

Pay boost for millions as National Minimum and Living Wage rates go up from today

- Around 2.5 million UK workers will receive a pay rise, as the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage increase today
- £1,000 a year pay rise for full time workers following the largest ever uplift to the National Living Wage for workers aged 23 and over
- Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng: “While no government can control the global factors pushing up the cost of everyday essentials, we will absolutely act wherever we can to mitigate rising costs.”

Millions of UK workers will receive a pay rise from today (Friday 1 April 2022), as the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rise comes into effect.

The uplift in wages, which will benefit around 2.5 million people, includes the largest ever increase to the National Living Wage. It will put £1,000 a year more into full-time workers’ pay packets, helping to ease cost of living pressures.

With today’s rise, the yearly earnings of a full-time worker on the National Living Wage will have increased by over £5,000 since the introduction of the National Living Wage by the government in April 2016.

As a direct result of government action, the current number of employees on the payroll is over 600,000 more than pre-pandemic levels – and unemployment has fallen to 3.9%.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

We have never been more determined to make work pay, and by providing the biggest cash increase ever to the National Living Wage from today, we are giving a boost to millions of UK workers.

While no government can control the global factors pushing up the cost of everyday essentials, we will absolutely act wherever we can to mitigate rising costs.

With more employees on the payroll than ever before, this government will continue to stand up for workers.

Today’s uplift will particularly benefit workers in sectors such as retail, hospitality and cleaning and maintenance. Apprentices will also get a large 11.9% increase to their minimum hourly pay, with 21 to 22 year-olds seeing an immediate 9.8% rise. The National Living Wage, the minimum wage for over 23

year-olds, will now move up to £9.50 an hour.

Last year, the age threshold for the rate moved from age 25 to 23, meaning that more young workers are now eligible for a higher wage.

The new National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates are both statutory minimums, and businesses are encouraged to pay workers above these whenever they can afford to do so.

Recent studies show significant benefits for employers who pay their staff higher wages, which includes higher job retention and staff productivity.

In full, the increases from 1 April 2022 are:

Rate	From April 2022	Current rate (April 2021 to March 2022)	Increase
National Living Wage	£9.50	£8.91	6.6%
21 to 22 year old rate	£9.18	£8.36	9.8%
18 to 20 year old rate	£6.83	£6.56	4.1%
16 to 17 year old rate	£4.81	£4.30	4.1%
Apprentice rate	£4.81	£4.30	11.9%
Accommodation offset	£8.70	£8.36	4.1%

With the rates going up from today, workers across the UK are being urged to check they are being paid properly. This can be done by visiting the [Check Your Pay site](#), which also offers advice on what to do if you are being underpaid.

The government also today announced it will be launching a communications campaign in the coming weeks to help increase understanding among minimum and living wage earners around the wages they are legally entitled to, as well as the steps they can take if they are concerned they are being underpaid.

Record increases in global gas prices this year saw the Energy Price Cap, set by the independent regulator Ofgem, rise by 54%. While a worrying time for households, the price cap continues to insulate millions of households from high wholesale gas prices.

Today's uplift comes alongside further government measures worth over £9.1 billion to support people across the UK with rising energy bills, with the majority of households receiving £350 in total. This will help over 28 million households affected by the large spike in global energy prices, protecting them from half of the average forecast bill rise.

The package includes a £150 rebate in Council Tax bills for all households in Bands A to D in England – 80% of households – with payments being made from today (Friday 1 April 2022), and a £200 reduction in energy bills for all households from October 2022 through the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

This contributes to wider government support to ease cost of living pressures worth £22 billion next financial year as well as government plans to drive £6 billion into making homes more energy efficient over the next ten years,

which is vital to keeping household energy costs down.

The government is also announcing further help for low-income households to meet energy costs with the publication of consultation responses on the extension of the Warm Homes Discount and Energy Company Obligation schemes.

The Warm Homes Discount scheme is being extended until 2025/2026 and expanded to reduce the energy costs of around £3 million low-income and vulnerable households every year, while the Energy Company Obligation scheme will see £1 billion annual funding until 2026 to help upgrade energy efficiency measures in 450,000 homes, cutting an average of £300 off energy bills.

Going even further to ease the cost of living, last week as part of the Spring Statement, the Chancellor Rishi Sunak announced a new Tax Plan, including cuts to fuel duty by 5p per litre, and that energy efficiency measures can be installed in homes VAT free for the first time ever.

The Chancellor Rishi Sunak said:

This historic increase will mean a pay rise for millions of hard-working Brits – with an average full-time worker pocketing an extra £1,000 a year.

We're doing everything we can to ensure people keep more of what they earn in these challenging times, with a new Tax Plan that delivers tax cuts for nearly 30 million people as well as £22 billion to help with the cost of living.

Bryan Sanderson Chair of the Low Pay Commission said:

The Business Secretary's strong support is especially welcome at this difficult time. Workers on the minimum wage; care for our elderly and sick, harvest and deliver our food, and do a multitude of other tasks which help us all.

Many public sector workers including for example teaching assistants will also shortly be included. They all deserve to be properly remunerated and respected as key members of our society.

The Low Pay Commission met with around 100 representative bodies last year before making its recommendations. We are frequently their main sometimes even their only advocates. With government support we will continue to try to ensure that they do not suffer from the neglect which was so often characteristic of the past.

The new rates – announced at the Chancellor's Spending Review 2021 – were recommended by the independent body the Low Pay Commission, following extensive consultation.

The government is committed to the target of the NLW reaching two-thirds of median earnings by 2024, and this increase means we are on track to meet this.

Last week we published this year's remit to the Low Pay Commission, asking them to make recommendations later this year for minimum wage rates to apply from April 2023.

Examples on how paying a higher wage promotes good productivity includes: Riley and Bondibene, 'Raising the Standard: Minimum Wages and Firm Productivity', 2017

The workers most likely to benefit from the uplift is outlined in the government's impact assessment published alongside the regulations.

Other changes to workers' rights come into force today, including a certification officer levy for trade unions. Please find out more: [government confirms plans to modernise trade union regulator](#).

Workers across the UK are entitled to the minimum wage, including Ukrainian refugees. For information on NMW entitlement please see: [The National Minimum Wage and Living Wage](#).

We encourage all employees to check their pay, particularly if you feel you are being paid incorrectly. For more details on the check your pay campaign, please see: [Check Your Pay site](#).

The regional breakdown for people in the UK on the National Living Wage or National Minimum Wage are:

Region	Coverage of NLW and NMW rates
North east	113,000
North west	295,000
Yorkshire and Humber	236,000
East Midlands	214,000
West Midlands	256,000
South west	219,000
East	209,000
London	212,000
South east	284,000
Wales	122,000
Scotland	174,000
Northern Ireland	138,000

British Embassy Panama: 2022-2023 call for project proposals coming soon

News story

The British Embassy in Panama will soon announce a call for proposals through social media channels.



The British Embassy in Panama City will shortly be announcing its call for proposals for projects between April 2022 and March 2023. The call for project proposals will be published on the Embassy's Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook accounts. We encourage non-profit and multilateral organizations to consider their ideas for the funding bids process.

We will consider proposals that directly support the following thematic areas:

1. Open societies

- a) Open Data and access to information
- b) Democracy
- c) Human rights (LGBT+, Afrodescendant people, indigenous communities)
- d) Media freedom

2. Climate change

- a) Waste management and recycling
- b) Implementation of COP26 commitments
- c) Energy transition and clean growth
- d) Links between climate change and academia

3. Accessible education

- a) Bilingualism
- b) Creative industries development, cultural, software, AI, IoT
- c) Technologies for virtual learning
- d) STEM education

About the International Programme Fund (IPF)

The International Programme Fund (IPF) of the United Kingdom was launched in 2015 as a responsive, agile fund to support the strategic objectives of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The IPF supports adaptive, short-term projects which also influence local policies and create networks that open opportunities for further engagement and diplomacy.

Projects must qualify as Official Development Assistance (ODA). ODA is a term created by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. ODA projects have, as a primary objective, the promotion of economic development and welfare, while ensuring gender equality, inclusion, and compliance with Paris Agreement objectives. To learn more about how the UK Government uses ODA, click [here](#).

Recommendations to consider when preparing a proposal

- Project proposals must be aligned with the [FCDO's priorities](#) and thematic areas above
- Projects cannot last longer than 9 months
- The total cost of a project should be between \$10,000 and \$30,000 USD (or the equivalent in other currencies)
- Unfortunately, we cannot consider projects which include the purchase of equipment and IT devices
- The call for proposals is not intended for individuals, for-profit or government organizations
- Project proposals should identify the key beneficiaries and reflect the "change" they will bring
- Project proposals should state the issues they will address and why the UK should fund them
- Payments to implementing partners during the project will be made in arrears (i.e. for actual costs incurred by the implementing partner after project activities take place). The Embassy cannot accept proposals that include advance payments

UK convenes international conference to secure military aid for Ukraine

Press release

The Defence Secretary hosted the second International Defence Donor Conference for Ukraine, leading efforts of partners to bolster the Armed Forces of Ukraine.



The conference brought together over 35 international partners to discuss the latest situation in Ukraine and the country's most pressing requirements for lethal and non-lethal military aid.

The international community has committed to widening its package of military support for Ukraine and explored new ways of sustaining the Armed Forces of Ukraine over the longer term, including the provision of increasingly capable air and coastal defence systems, artillery and counter battery capabilities, armoured vehicles and protected mobility, as well as wider training and logistical support.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace MP said:

Today's donor conference demonstrates the international community's determination to support Ukraine in the face of President Putin's illegal and unprovoked invasion by Russian forces.

We are increasing our coordination to step-up that military support and ensure the Armed Forces of Ukraine grow stronger as they continue to repel Russian forces.

The first Donor Conference was held on 25 February, boosting the provision of immediate support as Russia commenced its invasion. The number of participants has since increased to 35.

The UK Government is now working with Poland, the United States, and other partners to coordinate the provision of longer term international support, alongside the recently announced new UK military support package for Ukraine.

The UK has supported Ukraine since the 2014 invasion, training over 20,000 Ukrainian personnel, and earlier this year started providing lethal aid. This has included over 4,000 NLAWs and Javelin anti-tank systems, as well as committing to send Starstreak air defence systems and 6,000 new anti-tank and high explosive missiles. This is in addition to a range of non-lethal aid including body armour, helmets, boots, ration packs, rangefinders and communications equipment.

Published 31 March 2022

[Home Secretary meeting with Israel's Interior Minister](#)

News story

Priti Patel met with Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked during her visit to London, to discuss a number of issues including the conflict in Ukraine and counter-terrorism.



The Home Secretary expressed her pleasure at being able to welcome Minister Shaked to the Home Office in person and opened the meeting by expressing her condolences on behalf of the government to the families of the victims of Tuesday's terror attack in Bnei Brak, as well as those affected by recent attacks in Beersheba and Hadera.

Both ministers expressed their condemnation of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the Home Secretary explained to her counterpart the various ways in which the government is helping Ukrainians seeking to come to the UK at this uncertain time.

Minister Shaked expressed her gratitude to the Home Secretary for the announcement last November of the proscription of Hamas in its entirety as a terrorist organisation. The Home Secretary reiterated that the UK stands shoulder to shoulder with Israel in the global fight against terrorism and that the government remains committed to working together with Israeli counterparts in the vital sphere of counter-terrorism.

Both ministers shared their concerns about the ways in which individuals can become radicalised and agreed to maintain a dialogue on dealing with this problem. They also agreed to work together on tackling harmful content online so as to help make the internet a safer place, free from hate, terrorism and antisemitism.

Priti Patel said:

The UK's relationship with Israel is extremely important and it was a great pleasure to host Minister Shaked at the Home Office earlier.

Our governments already work together closely and that cooperation could not be more important at a time of great international uncertainty, given current events in Ukraine.

Published 31 March 2022

East Anglia ONE North Offshore Windfarm & East Anglia TWO Offshore Windfarm development consent decisions announced

The East Anglia ONE North Offshore Windfarm application was for an offshore wind farm which could consist of up to 67 turbines, generators and associated infrastructure, with an installed capacity of up to 800MW, located 36km from Lowestoft and 42km from Southwold.

The East Anglia TWO Offshore Windfarm application was for an offshore wind farm which could consist of up to 75 turbines, generators and associated infrastructure, with an installed capacity of up to 900MW, located 37km from Lowestoft and 32km from Southwold.

The applications were submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by ScottishPower Renewables on behalf of East Anglia ONE North

Limited and East Anglia Two Limited on 25 October 2019 and accepted for Examination on 22 November 2019.

Following Examinations during which the public, Statutory Consultees and Interested Parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, recommendations were made to the Secretary of State on 06 October 2021.

These are the 107th and 108th Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and 66th and 67th energy applications respectively to have been examined by The Planning Inspectorate within the timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

"The Planning Inspectorate has examined more than 100 nationally significant infrastructure projects since the Planning Act 2008 process was introduced, ensuring local communities have had the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them.

These Examinations took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated restrictions, and the Examining Authority worked hard to ensure that local people, the local authority and other Interested Parties were able to fully participate.

The Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to local views and the evidence gathered during the examination before making their recommendations."

The decisions, the recommendations made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendations are publicly available on the project pages of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

[East Anglia ONE North Offshore Windfarm](#) [East Anglia TWO Offshore Windfarm](#)

Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office, on 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate's [National Infrastructure Programme of Projects](#) details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months.