

The Economy, Trade and Jobs

Key Focus: Wages

The minimum wage is the lowest amount that employers can legally pay their workers. The Panel discussed the minimum wage and how it affects people's standard of living. We also spoke about the national living wage which is higher than the minimum wage and based on the real cost of living. The Panel is concerned about the effect Brexit might have on the amount of money that people have access to.

400,000 workers in Scotland (16.9%) earned less than the Living Wage in **2019**.

There are different rates of minimum wage depending on how old you are and what job you do. The majority of the Panel think this is unfair as it discriminates against younger people. This goes against Article 2 of the UNCRC.



Minimum Wage Rates (2020-21)

Apprentice	£4.15
Under 18	£4.55
18-20	£6.45
21-24	£8.20
25+	£8.72
	(National Living Wage)





What do we want?

- Increase the minimum wage for everyone because it will affect the money that families have. Living on a low-income might mean parents and carers have fewer opportunities to do the things children and young people need, like play and have fun. It also might make parents, carers, children and young people feel stressed, affecting their mental health.
- The minimum wage for 16 to 24-year-olds should be made the same as everyone else. It isn't fair that 16 to 24-year-olds can be paid less for doing the same work. The current minimum wage for apprentices and 16 to 24 year-olds makes it hard for young people to rent their own home. Some members of the Panel also said that if you have to take public transport to work, it is almost pointless to get a job because you will spend all your money travelling. If the minimum wage for apprentices and 16 to 24-year olds can't be increased, we need to know why.



- Governments should also look into the extra money they give to people who need more support through benefits. This includes young carers and families with disabled children.
- The UK Government wants to introduce new immigration rules after December 2020. This will mean people need to have a job offer with a minimum salary of £25,600 per year (or £20,480 for jobs where there is 'shortage'). If the minimum wage was to increase this could encourage more people to come to the UK to do jobs after December 2020 when the transition period is over.



What are we doing?

We are contacting Jamie Hepburn MSP who is the Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills in Scotland and Alok Sharma MP who is the UK's Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. We are also contacting the Scottish Trades Union Congress which represents lots of trade unions across Scotland.



Jamie Hepburn MSP



Alok Sharma MP



Scottish Trades Union Congress

