

**EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND**  
**RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION FROM THE SCOTTISH**  
**PARLIAMENT'S EDUCATION AND CULTURE COMMITTEE ON**  
**THE 2015-16 DRAFT BUDGET**

1. The Educational Institute of Scotland welcomes this opportunity to provide this written response to the consultation initiated by the Scottish Parliament's Education and Culture Committee.
2. The EIS has very real concerns regarding the content of the Draft Budget for financial year 2015-16 and Committee members will be familiar with the recent Audit Scotland report which sets out the real terms spending on education across all of Scotland's 32 Local Authorities.
3. The EIS offers the following specific comments on the questions posed by the Education and Culture Committee in its consultation document:

a) Real Terms Spending

Audit Scotland reveals that, in real terms, spending fell in every Scottish Council bar one in the period (South Lanarkshire). Whilst, in these time of austerity, we have all become familiar with the exhortation to "achieve more with less", the EIS is of the view that a continued real terms fall in education spending will impact detrimentally on pupils and families and upon educations staff. The consideration of a reduction in the length of the pupil week in primary school – which the EIS would resist vigorously - is an example of how budget considerations might directly damage the educational prospects of our children.

b) Variations across Scotland

There are significant and unacceptable variations on spend per pupil across Scotland. Whilst some variation is inevitable, given differing geographies and population densities, a minimum provision which ensures equality of access is essential.

c) Loss of Posts

The Audit Scotland report indicates the loss of posts across the whole of Scottish education. At a time of significant curricular change a 22% drop in Quality Improvement posts threatens the role of Councils in promoting change and supporting teachers.

d) Posts not included in Audit Scotland Report

The Audit Scotland report has not set out the reduction in posts in Psychological Services and Instrumental Music teaching, which the EIS believes are both significant in scale and potentially damaging to the educational experience of many pupils.

e) Teacher Numbers

The 2011 Pay and Conditions Agreement provided a protection on teacher numbers. It is, however, important to note the following statistics. In 2007 there were 692,215 pupils and 55,100 teachers. In 2013 the figures were 673,530 pupils and 51,078 teachers. While the pupil numbers are standing at 97.3% of the 2007 figures, the number of teachers stands at 92.7% of the 2007 figure. Over the same period the Pupil-Teacher ratio has risen from 13.0 to 13.5. The workload crisis in Scottish, which the Education Committee is familiar with, is not unrelated to the reduction in teacher numbers which has occurred over the past period. Further reductions may challenge the ability of local authorities to deliver statutory functions.

f) Teachers' Pay

External research commissioned by the EIS in 2012 indicated that teachers' pay had lagged behind the final element of the 2001 settlement (in 2003) by 6.5% (CPI) or 12% (RPI). International comparisons, such as the recent OECD Report *Education at a Glance*, provide further evidence that pay levels for Scottish teachers are declining relative to teachers' salaries in other countries around the world, and also relative to salaries in comparable graduate professions. This is likely to present future challenges in the recruitment and retention of high-quality graduates into the teaching profession. A recent EIS Health and Well-Being survey indicated that fewer than 1 in 2 teachers would recommend teaching as a career to young people - statistic which should cause concern for all involved in Scottish Education.

g) Statutory Provision and Supply Cover

There is a very real risk of failure to meet statutory provisions. On a weekly basis, in parts of Scotland, pupils could be sent home through a lack of availability of supply teachers. Currently, this does not happen primarily due to teacher goodwill and staff reluctance to allow pupils' learning to be negatively affected by lack of supply cover. Such goodwill cannot be presumed and increased workload and declining living standards will bring an increased risk of teachers not being prepared to provide cover beyond their contractual requirements.

h) Secondary Subject Provision

In secondary schools shortages of specific subject teachers and covered by School supply and this can impact on examination preparation particularly.

i) Early Years provision

Declining budgets in recent years have led a significant number of local authorities to reduce the number of qualified nursery teachers deployed in nursery schools and nursery classes within primary schools. This had led to wide variations in early years provision, which is intended to provide a quality early start to education in line with the 3-18 framework of CfE.

j) School and colleges

CfE Senior phase, and more recently the report of the Wood Commission, lays great emphasis on the link between school and college for many post 15 students. The reality is that school-college liaison budgets have been a victim of austerity pressures and progress in this area will be limited if additional resource is not provided.

k) Additional Support Needs

The EIS is aware, from member feedback, of significant pressures around the provision of adequate additional support. Whilst the Institute supports the principle surrounding the presumption of mainstreaming, achieving this aim is possible only where the additional support resource is

provided, also, and this is not happening. There appears to be evidence, also, that the provision of special schooling is being disproportionately squeezed in order to meet financial pressures. Clearly, this has a negative impact on the quality of the learning experience.

4. In conclusion, whilst the EIS recognises the difficulties surrounding public sector expenditure we have a clear view that the current budget proposals represent a significant challenge to the continuing success of Scottish Education.

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