of respondents (and could therefore be seen to be the most persuasive) are noted in this section as well as considering the most positively received frames overall.

Reassurance/safety net

The most effective framing option across the sample as a whole was the concept of 'reassurance/safety net' – and this worked particularly well with respondents who were in a more financially secure position right now but recognised that they could be less secure in the future as a result of something outside their control. Of the seven people who were more positive about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee by the end of the discussion, six responded positively to this frame.

The concept of a safety net was also spontaneously mentioned by respondents throughout the discussions about poverty more generally, suggesting this is an effective metaphor to use in communicating the benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee.

Freedom/opportunity

The theme around 'freedom/opening opportunity' also worked well, and was thought to be appealing across all age groups as it could apply to working people, families, etc. – anyone who wanted to improve their situation. This was also seen as a more hopeful/positive message, talking about aspiration rather than the social problems related to poverty. While this frame was slightly less effective than 'safety net' among the total sample, again six of the seven who were now more positive about a Minimum Income Guarantee also highlighted this as a positive frame – the same number among this group as had felt 'safety net' was effective. This suggests the 'freedom/opportunity' message may be particularly effective in persuading people of the benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee.

The idea of opening up opportunity also came up spontaneously in discussions about how to tackle poverty, particularly among those who stressed the importance of education/training as a way to improve people's opportunities to find better employment.

Fairer society

The 'fairer society for everyone to live in' frame has potential for broad appeal, although in its current wording it is perhaps felt to be a little negative, focusing on social problems rather than a hopeful message for the future, and some felt it placed the blame on those in poverty for social problems.

Respondents did commonly talk about the wider impacts on society of individuals improving their circumstances (e.g. improved health outcomes and less crime/social problems), and the idea of fairness was also raised when considering groups who were most vulnerable to poverty – particularly children, who are unable to control the circumstances they are born into. This suggests there is potential for this frame to be used effectively with some adjustments.

Global events

This theme was the least successful framing. While some felt it may appeal to those who are most engaged in the news/global events, nobody reported it resonated particularly well with them personally or found it an easily understandable explanation of why a Minimum Income Guarantee is important.

Global events were also very unlikely to be mentioned spontaneously during the interviews, suggesting this is not a readily accessed way of thinking about these issues.

The name 'Minimum Income Guarantee'

Finally, respondents were asked their views of the name 'Minimum Income Guarantee' to describe the proposed policy, and a few alternatives were tested: Living Income, Living Income Guarantee, Scottish Citizen Income and Scottish National Income.

People tended not to feel particularly strongly about the name – some felt it generally described the policy well and was clear enough, although a few issues were raised and some suggestions made for improvement.

- Some respondents did not like the word 'minimum' as they felt it implies something very basic or 'the bare minimum'. Some initially assumed it might relate to the minimum wage. Overall, people tended to prefer 'living income' to 'minimum income' as it communicated that it was the required income to live a good life.
- There were mixed views on including 'income' in the name – some felt this is all-encompassing and works as a term to think about all the resources coming into a household, but more often people thought this referred only to wages/work, rather than a holistic policy including wider services as well.
- Most respondents liked using the word 'guarantee' as it means there is a promise to deliver it (reflecting the 'safety net' theme that it would be guaranteed for all), although a few associated it with banking/insurance or consumer products. Some preferred 'assurance' or 'support' to guarantee.
- Nobody liked the inclusion of 'Scottish' in the name – it was not felt to be necessary, and people noted that not everybody who lives in Scotland sees themselves as Scottish/there are other nationalities living here.

“Minimum sounds like you're giving like the least you can do. For me, the word minimum is like minimum. That's like the lowest of the low. So living income guarantee, it sounds more promising.” Female, 18-24, DE

Quantitative research findings

Framing options tested

The qualitative research stage provided detailed information about responses to a Minimum Income Guarantee and how the framing options may be received. Following this stage of research, Progressive recommended the following for the quantitative survey:

- Adjusting the framing descriptions slightly to ensure all frames tested include a description of what a Minimum Income Guarantee is – to avoid confusing responses to the framing with responses to the policy elements
- Adjusting the ‘fairer society’ description for the survey to include a more positive focus for testing
- Removing the ‘global events’ frame from testing with the quantitative sample, as this is very unlikely to be an effective framing
- Including a question in the survey about preferred naming options.

The framing options tested for the population survey were therefore as follows:

Table 5: Minimum Income Guarantee framing options for quantitative testing

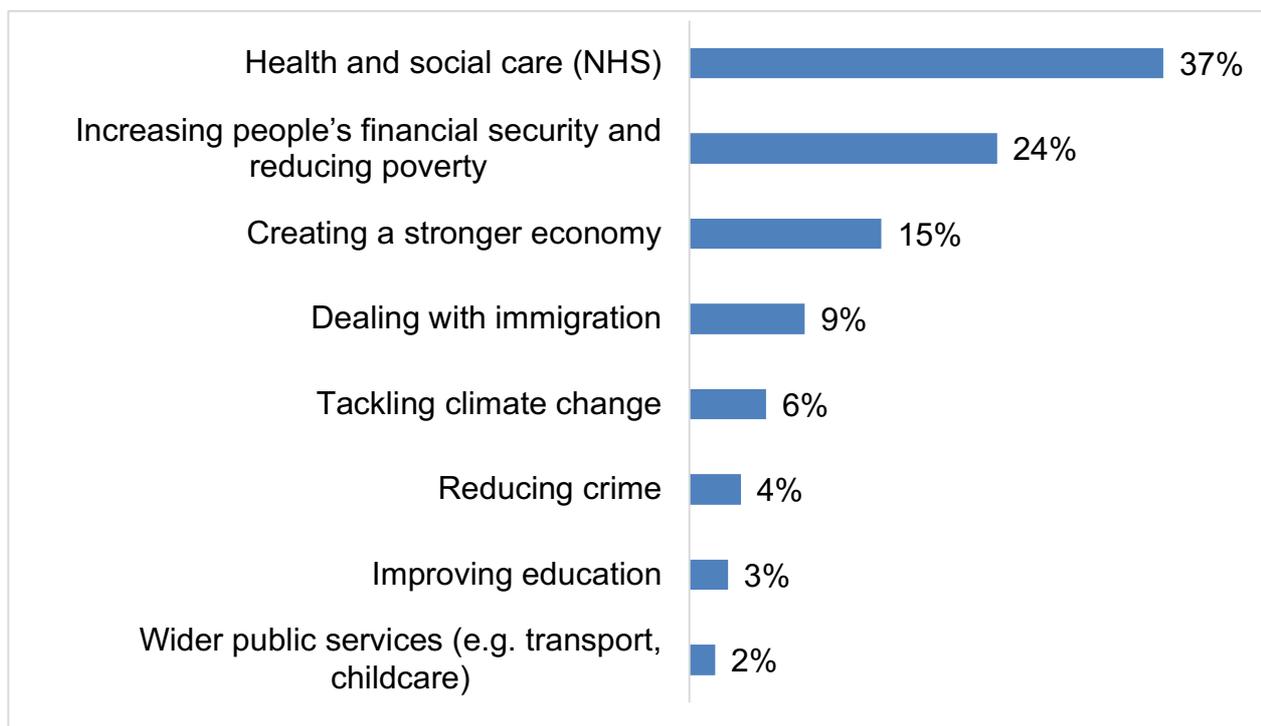
Frame/theme	Description
Reassurance/safety net	The cost-of-living crisis has demonstrated that no one is entirely protected from financial hardship, and that we must go further in providing a safety net. Anyone might need a helping hand at some point in their life, and a Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through a combination of fair and accessible paid work, high quality services and adequate social security, would be there as a reassurance for all – no matter your current position in life or what might happen in the future – you are promised a minimum standard of living.
A fairer society for everyone to live in	Inequality and poverty are harmful to society, not only for those at the sharp end of it, but for everyone. Inequality can be linked to some social problems, so reducing poverty will help to alleviate strain on the NHS and reduce crime, which in turn will lead to higher levels of trust and stronger community life. By introducing a Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through a combination of fair and accessible paid work, high quality services and adequate social security, we will not only be improving the living standard for those who need it most, but also for society as a whole.
Freedom/opening opportunity	There are people in our communities who do not get the opportunity to live decent, healthy and financially secure lives, and are, for example, being forced to choose between whether ‘to heat or to eat’. This is unacceptable in our modern society, and something that we need to collectively rectify. The Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through social security benefits, fair work/good jobs, and the provision of key basic services, would ensure a minimum standard of living to all, allowing people to pursue life’s opportunity and live fulfilling lives.

Perceptions and attitudes towards poverty and financial insecurity

Poverty and financial insecurity in Scotland

Across the eight issues presented to respondents, health and social care/the NHS was most likely to be ranked as being the most important issue for the Scottish Government to prioritise (ranked first by 37% of the sample), followed by increasing people’s financial security and reducing poverty (24%). Wider public services, such as transport and childcare – key components of a Minimum Income Guarantee – were ranked first by just 2% of the sample (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Most important issue for the Scottish Government to prioritise

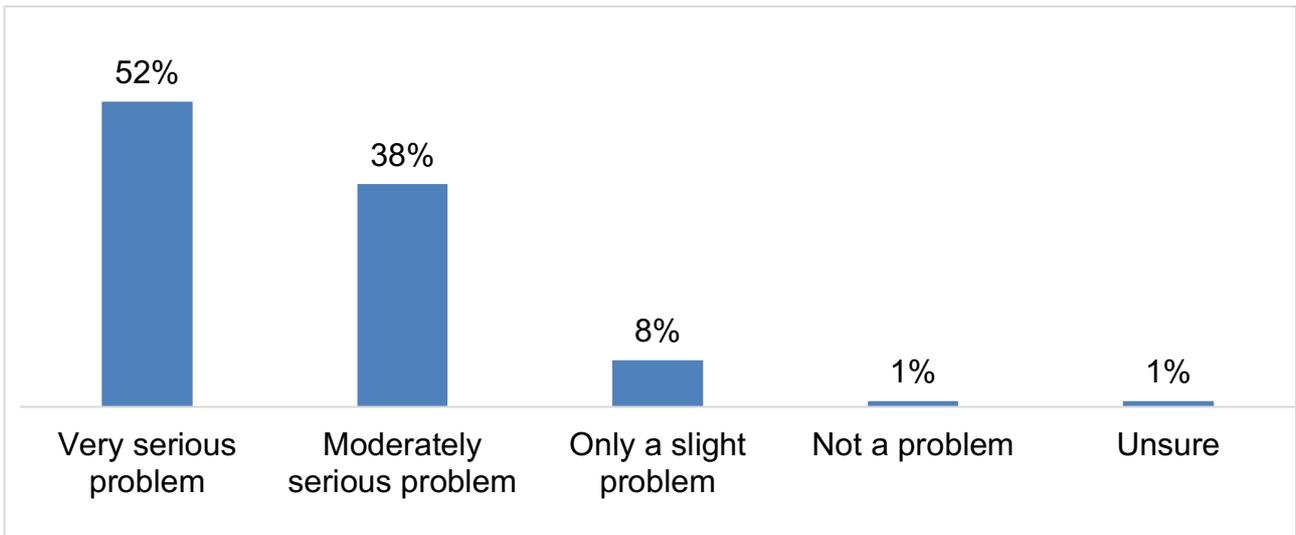


As might be expected, those most likely to prioritise increasing people’s financial security and reducing poverty included lower SEGs (28% of DEs ranked this first v 17% of ABs) and those who reported having financial difficulties at the moment (33% v 14% of those managing well).

Extent to which financial insecurity and poverty is a problem in Scotland

Poverty and financial insecurity were judged to be a serious problem in Scotland: nine in ten respondents in total said that this was either a very serious (52%) or moderately serious problem (38%) – see Figure 2.

Figure 2: Extent to which financial insecurity and poverty is a problem in Scotland



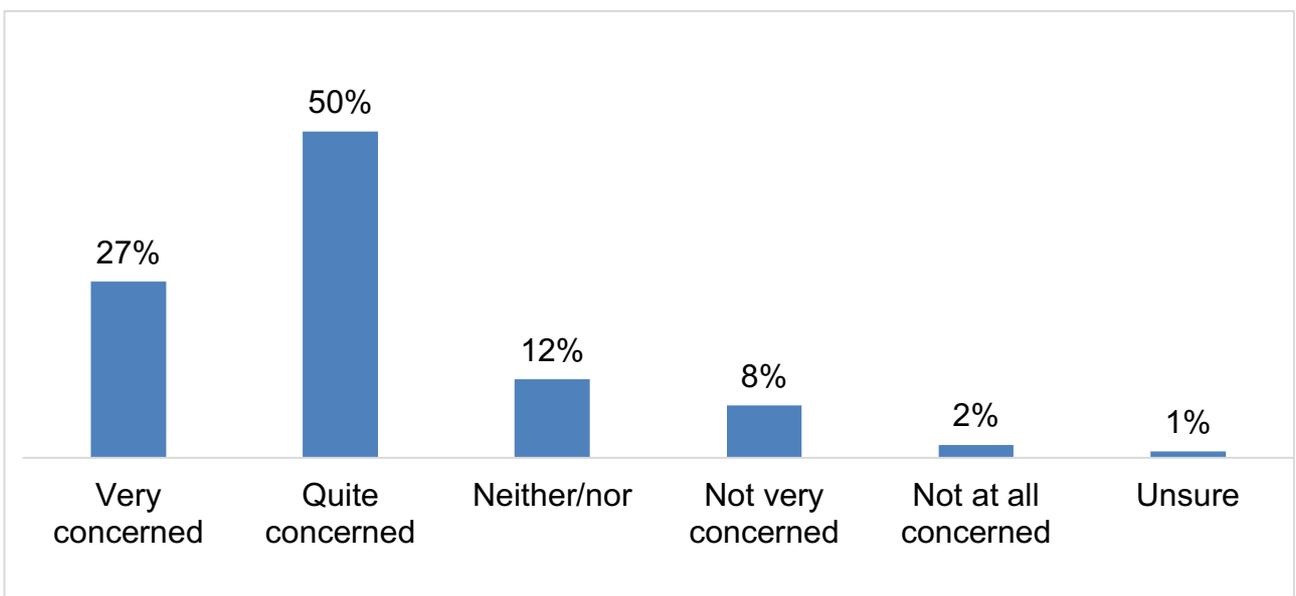
Those most likely to say this is a very serious problem included:

- The middle age group (62% of those aged 35-54 v 49% 18-34s and 47% 55+)
- Lower SEGs (56% of C2DEs v 48% of ABC1s)
- Those currently in financial difficulties (63% v 43% of those managing well)
- Respondents with any disability in the household (59% v 47% of those with no disability in the household).

Levels of concern about financial insecurity and poverty in Scotland

As shown in Figure 3, 77% in total said they were personally very or quite concerned about this issue, although the balance was towards 'quite concerned' (50%) rather than 'very concerned' (27%).

Figure 3: Extent to which respondents are personally concerned about financial insecurity and poverty in Scotland



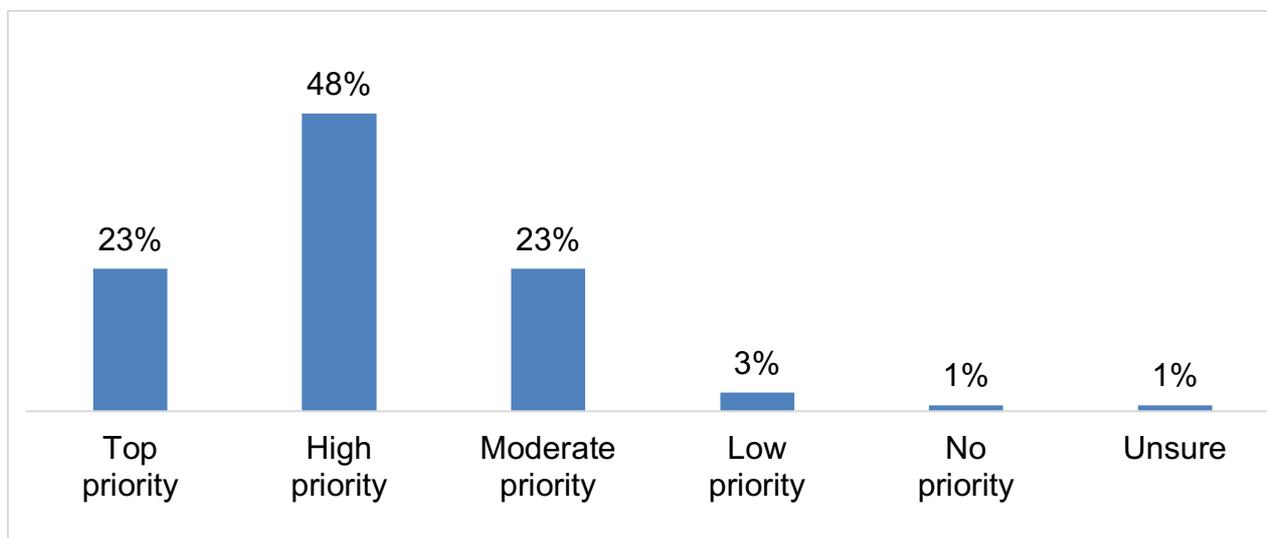
Sub-groups most likely to say they are personally concerned about financial insecurity and poverty in Scotland included:

- Respondents aged under 65 (the 65+ age group were least likely to be personally very or quite concerned: 65% said this, considerably lower than all other age groups)
- Those with the lowest annual household incomes (84% of those with a household income of less than £20k were very or quite concerned, although even 74% those with incomes of £45k or more still said they were personally concerned)
- Those experiencing financial difficulties (95% v 63% of those managing well)
- Respondents in priority families (86% v 75% of those not in priority families)
- Those with disabilities in the household (82% v 74%)
- Respondents with children in the household (85% v 74%).

Extent to which Scottish Government should prioritise helping people in poverty

Reflecting findings about levels of concern, the majority (71%) felt that it should be a top (23%) or high (48%) priority for the Scottish Government to help people experiencing financial insecurity and poverty (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: How much of a priority should the Scottish Government give to helping people who are experiencing financial insecurity and poverty



In line with previous findings, those most likely to say this should be a top/high priority for the Scottish Government included those in financial difficulties (83%), single parents (82%), those with a household income of below £20k (81%), and respondents with a disability in the household (78%).

Attitudes towards poverty and financial insecurity

Respondents were asked their views about the issue of financial insecurity and poverty in Scotland and how people experiencing this might be helped, e.g. through social security, public services and employment opportunities. Some of the statements were designed to

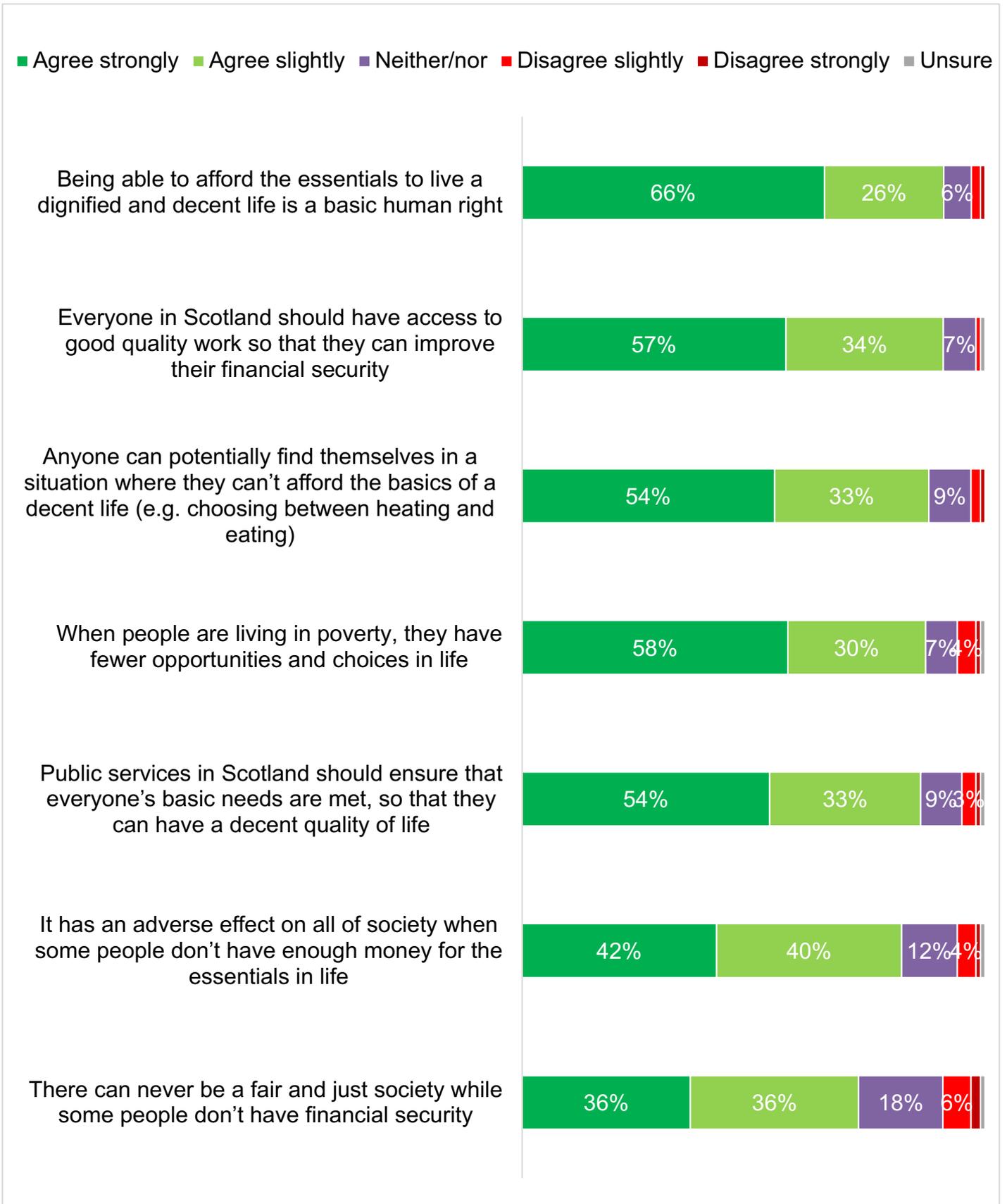
reflect the reasons for introducing a Minimum Income Guarantee, while others had a more negative focus to provide a measure of less sympathetic attitudes towards poverty.

There were very high levels of agreement with the statements that support the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee (see a summary of overall agreement levels in Table 6 and a full breakdown in Figure 5). Around nine in ten respondents agreed overall with five of the seven statements, and the balance was towards strong agreement. The highest levels of overall agreement were seen for: being able to afford the essentials is a basic human right (91% agreed overall – and two thirds strongly agreed); everyone should have access to good quality work so they can improve their financial security (91%); and anyone can find themselves in a situation where they can't afford the basics (88%). The lowest level of agreement was seen for 'there can never be a fair and just society when some people don't have financial security' – although 72% still agreed with this.

Table 6: Net agreement/disagreement with positive statements

Positive statements	NET: Agree %	NET: Disagree %
Being able to afford the essentials to live a dignified and decent life is a basic human right	91%	3%
Everyone in Scotland should have access to good quality work so that they can improve their financial security	91%	1%
Anyone can potentially find themselves in a situation where they can't afford the basics of a decent life (e.g. choosing between heating and eating)	88%	3%
When people are living in poverty, they have fewer opportunities and choices in life	87%	5%
Public services in Scotland should ensure that everyone's basic needs are met, so that they can have a decent quality of life	87%	4%
It has an adverse effect on all of society when some people don't have enough money for the essentials in life	82%	5%
There can never be a fair and just society while some people don't have financial security	72%	9%

Figure 5: Attitudes towards financial insecurity and poverty (positive statements)



There were high levels of agreement with these statements across all sub-groups in the sample, although there was a broad pattern in responses based on gender, current financial situation and whether respondents live in areas of deprivation:

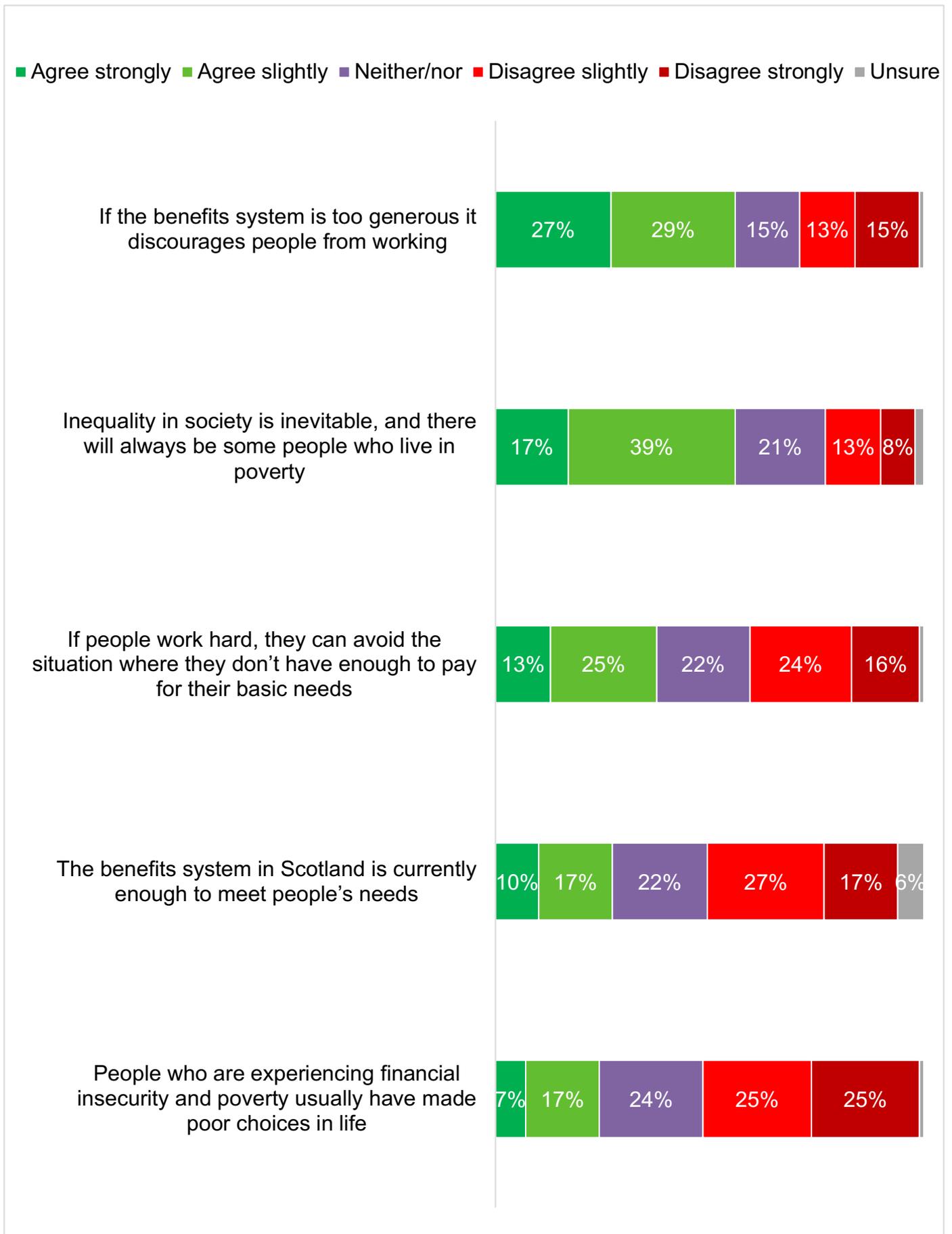
- Women tended to have more positive attitudes than men: for example, they were more likely to agree that anyone can potentially find themselves in a situation where they can't afford the basics (90% agreed v 85% of men), being able to afford essentials is a basic human right (94% v 88%), public services should ensure everyone's basic needs are met (90% v 83%) and everyone should have access to good quality work to improve their financial security (93% v 88%)
- Those currently in financial difficulties were more likely to agree with six of the seven statements (with the exception of the statement about access to good quality work) than those who said they are managing well
- Those living in the most deprived 20% SIMD areas were more likely than those in the least deprived 80% to agree with statements about poverty having an adverse effect on all of society (88% v 82%), financial insecurity undermining a fair society (81% v 71%) and public services ensuring basic needs are met (92% v 86%).

Agreement was lower for the statements with a more negative focus (see Table 7 and Figure 6). However, over half of all respondents agreed that if the benefits system is too generous it discourages people from working (56% agreed overall) and that inequality is inevitable and there will always be some people who live in poverty (56%). Agreement was lowest overall that people experiencing poverty have usually made poor choices in life, but a quarter did still agree with this (24%).

Table 7: Net agreement/disagreement with negative statements

Negative statements	NET: Agree %	NET: Disagree %
If the benefits system is too generous it discourages people from working	56%	28%
Inequality in society is inevitable, and there will always be some people who live in poverty	56%	21%
If people work hard, they can avoid the situation where they don't have enough to pay for their basic needs	38%	39%
The benefits system in Scotland is currently enough to meet people's needs	27%	44%
People who are experiencing financial insecurity and poverty usually have made poor choices in life	24%	50%

Figure 6: Attitudes towards financial insecurity and poverty (negative statements)



Again, some patterns emerged in responses to these statements by sub-group:

- Men were more likely than women to agree the benefits system is enough to meet people’s needs (31% v 24%) and that if people work hard they can avoid poverty (44% v 33%)
- The youngest age group (18-34s) tended to express more negative views in relation to poverty being due to personal choices, while the middle age group (35-54s) were most likely to disagree with the statements about work (working hard can avoid poverty; generous benefits discourage people from working)
- Better off respondents (higher SEGs, those not on the lowest incomes, and those managing well financially) all tended to express more negative views about poverty than those who were at the lower end of the SEG/income scale or who were in financial difficulties (with the exception of the statement that inequality is inevitable, where there were no differences by economic factors)
- Respondents with no disability in the household also tended to hold more negative views than those where someone in the household has a disability
- However, priority families were also more likely to hold negative views than those not falling into this category.

Analysis by attitudes towards poverty

Since negative attitudes towards poverty in general (e.g. a belief it is due to individual choices or not working hard enough etc.) could affect people’s likelihood to support a Minimum Income Guarantee, respondents were grouped based on their answers to four of these statements: people affected have made poor choices; if people work hard they can avoid poverty; some people will always live in poverty; if benefits are too generous people are discouraged from working. Three in ten respondents agreed with three or four of these statements (see Table 8). This sub-group has been used to look at responses to the Minimum Income Guarantee framing options in the following sections.

Table 8: Agreement with key negative attitudinal statements

No.	%
None	23%
One	23%
NET: None or one	46%
Two	24%
Three	18%
All four	13%
NET: Three or four	30%

Those most likely to fall into the group with the most negative attitudes (i.e. agreeing with three or four of these statements) included:

- Younger age groups (37% of 18-34s fell into this group, v 24% of 35-54s and 31% of 55+)
- Higher SEGs (36% of ABC1s v 25% of C2DEs)
- Those on higher incomes (those with household incomes of less than £20k were the least likely of all income groups to fall into this category: 23%)
- Respondents who said they were managing well financially (41% v 25% of those with financial difficulties)
- Priority families (40%)
- Those with no disability in the household (34%).

Response to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee

Just over a quarter of respondents (27%) said that they had heard of a Minimum Income Guarantee before. It is possible that there is some confusion with the minimum wage or the idea of a Universal Basic Income in these findings.

Initial levels of support for the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee

Respondents were shown a short description of a Minimum Income Guarantee and asked to what extent they would support or oppose the introducing of a Minimum Income Guarantee in Scotland. Initial reactions were positive (see Table 9), with an average support rating of 7.72 out of 10. Three fifths gave a score of 8~10, and just over three in ten giving the highest possible score of 10 (strongly support).

Table 9: Extent to which respondents would support or oppose the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee in Scotland

Level of support/opposition	%
Mean score	7.72
NET: Strong support (8~10)	60%
NET: Support (6~10)	80%
NET: Oppose (0~4)	8%
10 – strongly support	31%
9	8%
8	21%
7	13%
6	7%

5	8%
4	2%
3	2%
2	1%
1	1%
0 – strongly oppose	2%
Unsure	4%

Sub-groups of the population who were most likely to express strong support for the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee (scoring 8~10) included:

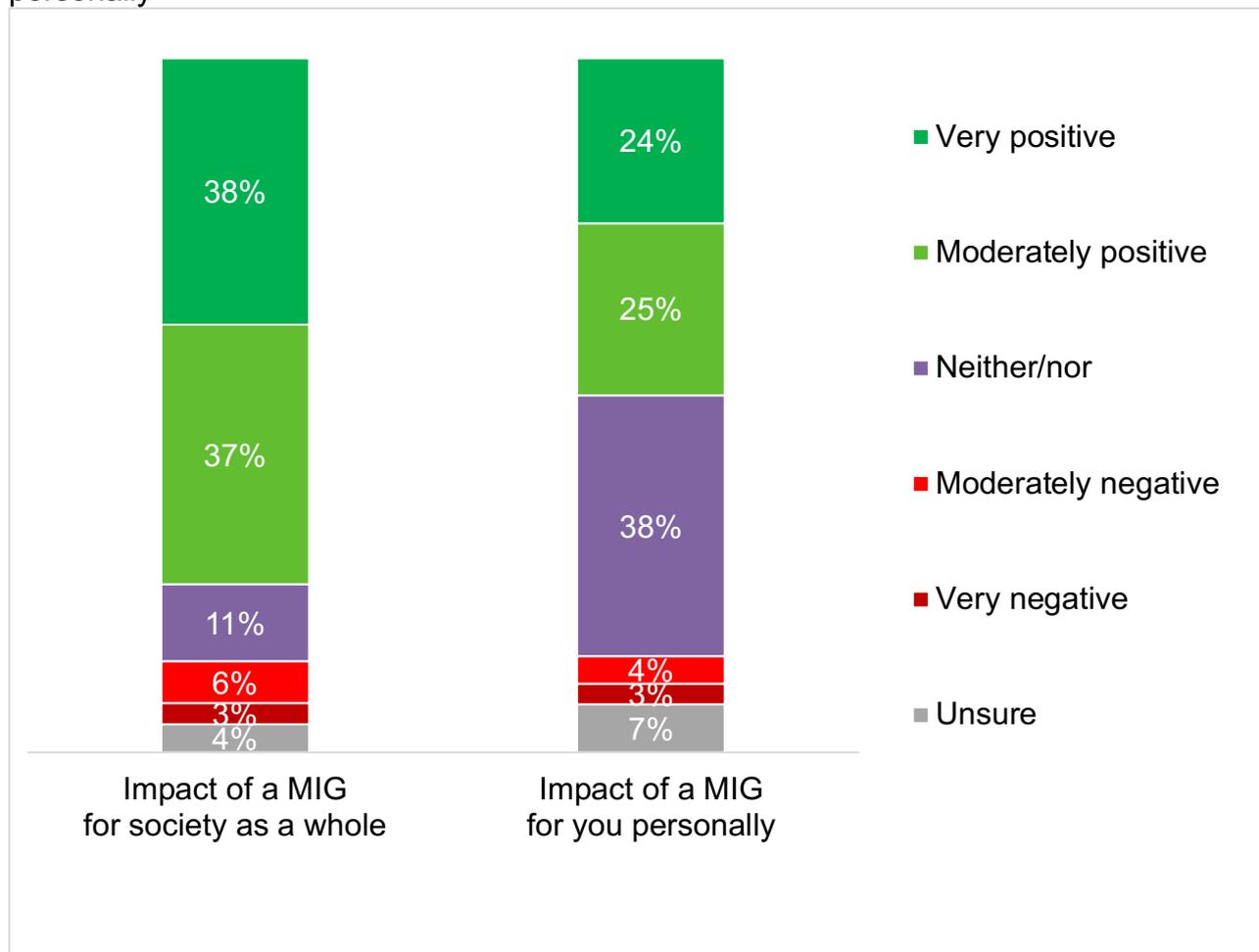
- Younger age groups (68% of 18-24s and 63% of 35-54s, compared to 52% of those aged 55+)
- Those in financial difficulty (66% v 55% of those managing well)
- Respondents living in the most deprived SIMD quintile (69% v 58% of those in the least deprived areas)
- Those with a disability in the household (64% v 57%).

Unsurprisingly, those with a more negative/less sympathetic attitude in relation to financial insecurity generally were less likely to express support for a Minimum Income Guarantee (46% of those agreeing with three/four negative statements v 70% of those agreeing with none/one). For example, strong support for the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee (i.e. the proportion scoring 8~10) was just under half (48%) among those who agreed that a too generous benefits system discourages work, compared to four in five (81%) among those who disagreed. A similar pattern was seen for each of the other negative statements, with around half of those who agreed saying they supported a Minimum Income Guarantee, compared to between seven and eight in ten of those who disagreed.

Anticipated impact of a Minimum Income Guarantee

Respondents were then asked how positive or negative they thought the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee would be for society as a whole in Scotland, and for themselves personally (see Figure 7). People generally believed that a Minimum Income Guarantee would have a positive impact on society as a whole, with three quarters (75%) saying this – and almost two fifths (38%) saying it would be ‘very positive’. Respondents were less likely to anticipate benefits for themselves personally, with just under half (49%) saying a Minimum Income Guarantee would be positive for them (evenly split between moderately and very positive) and almost two fifths saying this would have neither a positive nor a negative impact for them personally.

Figure 7: Anticipated impact of a Minimum Income Guarantee on society as a whole, and personally



Those most likely to say that a Minimum Income Guarantee would have a positive impact were similar to those who expressed strong support for the idea, for example:

- Younger age groups were most positive – those aged 65+ were least likely to say it would be positive for society as a whole (66%), and for them personally (29%)
- Lower SEGs were more likely to think a Minimum Income Guarantee would have a positive impact on them personally (53% C2DE v 44% ABC1)
- Those with the lowest household incomes were most likely to think it would have a positive impact on them (60% of those on less than £20k), as did those who were in financial difficulties (66%)
- Priority families were more likely than others to say it would be positive for society (80% v 74%) or themselves personally (61% v 45%)
- Those with disabilities in the household were also more likely than others to think it would be positive for them personally (53% v 45%).
- A similar pattern was observed based on attitudes towards poverty as was noted earlier – i.e. those who tended to agree with statements focusing responsibility for poverty on individuals were least likely to anticipate a Minimum Income Guarantee would have a positive impact on society or themselves.

Response to the framing options

Following testing of initial responses to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee, respondents were shown the three different ways of describing how a Minimum Income Guarantee would help people and society and asked about their level of support based on each description provided. As in the qualitative research, question order was randomised to avoid any order effect on results.

For the sample as a whole (see Table 10), results were broadly similar across all three frames: the mean score was highest for the reassurance/safety net theme (7.85) and lowest for fairer society (7.75), but these differences were small.

Table 10: Extent to which respondents would support or oppose the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee in Scotland based on each frame/theme

Level of support/opposition	Reassurance/ safety net	Fairer society	Freedom/ opportunity
Mean score	7.85	7.75	7.77
NET: Strong support (8~10)	62%	61%	62%
NET: Support (6~10)	82%	82%	82%
NET: Oppose (0~4)	7%	8%	9%
10 – strongly support	34%	31%	31%
9	10%	12%	12%
8	19%	18%	18%
7	15%	13%	13%
6	5%	8%	8%
5	8%	7%	7%
4	2%	2%	2%
3	2%	2%	3%
2	1%	1%	1%
1	1%	1%	1%
0 – strongly oppose	2%	2%	2%
Unsure	2%	3%	3%

Responses to each theme were also compared to the original level of support demonstrated before any of the frames were shown – i.e. whether levels of support had increased, decreased or remained the same based on the score out of 10 originally, and

the score out of 10 given following each frame (see Table 11). Although all three frames generated a small increase in mean scores, these were very small changes, and for the majority of respondents, the level of support did not change after seeing any of the three frames – but as noted previously, initial support was generally already high, so scores were starting from a relatively high baseline of support.

Table 11: Changes in support for a Minimum Income Guarantee based on each frame (total sample)

Change in support compared to initial response	Reassurance/safety net	Fairer society	Freedom/opportunity
<i>Avg change in score</i>	+0.16	+0.06	+0.09
Increased support (higher score compared to initial level of support)	25%	25%	25%
No change (exactly the same score given as initially)	59%	55%	56%
Decreased support (lower score compared to initial level of support)	16%	21%	19%
Base (all excl 'unsure')	1,005	1,003	1,000

The same analysis was conducted specifically looking at those who were initially opposed to the idea of introducing a Minimum Income Guarantee in Scotland (i.e. scored 0~4 initially) – since these are the people who most need to be persuaded about the idea. Because initial support was generally high, this analysis is based on a relatively small base size (n=90). However, results are encouraging in that those who initially opposed the idea were fairly likely to increase their level of support after seeing the more detailed descriptions – particularly for the reassurance/safety net theme: 43% of this group gave a higher score after seeing this frame (see Table 12).

Table 12: Changes in support for a Minimum Income Guarantee based on each frame (those who initially opposed it)

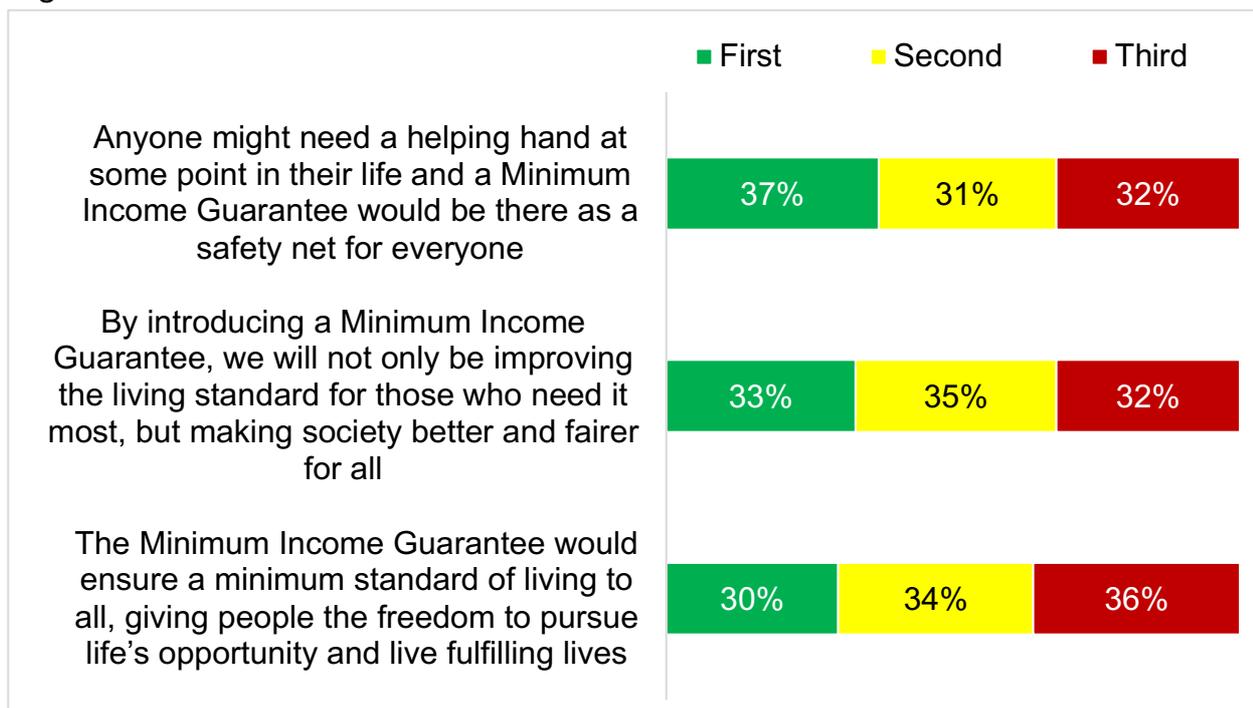
Change in support compared to initial response	Reassurance/ safety net	Fairer society	Freedom/ opportunity
<i>Avg change in score</i>	+0.74	+0.48	+0.56
Increased support (higher score compared to initial level of support)	43%	37%	37%
No change (exactly the same score given as initially)	42%	45%	46%
Decreased support (lower score compared to initial level of support)	15%	18%	17%
Base (all scoring initial support 0~4, excl 'unsure')	90	90	89

Preferred frame

Respondents were asked to rank the three options they had seen in terms of which made them feel most positively towards a Minimum Income Guarantee being introduced in Scotland (see Figure 8).

Reassurance safety/net was most likely to be chosen as the preferred frame, with 37% of the sample ranking this first. The freedom/opportunity theme was least likely to be ranked first, although results were fairly evenly split with no very strong preferences expressed.

Figure 8: Frames ranked first to third



Some differences emerged in relation to the most effective frames based on pre-existing attitudes and initial levels of support for a Minimum Income Guarantee before seeing any of the theme descriptions:

- Reassurance/safety net performed particularly well among those who agreed with three or four of the negative attitudinal statements about poverty (44% ranked this first, compared to 33% of those who agreed with none or one of these statements)
- Conversely, freedom/opportunity was less likely to be ranked first among those with the most negative attitudes (24% of those agreeing with three or four statements, compared to 33% of those agreeing with none or one)
- Among those who initially opposed a Minimum Income Guarantee, the preference for reassurance/safety net was even stronger – 63% of this group ranked safety net first, while 20% ranked fairer society first and 17% ranked freedom/opportunity first. As noted, this is based on a relatively small base size (n=90) but could indicate the effectiveness of the safety net theme in persuading those initially less positively disposed to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee.

There were very few sub-group differences in terms of demographics/economic profile for which frames were ranked first. Those most likely to prefer the reassurance/safety net theme included women (40% ranked this first v 34% of men) and older respondents (e.g. 47% of 65+ v 28% of 18-34s), while those most likely to choose freedom/opportunities included men (34% v 27% of women) and younger people (36% of 18-34s v 21% of 65+) – and there were no demographic differences for the fairer society theme.

Reasons for selecting preferred frames

Respondents were asked why they had selected their first choice and comments were coded into themes for analysis.

As outlined in Table 13, those who chose the reassurance/safety net theme tended to say that this was because anyone can fall on hard times or need help (26%) and/or that it is important/reassuring to have a safety net/protect people if something bad happens to them (22%).

Table 13: Reasons for preferring reassurance/safety net (mentioned by 5% or more)

Reasons for choosing safety net	%
Anyone can fall on hard times/need help	26%
Important/reassuring to have a safety net/protect people if something bad happens	22%
It's the best option (in general – e.g. it's the right thing to do, good idea, best choice)	8%
It will help everyone/everyone can benefit	7%
Everyone should have the basics/deserves a certain standard of living (incl. it's a basic human right)	7%
It will help those in need/the most vulnerable	6%
Base (all preferring reassurance/safety net theme)	390

Respondents who chose the fairer society theme were most likely to say that this was because it would make society fairer (25%), that everyone should be treated equally (18%), and/or that everyone should have the basics/a certain standard of living (11%) – see Table 14.

Table 14: Reasons for preferring fairer society for all (mentioned by 5% or more)

Reasons for choosing fairer society	%
It's fairer/would make a fairer society	25%
Everyone should be treated equally/there should be equality	18%
Everyone should have the basics/deserves a certain standard of living (incl. it's a basic human right)	11%
It's the best option (in general – e.g. it's the right thing to do, good idea, best choice)	9%
Everyone deserves the same/equal chances in life	8%
It would be positive for society/improve society (generally)	8%

It would reduce poverty	6%
People/everyone should have a good/full life	5%
Base (all preferring fairer society theme)	337

For respondents who preferred the freedom/opportunity theme (see Table 15), this was because they said people should have freedom/choices (28%), people/everyone should have a good/full life (17%) and/or that it will improve happiness/wellbeing (12%).

Table 15: Reasons for preferring freedom/opportunities (mentioned by 5% or more)

Reasons for choosing freedom/opportunities	%
People should have freedom/choices	28%
People/everyone should have a good/full life	17%
It will improve people's happiness/wellbeing	12%
It will ensure/improve standards of living/quality of life	8%
It gives people more opportunities/chances	7%
It's the best option (in general – e.g. it's the right thing to do, good idea, best choice)	6%
Everyone should have the basics/deserves a certain standard of living (incl. it's a basic human right)	6%
Everyone deserves the same/equal chances in life	6%
Happier/more fulfilled people are better able to contribute/will benefit all of society	5%
Encourages people to work/personal responsibility	5%
Base (all preferring freedom/opportunity theme)	326

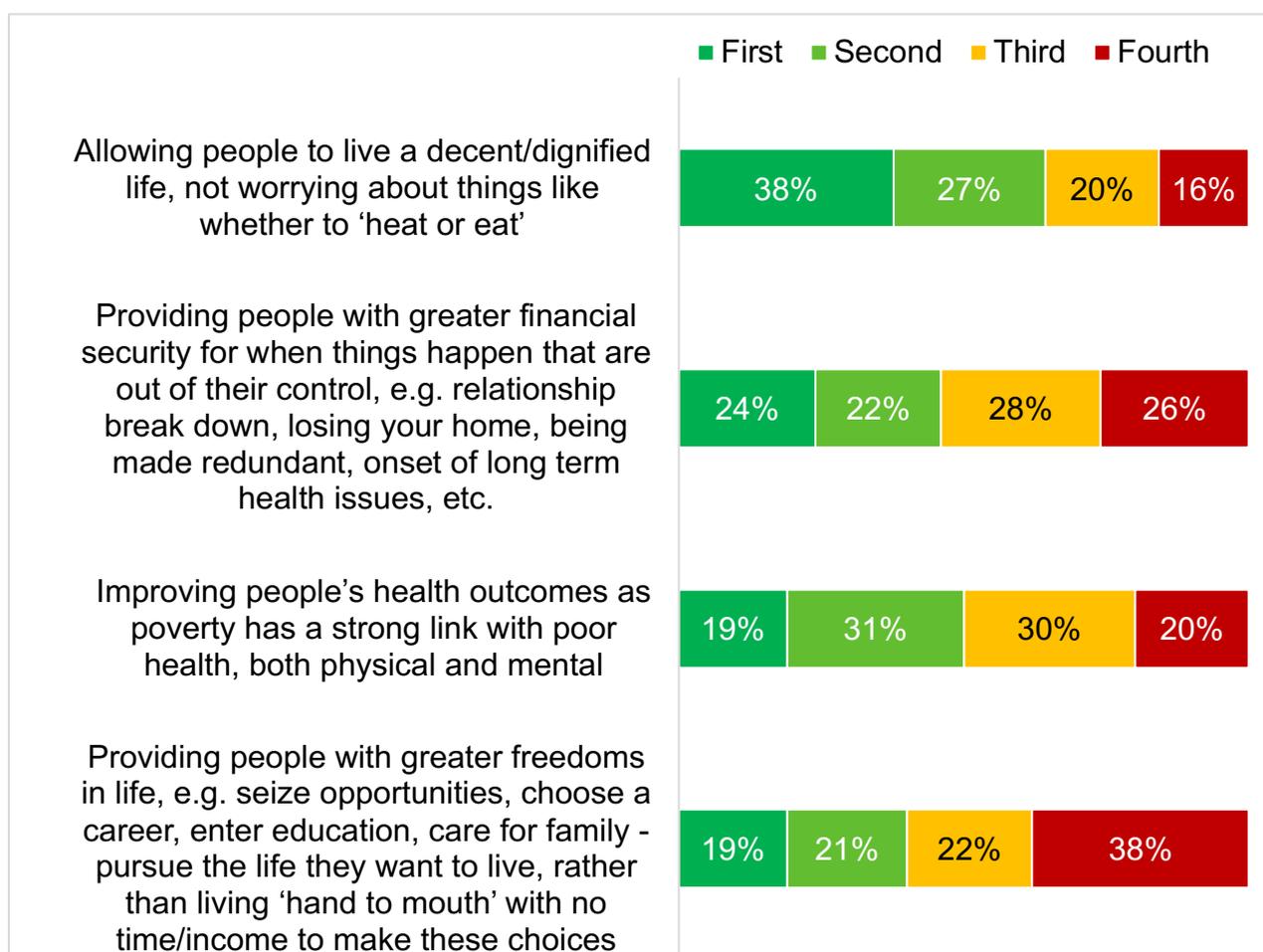
Benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee for individuals and communities

A range of potential benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee were shown, for both individuals and for society as a whole, and respondents were asked to rank these in order of which would make them most likely to support the idea.

Benefits for individuals that would increase support for a Minimum Income Guarantee

Allowing people to live a decent/dignified life, not worrying about whether to ‘heat or eat’, was the most likely to be ranked first as an individual benefit, by some margin – almost two fifths (38%) ranked this first (see Figure 9). This was followed by providing greater financial security for when things happen out of people’s control. The benefits associated with the freedom/opportunity theme were ranked lowest.

Figure 9: Benefits for individuals that would increase support for a Minimum Income Guarantee



However, certain sub-groups within the sample were more likely to be persuaded by particular individual benefits, for example:

- The ‘greater financial security’ benefit was more likely to be ranked first by higher SEGs (29% ABC1 v 20% C2DE) and those living in the least deprived areas (26% v 19% of those in the most deprived quintile). It was also popular

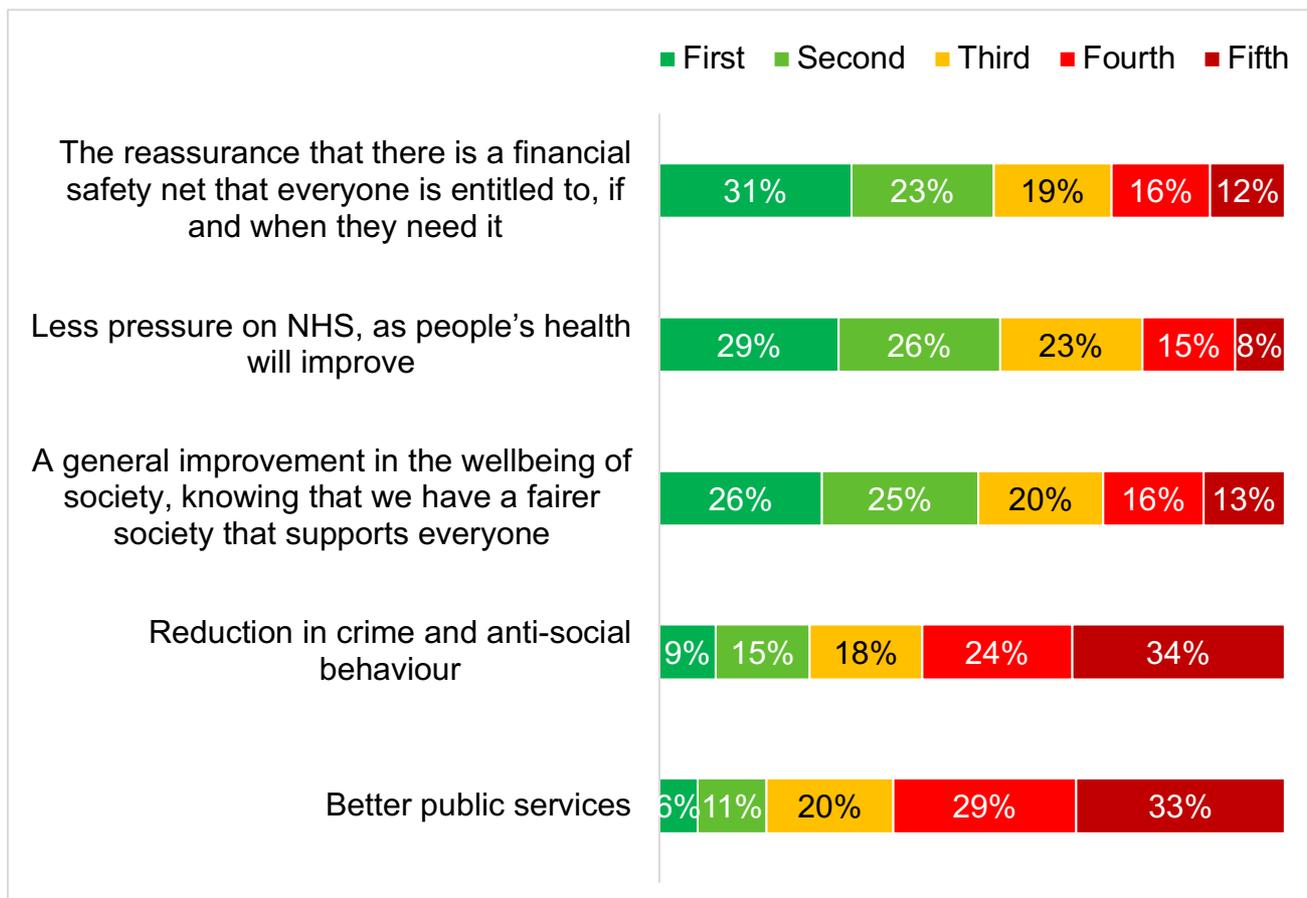
with those who were initially the most opposed to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee (45% v 22% of those who strongly supported the idea) and those with the most negative attitudes towards poverty (33% of those agreeing with three or four negative statements v 19% of those agreeing with none or one)

- The 'greater freedoms' benefit was also more likely to be ranked first by those with negative attitudes (26% v 16%) and by those with children in the household (23% v 17% of those without children).

Benefits for communities/society that would increase support for a Minimum Income Guarantee

As shown in Figure 10, the benefit related to the safety net theme was ranked most highly in the list of community/society benefits: reassurance that a financial safety net is there if and when people need it – 31% ranked this first. Less pressure on the NHS was also ranked highly, followed by a general improvement in the wellbeing of society.

Figure 10: Benefits for communities/society that would increase support for a Minimum Income Guarantee



Those experiencing financial difficulties were more likely than those managing well to rank the reassurance of a safety net first (35% v 27%), as were those in priority families (37% v 29% of those not in a priority family).

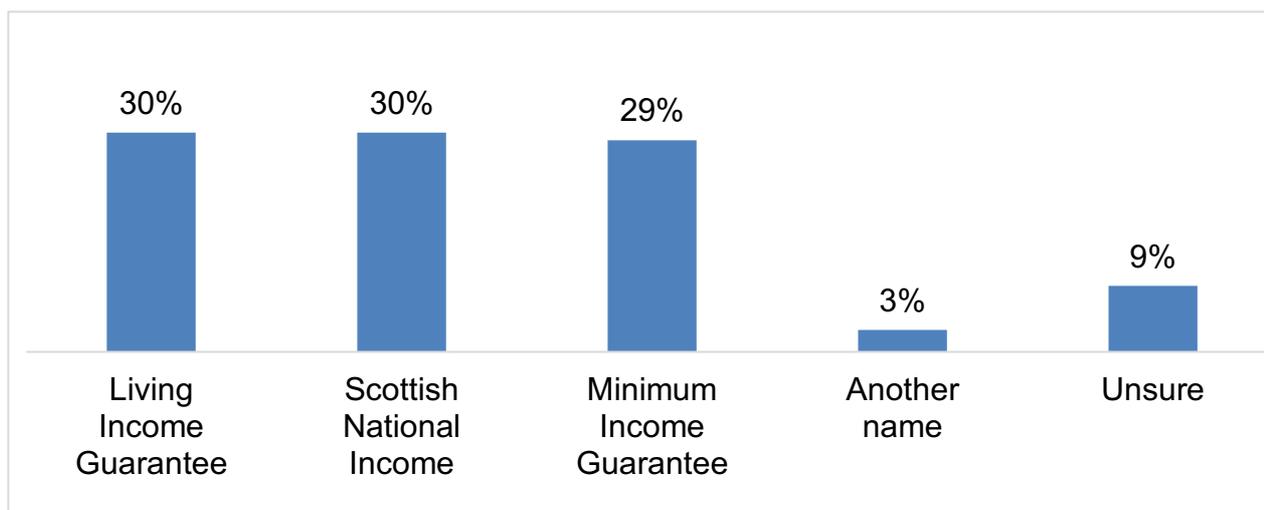
The only difference based on attitudes was that a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour was more likely to be ranked first by those with a more negative attitude to

poverty generally (16% of those agreeing with three/four negative statements v 6% of those agreeing with none/one). Reducing crime was also a more persuasive community/society benefit among those who initially opposed the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee (21% ranked it first v 8% of those who supported it).

Naming options

Respondents were asked which of three potential names for the policy they thought was the best. Views were very evenly split, with no clear winner overall in terms of the preferred name (see Figure 11). No names were suggested by more than one or two respondents who said it should be called something else.

Figure 11: Preferred policy name



Although views overall were evenly split between the proposed names, there were some differences between sample sub-groups:

- The name ‘Minimum Income Guarantee’ had consistent levels of support across demographic sub-groups
- ‘Living Income Guarantee’ was more likely to be chosen by women (34% v 25% of men) and by higher SEGs (33% ABC1s v 26% C2DEs)
- ‘Scottish National Income’ was preferred by priority families (37% v 27% of those not in a priority family); those with a disability in the household (33% v 27% of those with no disability in the household); and men (34% v 26% of women). However, this name was less popular among older age groups (e.g. 17% of those aged 65+, lower than all other age groups).

Any other comments

Finally, respondents were asked if they had any further thoughts about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee. A total of 359 respondents provided any further feedback. These responses were coded into broad themes, presented in Table 16 below.

The majority of those who commented gave positive feedback or said they supported the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee. Around a quarter gave negative feedback or

criticisms of the policy, including concerns about potential abuse of the system. A quarter raised queries/concerns about how it would work in practice (e.g. how it will be funded).

Table 16: Open-ended comments (mentioned by 2% or more)

Any other comments about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee	%
NET: Any positive comment/support for policy	62%
General support for the idea (it's a good/great idea/would help)	52%
It's important/urgent/needed (incl. sooner)	16%
Would have long-term impacts/benefit everyone	3%
I hope it works/happens	2%
NET: Any negative comment/opposition to policy	26%
Concerns about people being irresponsible/abusing the system	18%
Negative feedback/don't agree with the idea/it won't work	12%
NET: Any practical concerns/queries about how it will work	24%
Queries about how it's funded/it's not affordable/where money will come from	9%
Need more information/explanation	8%
Needs to be carefully/fairly implemented/monitored/managed	6%
Questions about how much it would be/who decides etc.	4%
Suggestions for improvements/alternatives	12%
Base (all who provided a comment)	359

Conclusions and recommendations

People understand that poverty and financial insecurity exist in Scotland, and they see the need for action.

Almost all qualitative respondents had personal experience of financial insecurity, either now or in the past, or through people they knew. Cost of living issues/rising prices were commonly mentioned, and several respondents were currently struggling financially. The quantitative research also found that people see this as a serious issue and a high priority for action: nine in ten respondents said poverty and financial insecurity was a very/moderately serious problem, three quarters said they were personally concerned about it, and seven in ten said that helping those affected should be a top/high priority for the Scottish Government.

Recommendation/implication: Findings indicate that the Scottish population is open to messaging about potential policies to address financial insecurity. All qualitative interviewees also spoke about local issues when asked about poverty, suggesting there is an opportunity for communication about a Minimum Income Guarantee to tap into widespread recognition that poverty is relevant in Scotland today.

Spontaneous comments about who is vulnerable, and proposed solutions, suggest people are open to the ideas that will be part of a Minimum Income Guarantee.

Qualitative discussions also suggested that people generally have a good understanding of which groups in society are most vulnerable to poverty, with older people and children/families particularly likely to be mentioned. A lot of the spontaneously proposed solutions to tackling poverty also included things that a Minimum Income Guarantee would be designed to achieve, e.g. reducing costs, improving services and ensuring access to well paid work – so there are a lot of positive things that can be communicated about the policy that will resonate.

Recommendation/implication: Highlighting all the key elements of a Minimum Income Guarantee in combination is likely to be effective: mentions of better public services and improvements to the world of work were viewed particularly positively, as well as ensuring adequate social security.

Some negative attitudes and contradictory narratives about poverty persist.

When thinking about the causes of poverty, qualitative interviewees were most likely to mention causes in wider society/the economy, but some did blame individual factors too, such as people ‘cheating the system’ and being ‘too lazy’ to work etc. The survey results also suggest that there are some persistent negative views of those affected by financial insecurity – e.g. two fifths of respondents agreed that if people work hard they can avoid being unable to pay for basic needs, and a quarter agreed that people experiencing poverty have usually made poor choices in life.

This supports previous research findings that people often hold contradictory positions when thinking about poverty – there was evidence in the interviews of some doubts about

those in financial hardship being 'deserving' of help, but also sympathy and a recognition that the problem is real when thinking about cost of living increases and wider social issues e.g. housing and employment – and when testing the original framing options and proposed benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee, any messaging that was seen to place blame on those in financial difficulties did not work well.

Recommendation/implication: There is an element of blaming individuals for their financial insecurity, which presents a challenge for communicating about/gaining support for a Minimum Income Guarantee. It may be effective to highlight experiences that everyone can understand, and focus on issues affecting everybody, since respondents were very aware of the cost-of-living crisis and rising prices etc. Survey data also provides an indication of what types of messaging will be most effective when communicating with the minority of the population who hold the most negative attitudes (see the framing section below). Communications should also avoid messaging which could be interpreted as placing blame on those in poverty/in receipt of benefits.

There was broad support for the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee in principle, although there was a tendency to assume it would benefit other people.

Initial responses to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee were positive: three fifths of survey respondents scored their level of support as 8~10 out of 10, and just over three in ten gave the highest possible score of 10. Qualitative respondents were also broadly supportive of the idea, with key positive elements including: it would ensure the most vulnerable in society are supported/nobody would fall below a certain standard of living; it includes good quality work and services, not just benefits; it felt quite aspirational and positive; and people saw that it could have wider benefits for society as well as individuals. However, interviewees tended to assume that they were unlikely to benefit personally from the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee.

Survey results also suggest some altruism in responses to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee. While three quarters of survey respondents thought that a Minimum Income Guarantee would have a positive impact on society as a whole, they were less likely to anticipate benefits for themselves personally: just under half said a Minimum Income Guarantee would be positive for them. These findings indicate that while there is perhaps a need to communicate a strong message about why a Minimum Income Guarantee would have a positive impact on everyone, people do still support the idea even when they assume it will benefit others rather than themselves.

Certain sub-groups of the population had different attitudes towards financial insecurity, and this was reflected in their initial responses to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee. For example, those who were better off (in higher socio-economic groups, currently managing well financially, not living in areas of deprivation etc.) tended to be less supportive of a Minimum Income Guarantee and were less likely to say it would have a positive impact than those who were less well off.

Recommendation/implication: Communication about a Minimum Income Guarantee should highlight benefits for everyone/wider society, as well as focusing on the advantages for the most vulnerable. There is a greater need to persuade certain sub-groups of the

population of the need for a Minimum Income Guarantee, particularly those who are personally better off financially themselves.

Talking about the benefits for individuals and society can help people think more positively about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee – but benefits for individuals were most persuasive.

Qualitative respondents found the benefits for individuals to be the most persuasive and relatable – greater financial security for individuals being the one that stood out the most. People responded particularly well to the specific examples of situations that could lead to needing help – common things like ill health, job loss, relationship breakdown etc, which people found relatable. The advantages of a Minimum Income Guarantee for wider society, while seen to be worthwhile, were felt to be less achievable/realistic and so did not work as well to gain support for a Minimum Income Guarantee.

In the survey, the individual benefit that people said was most likely to increase their support was allowing people to live a decent/dignified life, not worrying about whether to ‘heat or eat’ – this also reflects the qualitative findings, as the ‘heat or eat’ messaging resonated with people as something that highlighted the realities and impacts of financial insecurity. However, qualitative findings were mixed in relation to use of the word ‘dignified’ in this context, e.g. implying that people on low incomes were not dignified. Providing greater financial security for when things happen out of people’s control was also ranked highly. Similarly, the benefits for communities/society that was ranked first was reassurance that a financial safety net is there for everybody. A reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour and better public services were much further down the list of persuasive community benefits. Qualitative findings also suggest that focusing on crime and anti-social behaviour is less effective, since people feel this is placing blame on those in poverty.

Recommendation/implication: At least initially, messaging should focus on benefits for the individual: while some benefits of a Minimum Income Guarantee for wider society may be realised in the longer term, highlighting individual benefits may be more productive in terms of gaining public support in the short term, as these are seen as more achievable and realistic – particularly in the current climate of funding cuts and in the face of some fairly pessimistic views about the problem being ‘too big to solve’. Including specific examples of situations leading to people needing financial help should be included to ensure messaging is relevant/resonates across the population. People will need more explanation of how and why benefits will be delivered for wider society, particularly in relation to reducing crime and improving public services – which some people felt should be addressed anyway, independently of any policy related to a Minimum Income Guarantee.

All three framing options tested in the survey have potential to be effective in communicating about a Minimum Income Guarantee across the general population – but the reassurance/safety net theme worked best.

All three of the final frames tested in the survey have potential, in that levels of support for a Minimum Income Guarantee were slightly higher after respondents read each of the

three frames when compared to initial support levels. It is worth noting that it is relatively difficult to increase scores substantially when support for the idea is already high.

When asked to select which of the three frames made them feel most positively about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee, the 'reassurance safety/net' concept was most likely to be chosen – although views were relatively evenly split overall, with substantial minorities choosing the 'fairer society' and 'freedom/opportunities' themes.

As noted previously, certain sub-groups of the population had different attitudes towards poverty which was reflected in varying levels of support for the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee. Since those opposed to the idea are the most in need of being convinced of the need for a Minimum Income Guarantee, analysis focused on how those with the most negative attitudes responded to the framing options. Encouragingly, those who had initially been opposed to the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee did increase their level of support after hearing the more detailed framing descriptions – and this was particularly the case for the reassurance/safety net theme. When asked to rank their preferred themes, reassurance/safety net also performed particularly well among those who had the most negative/least sympathetic attitudes towards financial insecurity, and among those who had initially opposed the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee.

Recommendation/implication: Use the reassurance/safety net theme to frame messaging about a Minimum Income Guarantee, since this was most effective across the population as a whole but particularly among those who need most persuading about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee.

The name 'Minimum Income Guarantee' had the most consistent levels of support across the sample.

Some issues were raised in the qualitative research about the policy name, e.g. some thought 'minimum' implied the bare minimum or was related to the minimum wage, and there was some preference for 'living income' – although no very strong views were expressed. In the quantitative survey, views were fairly evenly split in terms of a preferred name for the policy; however, the name 'Minimum Income Guarantee' had the most consistent levels of support across demographic sub-groups.

Recommendation/implication: Retain the current name for the policy.

There are lots of questions about how a Minimum Income Guarantee would work in practice.

When first hearing about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee, qualitative respondents raised a number of (mainly practical) questions/concerns: how it will be funded/paid for; how it will be administered (e.g. whether it will be means tested, how eligibility will be determined, who would be eligible); what the minimum threshold would be and how it would be calculated; how to ensure it was not abused; how to ensure the minimum levels set did not disincentivise work; and queries around fairness (e.g. someone earning just below might get a top up, while someone earning just above gets nothing). When people were asked if they had any additional comments/thoughts about the policy in

the survey, around a quarter of those who left a comment also raised similar questions/concerns.

Recommendation/implication: Communication about a Minimum Income Guarantee will need to clearly explain the practicalities and answer the key questions people will have, such as how the policy will be funded, how it will be administered and how the Scottish Government will ensure its operation is fair. It is understood that providing answers to these types of questions about policy operation is part of the wider work of the Expert Group.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire

Screeners/quotas

SQ1. Where do you live?

Single Code	Code	Route
Scotland	1	Continue
England	2	Screen out
Wales	3	Screen out
Northern Ireland	4	Screen out
Republic of Ireland	5	Screen out
Elsewhere	6	Screen out

SQ2. What is your gender?

Single Code	Code
Man	1
Woman	2
Non-binary	3
Prefer to self-describe	4
Prefer not to say	5

SQ3. Which of the following age groups are you in?

Single Code	Code
18-24	1
25-34	2
35-44	3
45-54	4
55-64	5
65-74	6
75+	7
Prefer not to say	8

SQ4. Which of the following groups does the Chief Income Earner in your household belong to?

The Chief Income Earner is the person in the household with the largest income, regardless of how this income is obtained. If the Chief Income Earner is retired and has an occupational pension, please select according to the previous occupation. If the Chief Income Earner is not in paid employment and has been out of work for less than 6 months, please select according to previous occupation.

Single Code	Code
Semi or unskilled manual worker (e.g. manual jobs that require no special training, park keeper, non-HGV driver, shop assistant etc.)	1

Skilled manual worker (e.g. skilled bricklayer, carpenter, plumber, painter, bus/ambulance driver, HGV driver, unqualified assistant teacher, AA patrolman, pub/bar worker, etc.)	2
Supervisory or clerical/ junior managerial/ professional/ administrator (e.g. office worker, student doctor, foreman with 25+ employees, sales person, student teachers etc.)	3
Intermediate managerial/ professional/ administrative (e.g. newly qualified (under 3 years) doctor, solicitor, board director small organisation, middle manager in large organisation, principal officer in Civil Service/local government etc.)	4
Higher managerial/ professional/ administrative (e.g. established doctor, solicitor, board director in large organisation (200+ employees), top level civil servant/ public service employee, head teacher, etc.)	5
Student	6
Retired and living on state pension only	7
Unemployed (for over 6 months) or not working due to long term sickness	8
Prefer not to say	9

Survey Questions

Q1. Which issues do you think are most important for the Scottish Government to prioritise? Please rank them in order from the most important priority at the top to the least important at the bottom, by dragging each from the left to the right section.

Randomise Codes	Rank
Health and social care (NHS)	
Tackling climate change	
Creating a stronger economy	
Increasing people's financial security and reducing poverty	
Dealing with immigration	
Reducing crime	
Improving education	
Wider public services (e.g. transport, childcare)	

Throughout this survey we will ask you questions about people who are experiencing financial insecurity and poverty. By this we mean not having enough to be able to live a decent life, e.g. being able to afford basic necessities, as well as being able to participate in society.

Q2. To what extent do you think that financial insecurity and poverty is a problem in Scotland?

Single/Invert Scale	Code
It's a very serious problem	1
It's a moderately serious problem	2
It's only a slight problem	3
It's not a problem	4
Unsure	5

Q3. To what extent are you personally concerned about financial insecurity and poverty in Scotland?

Single/Invert Scale	Code
Very concerned	1
Quite concerned	2
Neither concerned nor unconcerned	3
Not very concerned	4
Not at all concerned	5
Unsure	6

Q4. How much of a priority do you think the Scottish Government should give to helping people who are experiencing financial insecurity and poverty?

Single/Invert Scale	Code
Top priority	1
High priority	2
Moderate priority	3
Low priority	4
No priority	5
Unsure	6

Q5. We are interested in your views about the issue of financial insecurity and poverty in Scotland and how people experiencing this might be helped, e.g. through social security, public services and employment opportunities. You will now see a series of statements other people have made about this. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements.

As with the rest of the questionnaire, your answers will be treated in confidence and not identified with you personally. They will be added to all the replies we receive from many people across Scotland to form a more general picture.

How much do you agree or disagree that...

SINGLE CODE/RANDOMISE/ INVERT SCALE	Agree strongly	Agree slightly	Neither agree/ disagree	Disagree slightly	Disagree strongly	Unsure
People who are experiencing financial insecurity and poverty usually have made poor choices in life	1	2	3	4	5	6
Anyone can potentially find themselves in a situation where they can't afford the basics of a decent life (e.g. choosing between heating and eating)	1	2	3	4	5	6
The benefits system in Scotland is currently enough to meet people's needs	1	2	3	4	5	6
It has an adverse effect on all of society when some people don't	1	2	3	4	5	6

have enough money for the essentials in life						
Being able to afford the essentials to live a dignified and decent life is a basic human right	1	2	3	4	5	6
Inequality in society is inevitable, and there will always be some people who live in poverty	1	2	3	4	5	6
There can never be a fair and just society while some people don't have financial security	1	2	3	4	5	6
If people work hard, they can avoid the situation where they don't have enough to pay for their basic needs	1	2	3	4	5	6
When people are living in poverty, they have fewer opportunities and choices in life	1	2	3	4	5	6
If the benefits system is too generous it discourages people from working	1	2	3	4	5	6
Public services in Scotland should ensure that everyone's basic needs are met, so that they can have a decent quality of life	1	2	3	4	5	6
Everyone in Scotland should have access to good quality work so that they can improve their financial security	1	2	3	4	5	6

The Scottish Government is considering a new approach to prevent people having incomes that are too low and living costs that are too high, called a Minimum Income Guarantee. Its aim would be to ensure everyone has enough to live a healthy and financially secure life.

This would be delivered through a combination of good quality paid work, high quality services that reduce household costs (like free prescriptions, bus passes, childcare etc.) and the guarantee of an adequate income through social security. As well as changes to rights around work and improving public services, it would mean increasing social security payments to a minimum level that allows people to live a decent life.

This idea is at a very early stage of consideration and is very much a long term plan, i.e. it would be implemented over the next 10 to 20 years.

Q6. Before taking part in this survey, had you heard of a Minimum Income Guarantee?

Single Code	Code
Yes	1
No	2
Unsure	3

A Minimum Income Guarantee would be delivered through a combination of good quality paid work, high quality services that reduce household costs (like free prescriptions, bus passes, childcare etc.) and the guarantee of an adequate income through social security. As well as changes to rights around work and improving public services, it would mean increasing social security payments to a minimum level that allows people to live a decent life.

Q7. Based on the description you have just read above, how much would you support or oppose a Minimum Income Guarantee being introduced in Scotland? Please answer on the scale below, where 0 means you would strongly oppose it and 10 means you would strongly support it.

Single/Invert Scale	Code
0 – Strongly oppose	1
1	2
2	3
3	4
4	5
5	6
6	7
7	8
8	9
9	10
10 – Strongly support	11
Unsure	12

Q8. How positive or negative do you think the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee would be for society as a whole in Scotland?

Single/Invert Scale	Code
Very positive	1
Moderately positive	2
Neither positive not negative	3
Moderately negative	4
Very negative	5
Unsure	6

Q9. How positive or negative do you think the introduction of a Minimum Income Guarantee would be for you personally?

Single/Invert Scale	Code
Very positive	1
Moderately positive	2
Neither positive not negative	3
Moderately negative	4
Very negative	5
Unsure	6

There are a number of different ways to describe how a Minimum Income Guarantee would help people and society. We are now going to show you three options for how this

could be described. For each, please state how positively or negatively the descriptions make you feel about Scotland introducing a Minimum Income Guarantee.

Please take time to read each description carefully before going on to answer questions about it.

Scripting note: Please rotate the order of the three MIG framing questions. Please also add a timer so that respondents cannot move onto questions until they have read the description.

The cost-of-living crisis has demonstrated that no one is entirely protected from financial hardship, and that we must go further in providing a safety net. Anyone might need a helping hand at some point in their life, and a Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through a combination of fair and accessible paid work, high quality services and adequate social security, would be there as a reassurance for all – no matter your current position in life or what might happen in the future – you are promised a minimum standard of living.

Q10. Based on the paragraph above, and thinking about the theme of the Minimum Income Guarantee **providing everyone in Scotland a safety net through a minimum standard of living**, how much would you support or oppose a minimum income guarantee being introduced in Scotland? Please answer on the scale below, where 0 means you would strongly oppose it and 10 means you would strongly support it.

Single/Invert Scale	Code
0 – Strongly oppose	1
1	2
2	3
3	4
4	5
5	6
6	7
7	8
8	9
9	10
10 – Strongly support	11
Unsure	12

Inequality and poverty are harmful to society, not only for those at the sharp end of it, but for everyone. Inequality can be linked to some social problems, so reducing poverty will help to alleviate strain on the NHS and reduce crime, which in turn will lead to higher levels of trust and stronger community life. By introducing a Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through a combination of fair and accessible paid work, high quality services and adequate social security, we will not only be improving the living standard for those who need it most, but also for society as a whole.

Q11. Based on the paragraph above, and thinking about the theme of a Minimum Income Guarantee **creating a fairer and more equal society in Scotland**, how much would you support or oppose a minimum income guarantee being introduced in Scotland? Please answer on the scale below, where 0 means you would strongly oppose it and 10 means you would strongly support it.

Single/Invert Scale	Code
---------------------	------

0 – Strongly oppose	1
1	2
2	3
3	4
4	5
5	6
6	7
7	8
8	9
9	10
10 – Strongly support	11
Unsure	12

There are people in our communities who do not get the opportunity to live decent, healthy and financially secure lives, and are, for example, being forced to choose between whether ‘to heat or to eat’. This is unacceptable in our modern society, and something that we need to collectively rectify. The Minimum Income Guarantee, delivered through social security benefits, fair work/good jobs, and the provision of key basic services, would ensure a minimum standard of living to all, allowing people to pursue life’s opportunity and live fulfilling lives.

Q12. Based on the paragraph above, and the theme of a Minimum Income Guarantee **allowing people more freedom and choice to live a fuller life**, how much would you support or oppose a minimum income guarantee being introduced in Scotland? Please answer on the scale below, where 0 means you would strongly oppose it and 10 means you would strongly support it.

Single/Invert Scale	Code
0 – Strongly oppose	1
1	2
2	3
3	4
4	5
5	6
6	7
7	8
8	9
9	10
10 – Strongly support	11
Unsure	12

Q13. Of the three options, which one makes you feel **most positively** towards a minimum income guarantee being introduced in Scotland? Please rank the statements from the one you feel most positively about at the top to the one you feel least positively about at the bottom, by dragging each from the left to the right section.

Randomise	Rank
Anyone might need a helping hand at some point in their life and a Minimum Income Guarantee would be there as a safety net for everyone	

By introducing a Minimum Income Guarantee, we will not only be improving the living standard for those who need it most, but making society better and fairer for all	
The Minimum Income Guarantee would ensure a minimum standard of living to all, giving people the freedom to pursue life's opportunity and live fulfilling lives	

Q14. What are your reasons for selecting [TEXT SUBSTITUTION] as your first choice? Please type in your reasons below and give as much detail as possible.

Q15. A Minimum Income Guarantee could potentially benefit **individual people** in a number of ways. Which of the following benefits for individual people would make you most likely to support a Minimum Income Guarantee? Please rank the statements from the one you feel most positively about at the top to the one you feel least positively about at the bottom, by dragging each from the left to the right section.

Randomise	Rank
Allowing people to live a decent and dignified life, not worrying about things such as whether to 'heat or eat'	
Providing people with greater freedoms in life, e.g. to seize opportunities, choose a career, enter education, provide care for family, i.e. to pursue the life they want to live, rather than living 'hand to mouth' with no time or income to make these choices	
Improving people's health outcomes as poverty has a strong link with poor health, both physical and mental	
Providing people with greater financial security for when things happen that are out of their control, e.g. relationship break down, losing your home, being made redundant, onset of long term health issues, etc.	

Q16. A Minimum Income Guarantee could potentially benefit **communities and society** in a number of ways. Which of the following benefits for communities and society would make you most likely to support a Minimum Income Guarantee? Please rank the statements from the one you feel most positively about at the top to the one you feel least positively about at the bottom, by dragging each from the left to the right section.

Randomise	Rank
Reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour	
Better public services	
Less pressure on NHS, as people's health will improve	
The reassurance that there is a financial safety net that everyone is entitled to, if and when they need it	
A general improvement in the wellbeing of society, knowing that we have a fairer society that supports everyone	

Q17. There are a number of options for what this kind of policy could be called. Which of the following potential names for the policy do you think is best?

Single code/randomise	Code
Minimum Income Guarantee	1
Living Income Guarantee	2
Scottish National Income	3
Another name (please specify)	4

Unsure	5
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Q18. Do you have any other thoughts about the idea of a Minimum Income Guarantee?

[Allow a 'No comments' option]

The final few questions are for classification purposes.

Q19. Thinking about your household, which of the following best describes how you and your household are managing financially at the moment?

Single/Invert Scale	Code
Managing very well	1
Managing quite well	2
Getting by OK	3
Having some financial difficulties	4
Having major financial difficulties	5
Prefer not to say	6

Q20. What is your current yearly household income, including any benefits you receive, before tax and other deductions?

Single code	Code
Less than £15,000	1
£15,000 up to £19,000	2
£20,000 up to £29,999	3
£30,000 up to £44,999	4
£45,000 up to £59,999	5
£60,000 or more	6
Don't know	7
Prefer not to say	8

Q21. Including yourself, how many people live within your household?

Adults (aged 16+): _____

Children (aged under 16): _____

ASK IF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD

Q22. How old are the children that live in your household?

Multicode	Code
Under 1 year	1
1-4 years	2
5-11 years	3
12-15 years	4
Prefer not to say	5

ASK IF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD AND >1 ADULT

Q23. Which of the following best describes your household?

Single code	Code
-------------	------

I live with someone who shares the parenting or caring role with me for the child/ren in the household	1
I do not live with someone who has a parenting or caring role for the child/ren in the household – I have sole responsibility in the household	2
Other (please specify)	3
Prefer not to say	4

Q24. What is your current working status?

Single code	Code
Full-time paid work (including self-employed)	1
Part-time paid work (including self-employed)	2
Government or other training scheme	3
Unemployed	4
Retired	5
Temporary sick	6
Long-term sick/disabled without a job	7
Looking after the home/family	8
Full-time education	9
Other	10
Prefer not to say	11

Q25. What is your ethnic group?

Single code	Code
White	
Scottish	1
Other British	2
Irish	3
Polish	4
Gypsy/traveller	5
Roma	6
Showman/Showwoman	7
Other white ethnic group	8
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	
Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups, please write in	9
Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian	
Pakistani, Scottish Pakistani or British Pakistani	10
Indian, Scottish Indian or British Indian	11
Bangladeshi, Scottish Bangladeshi or British Bangladeshi	12
Chinese, Scottish Chinese or British Chinese	13
Other	14
African, Scottish African or British African	
Please write in (for example, Nigerian, Somali)	15
Caribbean or Black	
Please write in (for example, Scottish Caribbean, Black Scottish)	16
Other ethnic group	
Arab, Scottish Arab or British Arab	17
Other, please write in (for example, Sikh, Jewish)	18

Prefer not to say	19
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Q26. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted or is expected to last 12 months or more?

Single code	Code
Yes, limited a lot	1
Yes, limited a little	2
No	3
Prefer not to say	4

ASK UNLESS NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD=1

Q27. Does anyone else in your household have a health problem or disability that limits their day-to-day activities, which has lasted or is expected to last 12 months or more?

Single code	Code
Yes, limited a lot	1
Yes, limited a little	2
No	3
Prefer not to say	4

Q28. Do you provide regular unpaid care or support for anyone who is elderly or disabled?

Single code	Code
Yes, in my household	1
Yes, but not in my household	2
No	3
Prefer not to say	4

Q29. What is the highest level of education or qualification you have completed?

Single code	Code
I have no educational qualifications	1
National 4/5, O Grades, Standard Grade, GCSE or equivalent	2
Highers/Advanced Highers/A levels or equivalent	3
Apprenticeship	4
College or university	5
Professional qualifications / Post graduate degree	6
Other	7
Prefer not to say	8

Q30. How did you vote in the last Westminster election, i.e. in July 2024?

Single code	Code
Labour	1
Conservative	2
SNP	3
Liberal Democrat	4

Reform	5
Green	6
Other	7
Not applicable – I did not vote in the election	8
Prefer not to say	9

Q31. What is your postcode? Please provide your full postcode. Please note this will be used for analysis purposes only, e.g. to classify into urban and rural areas of Scotland.
_____ [Allow a prefer not to say option]

Appendix 2: Sample profile

Gender	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Man	507	48%	504	48%
Woman	542	51%	545	52%
Non-binary	3	<1%	3	<1%
Prefer to self-describe	1	<1%	1	<1%
Age	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
18-24	64	6%	105	10%
25-34	187	18%	168	16%
35-44	187	18%	159	15%
45-54	169	16%	168	16%
55-64	208	20%	189	18%
65+	237	23%	264	25%
Prefer not to say	1	<1%	1	<1%
SEG	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
AB	273	26%	200	19%
C1	317	30%	336	32%
C2	241	23%	231	22%
DE	219	21%	284	27%
Prefer not to say	3	<1%	3	<1%
Children in the household	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Yes	297	28%	277	26%
No	756	72%	776	74%
Household income	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Less than £15,000	147	14%	175	17%

£15,000 up to £19,000	106	10%	123	12%
£20,000 up to £29,999	207	20%	211	20%
£30,000 up to £44,999	221	21%	212	12%
£45,000 up to £59,999	152	14%	132	12%
£60,000 or more	151	14%	130	12%
Don't know	8	1%	10	1%
Prefer not to say	61	6%	61	6%
How managing financially	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Managing very well	102	10%	94	9%
Managing quite well	242	23%	232	22%
Getting by OK	418	40%	422	40%
Having some financial difficulties	219	21%	228	22%
Having major financial difficulties	66	6%	71	7%
Prefer not to say	6	1%	6	1%
Disability in household	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Yes	411	39%	430	41%
No	642	61%	623	59%
SIMD	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Most deprived 20%	213	20%	215	20%
Least deprived 80%	727	69%	723	69%
Unclassified/Prefer not to say	113	11%	115	11%
Urban/rural	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Urban	798	76%	798	76%
Rural	113	13%	134	13%

Unclassified/Prefer not to say	122	12%	121	11%
Ethnicity	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
White	959	91%	961	91%
Mixed/multiple groups	11	1%	10	1%
Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian	35	3%	36	3%
African, Scottish African or British African	35	3%	34	3%
Caribbean or Black	7	1%	6	1%
Other ethnic group	3	<1%	4	<1%
Prefer not to say	3	<1%	2	<1%
Priority families	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Yes	263	25%	243	23%
No	790	75%	810	77%
Attitudinal groups	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Negative attitudes (agree with three/four negative statements)	323	31%	320	30%
Positive attitudes (agree with none/one)	478	45%	482	46%
Initial support for a Minimum Income Guarantee	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Oppose (0~4)	90	9%	81	8%
Strongly support (8~10)	626	59%	628	60%

Appendix 3: Technical appendix

Method: quantitative

- The data was collected by online survey.
- The target group for this research study was a representative sample of the Scottish population. The variables used to define the sample as representative of the target group were age, gender and SEG.
- The sample type was non-probability/quota sampling.
- The sample source was access panels.
- The target sample size was 1,000 and the final achieved sample size was 1,053. The reason for the difference between these two samples was standard sampling procedures allowing for slight overage.
- Fieldwork was undertaken between 7th and 13th October 2024.
- Respondents to self-completion studies are self-selecting and complete the survey without the assistance of a trained interviewer. This means that Progressive cannot strictly control sampling and, in some cases, this can lead to findings skewed towards the views of those motivated to respond to the survey.
- The sample is judged to represent the target population well.
- Data gathered using self-completion methodologies was validated using the following techniques:
 - Where the data is collected via an internet survey using an access panel, all respondents can only submit one response due to a system of unique IDs used by panel providers. Panellist IDs are also checked for duplication as part of Progressive's fieldwork checks. Where more than one panel provider is used, we use cookies to ensure the same individual cannot complete the same survey via two different sample providers.
- The sampling for this project was sub-contracted to Norstat and Cint.

Data processing and analysis

- The final data set was weighted to reflect Scottish population Census data. The sample base before weighting is 1,053 and the weighted sample base is 1,053.
- Quota controls were used to guide sample selection for this study. This means that we cannot provide statistically precise margins of error or significance testing as the sampling type is non-probability. The margins of error outlined below should therefore be treated as indicative, based on an equivalent probability sample. The overall sample size of 1,053 provides a dataset with an approximate margin of error of between $\pm 0.60\%$ and $\pm 3.02\%$, calculated at the 95% confidence level (market research industry standard).
- The following methods of statistical analysis were used: Z tests and t-tests.

- The data processing department undertakes a number of quality checks on the data to ensure its validity and integrity.
- For online questionnaires, these checks include:
 - Responses checked for duplicates where unidentified responses permitted. Cookies are also used and open-ended responses are checked to avoid duplicate responses.
 - The raw data is monitored throughout fieldwork to check for flatlining responses, quality of open-ended responses and speed of completion. Rules will be agreed with the DP team at the start to determine when to exclude data based on these checks. Where the sample source was an online panel, the IDs of all respondents removed from analysis are referred back to the panel provider to assist with on-going quality improvements.
- Other data checks include:
 - Every project has a live pilot stage, covering the first few days/shifts of fieldwork. The raw data and data holecount are checked after the pilot to ensure questionnaire routing is working correctly and there are no unexpected responses or patterns in the data.
 - A computer edit is carried out prior to analysis, involving both range (checking for outliers) and inter-variable checks.
 - Where an 'other – specify' codes is used, open-ended responses are checked against the parent question for possible up-coding.
 - Responses to open-ended questions will be spell and sense checked. Where required these responses may be grouped using a coding frame, which can be used in analysis. The code frame will be developed by the executive or operations team and will be based on the analysis of minimum 50 responses.
 - Open-ended coding is validated using a dependent approach, whereby a second person has access to the original coding and checks a minimum of 5% of cases coded. Once responses are fully coded and validated, the completed code frame is given a final check by the Executive responsible for the project, and any queries or amends are passed back to the Data Project manager.
- A SNAP programme was set up with the aim of providing the client with useable and comprehensive data, with cross-breaks discussed with the client to ensure that all information needs were met.

Method: qualitative

- The data was collected by in-depth interview.
- The target group for this research study was members of the Scottish general public.
- In total, 24 depth interviews were undertaken.
- Fieldwork was undertaken between 27th August and 4th September 2024.

- Respondents were recruited by Progressive's professional recruiters, using their local knowledge and existing contacts. Recruiters work to predetermined quota controls to ensure that the final sample reflects the requirements of the project. All respondents are screened to ensure that they have not participated in a group discussion or depth interview relating to a similar subject in the last 6 months prior to recruitment.
- Interviews lasted an average of around 50-60 minutes.
- Respondents received an incentive of £40 to thank them for their time.
- In total, 5 moderators were involved in the fieldwork for this project.
- Each recruiter's work is validated as per the requirements of the international standard ISO 20252. Therefore, all respondents were subject to validation, either between recruitment and the date of the group discussion/depth interview, or on the day of the group discussion/depth interview. Validation involves respondents completing a short questionnaire asking pertinent profiling questions and checking that they have not participated in similar research in the past 6 months.
- All research projects undertaken by Progressive comply fully with the requirements of ISO 20252, the GDPR and the MRS Code of Conduct.



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