

UNISON Scotland *Influencers*

General election briefing 2024

MAKING WORK BETTER

Workers need more rights – to have decent lives at work and outside of work. Work, most politicians will tell us, is the route out of poverty. Yet 70% of children in poverty live in a household where someone is in paid work¹.

Workers need more rights in order to make work pay; both individually and collectively. The Minimum Wage is too low – and has a lower rate for under 21's; it needs to be a real Living Wage (£12 at least). The best way to improve wages generally and other terms and conditions is collective bargaining. In the UK less than 25% of workers are covered by a collective agreement.²

COVID has shown up how inadequate sick pay is. Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) doesn't cover the first three days illness; very low paid are excluded because they do not earn enough to qualify; and the shockingly low level of payment. Over one million workers currently get no SSP at all as a result of not meeting the lower earnings limit which currently stands at £123 a week. 7 in 10 (69%) of those employees missing out on SSP due to the lower earnings limit are women.

QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

- What will your party do to increase wages?
- What will you do to increase collective bargaining?
- What is your party going to do to improve Statutory Sick pay?

USEFUL RESOURCES

- [TUC: 7 million workers would benefit from day one sick pay boost](#)
- [Poverty Alliance briefing: child poverty parliamentary debate](#)
- [Institute of economic rights: attacks on collective bargaining](#)

1 <https://www.povertyalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Poverty-Alliance-Briefing-Debate-on-the-Scottish-Governments-Priority-of-Eradicating-Child-Poverty-June-2024.pdf>

2 <https://www.ier.org.uk/comments/the-attacks-on-collective-bargaining-run-against-mainstream-economic-guidance/>