

But there is much more we can achieve and SNP MPs in the House of Commons will work with SNP ministers in the Scottish Government to ensure that we continue to make progress as a society and economy, across all three of the Scottish Government's priority areas:

Creating more, better paid jobs in a strong, sustainable economy

Our ambition is for a stronger Scottish economy, with the fruits of economic success shared more widely. We have set out our plans to deliver higher levels of sustainable economic growth through the Scottish Government's refreshed Economic Strategy. This includes proposals to boost Scotland's competitiveness, reduce levels of inequality and increase productivity.

Our aim is to match the productivity levels of the most successful economies in Europe. We also want Scotland to be in the top quarter of OECD countries in terms of wellbeing, sustainability and equality. This includes narrowing the economic gap between the different regions of Scotland.

We are focused on four key themes – Investment, Innovation, Inclusive Growth and Internationalisation.

We know that building a high-skill, connected Scotland is essential if we are to maximise our nation's economic potential. That is why **we are investing in our people, infrastructure and assets**, for example, by working to widen access to higher education.

New skills provide a route into rewarding, fulfilling employment. Our approach will see **30,000 new Modern Apprenticeship opportunities every year**

by 2020, having already exceeded our current target of 25,000 per year. Our aim is to reduce youth unemployment by 40 percent by 2021.

We believe that the more we can integrate skills and employment policy, with an extension of powers for the Scottish Parliament, the more we can achieve for people joining the jobs market. That includes the prompt devolution of the Work Programme and Work Choice.

We will also keep university education in Scotland free and have increased the minimum income for our poorest students to £7500 this year.

We are also investing to support Scotland's job creators. Through initiatives like the **Scottish Business Development Bank** we want to find ways of improving access to finance for growing businesses and we will use the influence we have at Westminster to secure additional funds so we can further increase support for Scottish companies.

We are determined to maintain Scotland's position as the best place to do business in the UK with a package of business rates relief worth an estimated £594 million for 2014-15 and £618 million for 2015-16 – supporting around 100,000 businesses across the country.

And we will continue to maximise investment in our nation's infrastructure, using both capital spending, new borrowing powers and a range of innovative finance mechanisms. In government, we have adopted an 'all-Scotland' approach, with key infrastructure projects across the country to ensure the fruits of economic opportunity are shared as widely as possible.