

250,000 Scots not properly fed – poverty study

SURVEY

Almost one million Scots cannot afford adequate housing conditions and more than a quarter of a million are not properly fed, research has shown.

The largest study of poverty ever conducted in the UK found that the percentage of households falling below society's minimum standard of living has increased from 14% to 33% across the UK over the last 30 years.

Experts have criticised the UK Government's poverty strategy and have called on both Holyrood and Westminster to do more to tackle deprivation.

Almost one in three people (30%) cannot afford to heat their homes properly in winter, with about 350,000 children living in cold homes during the winter months.

A quarter of adults have skimped on food so that others in the household can eat and 30,000 children

live in families who cannot afford to feed them properly.

The survey also shows levels of poverty in Scotland are slightly lower - 18% of children and adults were poor at the end of 2012 compared with 22% in the rest of the UK.

Similarly, 13% of adults in paid work are poor in Scotland, compared to 17% in the UK.

The Poverty and Social Exclusion in the United Kingdom (PSE) project compared people's living standards with the minimum standards the public believes everyone should have.

The findings of the study will be discussed at a conference in Edinburgh today.

Professor Nick Bailey, from the University of Glasgow, said: "The UK Government continues to ignore the deep problems in the Scottish and UK labour markets; they do not have adequate policies to address this growing problem. UK and Scottish governments both need to do more."

