



Issue 28

FACTS AND FIGURES!

February 2026



In-depth bargaining analysis for negotiators

Unite – Fighting for
JOBS · PAY · CONDITIONS



MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Collective bargaining is still the tried and tested method of pushing up pay

While headline inflation may have fallen, the baked in amounts we pay for energy and food are crippling many households. There has been a 40% rise in UK supermarket prices since 2020.

Let's just let that sink in. Families are paying 40% more now for food than we were five years ago.



What is always hidden is the profits the supermarkets are making, while everyday people suffer at their tills.

The big 4 supermarkets made operating profits of £4.7 billion in 2024. In 2025 Tesco alone made £3.1 billion in profit. And here is perhaps the biggest indictment. While our food prices rose by 40%, Tesco paid out £13 billion to their shareholders.

It's about time Britain had a conversation about rampant profiteering. Especially essential goods and services like energy and food.

While politicians continue to dither and delay on policies that would help workers and communities, like the renationalisation of energy and a wealth tax, Unite is deepening its work to defend workers and getting more pay into workers' pockets - focusing our resources on the front line.

Our ability to bargain collectively is still the tried and tested method of redistribution.

The one place where we can realistically fight and secure a share of wealth.

It is that approach, focusing on jobs, pay and conditions, that has led to our membership growing for the first time since our founding, and millions of pounds being secured in pay and conditions.

In 2024 workers and communities voted for change.

They voted for those who had been at the back of the queue for the last 14 years to be brought right up to the front.

Yet 18 months into a Labour government workers and communities are still hurting.

Now is the time for Labour to be real Labour.

The Labour government tells us, “we have no money”.

They tell us they have no choice.

But we are the sixth richest economy in the world.

Instead of picking the pockets of pensioners, tax the rich.

Instead of bean counting, change the fiscal rules so we can invest in British jobs.

Unite will continue to speak out and hold Labour’s feet to the fire while building power in the union at the workplace.

That is the real power in the labour movement.

Solidarity

Sharon

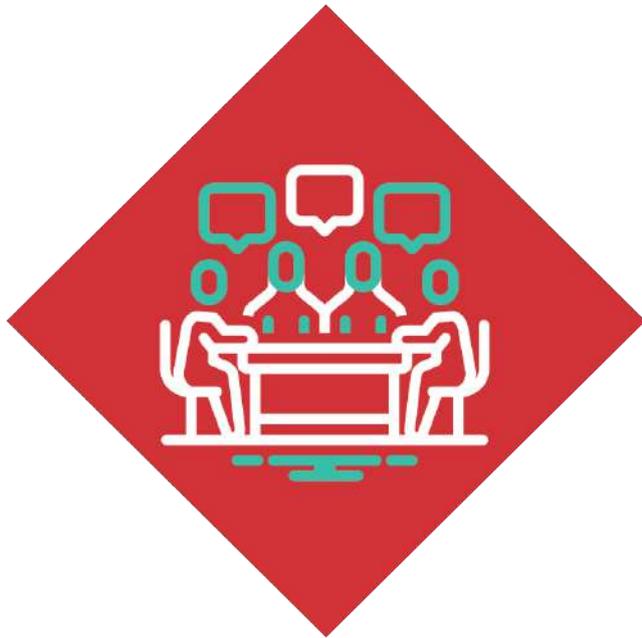


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SECTION ONE

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What is the backdrop to collective bargaining this month?

Facts and Figures

Collective bargaining is the tried and tested method of pushing up pay. We are the great equalizer; a force for good; getting money into the hands of the working class, the real wealth creators.

Sharon Graham, Unite General Secretary



1. What is the backdrop to collective bargaining this month?

1.1 RPI is down to 3.8% but still well above the Bank of England's target rate

Unless inflation is negative prices are still rising. Inflation's down to 3.8% this month, it just means prices are going up more slowly.

That's still way above the Bank of England's 2% target.

Overall prices are up 37% on five years ago, while food is up 41%.

Also, the Bank of England's prediction of falling inflation was contradicted by the British Retail Consortium, who said that it "is simply not borne out" by their latest shop price figures.

We've seen recently that inflation forecasts often underestimate the true cost, but in energy few are as well placed to read the tea leaves as the boss of Centrica.

He warned this month that energy bills will be higher by 2030 than they were in 2022, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine spiked prices. He blamed this on under-investment.

That is code for the government (ahem, the taxpayer) should give us more money.

- Read the [Cost of Living & Pay section](#) for more.

1.2 It isn't enough to survive, we need to live

While inflation stories (including our own) often rightly focus on people struggling to afford essentials such as food, housing, and energy, we deserve more.

One "luxury" is the right to a holiday. It feels like ancient history but unions fought long and hard for the right to paid holiday. Is it too much to ask for some sun?!?

But now package holidays are the latest target for profiteers. Prices have been hiked 10% in the last two years.

Thanks to this, leading outlet Jet2 made a whopping £800 million in profits in just the first half of 2025-26.

Its CEO made over £3 million last year, a 250% increase on 2020.

What will its workers get? Just higher prices for holidays?

Workers everywhere deserve a pay rise that more than covers cost increases, given the size and strength of the economy.

- Read the [Cost of Living & Pay section](#) for more on this.

1.3 In the battle of the inflation measures RPI beats CPI hands down

The fight for RPI based deals over ones linked to CPI could be the most important fight you need to win.

We have talked about the dangers of non-consolidated pay deals in the past and how even one non-consolidated pay deal can deflate your pay massively over the years.

At every opportunity we also stress the importance of using the Retail Prices Index (RPI) measure of inflation in pay negotiations rather than the almost-always-lower Consumer Prices Index (CPI) or Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH).

This month we crunched the numbers to highlight just how much you could lose using either CPI or CPIH and it's an awful lot.

Spoiler alert, over the average career length of 40 years you could stand to lose more than £500k in career earnings through pay deals set at CPI rather than our preferred RPI.

At the very least, CPI+ is a next-best starting point.

We will continue to provide analysis based on RPI but email us at workvoicepay@unitetheunion.org if you need data on the different inflation measures.

- Read the [Cost of Living & Pay section](#) for more on RPI v CPI.

1.4 The average worker has lost £65k since the financial crisis

Real wages - i.e. the value of your pay after inflation - are down by a sixth since the financial crisis.

It means an average loss of more than £65k per worker since 2008.

A recent narrative used by bosses is that, after one round of decent pay rises, we need to tighten our belts.

Let's ignore the fact that it was just one pay round and costs have risen by double digit percentages. Let's also ignore the incredible profits...

We are asked to show restraint, although the bosses haven't.



We've talked before about the megabucks that the FTSE 100 CEOs have hoovered up but it's not just those at the very, very top.

This time we're talking about all managers. The latest Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) data shows that pay for all managers, directors and senior officials was up 6.7%, versus 5.3% for all employees. Bosses are getting more than their fair share. The only way we'll get ours is through collective action.

Now, back to those profits.

Our new analysis shows FTSE 350 profits remained above the long-term average in 2024, 7.7% versus a 7.2% average this century.

In the first six months of 2025 profit margins were even higher at 9.5%. In plain speak, employers aren't just raising prices to match rising costs but by more than costs have risen. It shows that the money is there to afford decent pay rises.

- Read the [Cost of Living & Pay section](#) for more on bosses' pay and the drop in workers' real pay.
- Read the [Ability to Pay section](#) for more on profits.

1.5 Labour's pensions stealth tax may mean lower pension contributions for 80% of employees, with the bigger decline among the low-paid

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) estimates that the Government's new pension stealth tax will lead to 80% of employees in defined contribution (DC) pension schemes reducing their pension contributions.

This would fall more for low-earners than for high-earners, in stark contrast to the Government's claim that it will mainly affect high earners.

- Read the [Cost of Living & Pay section](#) for more.

Thousands of you have already used the Stealth Tax Calculator introduced by the General Secretary last month that shows the impact of Labour's other stealth tax to freeze the tax thresholds.

For those who haven't you can access it at <https://workvoicepay.unitetheunion.org/stealthtax> and by all means share it with your members.

Facts and Figures

1.6 Taking action wins better conditions on top of the £620 million headline figure on pay

After recently strengthened workplace harassment laws Unite has secured a ground-breaking sexual harassment policy at London Heathrow Airport.

It's the first of its kind and as a non-pay win this is in addition to the more than £620m won through disputes since the General Secretary was elected.

Read also this month's interview with, Afua, a health Rep at HSL. It shows how a local pay campaign can snowball into an organisation-wide issue.

Theirs attracted far more responses than there were union members. It shows that through collective action we can change the workplace for the better and that trade unions grow through issue-based organising.

- Read the [Wins section](#) and the [HSL interview](#) for more.

1.7 New Rep-driven content came out of last month's run-throughs and into this issue

More successful run-throughs last month led to this month's RPI v CPI article.

If you want your ideas to appear in a future issue or if you want to better understand any of the sections in Facts & Figures then [sign-up here](#).

Join us at either 10am or 6pm the day after the inflation figures are released.









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What have we won this month?

Unite will do everything it can to support reps building power in the workplace, at the bargaining table and in dispute. Work, Voice, Pay tools, Facts & Figures, Forensic Accounts, strike pay, Strikes Plus and organising campaigns: they're all designed for a clear purpose: To help you win better jobs, better pay, and better conditions.

Sharon Graham, Unite General Secretary



2. What have we won this month?

2.1 Unite members secured a ground-breaking sexual harassment policy at London Heathrow Airport

Last month, Unite members signed groundbreaking sexual harassment policy with Heathrow Airport Limited covering all workers at the airport, including those employed by third-party companies such as British Airways and OCS. The agreement includes mandatory training for all employees, regular risk assessments and clear procedures to ensure swift and effective action where incidents are reported, including in cases leading to disciplinary action or dismissal.

Next steps include Unite polling members at Heathrow to assess whether the policy is working, reviewing its effectiveness and running a joint campaign with the employer focused on tackling sexual harassment. The Heathrow agreement will also be examined for potential roll out across Unite's 19 sectors as part of the union's Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment campaign.



This is the first agreement of its kind since strengthened workplace harassment laws were introduced.

Unite Zero Tolerance Campaigns comes after polling of 6,000 female Unite members across all 19 sectors.

Facts and Figures

This found that 25% had been sexually assaulted, 43% had been inappropriately touched, 55% had experienced unwanted sexual remarks or gestures and 28% had been shown pornographic images. Just 26% believed their employer had done enough to promote a zero-tolerance culture. This clearly showed harassment to be endemic across UK workplaces. ¹

“Unite has long been committed to taking a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and this marks an excellent win for our members at Heathrow Airport. This new policy will go a long way to protecting our staff from sexual harassment and creating a safe workplace, where workers are being given the commitment that incidents will be dealt with effectively. Unite will fight every step of the way to ensure workplace harassment becomes a thing of the past.” Unite general secretary **Sharon Graham**

Through collective action and zero tolerance, Unite will continue to ensure that employers meet their legal duties and that every workplace is safe, respectful and accountable.

Sexual harassment includes humiliating, degrading, belittling, menacing or offensive behaviour at work.

Unite fights for dignity at work for members.

If you have experience of or witnessed sexual harassment at work, contact your Unite rep or talk to us at equality@unitetheunion.org

Find out more about Unite's Zero Tolerance campaign by scanning the QR code.



Click the QR codes in the images above for more information.



2.2 Swiss construction workers secured one of the most significant collective bargaining victories in decades

Swiss construction workers, organised by Unia and Syna, secured one of the most significant collective bargaining victories in decades after months of negotiations and nationwide mobilisation over the 2026-2031 National Construction Agreement (CNM), which regulates the working conditions of nearly 80,000 workers across Switzerland.²

The agreement represents a landmark reinforcement of national sectoral bargaining in Switzerland and demonstrates the impact of visible mass mobilisation combined with strategic negotiation.

Effective from 1 January 2026, it delivers combined wage and benefit improvements approaching 10% over six years. It introduces automatic cost-of-living adjustments to minimum wages for the full duration of the contract and includes a clause to reopen wage negotiations if inflation exceeds 2%, providing structural protection against future price increases.



A key gain is the extension of the agreement from the traditional three-year cycle to a six-year term, ensuring longer-term stability and predictability. The contract also improves travel time compensation and strengthens sectoral standards designed to make construction work more sustainable and attractive in the long term.³

The dispute centred on wages, protection against rising living costs, travel time compensation and broader working conditions. The employers resisted substantial improvements despite rising inflation and growing labour shortages in the sector.

What have we won this month?

Facts and Figures

As negotiations reached deadlock, unions escalated pressure through coordinated national days of action, regional demonstrations and mass workplace industrial actions.

The largest protest brought approximately 15,000 construction workers onto the streets, sending a clear signal to employers that the workers were prepared to intensify action if necessary.⁴

While the campaign stopped short of an indefinite national strike, members of Unia and Syna made clear that strike action remained a credible next step, significantly strengthening their bargaining position.

Unia underlined the power of collective action, stating:⁵

“Only united could construction workers build the strength needed to win these decisive improvements.”

Syna emphasised the broader significance of the outcome, noting:

“This agreement strengthens the entire sector and secures better conditions for today’s workers and future generations.”

“We construction workers have never been given anything for free. But we are united and we are fighting for our rights. Our fight has paid off!”

Emmanuel, road builder and Unia member

2.3 A historic breakthrough for Southern auto workers in the United States

Workers at Volkswagen’s Chattanooga, Tennessee assembly plant won a landmark first collective bargaining agreement with the United Auto Workers (UAW) after nearly two years of negotiations following their successful union vote in April 2024. This deal delivers a 20% wage increase over the four-year contract term, improved healthcare costs, stronger job protections and paid time off.⁶

In addition to the pay increase, the agreement includes lower healthcare costs for workers, enhanced job security protections, more paid time off and enforceable safety standards therefore delivering meaningful material improvements in workers’ daily lives and economic security.

The new contract was negotiated by a 20-member worker bargaining committee formed after the April 2024 union win, when 73% of voting workers chose UAW representation.



This made the Chattanooga factory the first auto plant in the South to unionise via election since the 1940s and the first foreign-owned facility in the region to do so.⁷

This is a major win for autoworkers in a region where unionisation has historically been extremely difficult.



The issue at Chattanooga reflected decades-long challenges for the UAW's efforts to organise in the U.S. South and at foreign-owned plants, where anti-union sentiment, aggressive employer resistance and political opposition have been deeply entrenched.

After union votes were rejected at the same plant in 2014 and 2019, workers persisted in ramping up organising efforts in 2023-24 alongside high-profile strikes against the Detroit Three automakers, using that momentum to shift attitudes and build rank-and-file strength.⁸

UAW President Shawn Fain highlighted the significance of the breakthrough: “For years, Chattanooga workers were told to settle for less while Volkswagen made record profits. So, the workers stood together and won their union – and now they’ve secured a life-changing first agreement.”

Bargaining committee co-chair Steve Cochran emphasised the broader impact for autoworkers: “A strong contract makes sure promises are delivered. Respect and security shouldn’t be up for negotiation – and now they won’t be.”

This victory matters not only for the thousands of workers at Volkswagen’s Chattanooga plant but also as a symbol of what collective organising can achieve beyond the traditional union strongholds of Detroit.

Facts and Figures

It sets a precedent for future unionisation campaigns in the U.S. South and reinforces the UAW's broader strategy to expand workers' rights and bargaining power in manufacturing nationwide.

2.4 Workers' Voice: Winning in Outsourced Healthcare

Though successive governments tell us that our NHS will never be privatised, some key services are delivered by external providers focused on profits. Often this means the workers involved have inferior terms and conditions to NHS staff, and sometimes it means they are exploited.

Unite however will not stand by and see our health service and its staff used as a profit source for greedy private sector companies and private equity. We organise and equip workers to win. Here are two stories where solidarity and the strike weapon helped our members win.



Hear it straight from the front line! Listen to the full interviews on the upcoming Facts and Figures podcast: **Spotify:** <https://tinyurl.com/4uf9y5zc> **Apple Podcasts:** <https://tinyurl.com/3uv8ae8d>

2.4.1 Diagnosis Union: How Biomedical scientists and technicians at HSL stopped being the blood bank for private profit in the NHS

Biomedical scientists and technicians at HSL, a private diagnostics provider delivering services to NHS trusts, secured a major company-wide victory after building a powerful workplace campaign that transformed pay, leave and employment standards. Starting from widespread dissatisfaction and significant underpayment compared to NHS rates, Unite members organised, grew union strength and forced management to agree to substantial improvements – including pay rises averaging 15.4% over two years, with some workers receiving increases of 30-40%.

Here is HSL Unite representative Afua Mensa-Bonsu explaining how workers built the campaign and won.



Take us through what was achieved.

Afua: Honestly, sometimes it still feels unreal.

We started with a local pay campaign that then became company-wide. The first step was a survey. The results showed real, widespread dissatisfaction: pay, leave, training, and development all came up strongly.

Around 800-900 people responded (about 956 if I remember correctly), out of a workforce of roughly 1,500 employees.

Facts and Figures

That told us we had something serious. At that time, there were only about 100 union members and one rep for the whole company.

Management initially proposed around a 3.3-3.6% pay rise and talked about an electric vehicle scheme. Through the campaign, we moved from that to a situation where some staff received pay rises of 30-40% – because people were massively underpaid. The average was 15.4% over two years.

For example, medical laboratory assistants (MLAs) – staff who receive, sort, book in, and distribute samples – were sometimes on around £28,000 after nine years' service. Many were still below London NHS rates.



One of the biggest wins is that we now have an agreed pay banding system for HSL. Before, nothing like this existed. Now we can say: if you're in this role, this is the minimum you should earn. Management had repeatedly said this was impossible because "we're not the NHS." Now it's in place, and we intend to build on it year after year.

Membership and capacity grew alongside the campaign. From one rep, we grew to four or five reps. I became a rep in March last year. Our campaign involved the survey as I mentioned, a petition signed by most departments, we distributed flyers, made videos, held badge days, really built our visibility. We balloted when our membership was strong enough

Each department had its own petition copy. Even at Halo, the flagship lab where the CEO and directors are based, reps handed petitions in and recorded it. That visibility mattered.



We had a badge day where people wore badges saying: “**I strengthen Unite, I support the campaign.**” Each step increased confidence. People were nervous at first – this was new – but every milestone showed we were stronger than we thought.

Once membership was solid, we balloted for industrial action. Management kept improving offers, but not enough, which pushed things forward.

We also got two additional days of annual leave, sick pay for all staff after probation. We also secured new provisions for carers and bereavement leave. Training and development is now a proper process with fair section and is no longer the preserve of line managers.

In terms of helping to negotiate your pay deal, did you find resources in the Unite suite of tools that you could use?

Afua: Yes. Many of us were new reps and hadn't yet had workplace training, so organisers did a lot of the heavy lifting. We were also introduced to Work Voice Pay, which showed how well the company was doing financially.

That information changed the mindset. Management kept saying they couldn't afford improvements, but the data showed they could – they just didn't want to without pressure.

Members initially worried: Where will the money come from? That shifted to: When are we getting our back pay? People saw the money existed.

And did you get some help from the forensic accounting service?

Afua: Yes, and it was crucial.

One figure became central: 17%. The forensic accounting showed HSL staff had effectively been underpaid by around that amount. Organisers produced a flyer stating: “HSL staff have been underpaid by 17%.”

Management challenged it constantly: Where did you get this figure? But when people started receiving 26%+ pay rises, it was hard to argue.

Not everyone was underpaid by exactly 17%, but many were underpaid by more. The forensic work gave us credibility and confidence.

What would be your three takeaways for other reps?

Afua: Don't give up.

Facts and Figures

It's tough, but you draw strength from each other.

There's power in numbers. If you grow membership and become truly unionised, you're far more likely to win

.Motivate people to join the fight. We win together.

2.4.2 GFM Newham: solidarity, the strike weapon and forensic accounts facilitate a big win

Facilities workers employed by GFM at Newham Mental Health Hospital secured a decisive victory after six weeks of escalating strike action that forced the company to concede significant improvements. The dispute delivered a 15% pay rise for the lowest-paid staff, an additional week of annual leave, and day-one sick pay including two months on full pay therefore marking a major breakthrough for outsourced NHS workers.

Unite Reps, Mary, Jennifer and Stuart explain how solidarity, escalation and forensic financial scrutiny secured the win.



To begin, could each of you briefly introduce yourselves and your role?

Mary: My name is Mary. I work for GFM at Newham Mental Health Hospital. I work as a catering manager, and I have been working there for almost five years. I'm a union rep.



Jennifer: My name is Jennifer. I'm a union rep. I'm receptionist and admin staff, and we worked with GFM to galvanise information from other unions, spread the message, and raise funds for our union against GFM.

Stuart: I'm Stuart. I'm a Unite rep with the East London Foundation Trust branch. I'm a community mental health nurse in Tower Hamlets.



The first question is about the victory achieved at GFM. Who would like to take that?

Stuart: OK, so we took six weeks of strikes through last autumn, escalating each time with more days. We were planning to go out for a month over Christmas and New Year. With the threat of a month of strikes, they basically gave in and gave us everything we wanted.

So we got a 15% pay rise for the lowest paid, tapering up for the higher grades. We got an extra week's annual leave. We got sick pay from day one – full sick pay for two months, and half sick pay for two months.

Mary: Stuart and I organised meetings at work. All members were invited and talked about the strike.

They all came on the days we asked them to come. All the staff from the facilities department – porters, catering assistants, chefs, domestics, reception – all stood together as a team.

Facts and Figures

Everybody stood every day for all the days we were there. We went to different places where GFM had contracts and we protested together, saying we want what we want, and we got it in the end. It was victory together



In terms of engaging your members, what sort of communication methods did you use?

Mary: So, we have about three groups, and we communicate everything through those. Everybody worked together well, came and supported in solidarity.

Stuart: We also got Barts reps to come over. They organise at Newham General Hospital across the road, and they recently won a big dispute bringing porters, domestics and catering staff back in-house into the NHS. That was our inspiration.

People had worked through COVID and there was a big sense that they should be paid the same as directly employed NHS staff.

Jennifer can you talk about the wider support you built?

Jennifer: Yeah, we went to other union reps' and meetings, like renters' rights meetings. We supported other organisations and their issues, and they came to show solidarity with us.



I went to a fire brigade meeting; we went to a bus workers' meeting. We go to meetings in the evening to show solidarity and raise awareness.

One of the issues that helped win the dispute was that the company was understating profits and moving assets between different parts of the company. How did you take that up?

Stuart: When we first went to GFM, they said they had no money and virtually no profit on the contract. NHS accounts show the contract is just over £8 million a year and rising, with about ten years left. But workers were on poverty wages – earning less than London Living Wage, no sick pay, no statutory minimum annual leave. The ultimate owner at the end is a billion-euro fund management company based in Paris.

“It looked from the Forensic Accounts that around £6 million had been extracted by this group of companies. The NHS is going to pay about £230 million for Newham Mental Health Centre, even though it cost just over £14 million to build!”

Let's talk about how the strike was built?

Mary: Every staff member came and voiced what they felt. We all came together, fought together for six weeks, and we achieved in the end.

Jennifer: We spoke with colleagues on strike and encouraged them to continue showing up in numbers.

Stuart: We were solid in the kitchens and domestics. The picket lines became lively and noisy, and it was clear people were enjoying standing together more than being at work.

We built strike funds by speaking in different branches and bringing donations in. That meant especially in the run-up to Christmas people weren't too badly hit financially.

Final question: one takeaway lesson for other reps and members.

Stuart: Staying positive and united and believing in your cause. People weren't sure at times, but unity made the difference.

Jennifer: Even people on bank contracts without the same rights – we fought for them too. Stay together and stay united.

Mary: The support from Unite was invaluable. The resources and financial support made a real difference.

Facts and Figures

Stuart: You've got to keep escalating until they give in. If we stand together, we've got more power than our bosses. Unity and solidarity win.

2.5 Bite-sized Bargaining: Hear how more workers won better jobs, pay and conditions in 2025

When workers stand together, armed with the facts and supported by their union, real change is possible. Winning workers are telling us how they won better pay deals in their workplaces.

- **HSL Reps** on how they won 15.4% pay rise over two years after a strike action: <https://tinyurl.com/29whsadb> Facts & Figures December 2025, p.18.
- **Unite Rep Laurie** on how **Chartwells'** workers won full sick pay rights: <https://tinyurl.com/2u24cmww> Facts & Figures November 2025, p.18.
- **Unite EC South East Rep** and hospitality Rep **Megan** on working conditions in the hospitality sector: <https://tinyurl.com/3mjwjm57> Facts & Figures October 2025, p.36.

Use Work, Voice, Pay tools to win

There are several tools in the **Work, Voice, Pay** armoury to understand more about your company's financial data and prepare better collective bargaining negotiations, all of which can be accessed at <https://www.unitetheunion.org/work-voice-pay>





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SECTION THREE

COST OF LIVING AND PAY

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We are under no illusion: this is not the end - the cost of living crisis is not over. Furthermore, those who have profited from the crisis should pay for it.

Sharon Graham, Unite General Secretary



3. What is happening to the cost of living and pay?

3.1 Key figures: RPI is 3.8%

Unite Reps can use the following information to build power in their workplaces and win at the bargaining table this month:

- **Prices rose 3.8% in the year to January**, as measured by the Retail Price Index (RPI).⁹ The rate fell compared to last month but Unite Reps know: **a falling inflation rate does not mean falling prices**. They're just going up a little bit slower than before. Prices are now 37% higher than they were five years ago.
- **Workers are being hammered on both the essentials and good things of life**. Food inflation remains above the overall rate, at 4.4% - food prices are up 41% over five years. The price of sweets and chocolate are rising at 12%. They're up a massive 49% over the last five years. So-called "leisure services" are also increasing faster than the overall rate. Holidays for example have gone up 10% in the last two years. **Our members deserve a break but are being fleeced when they take one**: as we show later in this section, holiday firm Jet2's profits are soaring and the boss got paid £3.2 million last year.

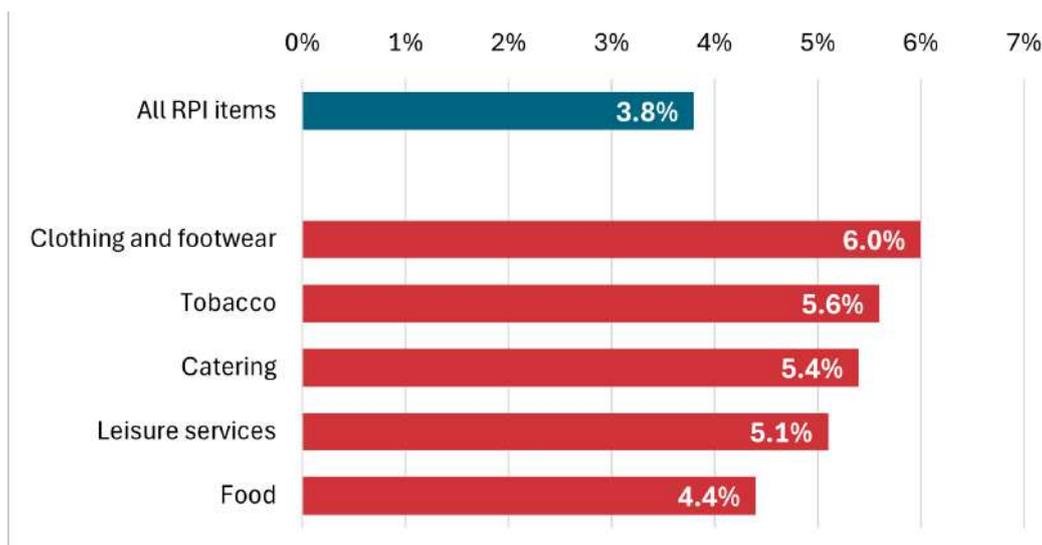


Figure 1 Overall RPI inflation and fastest growing categories. Source:ONS

Facts and Figures

- **Forecasters say inflation will drop but that's no guarantee.** The Bank of England predicts inflation will fall by 1% in the coming months.¹⁰ But as we saw in last month's Facts & Figures, official forecasts usually *underestimate* what inflation will be. Other indicators are certainly not as positive. Prices in shops are increasing at their highest level since early 2024 according to figures released earlier this month by the British Retail Consortium, for example. It said **any suggestion that inflation has peaked "is simply not borne out by these figures"**.
- **Energy companies are warning bills may skyrocket again.** The boss of Centrica said this month bills will be higher by 2030 than they were in 2022, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine spiked prices. He blamed this on under-investment. Facts & Figures readers know that rampant profiteering is to blame, with public ownership the necessary solution. This year, energy bills will still be £40 higher compared to summer 2024, even after Labour's upcoming cuts. **The threat of energy bills skyrocketing again adds weight to the case for inflation-busting pay rises, especially in multi-year deals.**
- **Real wages have risen in the last two years but after years of inflation and stagnant pay there remains a huge lost earnings gap.** As we show this month, real wages are 17.5% lower than they were in 2008. If wages had gone up at the rate they were before the financial crash, they would be £10,000 a year higher in real terms than they are today. **The case for RPI+ pay deals is as strong as ever.**



Figure 2 Cumulative RPI inflation between Mar 21 and Jan 26. Source: ONS



- **Employers are planning 2026 pay deals below the current rate of RPI.** A survey of 121 businesses by research outfit Incomes Data Research found the vast majority planning pay deals of less than 4%. Around a third of the businesses, which together employ nearly three million workers, are planning to pay less than 3.5%. **Unite Reps know that anything less than RPI means a real terms pay cut.**¹¹
- **Labour's stealth taxes mean workers' disposable income is predicted to flatline through the decade.** The official forecaster the Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts household disposable income will go up by just 0.3% a year in real terms this decade. The Institute of Fiscal Studies has called this "truly dismal" and pointed to Labour freezing the tax thresholds and scrapping National Insurance relief on salary sacrifice pensions. Before the austerity decade, real disposable income was going up by over 2% a year on average. **We can't rely on the government: strong collective bargaining is needed for a better standard of living.**
- **Use the new Reps calculator commissioned by the General Secretary** to work out how much the new stealth taxes will hit your members: <https://workvoicepay.unitetheunion.org/stealthtax>

Employers may try to link pay to the CPI or CPIH measures of inflation. Both underestimate the real price hikes faced by workers. There's more information on this later in this section to use in the workplace.

- **Tying pay to CPI or CPIH short-changes workers:** CPI is just 3.4% this month, CPIH is 3.6%.¹²
- **Only RPI represents workers' cost of living:** CPI and CPIH include the spending of non-workers like tourists, skewing the numbers.
- **Mobile phone bills, utility bills, student loan interest and even government bonds are linked to RPI.** If it's good enough for them, why not workers?

3.2 Package holiday prices fly high

When people talk about the rising cost of living, they tend to focus on essentials like food, energy, and housing. However, inflation is not only based on these essential items.

Facts and Figures

Your child's car seat, gardening products, or training shoes ... they all have their contribution to the retail price indices which are used to calculate the cost of living. One of these basket items is package holidays, under foreign holidays.¹³

For the last two years, prices of foreign holidays including package holidays are rising. It is one of the categories which has driven overall inflation up.¹⁴

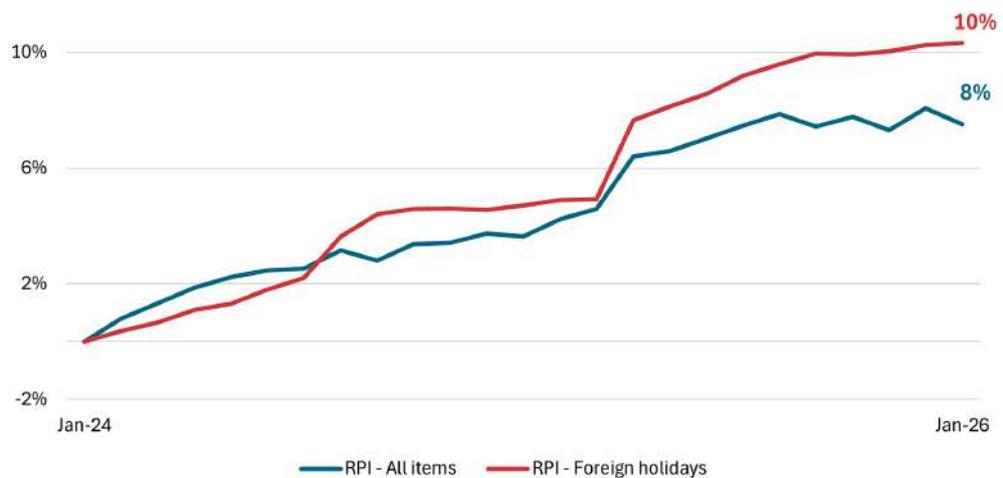


Figure 3 Cumulative percentage change for RPI inflation and foreign holidays prices, Jan 24 - Jan 26, Source: ONS

Workers' lives should not only be for survival. Vacation is not a luxury, but a necessity for workers to recover physical and mental health.

How does the cost-of-living crisis impact different groups?

Previous editions of Facts & Figures have discussed how the lowest paid workers experience the highest rate of inflation. Find out more here: tinyurl.com/uccet97z

3.3 Jet2 plc raked in £800 million in profits in the first half of 2025-26, thanks to increased prices of package holidays

While workers are hard pressed by high inflation and more and more people cannot even afford a very short break, the holiday companies increase their profits, driven by rising package holiday prices.

Take Jet2.com for example... In 2025, Jet2.com increased package holiday prices by 5% to £873.

Facts and Figures



Key performance indicators

	2025	2024	Change
Seat capacity	22.29m	19.73m	13%
Flown passengers	19.77m	17.72m	12%
Load factor	88.7%	89.8%	(1.1pts)
Flight-only passengers	6.62m	5.61m	18%
Package holiday customers	6.58m	6.08m	8%
Package holiday customers % of total flown passengers	66.5%	68.3%	(1.8pts)
Flight-only ticket yield per passenger sector (excl. taxes) ¹	£118.81	£121.26	(2%)
Average Package holiday price	£873	£830	5%
Non-ticket revenue per passenger sector ¹	£25.56	£24.12	6%
Fuel requirement hedged for the next twelve months	81.7%	81.7%	-
Advance sales made as at 31 March	£3,985.0m	£3,720.0m	7%

Figure 4 KPIs at Jet2.com Limited. Source: Companies House

Package holidays are by far the highest earner for Jet2, generating over 80% of revenue in 2025. Its revenue increased 15% to an all-time high of £7.2 billion in 2025, driven by an increase in passenger numbers and package holiday prices.

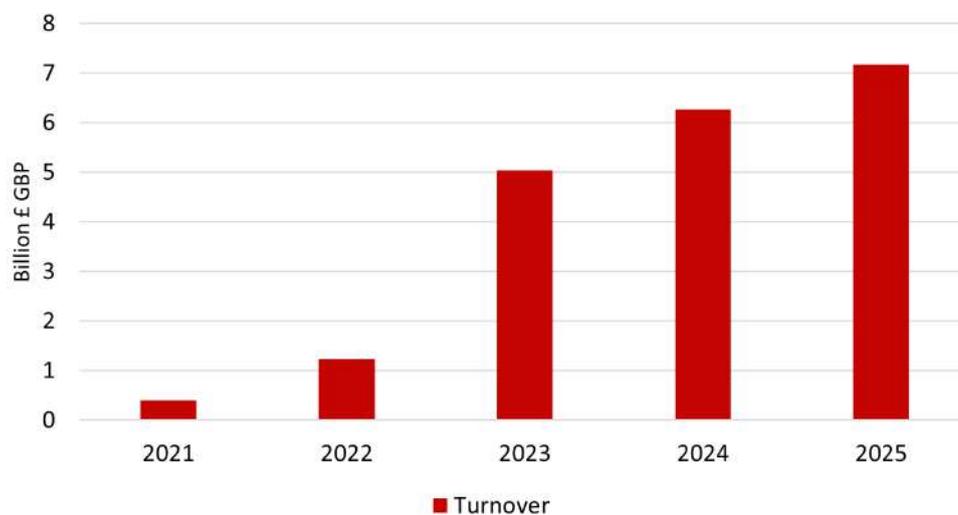


Figure 5 Revenue at Jet2.com Limited, FY21-25. Source: Companies House

Management are “very pleased” with the performance of the company in 2025, reporting “another year of strong financial results”.¹⁵ However, its pleasure of profiteering has not ended: Jet2 plc has raked in £800.3 million in profits in H1 FY26, up 1% from the first half of 2025.¹⁶ So far in 2026, average package holiday prices increased another 3% to £933.

So, where do these profits go? Since 2020, Jet2 plc has paid out a whopping £237.8 million to its shareholders, who are mostly huge institutional investors like Barclays and JP Morgan. Most of this sum was in the form of a share buyback in 2025 totalling £158.5 million, which was repurchased through the Employee Benefit Trust.

What is happening to the cost of living and pay?

Facts and Figures

At the end of its 2025 financial year, Jet2 plc announced it would repurchase £250 million in shares. Then, in November, it upped that amount by an additional £100 million. At the end of H1 FY26, Jet2 plc had already fulfilled £230.8 million of these buybacks.

Another happy reaper of the profits is Jet2's CEO, Steve Heapy. In 2025, he was paid £3,187,000 for his role. This means that Steve Heapy earned 57 times more than the average remuneration at Jet2.com. £927k of this was paid as a cash bonus based on how profitable Jet2 is. Steve Heapy's pay has increased 247% in real terms since 2020 as a result of his annual bonuses growing in line with profits.

These results make it clear - **bosses will do all they can to make it seem like companies "can't afford" fair pay increases.** But don't take this at face value. **Wait until the actual results come out and fight back against these claims.**

How is corporate profiteering contributing to the cost-of-living crisis?

Research by [Unite Investigates](#) previously exposed supermarkets raising prices to excessively high levels to boost profits. For more, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/3td2a9c3>

3.4 Pay linked to CPI or CPIH shortchanges workers, RPI-plus pay is the only way to beat inflation

Inflation is not a one-off problem. It compounds year after year. Below-inflation increases in pay make the situation worse for workers. Without inflation-busting pay rises, workers cannot even afford the living standard they have had before, never mind improving it.

Unite Reps in organised workplaces fight for Retail Prices Index (RPI)+ pay deals to beat inflation through collective bargaining. When unions are weak in the workplace, employers use this opportunity to limit pay deals to Consumer Prices Index (CPI) or even lower than that. That's why in this analysis we want to show why RPI or RPI+ pay deals protect workers against pay and earnings erosion, and why our members should fight against CPI offers.

In this scenario, we will look at the impact of pay rises linked to CPI, Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH), RPI, and RPI+1% at four workplaces over 10, 40, and 50 years.

To make the calculation easier, we assume workers at these workplaces do the same job, have the same hours, and start on the same pay.



They will have the same pay rises just linked to the different inflation measures.

	Starting hourly rate	Pay rise each year	Annual hours
Workplace A	£15	CPI (3.4%)	1,950
Workplace B	£15	CPIH (3.9%)	1,950
Workplace C	£15	RPI (4.1%)	1,950
Workplace D	£15	RPI+1% (5.1%)	1,950

Table 1: Last year's average rates of CPI, CPIH, and RPI are used in this example.

There are different inflation indices:

The Retail Prices Index (RPI): Currently, among all inflation indices, this shows best the real cost of living. The mortgage cost is one of the key components of RPI. It is usually the biggest cost for workers. In 2023, roughly 88% of mortgage applicants were employed, and often faced high loan-to-income ratios.¹⁷ Unite urges Reps to fight for RPI-plus pay rises.

The Consumer Prices Index (CPI): Employers' favourite inflation index, because it is the lowest of them all. Simply, if pay rises by CPI it costs employers less.

The Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH): This is higher than CPI, because it includes some housing costs, but not as fully as RPI does. For example, it excludes the cost of mortgage interest and it only looks at "rental equivalence of the house you own". However, this does not reflect the reality of workers who have to pay mortgage interest each month!

3.4.1 After 10 years, an average worker loses almost £36,500 if their pay is linked to CPI, rather than RPI-plus

In the first example, we will look at the impact of the different pay rises over a 10-year period. This length of time could be particularly relevant to Unite members who tend to be older, and therefore closer to retirement.

Firstly, let's look at the comparison between pay rises at CPI and RPI rates.

Facts and Figures

Even though there is less than 1% difference between CPI (3.4%) and RPI (4.1%), pay loss accumulates quickly over time. After 10 years, an average worker whose pay is linked to CPI loses more than £15,000 compared to a worker's RPI-linked pay.



Figure 6 After 10 years, an average worker loses almost £36,500 if they have CPI-linked pay, compared to their pay increasing by RPI+1%

After 10 years, if a workplace pay rise is linked to RPI+1%, an average worker would earn £36,500 more than if their pay were linked to CPI.

3.4.2 After 40 years, an average worker loses almost £1.4 million if their pay is linked to CPI, compared to RPI+1%

Now, let's look at what happens after 40 years.

This will show the long-term effect of below-inflation, inflation-level and above-inflation pay deals. This is especially critical for young workers, as they would start and continue their working life with these rates.

After 40 years, an average worker having RPI-linked pay will earn £503,193 more than if their pay matched CPI.

As RPI is the real inflation rate, this pay will be on the same level as the cost of living.

CPI-linked or CPIH-linked pay will not be enough to combat the increased cost of living. An average worker whose pay increases by CPI will be 17% worse off after 40 years.

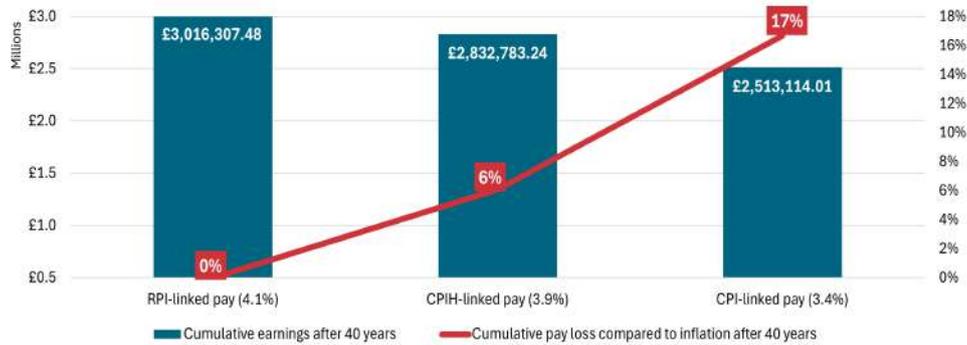


Figure 7 An average worker whose pay increases by CPI will be half a million pounds off after 40 years compared to their pay increasing by RPI

RPI+1%, on the other hand, will increase the living standard dramatically after 40 years. It will help workers earn 35% more than if it had increased by CPI (£1,354,027 more earned in total), 27% more than by CPIH (£1,034,358), and even 22% more than by RPI (£850,834).

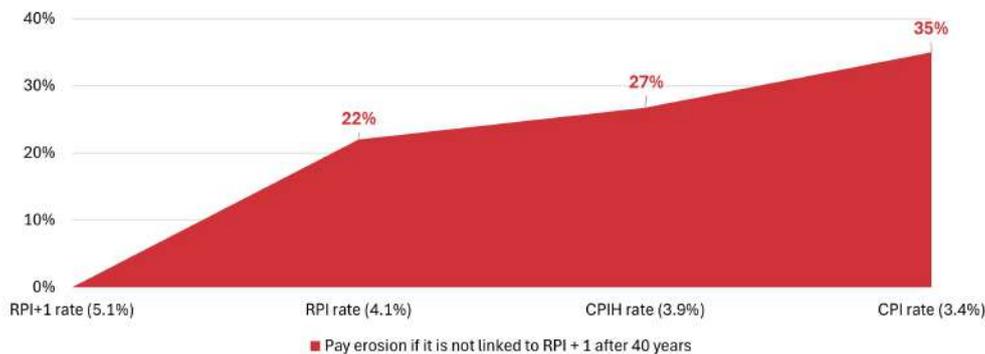


Figure 8 After 40 years, CPI-linked pay would mean 35% less earnings compared to RPI-plus pay

3.4.3 After 50 years, an average worker with CPI-linked pay is 43% worse off compared to if their pay went up by RPI+1%

Where people have begun paid work earlier in life, or have to work past-retirement age, the impact of below-inflation, inflation-level and above-inflation pay deals is tremendous. **Over 50 years, even an increase of less than 1% above RPI would make a worker much better off.** 50-years' earnings for the average worker would be worth £6.7 million. It would be 28% higher than if pay rose to match RPI.

On the other hand, CPI-linked pay rises would be worth 21% less than those linked to RPI over 50 years (£3.8 million versus £4.9 million). Losses can exceed seven figures over a career!

Facts and Figures



Figure 9 An average worker whose pay increased by RPI+1% will earn almost twice as much as if their pay increased by CPI

Below-RPI, RPI and RPI+ pay deals would also have a huge impact in retirement. Lower wages linked to CPI or CPIH rates are reflected in inadequate pension pots and retirement income. This means lower living standards follow workers into retirement. With below-inflation deals, pay erosion starts early and never stops. It quietly removes thousands of pounds from workers’ pockets.

Even RPI-linked pay is not enough to beat the real impact of the cost of living crisis in our lives. It is just the base level to keep pace with rising costs. While it stops workers becoming poorer, it does not make workers better off. Only RPI+ pay genuinely combats inflation. It is the only way to share economic growth fairly.

Unite urges Reps to become more proactive to organise their members to fight for above inflation pay rises. Stronger unions and collective bargaining is the only way workers win pay protection.

3.5 Workers earn 17.5% less in real terms today since the financial crisis, so RPI+ pay rises are vital

In real terms, workers are paid less now than they were just after the financial crisis at the end of 2008. The term 'real wages' refers to wages that have been adjusted for inflation. It allows us to accurately compare pay over many years.

The median weekly wage for a full-time employee in 2025 was just £767. **Real wages have fallen nearly 17.5% (from £929 in today's money) since 2009. This means workers are £162 per week worse off.**¹⁸

Although this will be the second year in a row where real wages have increased (respectively 2.7% and 0.8%), wages have failed to keep up with rising prices, driven by a rise in corporate profiteering.¹⁹

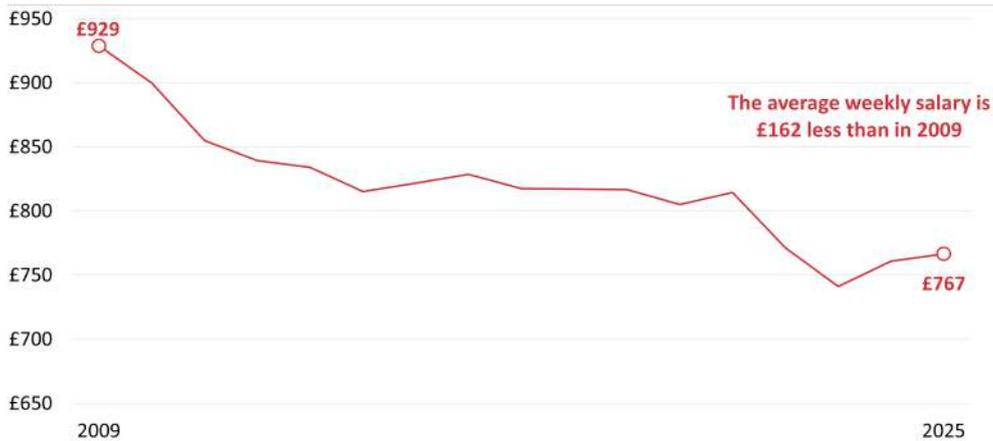


Figure 10 Median weekly wage, full-time employees, 2009 to 2025, Source: ASHE, ONS

The fact that millions of workers are now substantially worse off shows why it is vital to win RPI+ pay rises to gradually claw back our previous living standards.

Unite is working across sectors, via industrial combines, to bring workers together and use their collective power to drive up pay and conditions.

Unite Reps who organise their workplaces to win RPI+ pay deals through collective bargaining are leading the trade union movement for achieving better living conditions.

3.6 Prices have risen faster than wages since 2008, resulting in a total loss of nearly £65,000 for the average worker

Prices have been rising faster than wages for almost two decades. To show the impact of this on our members' pockets, let's use an example: 'Mary', a full-time worker who earns the national average wage:

- In 2008, Mary made approximately the average monthly wage of £1,920 and had monthly expenses of £1,920. They were basically breaking even.
- Five years later, in 2013, they were still making the average monthly wage, but this had seen little growth (only £100 per month), and their expenses had increased to £2,250 - leaving them with a hole of £230 per month.
- The mid-2010s was a period of very low inflation, but pay rises were similarly low. This meant that whilst the gap was broadly static, the standard of living in 2017 had become more than £300 per month worse than in 2008.

Facts and Figures

- After a decade where average annual wage increases only once beat 3%, 2021 (over 4%), 2022, (over 5%), 2023 (over 7%), 2024 (over 6%), and 2025 (over 5%) saw increasing values. But these were dwarfed by high inflation rates over the same period. **This has left Mary needing nearly £700 a month extra to equal their 2008 living standards.**
- The combined losses from inflation outstripping wages since 2008, mean that **the average worker has lost out on a massive £65,000 over this period.**

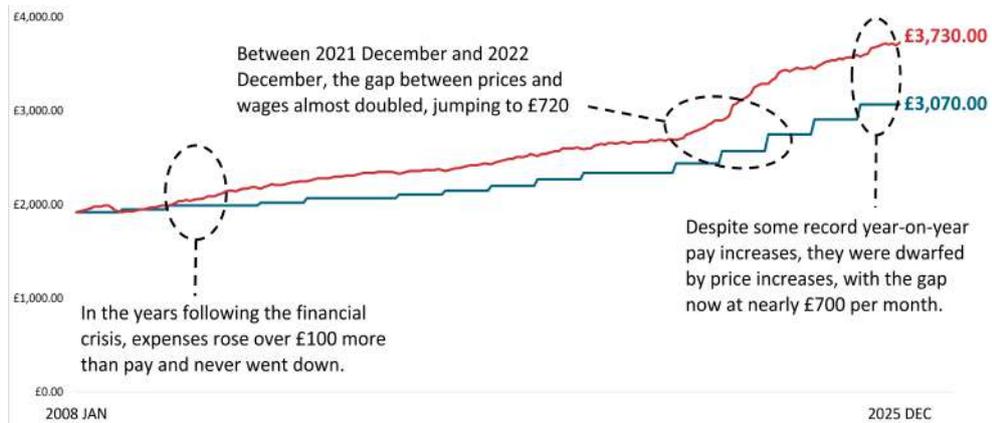


Figure 11 The average wage has not increased in line with RPI. Median monthly wage (in blue) versus monthly costs being increased in line with RPI (in red), January 2008 to December 2025. Source: ASHE and RPI, ONS

Some people may be able to use savings to subsidise their living standards, but many of our members do not have significant reserves. They may be forced to choose to give up non-essential spending, like trips away or visits to local restaurants. But the example above uses the average wage. Those earning less would have had even tougher decisions to make on what spending to cut.

When wages lag behind price rises, people may need to decide between heating and food. They are less likely to have spare funds to account for a broken boiler or car MOT. Each time a pay rise does not match a rise in the cost of living, a worker's options are reduced and eventually there is nothing left to cut. But the burden should not be on workers: **the only way workers can truly address increases in the cost of living is by bargaining collectively to make sure pay and conditions match reality.**



3.7 Real terms wage increases were the norm for over 100 years before

Real wage increases have historically been the norm. For over a century, in fact pretty much back to the industrial revolution, real pay went up nearly every year.

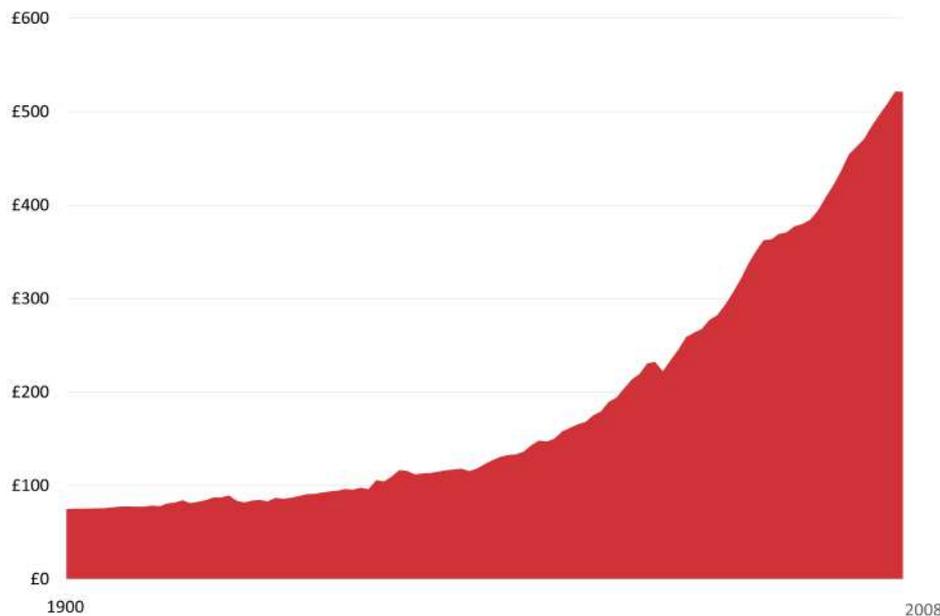


Figure 12 Real Average Weekly Wages saw consistent growth for over a century before 2008. Source: Bank of England (2017)

Some people got filthy rich over this period, but at least the rest of us saw real improvements in our pay. **So how has it become the bosses' starting position that a real terms (RPI+) pay increase is unaffordable - while at the same time profits are high and some people are still getting filthy rich?**

3.8 New analysis shows Labour's pension 'stealth tax' will lead to lower contributions

In the most recent Budget the Government announced it would be reducing the tax threshold for pension contributions made through salary sacrifice from April 2029. Currently these are exempt from National Insurance contributions (NICs).

Unite has strongly condemned these proposals. Newly-released analysis this month by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), which models the financial impact of Government policies, projects that **this will lead to workers cutting their pension contributions. Lower-paid workers are expected to cut their contributions the most.**

Facts and Figures



Salary sacrifice for pensions is a benefit offered by employers in many sectors. Under the scheme the employee gives up, or sacrifices, an agreed amount of their salary which the employer then pays as a pension contribution. **Many employers now use salary sacrifice for pensions, meaning many of our members benefit from it.** Ongoing pension research by Unite has found salary sacrifice to be widespread and used in both Defined Benefit (DB) and Defined Contribution (DC) schemes.

But under the proposed change only the first £2,000 of contributions made via salary sacrifice each year will be exempt. Contributions above that level will face employee and employer NICs, although ordinary employer pension contributions will remain exempt.

The changes have been dubbed a 'stealth tax' and Unite has called for them to be reversed, alongside other stealth taxes in the Budget.

“The chancellor has picked a side. Health workers, engineers, and tanker drivers will pay through stealth taxes, while city bankers and billionaires go largely unscathed.” Unite General Secretary Sharon Graham

The salary sacrifice changes are intended to raise tax revenue but they could have an impact on workers' pensions and wider terms and conditions.

The OBR says the changes are expected to bring in £5 billion a year in extra NICs by the end of the decade.



However, due to how employers and employees are likely to respond, the expected revenue falls significantly after the first year.

Although it warns that the impacts are uncertain, the OBR suggests employers may redesign pay and pension arrangements to preserve some of the existing tax advantages.

Employees in turn may change pension contribution methods or reduce how much they save.

The OBR estimates that 80% of employees in DC schemes may respond by reducing their contribution levels to receive an increase in take-home pay. Lower-earning employees are expected to reduce their contributions by 2.75% compared to 1.8% for high earners.

For Reps, it is important to consider not just the headline tax change but how this change could affect members in practice.

Limiting NIC relief on salary-sacrifice pensions has been portrayed by the Government as mainly hitting higher earners, but as we have seen the OBR expects lower earners to cut pension contributions more.

Also, knock-on changes by employers to pension design or contribution levels, or pay, could be felt more widely across the workforce.

Although the change to salary sacrifice is still several years away, Reps should be vigilant.

Employers may use future increased costs from 2029 onwards as a reason to make detrimental changes to members' pensions, pay or any other terms and conditions.

Reps should also look to negotiate between now and 2029 ways to offset any additional future member cost.

Unite will be monitoring the impact of the change. If your employer is making changes to pensions, pay or anything else on the basis of the Budget let us know. Email: workvoicepay@unitetheunion.org

Labour's other new stealth tax hitting workers is the extended freeze on tax thresholds. Last month the General Secretary launched the [Unite's Stealth Tax Calculator](#) tool for Reps, which shows you how much this will hit workers in the pocket.

3.9 Bite-sized Bargaining: Increased social care, child care, and leisure costs add to workers burden

Unite backs its members who fight collectively for inflation-busting pay in the workplaces and sectors. See below for a compiled cost-of-living and real terms pay articles in our previous issues to strengthen your negotiations.

- **Use Financial Insider to discover whether real-terms pay at your company has kept pace with inflation.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/2585t624> or look in the September 2024 edition, p.134-135.
- **CPI and CPIH both short-change workers when used instead of RPI.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/2wujk5s2> or look in the June 2025 edition, p.54-57.
- **The UK is the most expensive country for childcare in Europe, with costs for an under two-year-olds rising by 43% in the last decade.** Find out more here: tinyurl.com/2bcvj8hc or look in the May 2024 edition, p.49-51.
- **Social care has been mostly privatised, running for profit and costs its patients over £60,000 a year.** Find out more here: tinyurl.com/2xu66av4 or look in the August 2024 edition, p.33-35.
- **The lowest paid workers are experiencing the highest rate of inflation** Find out more here: tinyurl.com/uccet97z or look in the April 2024 edition, p.51-52.
- **The rising cost of living has made personal leisure a privilege as workers have had to prioritise bills and food.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/4nu8vvbd> or look in the December 2024 edition, p.32.
- **Since 1977, the income gap between the top and bottom income groups is continuing to widen.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/3t9ep345> or look in the October 2024 edition, p.45-47.

Heathrow bosses!

END POVERTY PAY

WORKERS CAN'T GET BY



#HALStrike

Unite, fighting for Jobs. Pay. Conditions.





SECTION FOUR

ABILITY TO PAY

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Put simply: huge profits and dividends show that firms have the ability to pay.

Sharon Graham, Unite General Secretary

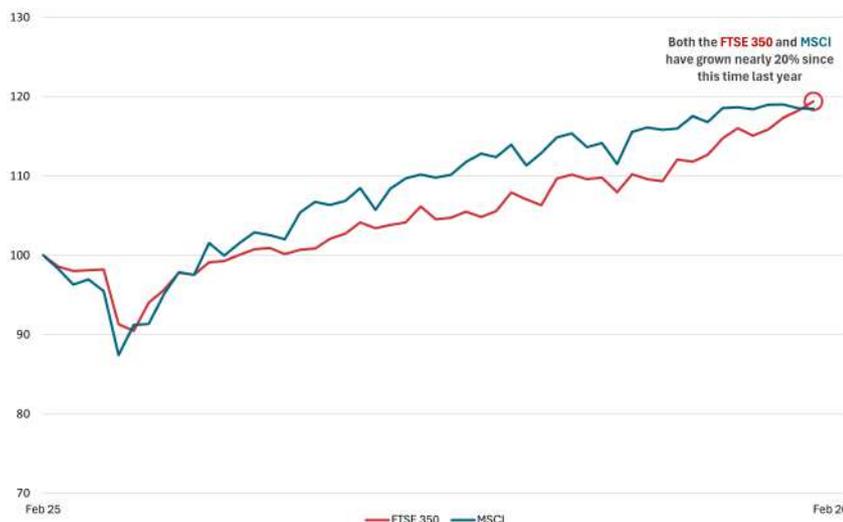


4. How much money are employers making?

4.1 Key figures: boss pay up and stock markets still on the rise

Across the world, companies are reporting results that reveal ever-growing profits. **Armed with the facts, workers can fight back against profitable firms crying the poor tale at the bargaining table:**

- **Ability to pay remains high:** Companies on the FTSE 350 and many Unite employers worldwide have reported margins above the long-term average (see the next article for more).
- **Shareholders are pocketing growing amounts each year:** These companies are paying out more and more each year to their shareholders - it's time workers got their fair share!
- **Don't believe the hype that stock markets are down:** The FTSE 350 is still at record-highs, and the MSCI, which contains companies worldwide, is up 20% since this time last year.



- **Fat Cat Day for all:** It's not just FTSE 100 bosses coining it in - boss pay is up across the board (see later this section for details).
- **Interest rates are expected to be cut:** The Bank of England is expected to cut rates yet again in March - boosting ability to pay for firms that borrow.

Use the **Forensic Accounts team** to find out how your employer is doing financially, Get in touch at forensic.accounts@unitetheunion.org

Facts and Figures

4.2 Exclusive: Profit margins of companies on the FTSE 350 are above the long-term average....

Unite Reps will have heard the line from bosses that rising national insurance costs and minimum wage increases have left companies on their knees - leaving no money to give workers' their fair share.

But new research for Facts & Figures has found that profit margins of firms on the FTSE 350 remain above the long-term average - showing that the ability to pay is still high.

In 2024 - which is the latest financial year that all companies have reported results - firms reported an average profit margin of 7.7%. Given that this is above the average for this century, it shows that ability to pay is still high.

The chart below shows the average net profit margin FTSE 350 firms have reported between 2000 and 2024. This is the bottom line profit after all costs have been taken off, as a percentage of revenue each year.

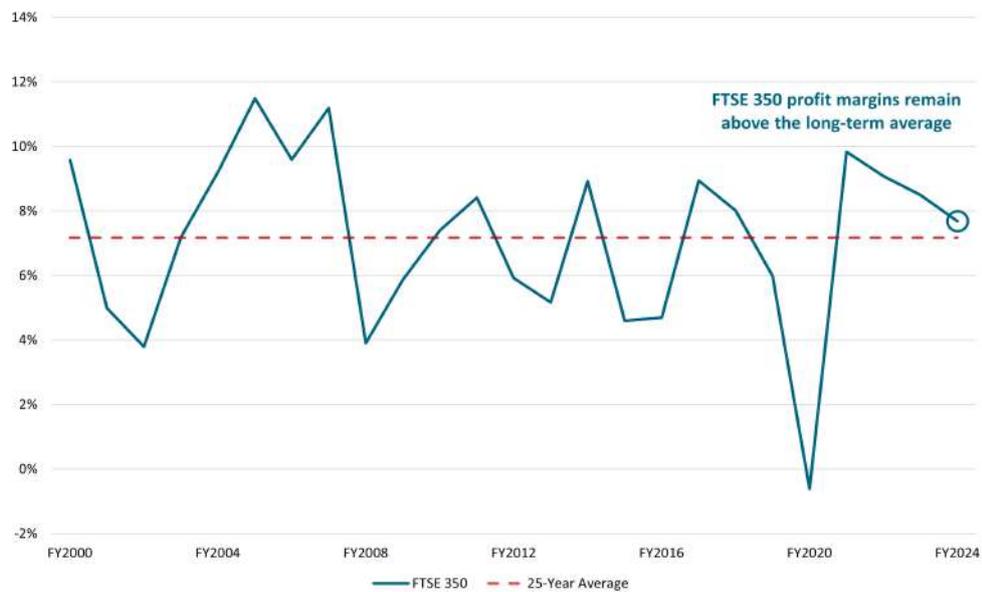


Figure 13 FTSE 350 average net profit margins, FY00-FY24. Excludes trusts, private equity, REIT, and investment funds. Source: Unite analysis of S&P Capital IQ Pro.

The FTSE 350 includes the 350 biggest firms listed on the London Stock Exchange. It includes a mix of global giants like BP and Shell, and UK-focused firms like Greencore or AG Barr. All in all it includes 85% of the UK equity market. It is a bellwether for the fortunes of the UK corporates that ultimately employ many Unite members.



As expected, profit margins have fluctuated quite a lot over the last 25 years, hit by the 2008 financial crisis and then again by COVID. Smoothing out these big up and down movements though, firms have on average reported a strong 7.2% profit margin.

While it's true that margins have slightly fallen from their post-COVID peak in 2021, **figures for the first half of the 2025 financial year show that margins are back on the up.**

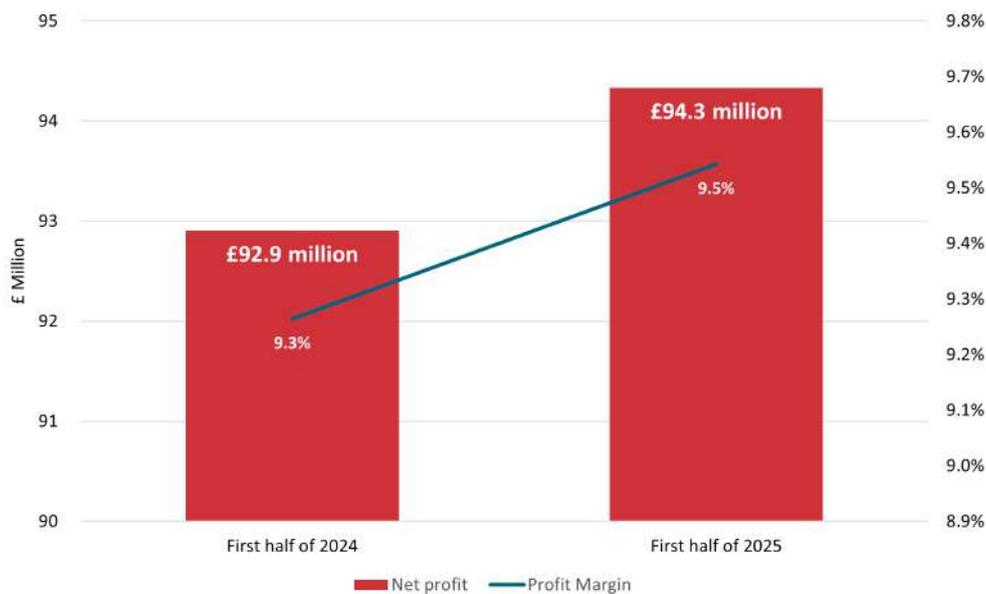


Figure 14 FTSE 350 net profit and net profit margin, H1 FY24 - H1 FY25. Excludes trusts, private equity, REIT, and investment funds. Source: Unite analysis of S&P Capital IQ Pro.

In the first half of 2025, firms had already made £94.3 million in net profit at an average margin of 9.5% - up from 9.3% in the first half of 2024. Not only does this again show that firms are still massively profitable - but that profits are on the rise.

4.3 ... While payouts to shareholders are at record highs

So - it's clear that profits are at record-highs, but where does this money actually go?

Profits can be spent on investment back into the company, shareholder payouts, debt repayments, and giving workers' a fair pay increase. Ultimately, the choice is made by the top bosses - **but what is becoming clearer is that they are choosing to pay out ever-growing amounts to shareholders.**

Facts and Figures

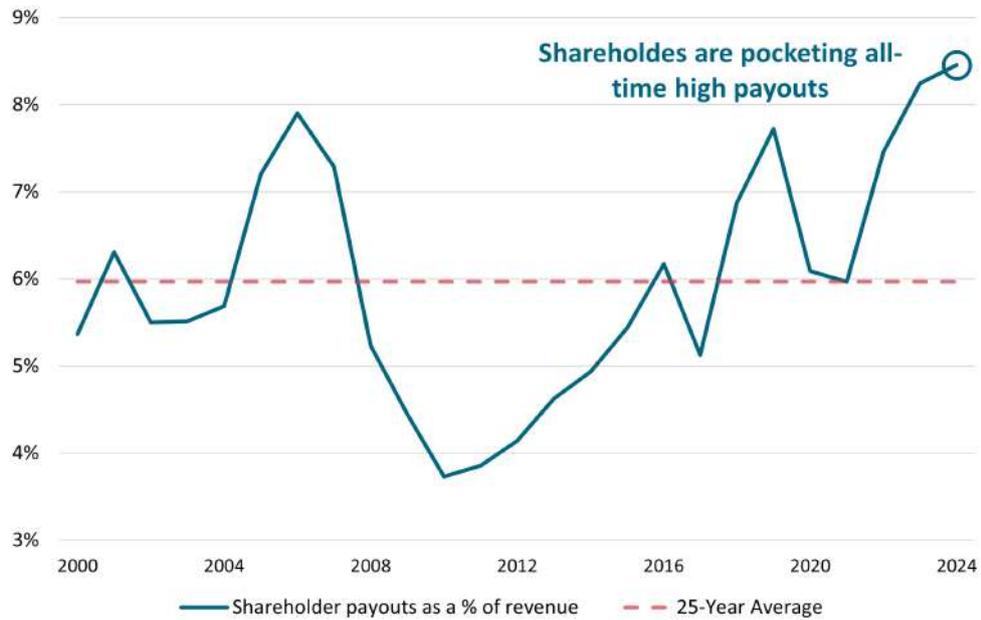


Figure 15 FTSE 350 dividends and buybacks as a percentage of total revenue, FY00 - FY24. Excludes trusts, private equity, REIT, and investment funds. Source: Unite analysis of S&P Capital IQ Pro.

The chart above breaks down how much FTSE 350 companies are paying out to shareholders through dividends and share buybacks as a proportion of total revenue.

In 2024, the ratio hit its highest point yet, with firms paying out 8.5% of their revenue to shareholders on average.

If companies can afford to pay out more to their shareholders, they can afford to pay more to the workers' who actually generated the profits.

4.4 The story is the same for overseas employers - profits are on the up

We estimate that over half of Unite members are employed by companies headquartered overseas.

In a global capitalist system, employers of Unite members may be based anywhere in the world. While it may seem like we are bargaining with a local employer, the reality may be that we are dealing with a huge multinational.

Facts and Figures

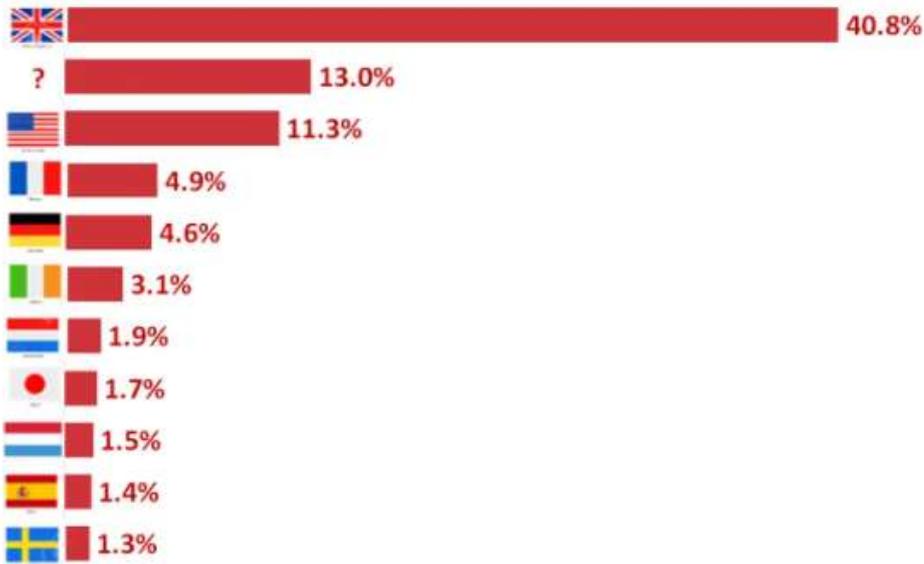


Figure 16 Less than half of Unite's members are known to be employed by companies whose headquarters are in the UK. Country location of headquarters of Global Ultimate Owner. Source: FAME and Unite membership data.

So, given that many Unite employers are ultimately based overseas, it makes sense to expand our search to see how much companies worldwide are making.

To do this, we compiled the financials for over 2,500 companies listed on the world's largest stock exchanges in the USA and Europe.



Figure 17 NYSE, NASDAQ, and ENX average net profit margins, FY00-FY24. Excludes investment funds, trusts, and companies with under £1bn in revenue. Source: Unite analysis of S&P Capital IQ Pro.

How much money are employers making?

Facts and Figures

The story at these firms is similar to that of the FTSE 350: average profit margins are above the long-term average at all three of the stock exchanges we looked at.

European companies on the Euronext stock exchange, such as BNP Paribas and Budweiser reported overall average margins of nearly 10% in 2024.

Many firms have yet to report full-year profits for 2025, so we've analysed how much profit they made in the first half of each year to get their latest results.

The trend is once again clear - profit margins are at record-highs and on the up, showing that ability to pay for many Unite employers is growing.

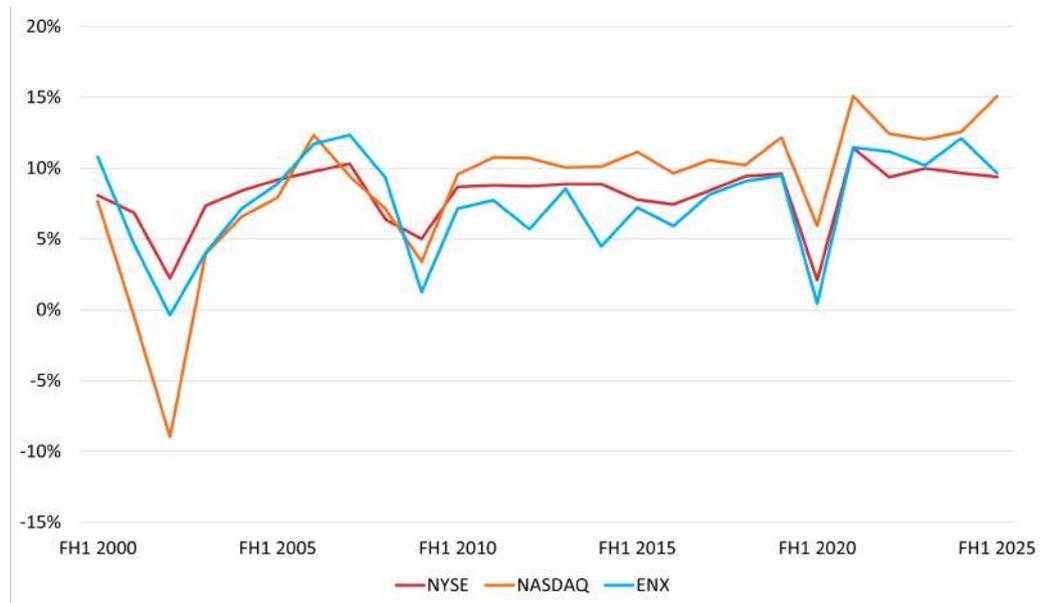


Figure 18 NYSE, NASDAQ, and ENX average net profit margins, H1 FY00 - H1 FY25. Excludes investment funds, trusts, and companies with under £1bn in revenue. Source: Unite analysis of S&P Capital IQ Pro.

It isn't just the FTSE 350 shareholders that are having their pockets lined with payouts.

With profit margins across the world at record-highs, shareholders of many Unite employers are seeing the returns.

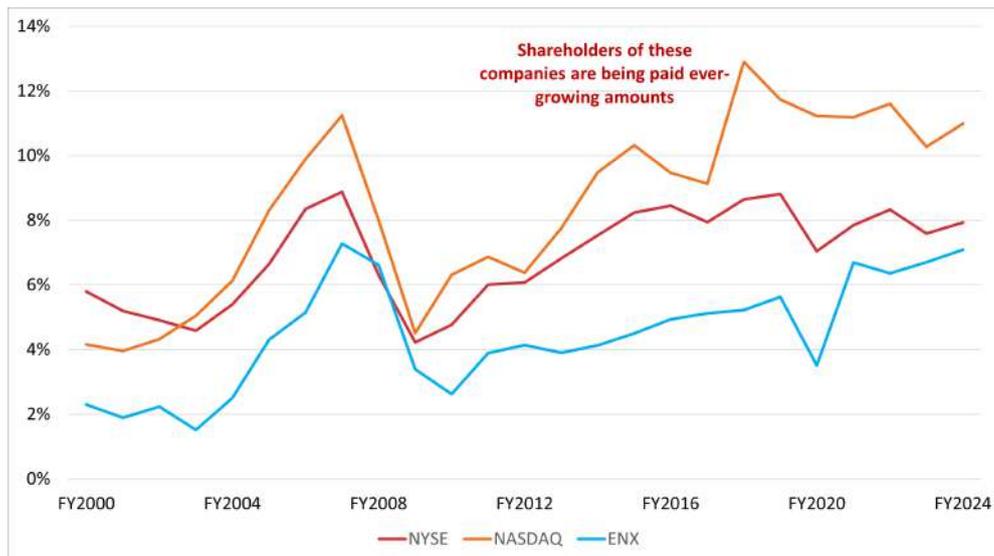


Figure 19 NYSE, NASDAQ, and ENX dividends and share buybacks as a percentage of revenue, FY00 - FY24. Excludes investment funds, trusts, and companies with under £1bn in revenue. Source: Unite analysis of S&P Capital IQ Pro.

After shareholders pocketed bonanza payouts in 2007 - just one year before the financial crash in 2008 - payouts fell to a lower amount of around 4% of revenue.

Since then, however, companies have been paying out growing amounts of their income to shareholders. In 2024, these firms paid out an average of 8.7% of revenue.

This is money that could have otherwise been invested back into the business, including giving workers a fair pay rise.

4.5 ASHE: Managers earnings grew by more than 1.4% more than average workers

Last month, we wrote about [Fat Cat Day](#), when FTSE 100 CEOs had made more than your annual salary by 6 January.

It is not just top-tier executives of FTSE 100 companies, though. **While the government highlights overall wage growth, it is evident that UK-based CEOs and senior leaders are taking the biggest share too.** The latest data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) shows that managers, directors and senior officials' pay increased by at least 1.4% more than average workers, so **bosses started on higher pay and then rewarded themselves with an even higher percentage increase than their workers.** ²⁰

Facts and Figures

Weekly pay for full-time employees is up 5.3%, but managers and directors saw a larger rise of 6.7%. Even those figures mask the true difference as those bosses will also be included in the all employees figure. The figure for workers minus bosses would be less than 5.3%!

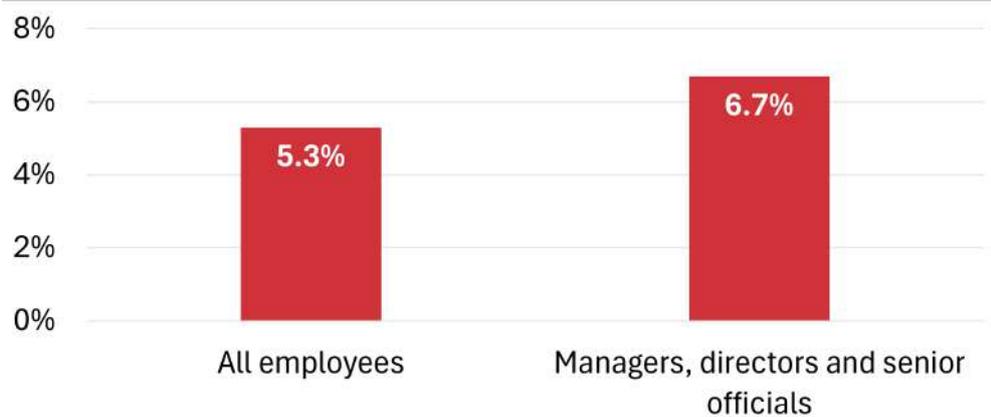


Figure 20 Average gross weekly earnings for full-time employees, 2025, not adjusted to RPI. Source: ASHE, ONS

Where unions have demanded fair pay and conditions, workers have secured real-terms gains. [Average weekly pay rose in real terms for the second consecutive year, after a wave of industrial action.](#)

Unite is proud to stand firmly with members who take action. Across sectors members have shown they are prepared to organise, ballot and, where necessary, strike to defend their living standards.

Unite negotiators know unionising is how workers start levelling the playing field in the face of bosses that hoard profits. Use Work Voice Pay's Financial Insider tool to find out how much the boss at your employer is making.

You can access it here: <https://www.unitetheunion.org/work-voice-pay/financial-insider>

4.6 Explainer: Why stock markets matter for collective bargaining

The positive performance of listed companies on the stock market is a good sign when it comes to pay negotiations. This is because **share prices provide an indication of investors' confidence in future profits - or in other words, the company's ability to pay.**



While a rising stock price does not typically put more money directly into a company's pockets, it does signal a vote of confidence in a company's prospects and, to some extent, in the economy as a whole.

This is relevant to Unite members, as **around a third of our members are ultimately employed by companies listed on stock exchanges.**

Investors often track stock market "indexes". These bundle together a selection of "bellweather" firms from one or more stock markets to give an overall picture. There are a few major indexes that are of particular importance to UK workers:

- The **S&P 500** index tracks the share price of 500 of the largest companies listed on stock exchanges in the United States.
- The **MSCI World** does the same for 1,500 of the largest listed companies in the world - although in reality, 70% of its constituents are US-based.
- The **FTSE 350** tracks the 350 biggest companies on the London Stock Exchange.

The US stock markets are relevant to our members for two reasons.

Firstly, US stock markets are the dominant markets globally, accounting for nearly 60% of total global stocks by market value. This means the US market's performance affects companies and investors worldwide.

Secondly, our analysis has found that **at least 11% of Unite members are ultimately employed by a company which is headquartered in the US.** In other words, what happens on the US stock market will have an impact on many of our members in the UK.

In short, whether a company is listed on the US stock market, the UK stock market, or elsewhere, **if the company's share price is doing well, then its workers can raise this at the bargaining table, and insist that they share in the gains.**

4.7 Bite-sized Bargaining: Ability to pay

Previous editions of Facts & Figures have identified how companies maximise profits and the methods they use.

- **Unite has identified five main forms of profiteering, including windfall profits.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/2dvcbwa6> or look in the March 2024 edition, p.76-80.
- **Companies paying dividends and share buybacks to shareholders indicates there is money for workers.** Find out more here: <http://tinyurl.com/3e3f3wv6> or look in the March 2024 edition, p. 235-236.
- **Companies will use various different measures of profit but the main measures are explained here:**<https://tinyurl.com/4z6jfbwc> or look in the February 2024 edition, p.73-74.
- **Explainer: Why you can use group profits to back up pay demands:** <https://tinyurl.com/yerzms8> or look in the June 2025 edition, p.83-85.
- **Companies listed on the world's largest stock exchanges made over £2.2 trillion in profit in 2024.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/ye237yha> or look in the October 2025 edition, p.70-71
- **Unite Reps have been using stock market analyst research to reinforce the ability to pay argument.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/4tnvdtf> or look in the March 2025 edition, p.73-74

Use Work Voice Pay's Financial Insider tool to generate a report about your employer's finances. Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/yhk7y344>.

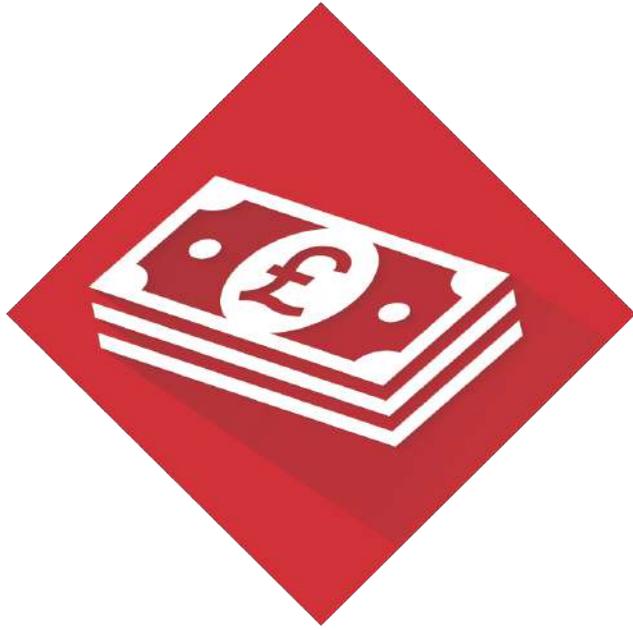


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SECTION FIVE

ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET

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Facts and Figures

Workers earn less today in real terms than they did in 1997, and the divide between the rich and the rest of us is growing ever wider. We need to fix our broken economy right now and not allow growth targets to be used as an excuse for a smokescreen for fresh rounds of austerity.

Sharon Graham, Unite General Secretary



5. What is happening to the economy and labour market?

5.1 Key figures: The UK economy is set to pass £3 trillion this decade

- **The UK economy is massive and growing, albeit slowly:** The UK economy grew 1.3% last year. Even at the current low growth rates GDP will hit £3 trillion this decade. **We're one of the richest countries in the world, there's no excuse for poverty pay.**
- **Business continue to be bullish on their future prospects.** According to the widely-watched S&P Purchasing Managers Index, UK businesses "kicked up a gear in January", reporting higher demand, both from home and export markets. This has "driven output growth to the fastest since April 2024". S&P said firms are "reporting the greatest optimism about the business outlook since before the 2024 Autumn Budget". **All of this undermines the narrative of unavoidable job cuts and pay restraint.**
- **Employers are cutting jobs in retail and hospitality but hiring in health:** The number of payrolled jobs fell by 46,000 in the quarter to December 2025. Retail has borne the brunt of job cuts, with 65,000 cut in 2025. Health and social care saw the biggest increase, with 39,000 jobs estimated to have been created. **Reps there can use this demand to push for better pay and conditions.²¹**

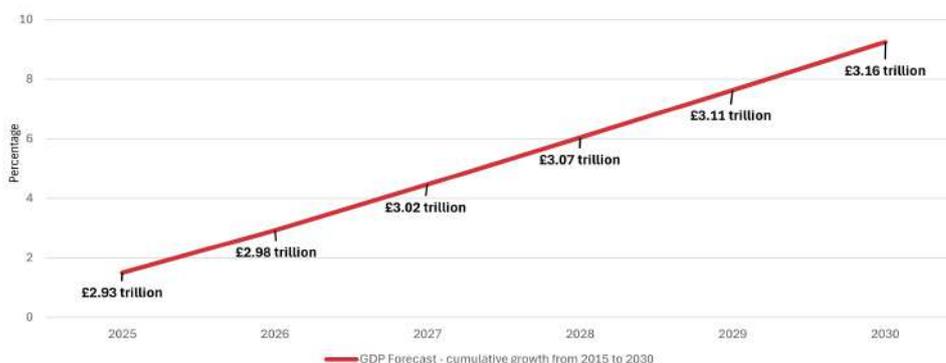


Figure 21 GDP Forecast - cumulative growth to 2030. Source: Autumn Budget based on the OBR's GDP forecast, House of Commons Library

Facts and Figures

5.2 Businesses aren't investing: time for the state to step in

More economic statistics came out this month showing a predictable story: businesses aren't investing.

Does this mean there's not enough money for pay rises? No of course not. As the last section showed, **Unite employers continue to book very healthy profits, with shareholders reaping the rewards.** And even though it isn't growing very fast, the UK economy is still predicted to grow to a massive £3 trillion by the end of the decade (see [last month's Facts & Figures](#) for more on this).

But this month's figures show again why the **Labour Government needs to step in and invest in British industry.** Figures from the Office for National Statistics show overall business investment was down by 2.7% in the last quarter of 2025. Unfortunately, this is "on trend" with the economic approach since Thatcher.

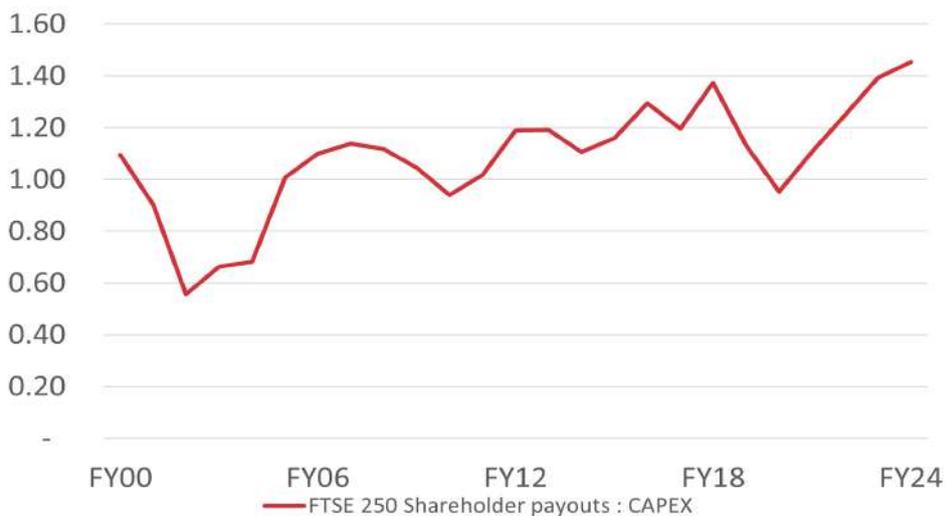


Figure 22 Shareholder payouts have been rising compared to capital investment this century Source: CapIQ

Payouts to shareholders are historically high while the UK has a problem of chronic under-investment. For years the UK has had the lowest overall investment rates of all G7 “advanced” economies. This has led to the loss of 4 million manufacturing jobs, decimating our blue collar base. Today, unemployment sits at 5.2%. The Bank of England reckons it will increase to 5.3% this year, before falling back. Youth unemployment has hit its highest level for 11 years, with 16% of 24-year olds and under out of work.²²

Without investment, you don't get growth or new, decent, secure jobs.



As the economist Marina Mazzucato has said, this is “like waiting for your car to start moving before putting in fuel.” As the private sector is not delivering, we need government to lead with public investment. The UK’s public investment rate is 2.7% of GDP, even after the increased spending that Labour has announced. It is still well below the 3.7% average for advanced Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) economies since the turn of the century.

When Labour came to power we had built up a public investment gap of over £500 billion, with investment below the OECD average. To match the long-term average we need to boost public investment by at least 1% of GDP - around £28 billion. Ideally more - 2% of GDP - because we need to catch-up and close the historic investment gap.



Figure 23 The unemployment rate increased in the latest quarter, between Jan-Mar 20 and Oct-Dec 25. Source ONS, LFS

This would also address the productivity "problem", which economists fret about and some employers use to cut jobs, pay and conditions. After all, the biggest factor in productivity is investment: because **if you have old and broken kit, workers can't produce as much**. UK productivity has been in stagnation for decades because of under-investment.

The Productivity Institute, a think tank based at Manchester University, says under-investment is “the root cause of the country’s weak productivity performance.” From 1993 to 2024, UK investment averaged just 18% of GDP. In France and Germany, it was over 22%. **That difference, compounded year after year, has left the UK miles behind.**”

“Compared to workers in the US, Germany, France, and the Netherlands, people in the UK have access to a third less capital per hour worked. Less software. Fewer machines. Outdated systems. Insufficient training. Too little R&D and organisational capacity. The result? Lower productivity, lower wages, lower living standards.”

Facts and Figures

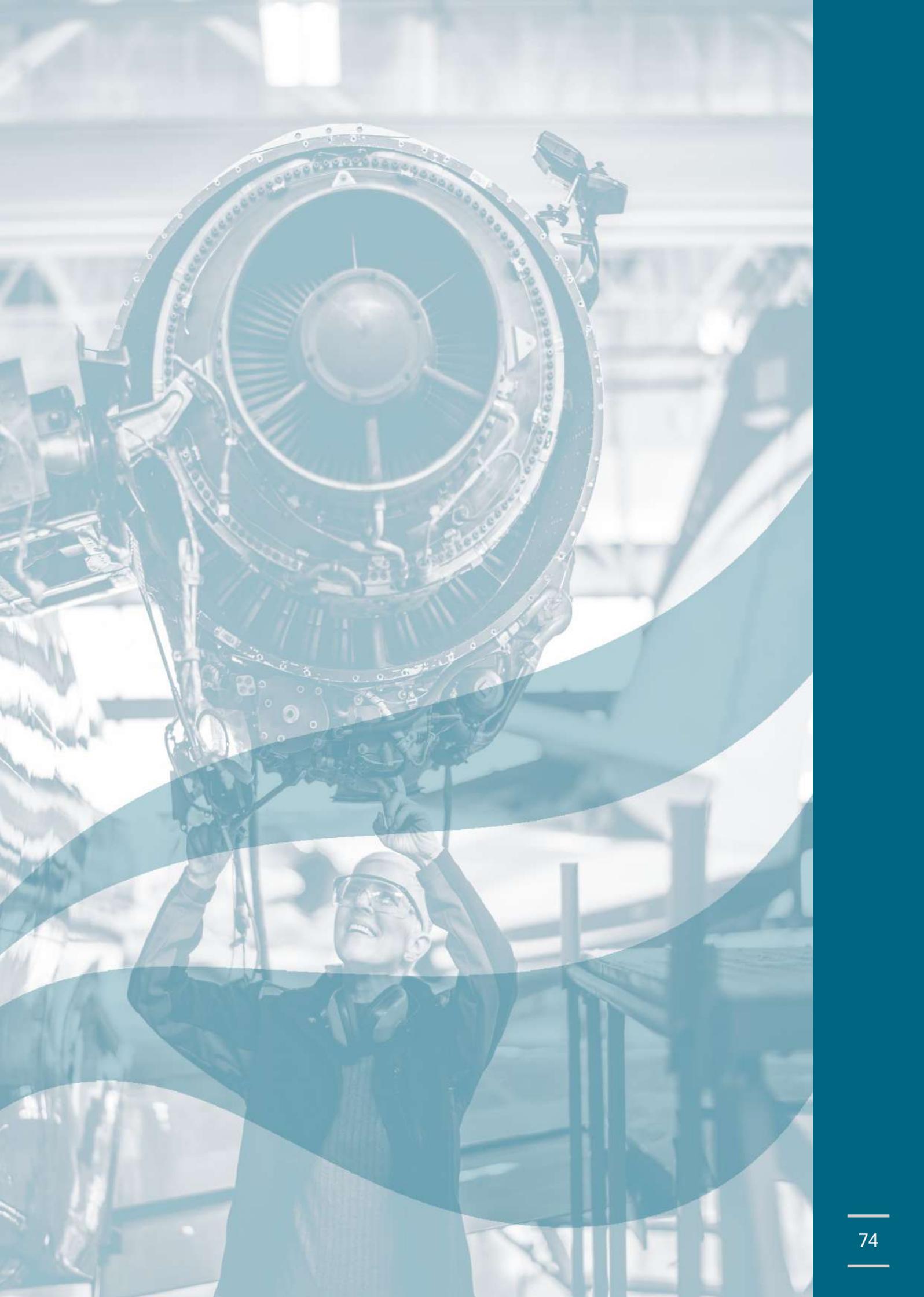
This was masked to some extent by the financial bubble before 2008, because our GDP growth was inflated by the boom in financial services. When the bubble burst, this exposed the reality of under-investment in the infrastructure and industry that underpins the real economy.

“the UK economy will not get the growth we were promised until we reverse our historic levels of underinvestment. We need to stop the rot and start delivering for everyday people.” Unite General Secretary Sharon Graham

5.3 Bite-sized Bargaining: Collective bargaining reduces inequality

Employers rely on our labour. Our members, through their union and collective bargaining, can shift the balance of power in the economy. **Whether it's winning above-inflation pay rises, improving conditions, or securing a fair share of public investment, this is about building real market power from the ground up.**

- **Studies show that greater union membership leads to money being distributed more evenly across society.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/382n83mf> or look in the March 2024 edition, p.210.
- **CMA studies show that without collective bargaining, concentrated labour markets reduce wages.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/bddn5x88> or look in the March 2024 edition, p.211.
- **Union power extends beyond its membership, with collective agreements covering 40% of the workforce, and we can increase this by organising more.** Find out more here: tinyurl.com/3akae4w7 or look in the March 2024 edition, p.208-209.
- **Government's failure on the economy is no excuse for employers offering poor pay deals.** Find out more here: tinyurl.com/4pxcmt4p or look in the April 2024 edition, p.110-111.
- **Investment is a collective bargaining issue where worker focused investment can benefit employers and employees.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/2wx2mtvj> or look in December 2023 p.182.
- **UK companies lag behind peers in comparable countries with far lower investment levels.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/4fpa8ytx> or look in November 2023 p.144-145.







SECTION SIX WORKPLACE ISSUES

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What's happening in our workplaces?

Facts and Figures

What's happening in our workplaces?

Equality, safety, and decent conditions aren't extras. They're the basics. When workers stand together, we win better pay, safer jobs, and real equality. That's what Unite is built for.

Sharon Graham, Unite General Secretary



6. What's happening in our workplaces?

6.1 On average, women are paid almost 13% less than men, and collective action is needed to address this

Though the gender pay gap has been declining slowly over time, it was still 12.8% for all workers in 2025.²³ Among full-time employees the gender pay gap in 2025 was 6.9%, compared to 7.1% in 2024.

The gender pay gap means that on average, **women effectively work the first 47 days of the year unpaid**. Equalities issues are collective bargaining issues and go far beyond the matter of pay equality alone.

Unite Reps have a key role in ensuring that progress is made towards closing the gender pay gap, by securing better parental leave, childcare options, flexible working, and part-time options.

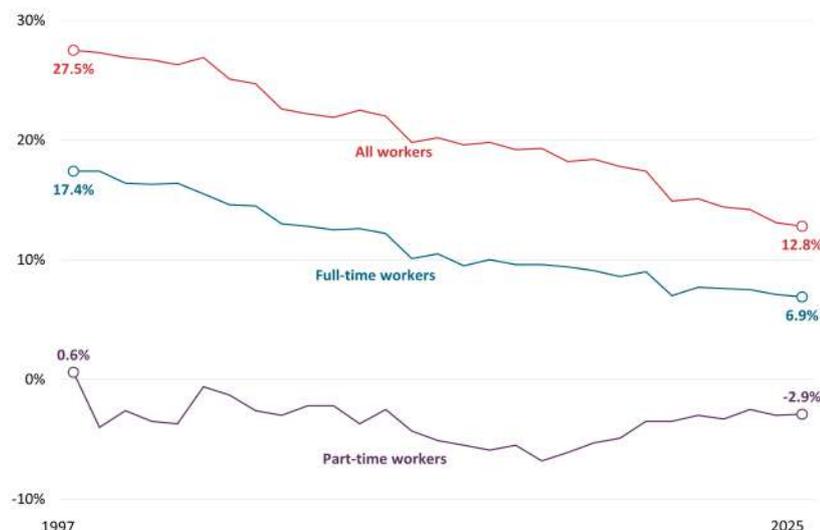


Figure 24 The gender pay gap has been slowly falling but is still substantial. Gender pay gap for median gross hourly earnings (excluding overtime), UK, April 1997 to 2025 Source: ASHE, ONS.

The gender pay gap is higher for all employees than it is for full-time employees or part-time employees. This is because women fill more part-time jobs, which in comparison with full-time jobs have lower hourly median pay. **Approximately 40% of women are in part-time roles, compared to 13% of men.**

Facts and Figures

6.1.1 At the current pace, the gender pay gap won't close until 2050

The gender pay gap is a measure of what women are paid relative to men. It is a measure of all jobs in the UK, not of the difference in pay between men and women for doing the same job.

So whilst the gender pay gap has been closing over the last 28 years, the pace is slow.

If it continues at the same rate as we have seen for the past 28 years then we may see the end of the gap in 2050.

But women should not have to wait decades more for equality! By putting equal pay at the centre of collective bargaining we can speed up this fight for justice.

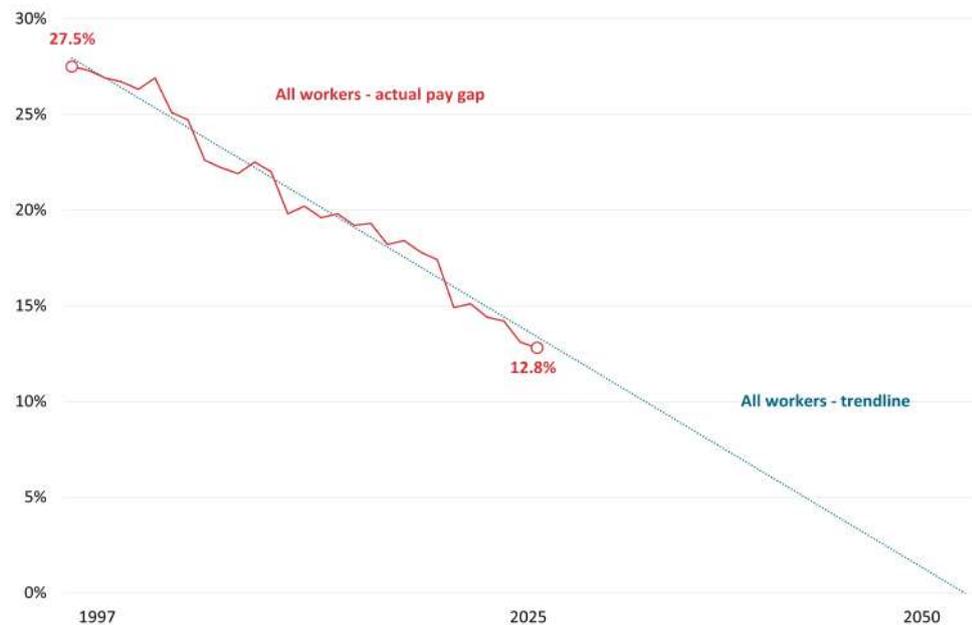


Figure 25 At the current rate the gender pay gap will not disappear until 2050. Gender pay gap for full-time median gross hourly earnings (excluding overtime), UK, April 1997 to 2025, with trendline 1997-2050. Source: ASHE, ONS.

6.1.2 The gender pay gap is particularly high among older workers and administrative and secretarial workers

There is a large difference in the gender pay gap between those over and below 40 years of age.²⁴

For groups aged under 40, the gender pay gap for full-time employees is much lower, at 3.9% or below.



However, for age groups aged 40 and older, the gender pay gap for full-time employees is much higher, at over 9.1%. There could be a number of reasons for the difference. A historic lack of career progression for women, or women bearing a greater burden of caring responsibilities in later life coupled with a shortage of flexible working options, could be factors slowing progress for over 40s.

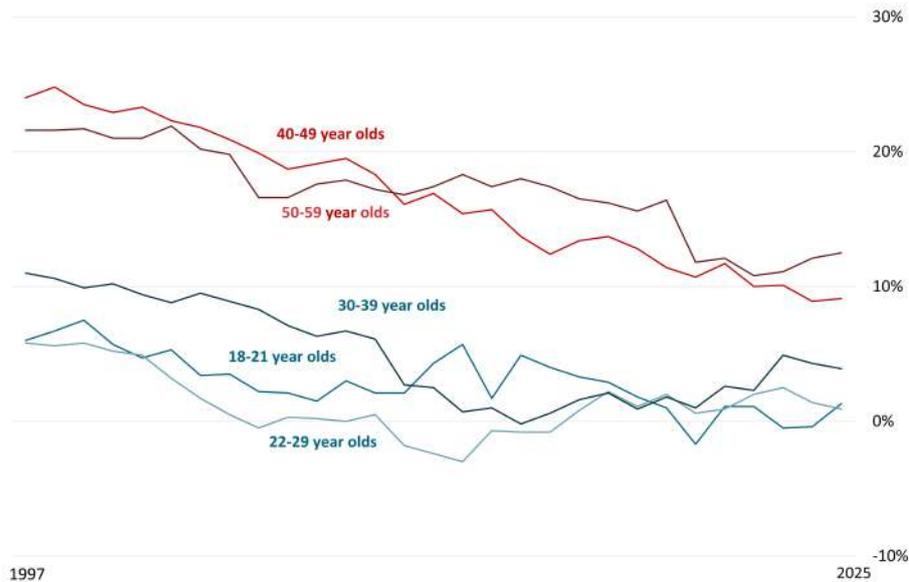


Figure 26 There is a clear split between those over 40 (in red) and those under 40 (in blue). Gender pay gap for full-time median gross hourly earnings (excluding overtime), by age-group, UK, April 1997 to 2025. Source: ASHE, ONS.

Men are paid more than women among full-time employees in each of the nine main occupation groups. The gap is highest for skilled trades occupations, at 14%.

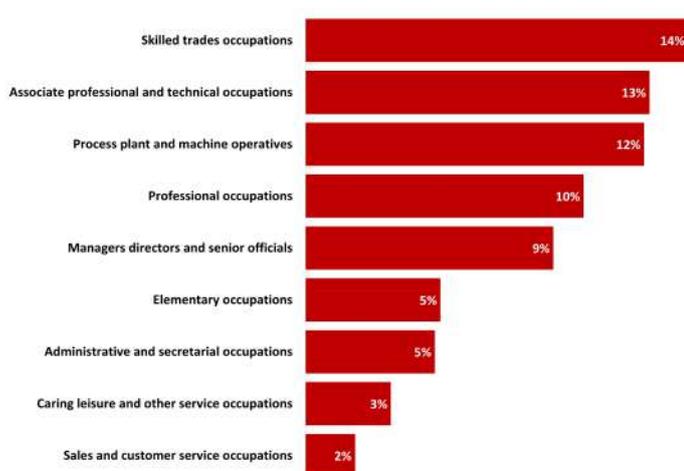


Figure 27 The gender pay gap is highest in the skilled trades occupational group. Gender pay gap by occupation groups, 2025. Source: ASHE, ONS.

Facts and Figures

The gender pay gap also varies substantially between regions and countries.

The South East of England has the highest gender pay gap (11%), while Northern Ireland has the lowest pay inequality (1.1%). However, in 2022 Northern Ireland was the only area where women were paid more than men (4.6%). Some areas have seen substantial reductions in the gap over the last 25 years, including Wales, Scotland, and the North East of England, whereas London has seen a far smaller change.



Figure 28 Regional changes over the last 25 years have been very different. Gender pay gap for median gross hourly earnings (excluding overtime) for full-time employees, by work region, UK, April 1997 (in blue) and 2025 (in red). Source: ASHE, ONS.

The gender pay gap is particularly pronounced among certain groups of workers, but across nearly all age groups, occupations, and regions, it remains a huge issue. **Collective bargaining has a vital role to play in addressing this and ensuring fair pay.**

6.2 Unite introduced its brand new Apprenticeship Charter during Apprenticeship Week

This past week (9-15 February) was Apprenticeship week. To celebrate the annual event Unite launched a new charter and lobbied employers to sign up to minimum standards.



- The Unite Apprenticeship Charter is available at <https://tinyurl.com/23p8pxen>

"Unite represents thousands of young people in apprenticeships and is totally focused on defending and improving their jobs, pay and conditions. Unite is lobbying employers up and down the country to sign up to our charter to ensure fair wages and treatment are baked into their apprenticeships. Apprenticeships should be a career pathway to skilled and secure work. While many employers offer this, the government needs to do more to stop bad bosses using apprenticeships as a source of cheap labour with training and contracts that go nowhere." Unite General Secretary, Sharon Graham

Apprentices are the future of our industries. They must be supported, valued, and treated fairly at every stage of their training and employment. The charter sets out the standards Unite expects for every apprentice.

It covers fair treatment and respect, pay and employment rights, training and development, health, safety and welfare, progression and opportunities, voice and representation alongside apprentice responsibilities.

Use the Apprenticeship Charter and our Apprenticeship Template Agreement for fair treatment of apprentices

If you have apprentices then share the Unite Apprenticeship Charter and our Apprenticeship Template Agreement with them and get your employer to sign up:

- The Charter (<https://tinyurl.com/23p8pxen>)
- The Agreement in Word (<https://tinyurl.com/u6p7z374>)
- The Agreement in PDF (<https://tinyurl.com/2rt667ww>).

"Unite supports apprentices in defending their rights, improving standards, and building strong futures across all industries. Apprentices who want support with workplace issues and to improve wages and working conditions should join Unite - there is power in a union." Unite National Young Members Coordinator, Frazer Lake

The agreement goes in-depth into the areas covered by the charter.

Facts and Figures

It can be negotiated as a stand-alone agreement, especially if your employer signs up to the charter. Alternatively, it could become part of your next pay claim.

If you use the Pay Claim Generator to create your pay claim then go to Section 6 and tick **Introduction of the Unite Apprenticeship Framework Agreement**.

If you need help using the Pay Claim Generator for the first time then see the PCG article below or email workvoicepay@unitetheunion.org and we'll happily guide you through it.

Unite will continue to promote apprenticeship best practice and work collaboratively with employers to ensure the best possible experience for apprentices.

6.3 The Government watered down the Employment Rights Act again this month

In the New Deal for Working People, negotiated with trade unions, Labour promised to “outlaw fire and rehire”. But with the introduction of the Employment Rights Act, **Labour’s policy on fire and rehire has become a “burnt out shell”**, as our General Secretary Sharon Graham put it, with Ministers repeatedly watering down rights and renegeing on commitments to workers.

Earlier this month, **Ministers announced new fire and rehire protections will be delayed until 1 January 2027**.

Now, the government is consulting on excluding benefits in kind, expenses and even changes to shift patterns from the new fire and rehire safeguards.

Unite alone has publicly called out the Labour government on watering down key manifesto commitments.

We will strongly oppose these changes and continue to do whatever it takes to protect our members from employers’ bullying fire and rehire tactics.



When the Employment Rights Bill was published, it included unfair dismissal protections against fire and rehire. But the rights included a significant “get out” clause for employers. Employers can defend dismissals by arguing their business faces serious financial difficulties and there is no alternative but to cut employee’s pay and conditions. The effectiveness of the new protections will depend entirely on the willingness of employment tribunals to second-guess employers’ financial assessment of their company. Something tribunals will never do!

Then, the government amended the Bill to permit the use of fire and rehire by public sector employers facing financial difficulties and struggling to deliver statutory services and who argue they have no choice but to cut pay and conditions. This includes local authorities, where commissioners have been appointed, such as in Birmingham City Council.

Fire and rehire happens where employers sack a workforce only to re-employ them on lower pay and conditions. Employers will often threaten fire and rehire to try to bully employees into “agreeing” changes. Such exploitative practices were widespread throughout the pandemic, at British Airways and beyond. Employers continue their use during the cost-of-living crisis at workplaces at food manufacturers, NHS trusts and local authorities.

Facts and Figures

The Government introduced amendments restricting "fire and rehire" safeguards to "core" T&Cs, leaving work location and job role not protected

Ministers also introduced amendments restricting fire and rehire safeguards to "core" terms and conditions. This includes pay, pensions, working hours, holidays and other forms of leave. But there are significant gaps. For example, an employee's work location and their job role are not protected.

Such restrictions could have a devastating impact on workers.

Take the intensive care nurses at **Bassetlaw Hospital** currently taking industrial action over "fire and rehire" contract changes that will force them to rotate between Bassetlaw and Doncaster Royal Infirmary. The nurses - who fear the transfers could lead to the permanent closure of Bassetlaw ICU - are taking short of strike action through a ban on working on any ward or unit other than Bassetlaw ICU. In response, the trust has banned the nurses from work and denied them pay. The nurses have continued to attend and make themselves available for work. Still the trust issued dismissal notices to the nurses in December 2025. They intend to sack the nurses in mid-March 2026 only to rehire them the next day on less favourable terms and conditions.

Under the Employment Rights Act, these ICU nurses are unlikely to be protected, because the employer is forcing through a change to their place of work.

MPs are also planning to proposes excluding changes to benefits in kind, expenses and even some changes to shift patterns from new automatic unfair dismissal rights

Now Ministers are planning to water down the new rights even further, issuing a consultation which proposes excluding changes to benefits in kind, expenses and even some changes to shift patterns from new automatic unfair dismissal rights. **As a result, employers will be allowed to force through detrimental changes to accommodation and travel arrangements for staff who work away from home - unless a union stops them!**



Such restrictions are outrageous and represent yet another government U-turn.

No government minister should decide which hard fought for terms and conditions matter to working people. Only workers can and should decide.

Unite will fiercely oppose these proposals. We will continue to do whatever it takes to protect our members from employers' bullying fire and rehire tactics.

6.4 Regulator warns that employers can break competition law by co-ordinating over wages

When Reps are negotiating with employers a common blockage is companies arguing they can't afford to pay more than the 'market rate'. **But what if employers are working together to keep wages down?**

In 2025, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), the UK's competition regulator, issued an updated guide on when co-ordination between employers over pay is illegal. Although aimed at employers' HR teams it is useful for Reps to know when companies might break the law. This falls into three main areas.

- No-poaching agreements

Companies must not enter formal or informal agreements with other businesses to not hire or poach each other's workers. Even informal understandings can be illegal. **No-poaching agreements are bad news for workers as they can reduce their ability to move job and be a downward pressure on wages.**

- Fixing wages and co-ordination on pay

Companies must not agree with other businesses to fix or cap wages, bonuses or pay increases.

Facts and Figures

'Co-ordination' is less blatant but has the same effect. Rather than formally agreeing "let's all cap pay at £15/hour", co-ordinating might involve sharing pay data or other ways of signalling plans.

- Sharing competitively sensitive information

Companies must not share non-public information about pay rates, future pay plans or hiring strategies with competitors.

Even benchmarking exercises can be illegal if they reveal sensitive data that affects competitive behaviour.



The CMA gave examples of employers co-ordinating over pay.

In 2025 it fined broadcast production companies like the BBC, ITV and Sky over £4 million for sharing information on pay rates for freelancers. It also made public examples of co-ordination between employers by email and WhatsApp.

Email to a competitor: *"We pay our Studio Vision Mixers £(X) per day for a 10 hour shift."* **Response:** *"That's exactly the same as we pay. Good to know we are aligned there."*

WhatsApp message to a competitor: *"We're thinking some rates might need adjusting for 2022/23 but want to be aligned. Wanted to be clear we have no intention of getting into a bidding war just want to be aligned and benchmark the rates. Also sick of being told we are not paying what others are which I inherently distrust."*



None of this affects collective bargaining and organising gig workplaces. Importantly issues around co-ordination on pay apply to employers and not to workers coordinating with each other through a union. The CMA's guidance makes clear that **the regulator will not intervene in collective bargaining when workers and companies negotiate** to reach agreement, provided this is genuine collective bargaining over pay and working conditions. This applies whether the workers are employed or self-employed.

This is important given the rise of self-employment in the 'gig economy'. This means that **workers can negotiate collectively where they are self-employed** without worrying that this might be considered co-ordination and so a problem under competition law

The CMA's report shows that employers can and will co-ordinate to try and hold wages down and sometimes they break the law doing so. **Workers' best defence against employers resisting wages increases is to work together both within companies and across sectors.** This is why linking up Reps through combines is critical to Unite's strategy.

6.5 Bite-sized Bargaining: Research shows that women, the young, LGBT+ and disabled people face disproportionate discrimination in the workplace

See below for a compilation of Equalities articles in our previous Facts & Figures issues. **Unite represents all its members equally and will fight and defend against all forms of discrimination**

- **Under the Worker Protection Act 2023, employers have to take reasonable steps to stop their workers from being sexually harassed at work.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/mj2apcj3> or look in the January 2025 edition, p.50-52.
- **Know your rights as a young worker or apprentice in the UK.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/3apsvm2y> or look in August 2025 edition, p.121-123.
- **The TUC reports over half of LGBT+ people experienced workplace bullying/harassment in the last five years.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc8hz43j> or look in the February 2025 edition, p.48-50.
- **The TUC reports disabled workers suffer from finding employment and being underpaid.** Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/2td2cztn> or look in the January 2025 edition, p.52-54.





SECTION SEVEN

BUILDING INDUSTRIAL POWER

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Where are we building our industrial power this month?

We will look to join up local fights and maximise our power through coordination. Without coordination, how can you build solidarity? Without solidarity, how can you build an effective Union or deliver results at the workplace?

Sharon Graham, Unite General Secretary



7. Where are we building our industrial power this month?

7.1 Unite members are flexing their strike muscles, and it is bringing home real gains

When we strike together, we win together.

- This month, more than 3,500 Unite members balloted at 18 employers across 10 sectors are taking [strike action](#).
- Unite members at **WSP Textiles**, who make sporting textiles used at the likes of Wimbledon and the Snooker World Championship, are on strike after the company offered a below-inflation pay increase.
- **BAE Systems** workers are taking renewed strike action after bad faith negotiations resulted in a poor pay offer and assault on their terms and conditions.
- **Imperial College** workers are on their second round of strike action, fighting back against a real terms pay cut of 2%.
- **Airedale NHS Foundation Trust** Microbiology workers who carry out diagnostic tests are on strike over an increased workload and unfair pay.



7.2 Unite members in different sectors including health, education, and local council are taking industrial action in February and March

2025 was another year where thousands of Unite members took industrial action and won inflation busting wins in their workplaces and sectors.

Facts and Figures

Fighting Unite members do not stop in 2026. Workers across many sectors are fighting for better pay, improved working conditions, and union recognition.

The Table below shows those workplaces currently in dispute.

Employer	Region	Unite Sector	Dates
Veolia ES (UK) Limited - All drivers and loaders, Veolia Sheffield	NEYH	Local Authorities	Alternative weeks until the end of the mandate Next block 16 - 22 Feb
Birmingham City Council - Waste Management Refuse Collection	WM	Local Authorities	Continuous
Job & Talent - Birmingham City Council bin collection agency workers.	WM	Local Authorities	Continuous
Glasgow VUR Village Trading No.1 Ltd	SC	Service Industries	until 19 Mar
VUE Cinema - Glasgow	SC	Service Industries	17 Feb - 04 Mar
WSP Textiles Limited	SW	CPPT	16 Feb - 04 Mar
BAE Systems - Warton and Salmsbury, air division	NW	Aerospace and Shipbuilding	02 - 20 Feb 23 Feb - 13 Mar
Airedale NHS Foundation Trust	NEYH	Health	18 - 21 Feb
Transport for Greater Manchester	NW	Local Authority	15 - 23 Feb
Diligenta Liverpool, Glasgow, Reading, Edinburgh and Stirling	National	Finance & Legal	TBC
Cambus Ltd.- Stagecoach Cambridge	LE	Passenger Transport	TBC
Wolffkran Limited - Crane operators	LE	Construction	20 Feb
NEU London Region	LE	Community, Youth Workers, and	TBC



Employer	Region	Unite Sector	Dates
		Not for Profit	
UCU	LE	Community, Youth Workers, and Not for Profit	12 - 20 Feb
Arriva London North	LE	Passenger Transport	22 Feb
Barking, Havering & Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust - Queens Hospital pathology lab scientists and clinical engineers	LE	Health	TBC
Imperial College - All members	LE	Education	24 Feb
CWM TAF MORGANNWG - South Wales NHS	WA	Health	23 Feb - 20 Mar

Table 2: Unite workplaces due to take industrial action from January 26. Source: Unite (as of 17 February 26)

7.3 Unite's Industrial Combines are leading the way in setting and raising standards across our sectors

Our Industrial Combines have helped bring Reps together to coordinate action sectorally. They are also the most effective way to raise awareness and understanding among workers within a specific industry.

Unite's Finance Combine will meet on 5-6 May in Glasgow to coordinate pay claims and negotiations

Unite's Finance Sector Combinewill meet on 5-6 May in Glasgow to coordinate pay claims and negotiations in the Banking and Insurance sector.



To get involved, please email Michelle.Smith@unitetheunion.org

Where are we building our industrial power this month?

Facts and Figures

Unite's Health Combine (England) will meet on 11 March

Since it was created in 2022, **Unite's Health Combine** for Reps in England meets regularly to discuss, agree and develop campaigns across the NHS in England. Together, it takes on issues that health workers face and supports them to win.

Meetings will take place on the 2nd Wednesday of each month and are open to all Reps in the sector.

The next Health Combine (England) is on 11 March. The meeting invitation was sent to Reps and a reminder will be sent along with a draft work programme.

Email National Officer Onay Kasab to join **the England Health Combine meetings each month**: onay.kasab@unitetheunion.org

Last two meetings have agreed priority items for Combine Campaigns. They will shortly be organised into a work plan for the Combine and distributed to reps. These items include:

- Pay Banding
- Reorganisations
- Safe Staffing
- Racism
- Outsourced Workers / Bank Workers / Sick Pay
- Disciplinarys / Bullying

The Combine has been working on "safe staffing levels" by linking NHS annual survey results, which show numbers of sick days, with work-based stress / injury as the reason for absence.

This followed a complaint made to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) by Unite. So far, the work has shown that Trusts generally do not even carry out stress risk assessments before or after staff return to work. This work has been piloted in one branch and will now be rolled out more widely.

The Combine also began work on awareness on pay banding levels and claims.



The victories and ongoing disputes from the **Health Combine** so far:

- **HSL** - pay victory (15.4% over two years, improved sick pay, introduction of special leave, additional annual leave and pension protection for transferred staff). But just as importantly, the union secured a commitment to determine workload and safe staffing levels. This win came after a period of strike action.
- **Mental Health Unit Workers in Newham (Grosvenor Facilities Management)** pay and recognition victory. (Up to 15% pay rise, five days additional annual leave and will now be entitled to two months full sick pay and an additional two months half sick pay)
- **Guys and St Thomas Cardiac Theatre Nurses** - win in dispute over payback of hours after balloting for strike action.
- **Bassetlaw ICU nurses** taking strike action over fire and rehire. (This dispute can set an example across the sector when it comes to fighting organisations because of the fire and rehire practice.)
- **Barking, Havering and Redbridge clinical engineering and pathology members** - the fight includes opposing the imposition of new shifts, reduction of pay protection, failure to address complaints of bullying and discrimination.
- **NHS England and ICB Cuts** - our public call opposing government plans.
- **Airedale NHS Foundation Trust Microbiology Department** - vote for strike action.
- **United Lincolnshire Teaching Hospital** - fighting against redundancies.

Facts and Figures

- **South West Yorkshire Partnership Teaching Hospital** - fighting for 'agenda for change' pay and conditions.
- **Mid and South Essex Foundation Trust** - demanding action after damning CQC report over “toxic management culture”.
- **Liverpool Hospital** lab workers - fighting for safe staffing.
- **Guys and St Thomas** - balloting on items including failure to consult, bank shifts, risk assessments, PPE and facility time for Reps.

Unite's Ground Services Combine will meet in March in London

Unite's Ground Services Combine will meet on 10-11 March in London and 16-17 June in Eastbourne. This combine includes anyone working in ground handling.

In the March meeting, there will be a session on day 2 led by the Organising department and it will focus on sector level coordination across Civil Air Transport.

In the last meeting, delegates of the Ground Services Combine came together to discuss pay coordination. Reps also had a session on how to use **Work, Voice, Pay** tools in their collective bargaining.



Reps can join future meetings to discuss pay and working conditions. Please register here:

<https://surveys.unitetheunion.org/260074216713955>

The Ground Services Combine has also been carrying out an **online survey about health-related issues** within the aviation industry. To join the survey, click on the link:

<https://surveys.unitetheunion.org/250274033423042>

To get involved, please email christine.vera@unitetheunion.org or National Officer Balvinder Bir: balvinder.bir@unitetheunion.org



In the last meeting, Reps also made a solidarity visit to the striking Birmingham bin workers.



7.4 Many National Industrial Sector Committees (NISCs) and Regional Industrial Sector Committees (RISCs) will take place in April

See below for a list of National Industrial Sector Committees (NISCs) that will meet across Britain throughout April.

Committee	Date	Location
Aerospace and Shipbuilding	14-15 April	Birmingham
Automotive	9 April	Sheffield
Civil Air Transport	15 April	London
Construction	15 April	TBC
CYW&NfP	21 April	Belfast
DRFW	21 April	Birmingham
Education	15 April	Oxford
EMS	21 April	Sheffield
Energy & Utilities	14-15 April	Belfast
FD&A	15-16 April	Cardiff
Finance & Legal	15 April	Birmingham
GDPC	14 April	TBC
GPM&IT	21 April	London

Where are we building our industrial power this month?

Facts and Figures

Committee	Date	Location
Local Authorities	9-10 April	Edinburgh
Passenger Transport	15-16 April	Liverpool
RTCW&L	15-16 April	Southampton
BAEM	23 April	Bournemouth
Disabled	28 April	London
LGBT+	27 April	London
Retired Members	21 April	Birmingham
Women	30 April	Birmingham
Young Members	24 April	Bristol

Regional Industrial Sector Committees (RISCs) for all sectors will also have meetings at the end of February and March. Please contact your region for more information.

7.5 Balloting Brief: Unite Reps across 13 workplaces are balloting their members in February and March

Unite members are fighting for better jobs, pay and conditions with fair and decent pay rises being essential during this cost-of-living crisis.

Across regions and sectors, Unite members are showing that they are prepared to face down bad bosses.

Employer	Region	Closing
Greenwich Leisure Ltd - All members within LB Greenwich's Adventure Play Centres	LE	19/02/2026
Soufflet Bairds Malt Ltd - All members working at the Longman Road, Inverness site	SC	23/02/2026
London Borough of Tower Hamlets - All members in Leisure Services	LE	25/02/2026
University and College Union - All members	LE	26/02/2026
International Transport Workers' Federation - All members employed below pay grade B4 who work at ITF House, Borough Road	LE	26/02/2026



Employer	Region	Closing
Brighton & Hove Bus and Coach Company - All members, including Metrobus Crawley staff	SE	02/03/2026
Guy's and St Thomas' Foundation - All members below Senior Management Team level	LE	02/03/2026
IPS Lea Interchange Bus Company Ltd - All Bus Driver members working at/from Lea Interchange Bus Garage	LE	09/03/2026
Arriva the Shires Ltd - All members within the Engineering Department at the Luton Depot, save for managers	LE	09/03/2026
DHL Services Ltd - All Hourly Paid Warehouse Operative members working at the Damson Way, JLR Solihull site.	WM	11/03/2026
London Borough of Newham - All members, save for Managers, employed on Red Book T&Cs at Bridge Road Depot	LE	26/03/2026
Leeds City Council - All members within the Local Auth Craft & Assoc JNC (Red Book) bargaining group	NEYH	26/03/2026
Durham County Council - All members employed on Red Book T&Cs	NEYH	26/03/2026

Figure 29 Unite workplaces currently balloting for industrial action. Source: Unite Balloting Department (as of 17 Jan 26)

Where are we building our industrial power this month?

8. Appendix 1: Significant Unite wins on pay and conditions

Major trade disputes won by Unite members over the last 12 months:

February 2026 wins

Sector	Company	Results
Docks, Rail, Ferries, & Waterways	Orkney Ferries	Two-year pay deal. In year one, a 5% pay increase and a non-consolidated £600 payment. In year two, a 3.5% pay increase or January 2026 RPI rate - whichever is higher.
Service Industries	Sodexo Remote Sites Scotland Limited	Two-year pay deal. In year one, a cost of living payment of up to £1,225, a 4% pay increase backdated to 1 April, and retention of the attendance bonus of up to £1,000. In year-two, a 4% pay increase and retention of the attendance bonus of up to £1,000.
Civil Air Transport	ICTS at Glasgow airport	9.8% increase for the baggage screeners last year backdated to October 2024
Food Drink and Agriculture	Diageo	15.5% in a three-year deal

January 2026 wins (RPI was 3.8%)

Sector	Company	Results
Civil Air Transport	Heathrow cabin crew at SAS airline	8% pay increase, overtime pay go to a maximum of £240, two additional days of annual leave, and an additional pay grade
Engineering, Manufacturing and Steel	Glen Dimplex	Between 6% to 8% pay increase
Engineering, Manufacturing and Steel	Bosch Rexroth Limited	4% pay increase backdated to 01/01/26.



Sector	Company	Results
Road Transport Commercial, Warehousing & Logistics	Menzies Distribution Solution Limited	4.25% pay increase for 2025, and 3.75% for 2026
Aerospace and Shipbuilding	Safran Nacelles Limited	4.5% pay increase backdated to February 2025 in year one, and 3.3% in year two. New employee incentive scheme worth up to £750 introduced.
Civil Air Transport	DHL Services Limited	18-month pay deal including a 5.5% pay increase backdated to October 2025, a 25% increase to night shift premiums, and a £250 payment.
Passenger Transport	First Glasgow	5% pay increase

December 2025 wins (RPI was 4.2%)

Sector	Company	Results
Health	GFM at Newham Centre for Mental Health	Up to 15% pay rise, five days additional annual leave, improved full & half day sick pay. Plus a recognition agreement
Passenger Transport	Arriva Leicestershire	6.5%, one off non-consolidated payment of £1,000 and an improvement to their bank holiday working rate
Passenger Transport	First Aberdeen	5.3% for one year
Passenger Transport	First Cymru	5%

November 2025 wins (RPI was 3.8%)

Sector	Company	Results
Docks, Rail, Ferries & Waterways	Immingham DB Cargo	£11,723 in back pay for each worker
Road Transport Commercial, Warehousing & Logistics	GXO Logistics	4%, boost to overtime payments

Facts and Figures

Sector	Company	Results
Government, Defence, Prisons, and Contractors	Amulet Security at Bank of England	4%+4% over two years, additional day of annual leave
Aerospace and Shipbuilding	Leonardo	8% over two years (across five sites)

October 2025 wins (RPI was 4.3%)

Sector	Company	Results
Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Process and Textiles	Altradon EnQuest's Magnus and Thistle Alpha platforms	4.5%
Aerospace and Shipbuilding	Lufthansa Technik	5%
Passenger Transport	Ribble Motor Services	Birkenhead - 10% Chorley and Preston - 6.2%
Passenger Transport	First West of England	8.6% over two years
Aerospace & Shipbuilding	Collins Aerospace	A fully consolidated 10.3% over a 28-month period
Civil Air Transport	Bournemouth International Airport	4.5% in year one, plus an additional £1/hour for workers classed as front of house backdated to 1 April. In year two, an additional pay rise of inflation plus 0.5%, or 3.1% (whichever is greater)

September 2025 wins (RPI was 4.5%)

Sector	Company	Results
Engineering, Manufacturing & Steel	EPTA UK	6% increase on all rates backdated to 1 April 2025, bonus scheme, improved holiday scheme, and improved maternity/paternity policy
Civil Air Transport	OCS Group at Edinburgh Airport	Two-year pay deal of 6.1% backdated to 1 January 2025 and a further 5% from 1 January 2026.



Sector	Company	Results
		Overtime rates increased by time and a half, as well as improved sick pay
Passenger Transport	First Potteries	9.8% pay deal over two years and £250 payment
Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Process and Textiles	Alpla UK	Two one-off payments of between £1,000 and £9,000 based on experience and one additional day holiday

August 2025 wins (RPI was 4.6%)

Sector	Company	Results
Public Transport	Cardiff Bus	5.86% + improvements to breaks and travel time
Public Transport	Stagecoach North-east	5%
Aerospace	Princess Yachts	6.50%
Service Industry	Village Hotel Glasgow	10%
Civil Aviation Transport	ICTS (Gatwick Airport)	7% + Bank holiday double time
Food, Drink & Agriculture	Dale Farm	4.75%
Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Process and Textile	Repsol Resources	8.5% over two years. In 2025/26, the pay increase amounts to 4.5% and in the following year due to changes in shift rotation allowances, workers will receive a further 4%.
Civil Aviation Transport	Glasgow Airport Limited	A two-year pay deal effective from January this year. In 2025, the pay deal includes a basic 4% rise alongside a one-off £500 payment. The cash payment is worth an additional 4% for the lowest paid members with airside support unit operatives gaining an additional uplift increasing their pay award by

Facts and Figures

Sector	Company	Results
		up to 11.6%. In 2026, the pay award will be equal to the December inflation rate and run for one year.

July 2025 wins (RPI was 4.8%)

Sector	Company	Results
Energy	Scottish Water	The lowest paid Grade 2 workers will receive a 10.67% pay increase with increases for all other grades tapering to a 4.85% increase for the highest Grade 8 staff.
Civil Aviation Transport	Skytanking 'front-of-house' customer service, ramp and bagging agents	A basic 5% increase
Civil Aviation Transport	Menzies Aviation	The one-year pay deal, an average increase of 6.5% with some members gaining up to 10%, introduction of a pay grade system which rewards length of service and skills.
Road Transport Commercial, Warehousing & Logistics	Wincanton (Marshalls contract) Wilson James (Heathrow Passenger Assistance)	5% + £1000 lump sum
Road Transport Commercial, Warehousing & Logistics	Oxalis Logistics UK Limited	Increases in the base rate and other elements of pay (excluding bonus): - Y1 - 5% . - Y2 - 3.5%. - Y3 - Effective 1st January 2027 - mean average of RPI and CPI for December 2026 with a minimum of 3%. Improvement to holiday and sick pay.



June 2025 wins (RPI was 4.4%)

Sector	Company	Results
Civil Aviation Transport	Wilson James (Heathrow Passenger Assistance)	12.5%
Graphical, Paper, Media & Information Technology	Amtcor Flexible Packaging	5.1%
Civil Air Transport	Gatwick Airport, Redline Oil	4.75% pay rise backdated to October 2025 + additional 1.75% from October 2025 + one fewer working hour a week
Community Youth Workers and Not for Profit	Livv Housing	7.7% + £175 non-consolidated payment + matched pension contributions between 6-10% + three more days annual leave + one fewer working hour a week

May 2025 wins (RPI was 4.3%)

Sector	Company	Results
Civil Air Transport	Glasgow Airport ICTS	9.8% backdated to October 2024 + one off bonus of £500
Food, Drink & Agriculture	Brakes Brothers	5.1-9.8% for warehouse workers, hygiene, and distribution drivers. An 88p hourly increase for all workers+ one-off payment up to £515.
Civil Air Transport	Glasgow Airport, ABM, and OCS	5% for cleaners, OCS workers, and night shift + double time for Christmas and New Years Day
Civil Air Transport	Prestwick Airport	Backdated 6.8% to 1 April and improved shift allowances
Passenger Transport	First Bus Glasgow	13.3% for engineers
Passenger Transport	Arriva Midlands	Workers earning £13.36 per hour will receive £14.00 per hour(backdated to July 2024) and £14:45 per hour from July 2025. Improvements to overtime rates and a new critical illness payment policy.

Facts and Figures

Sector	Company	Results
Engineering, Manufacturing & Steel	Merson Signs	Two-hour reduction in the working week with no loss of pay, effectively delivering a 5% average pay rise. Workers move to a four-day working week and receive up to £250 in back pay from 1 January.

April 2025 wins (RPI was 4.5%)

Sector	Company	Results
Civil Air Transport	Valero at East Midlands Airport	6.5% in year one, and 3.5% in year two backdated to June 2024. Improved overtime rates, more holiday entitlement, paid training, and a one-off lump sum.
Civil Air Transport	Edinburgh Airport	5.8% and increase to shift allowances backdated to January, increases to the bonus scheme by up to £450, other improvements to working conditions including paternity, income protection and training policies. Overall pay uplift is worth up to 8% for the airport workers.

March 2025 wins (RPI was 3.2%)

Sector	Company	Results
Automotive Industry	BMW Hams Hall	3.5%
Civil Air Transport	American Airlines (Heathrow engineers)	Roughly 10% over two years, taking the average wage to £108,000
Passenger Transport	First Bus Hampshire	6.5% over two years



9. Appendix 2: Unite recognition agreements

Over the last 12 months, Unite has secured many recognition agreements across the UK, with thousands more members now being covered by Unite in the workplace.

See below for a list of major recognition deals in the last year.

Date	Employer	Note
Jan 26	Trescal	Recognition agreement for Trescal employees based in Derby Riverside Court.
Dec 25	Grosvenor Facilities Management (GFM)	Union recognition and wage win (up to 15% and improvements to annual leave and sick pay).
Nov 25	Amulet Security at the Bank of England	Union recognition and enhanced pay.
Oct 25	Bear Scotland	Union recognition and wage win (up to 7.25% and improvements to standby payments).
Oct 25	Norwich Eaton Park Café	Voluntary recognition agreement marking the first ever hospitality venue in the city to sign an agreement recognising its workers' chosen union.
Sep 25	Gipson Supported Independent Living	Recognition agreement covers everyone from housing support workers and counsellors to advice and employment workers.
Aug 25	EMCOR UK	A formal recognition agreement for workers in facilities management at Oxford University.
Aug 25	Lineage	Recognition agreement for 30 drivers and shunters.
Aug 25	Liverpool University	Improvement of collective bargaining agreement with new terms to protect home working for over 300 professional services staff after strike action.
Aug 25	Lockwood Haulage	Recognition agreement.
July 25	Culina Logistics in Til-	Recognition for 300+ workers.

Facts and Figures

Date	Employer	Note
	bury Port	
July 25	Oscar Mayer	Recognition agreement for more than 500 workers, reinstatement of 26 dismissed workers, improvements to holiday compensation.
July 25	TAC Healthcare Group Limited on Repsol platforms	Recognition agreement for around 20 off-shore medics.
Jun 25	Macmillan Cancer Support	Recognition agreement voted for by over 200 workers.
May 25	Key	Extension of recognition agreement for 2,500 social care workers across Scotland.
May 25	Sodexo at Sullom Voe terminal	Recognition agreement for 30 workers at Sullom Voe terminal.
Feb 25	Baxter Storey	Formal recognition for Drax Canteen workers as well as a 5% pay rise for 2025.
Feb 25	Siemens Mobility	Recognition agreement for factory workers who strip down, repair, and reassemble trains.
Jan 25	Advocacy Service Aberdeen (ASA)	Recognition agreement for 20 workers and volunteers who provide services for vulnerable residents in Aberdeen.
Jan 25	North Air tanker drivers (Scottish airports)	4.5% on basic pay plus bigger uplifts for shift allowance, overtime, and bonus rates, extension of recognition agreements.
Jan 25	Wilson James (Security @Sullom Voe)	New recognition agreement, alongside other Unite organised employers at the terminal.



10. Appendix 3: Other unions' major pay increases

The following table details private sector pay deals of 5%+ won by other unions over the last year, taken from the **Labour Research Department**. They include multi-year deals.

Company	Date	Result (%)
DHL Inside Track	Apr 25	10.13
Capita TVL (Bristol and Darwen)	Apr 25	9.52
Damory Coaches	May 25	7.7
John Lewis/ Waitrose	Apr 25	7.35
City Cruises	Apr 25	7
GIST (Carlisle) BOC	Apr 25	6.77
Carlisle Support Services (Northern Trains)	Apr 25	6.73
Fiskars (Formally Wedgwood)	Apr 25	6.73
Hovertravel	Apr 25	6.73
Leather Producing Industry	Apr 25	6.73
Racing Staff NJC	Apr 25	6.73
Anderson Maguire	Apr 25	6.7
Baxterstorey Willow Green Bridgewater Morrisons distribution centre	Apr 25	6.7
Deeside Cereals	Apr 25	6.7
Lees of Scotland (Coatbridge)	Apr 25	6.7
Lightbody Eurocentral Finsbury Food Group (both in Hamilton and Motherwell)	Apr 25	6.7
NICHOLAS & HARRIS Ltd	Jan 25	6.7
Organ Building JIC (IBO)	Jan 25	6.7
Savencia Fromage & Dairy	Jan 25	6.7
Mitie (Merseyrail Soft Services)	Apr 25	6.67
GXO Logistics (Asda) Rochdale ASC & Skelmersdale ASC & Wakefield ASC	Apr 25	6.55
Radisson Blu Canary Wharf	Apr 25	6.53

Facts and Figures

Company	Date	Result (%)
Midcounties Co-operative Society (Food)	Apr 25	6.5
Well Pharmacy [Bestway] (Pharmacists/ Pharmacist Managers)	Apr 25	6.5
Warrington and Vale Royal College	Aug 25	6.5
Sofina (Scunthorpe)	Apr 25	6.49
Glatfelter (Caerphilly)	Apr 25	6.47
G4S (PSNI)	Mar 25	6.3
GXO Logistics (Asda) Bedford ASC, Bristol ASC, Erith ASC, Magna Park ASC/ERC, Washington ASC	Apr 25	6.18
Scottish Midland Co-op Society (Scotmid)	Apr 25	6
ABP Scotbeef (Bridge of Allan)	Apr 25	6
Labour Relations Agency (Northern Ireland)	Aug 25	6
Phoenix Healthcare Distribution	Apr 25	5.93
A & P Falmouth	Apr 25	5.9
Pladis - both (United Biscuits - Manchester) and (United Biscuits - McVities) Harlesden	Apr 25	5.8
Doulton Water Filters	Apr 25	5.75
Mantec Industrial Ceramics	Apr 25	5.75
Gate Gourmet (LNER Contract)	Apr 25	5.7
Booker Wholesale Branch Assistants and Supervisors	Apr 25	5.6
Well Pharmacy [Bestway] (HSC)	Apr 25	5.5
Dartline	Apr 25	5.45
Carlisle Support Services (Arriva Rail London) Cleaners	Apr 25	5.4
Bidvest Noonan (c2c Contract)	Apr 25	5.3
HATS Group (both Lewisham Hospital Patient Transport and Queen Elizabeth Hospital Woolwich Patient Transport)	Apr 25	5.3
Nottingham Trams Ltd (NTL)	Jun 25	5.3
NSL (Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea)	Apr 25	5.26

Facts and Figures



Company	Date	Result (%)
2 Sisters Food Group (Thetford)	Apr 25	5.2
AF Blakemore	Apr 25	5
Aldridge Fabrications	Apr 25	5
Amber Valley Norse	Apr 25	5
Bespoke Facilities Management (Hitachi Rail Doncaster)	Apr 25	5
FES FM LTD	Apr 25	5
G4S (both in Kent Patient Transport Services and Northern Ireland Courts & Tribunals Service)	Apr 25	5
Independent Theatre Council (ITC) Performers, Stage Managers & Choreographers	Apr 25	5
ISS (Northern Trains)	Apr 25	5
Kerry Foods (Hillington)	Apr 25	5
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	Jul 25	5
Marks & Spencer	Apr 25	5
North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College	Sep 25	5
Pilgrims Pride UK Ltd (Bristol)	Apr 25	5
Royal Mail Property & Facilities Solutions (RMPFSL) Cleaners	Apr 25	5
Tata Consumer Products GB	Apr 25	5
United wholesale	Apr 25	5
Veolia (West Berkshire)	Apr 25	5
Walkers Shortbread	Apr 25	5

Endnotes

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- ¹⁸Unite analysis of ASHE 2025 data from ONS
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