



A GENDER EDIT of the *UK GOVERNMENT BUDGET 2016*

This document is a 'gender edit' guide to the UK Government's Budget 2016. It includes all extracts that refer directly to women or gender, and selected policy announcements that have direct implications for women and girls in Scotland. Previously announced decisions, for instance exemption from the benefits cap for certain carers, or cuts to social security established in the Summer Budget and Autumn Statement 2015, are not included.

We point to explicitly gendered issues, rather than providing a gender analysis of the wider content or intersectional analysis of implications for disabled women and other groups. The UK Women's Budget Group will publish a full gender assessment of this budget on 7 April.

1. EXTRACTS THAT REFER DIRECTLY TO WOMEN OR GENDER

Support for parents in employment [p.41]

"Significant progress has been made in achieving greater equality of opportunity for women. Female employment is at a record high and the number of women in full time jobs has increased by over 30% since 1992, when records began. Yet it is still the case that 90% of those who aren't working because they are caring for a family or home are women, and there are over 1 million women who aren't currently able to work who want a job. The OECD have said equalising the roles of men and women in the labour force could raise UK GDP by 10% by 2030.

"To support families in this Budget, government will launch a consultation in May 2016 on how to implement its commitment to extend Shared Parental Leave and Pay to working grandparents.

[...]

"From early 2017, the government is introducing Tax-Free Childcare to help working parents with the cost of childcare, ensuring more parents who want to can go out to work or increase the number of hours they work. Tax-Free Childcare will be rolled out in such a way that allows the youngest children to enter the scheme first, with all eligible parents brought in by the end of 2017. The existing scheme Employer-Supported Childcare will remain open to new entrants until April 2018 to support the transition between the schemes.

This will sit alongside doubling the free childcare entitlement from 15 hours to 30 hours a week for working families with three and four year olds from September 2017.

"Last year, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury asked Jayne-Anne Gadhia, CEO of Virgin Money, to lead a review into the representation of women in senior managerial roles in the

financial services industry. It is the sector with the highest pay in the UK and the widest gender pay gap. The review will launch its report on the 22 March at the Bank of England with recommendations on how to improve gender diversity and will complement wider government work to eliminate the gender pay gap.”

Higher wage society: the National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage [p.41]

“Around 65% of those who will benefit directly from the NLW are women, and the OBR estimate that by 2020 1.9 million women will be earning the NLW.”

Tampon Tax Fund for women’s charities [p.95]

“The government is committing £12 million of funding to support a range of good causes benefitting women.”

[Including]

- “Women’s Fund for Scotland £600,000 – to run a funding programme to target small grassroots women’s organisations across Scotland.”

2. POLICIES THAT WILL IMPACT ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

Preventing homelessness [p.39]

To further support rough sleepers off the streets and to help those who are recovering from a homelessness crisis, Budget 2016:

- Invests £100 million to deliver low-cost ‘second stage’ accommodation for rough sleepers leaving hostel accommodation and domestic abuse victims and their families moving on from refuges. This will provide at least 2,000 places to enable independent living for vulnerable households and individuals, freeing up hostels and refuges for those in most acute need

Public sector pensions [p.93]

- *Around two thirds of public sector workers are women. This cut to pensions will amount to £2 billion by 2021 (see p.84).*

“The government has reviewed the discount rate used to set employer contributions to the unfunded public service pension schemes. The discount rate is being set at 2.8% and employers will pay higher contributions to the schemes from 2019-20 as a result.”

Income tax and National Insurance contributions [p.96]

- *Wealth inequality is fundamental to women’s economic inequality and the gender pay gap. 69% of the top 10% of earners in the UK are men. Increasing the higher rate threshold of income tax will raise £600m by 2021 (see p.82) and will predominantly benefit men.*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413970/TIIN_4168_income_tax_personal_allowances_and_basic_rate_limit.pdf.

“The government will increase the higher rate threshold from £43,000 in 2016-17 to £45,000 in 2017-18. The NICs Upper Earnings Limit will also increase to remain aligned with the higher rate threshold.”

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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ABOUT ENGENDER

Engender has a vision for a Scotland in which women and men have equal opportunities in life, equal access to resources and power, and are equally safe and secure from harm.

We are a feminist organisation that has worked in Scotland for 20 years to advance equality between women and men.