# Kemi Badenoch insists on keeping two-child benefit cap amid rising welfare costs



Kemi Badenoch recently took a firm stance on the contentious issue of child benefit policies in the UK, asserting that the existing two-child benefit cap should remain in place. Speaking on the BBC's *Sunday With Laura Kuenssberg*, she described claims made by her political opponents as "nonsense," emphasizing that taxpayer responsibility must be considered when discussing welfare changes. Her declarations come amid a growing political landscape wherein both Nigel Farage and Sir Keir Starmer are advocating for alterations to this policy, which Badenoch argues would be fiscally reckless.

Badenoch’s comments were made in the context of an ongoing debate about the welfare system and its sustainability, particularly as the government faces a rising welfare bill projected to exceed £316 billion by the 2025/26 financial year. This expenditure includes significant allocations for pensions and working-age benefits, including those for children and housing. The Conservative leader underscored that the cap was introduced in 2017 to curb welfare spending when the economy was more robust, and she cautioned that reinstating broader benefits would exacerbate the nation's financial challenges. Concerns include the growing cost of debt interest, which currently amounts to over £100 billion annually.

Interestingly, the push to abolish the two-child benefit cap has not only come from Farage but also from within Starmer's Labour Party, where there is mounting pressure from various factions to reconsider the measure. Labour's internal dynamics reflect a significant divide, with some members advocating for the cap's removal as part of a broader antipoverty strategy, despite concerns about its estimated £3.5 billion yearly cost. A recent Resolution Foundation study suggests that removing the cap could potentially lift around 500,000 children out of poverty, a statistic that resonates deeply within Labour, even as they grapple with economic considerations.

Yet, both Badenoch and Treasury Chief Secretary Darren Jones have pointed to the current economic climate as a barrier to scrapping the cap. Jones highlighted that unforeseen government borrowing, rising to £3.1 billion in July, has jeopardised plans to reconsider welfare policies. This sentiment echoes Bainock’s insistence that difficult decisions are necessary, reinforcing her belief that the fundamental principle is not about providing for larger families through taxpayer funding.

Beyond the political rhetoric, the implications of these welfare policies are profound. The Institute for Fiscal Studies has warned that while removing the cap might lift hundreds of thousands out of poverty, it could also reduce incentives for parents to work, leading to increasing costs for the government beyond those directly associated with welfare payments. Critics argue that long-term dependence on benefits may not be the solution that many families need, and there is a growing discourse about the systemic issues pushing families into poverty in the first place.

Badenoch’s remarks also touch upon demographic considerations, as she noted that immigrant families often qualify for benefits and tend to have larger households. She expressed concern that removing the cap could enable unsustainable reliance on the welfare system, which could, in turn, impact those who are waiting to start families until they are financially stable. While advocating for a humane welfare system, she firmly stated that the existing cap is not only reasonable but necessary to ensure a balanced approach to family welfare and public expenditure.

As the political landscape evolves, with figures like Farage and Starmer entering the fray, Badenoch’s commitment to maintaining the cap illustrates a broader ideological battle over the future of Britain’s welfare state. The stakes are high as the nation navigates economic recovery post-pandemic, with the decision on child benefits encapsulating larger questions about fiscal responsibility, social equity, and the role of government in personal family choices.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14748733/Kemis-warning-Dont-lots-babies-you-afford-Tory-leader-throws-gauntlet-Farage-Starmer-insists-two-child-benefit-cap-fair.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/07/22/labour-to-consider-scrapping-two-child-benefit-cap/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14748733/Kemis-warning-Dont-lots-babies-you-afford-Tory-leader-throws-gauntlet-Farage-Starmer-insists-two-child-benefit-cap-fair.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.bigissue.com/news/social-justice/two-child-benefit-cap-cuts-poverty-labour/), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/business/business-news/higher-borrowing-makes-scrapping-two-child-benefit-cap-unaffordable-minister-b1177719.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2024/10/03/scrapping-two-child-cap-risks-parents-benefits-life/), [[6]](https://www.itv.com/news/2024-07-22/government-will-consider-scrapping-controversial-two-child-benefit-cap-minister-says)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14748733/Kemis-warning-Dont-lots-babies-you-afford-Tory-leader-throws-gauntlet-Farage-Starmer-insists-two-child-benefit-cap-fair.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[7]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cxr2g6w92zro)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14748733/Kemis-warning-Dont-lots-babies-you-afford-Tory-leader-throws-gauntlet-Farage-Starmer-insists-two-child-benefit-cap-fair.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2024/10/03/scrapping-two-child-cap-risks-parents-benefits-life/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14748733/Kemis-warning-Dont-lots-babies-you-afford-Tory-leader-throws-gauntlet-Farage-Starmer-insists-two-child-benefit-cap-fair.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2024/10/03/scrapping-two-child-cap-risks-parents-benefits-life/> - An October 2024 article from The Telegraph discusses the Institute for Fiscal Studies' warning that removing the two-child benefit cap could lead to 540,000 children being lifted out of poverty at a cost of £2.5 billion annually. However, the IFS cautions that such a move might reduce incentives for parents to work, potentially increasing the overall costs to the government beyond the direct benefits provided. The article highlights the ongoing debate over the cap's impact on child poverty and work incentives.
3. <https://www.bigissue.com/news/social-justice/two-child-benefit-cap-cuts-poverty-labour/> - A February 2025 report from The Big Issue examines the potential consequences of reducing family benefits by £3 billion, including the two-child benefit cap. The Resolution Foundation projects that such cuts could increase child poverty rates to 33% by the end of the 2024-2025 parliament, affecting 4.6 million children. The report suggests that scrapping the two-child limit could lift half a million children out of poverty at a cost of £4.5 billion, presenting a more targeted approach to reducing child poverty.
4. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/07/22/labour-to-consider-scrapping-two-child-benefit-cap/> - In July 2024, The Telegraph reported that Labour's Education Secretary, Bridget Phillipson, stated the party would 'consider' scrapping the two-child benefit cap. While acknowledging the policy's expense, she indicated that it would be evaluated by a new child poverty task force. This development came amid internal party pressure and external calls to abolish the cap, which restricts child welfare payments to the first two children in most families.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/business/business-news/higher-borrowing-makes-scrapping-two-child-benefit-cap-unaffordable-minister-b1177719.html> - An August 2024 article from the Evening Standard reports that Treasury Chief Secretary Darren Jones stated that higher-than-expected government borrowing has made abolishing the two-child benefit cap unaffordable. He emphasized the need for difficult decisions due to the unexpected £3.1 billion borrowing in July, suggesting that removing the cap is not feasible in the current economic climate.
6. <https://www.itv.com/news/2024-07-22/government-will-consider-scrapping-controversial-two-child-benefit-cap-minister-says> - In July 2024, ITV News reported that Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson announced the government's intention to 'consider' scrapping the two-child benefit cap. She acknowledged the policy's expense but indicated it would be reviewed as part of a broader strategy to reduce child poverty. This statement signaled a potential shift in the government's stance on the controversial cap.
7. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cxr2g6w92zro> - A July 2024 article from BBC News details the Scottish National Party's (SNP) amendment to the King's Speech, calling for the abolition of the two-child benefit cap. The SNP argued that the cap is pushing thousands of Scottish children into poverty and urged the UK government to reverse the policy. The amendment was expected to receive support from other parties, including Plaid Cymru and the Greens.