Scottish Parliament Information Centre
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Briefing for the Public Petitions Committee on petition PE2276: Fast-track the Minimum Income Guarantee by 2029 and remove welfare time limits, lodged by Kardashev Pohyist

Brief overview of issues raised by the petition

The petitioner asks for the full implementation of a Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) in 2029 rather than the staged approach recommended by the independent Expert Group in their 2025 'roadmap'.

The Scottish Government does not have a commitment to implement a Minimum Income Guarantee.

Expert Group

The Scottish Government appointed an independent expert group in 2021 to develop a proposal for a Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG). Membership was mainly from third sector organisations including Citizens Advice, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Carers Scotland and Child Poverty Action Group. A full list of membership is available on the Scottish Government's website. They reported in June 2025, setting out a 'roadmap'.

The Roadmap

The Expert Group proposed developing an MIG in three stages.

2026-31: 'strengthen the existing safety net' including:

- welfare reform: including changes to Universal Credit and doubling the Scottish Child Payment
- services improvement: for example, an energy social tariff and raising awareness of existing entitlements
- pilot a MIG for some groups.

2031-36 'building a fairer Scotland, including introducing an interim Minimum Income Guarantee, which:

- is set at the relative poverty line
- is limited to 12 months in every 60 months
- has no time limit for disabled people or unpaid carers, and an extended time limit for parents to care for children

- has additional payments for disabled people and unpaid carers
- has an estimated cost of £5.9 billion per year.

After 2036: "Our vision for Scotland in 2036 is that the Minimum Income Guarantee now sits alongside more established parts of the social contract, including the NHS and free education."

Scottish Government response

The Scottish Government published its response in November 2025. This set out the work the Scottish Government was already doing, described how the UK Government could do more and suggested that a future Scottish Government should consider the expert group's report.

> "As we are approaching the next Scottish Parliament elections in May 2026 future governments should also reflect on the Expert Group's Roadmap."

On the recommendation for a pilot, the response said:

> "the next government should consider exploring what a Minimum Income Guarantee pilot could look like under current powers in Scotland and impact what a pilot might mean for different groups."

A blog by the Poverty Alliance (January 2026) criticised the Scottish Government's response:

> "The response makes it difficult to determine what the Scottish Government actually thinks about the proposal. Rather than engaging in detail with the report's recommendations, the response focused on two things: criticism of the UK Government, and a review of existing Scottish Government policies and initiatives.
>
> The Scottish Government doesn't need to agree that a Minimum Income Guarantee is the right path to take. But if it disagrees, it should have the confidence to say so clearly."

There was no mention of a Minimum Income Guarantee in the Programme for Government. But, reflecting the SNP manifesto, the Programme for Government did include a commitment to pilot a Scottish Artists Minimum Income by the end of the Parliament.

Key Organisations and relevant links

Organisations that were represented on the expert group which set out the roadmap, for example:

- The Robertson Trust
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation

- Poverty Alliance

Camilla Kidner
Senior Researcher
23 October 2026

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at spice@parliament.scot

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