

Hundreds of thousands of Scots now paying more tax

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Hundreds of thousands of Scots face paying more income tax after the SNP and the Greens conspired to vote through a high-tax budget.

Under the plans announced by the Scottish Government, 374,000 people will pay more than they would if they lived south of the border.

They include train drivers, nurse consultants and some teachers.

It is confirmation that finance secretary Derek Mackay's budget will make Scotland the highest-taxed part of the UK.

The blow comes on top of additional rates being charged to businesses, another measure that will damage the economy and punish hardworkers.

Shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser pointed out that the SNP used to believe low taxes would encourage growth and therefore provide more money for public services.

He added in today's Holyrood stage one debate that the SNP had been persuaded of a left-wing agenda by the Greens, who will provide the support necessary to get the budget through.

Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said:

"Derek Mackay could drop his plans to make Scotland the highest-taxed part of the UK and work with us to deliver an ambitious budget focused on growing the economy.

"Instead, he's turned hard left and embraced the anti-growth, anti-business agenda of the Greens.

"The SNP was well-warned by the business community as to the consequences of going further on tax than he originally intended. The Chambers of Commerce described it as 'highly dangerous'.

"But the nationalists have shown contempt for the views of Scottish business, and have demonstrated they have zero interest in trying to help grow our under-performing economy.

“This is a weak, hesitant and dismal set of measures.

“The budget will see local services slashed while council taxes are being hiked, and cut funding to enterprise networks and reinforce reductions in college places when we should be doing the opposite.

“It sends out the message that the risk-taker, the wealth-creator, the entrepreneur, and the successful are not welcome here.

“Only the Scottish Conservatives champion the Scottish economy, are on the sides of businesses, taxpayers and hard-working families.”

In Scotland, there are 2,560,000 taxpayers in total, of which:

2,150,000 pay the basic rate (84.0 per cent);

356,000 pay the higher rate (13.9 per cent) and

18,000 pay the additional rate (0.7 per cent)

(HMRC, *Table 2.2 Number of income taxpayers, by country*, 18 May 2016, [link](#)).