

We need to create more opportunities for our young people

9th April 2017

Youth employment levels in Scotland still haven't recovered from the global financial crash.

Before the full onset of the financial crisis the number of 16-24 year olds in employment stood at 365,000.

The latest figures show that youth employment has not recovered to pre-crisis levels and currently stands at 341,000.

What would Scottish Labour do?

We need to give our young people the skills they need to compete for the jobs of the future.

That means investing in education, not carrying on the cuts. It also means reforming the system so that it is fairer. Your chance to get on in life shouldn't be based on how much your parents earn but your own talent, ambition and work ethic.

We want to see better bursaries for the poorest students, and tailor our apprenticeship schemes more closely to the jobs market.

We'd stimulate our economy with investment, bringing forward infrastructure spending with a specific focus on housebuilding.

Across Scotland, Labour has a plan that works for your community

In Glasgow, Labour will offer guaranteed job for every 18-to-24 year old

In North Lanarkshire, Labour will create 10,000 new jobs and guarantee one for our young people.

In West Dunbartonshire, Labour will create 3,000 new jobs and apprenticeships to help people back into work and grow the local economy

In Edinburgh, Labour will expand and fund training opportunities for adults and young people, working with colleges, to help them raise their skills and earnings.

In Aberdeen Labour has a City Centre Masterplan which will create more than 5,000 jobs and attract investment of around £1 billion.

Like our plans? [Then spread our message.](#)

[Our Child Benefit plan would help half a million families](#)

8th April 2017

Labour's plans to boost child benefit would help over half a millions Scottish families and nearly 1 million kids.

We want to see child benefit increased by **£240 by 2020**.

This move will lift thousands of children out of poverty and put money back into the pockets of working class families.

You can find out how many families in your local area would [be better off here](#).

We aren't the only people who want to see this happen. So do the [Child Poverty Action Group](#).

We want to see this plan in the Child Poverty Bill, which Holyrood will debate later this year.

Earlier this week new figures revealed that working poverty in Scotland is at its highest point since the Scottish Parliament was established in 1999.

Scotland has huge new powers over social security. We can radically reshape our country to make it fairer.

Rather than focusing on dividing Scotland again with another referendum, SNP ministers should be working with Labour to put money back into the pockets of working class families and lifting children out of poverty.

Agree with our plan? Then help spread our message.

[Scotland has a hidden jobs crisis](#)

7th April 2017

Scotland has a hidden jobs crisis, with real unemployment standing at nearly 10 per cent.

Analysis from the independent Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe)

has revealed that real unemployment in Scotland between 2015 and 2016 stood at 322,000 – or 9.4 per cent of the labour market.

Why is real unemployment so much higher than the stats we normally see?

Real unemployment is calculated by combining the figure for unemployment people with those who are economically inactive but want a job.

People who are economically inactive but want a job make up 23.8% of those aged 16-64 who are defined as “Economically inactive”

That's an additional 190,000 people.

What do the experts say?

Professor Brian Ashcroft has written about economic inactivity before. He was warning about real unemployment [rising five years ago](#).

The STUC – Scotland's Trades union Congress – have raised concerns before that official stats [don't show the real condition of our jobs market](#):

“Understandably, the political debate revolves around the headline employment and unemployment rates and rarely addresses these other trends. The STUC has sought to highlight that the true level of demand for labour is not always reflected in the ILO and claimant count and has published regular labour market reports which have included the development of a measure of ‘Scotland’s Full-Time Employment Deficit.’

And the respected think tank the Fraser of Allander Institute recently talked about [rising levels of inactivity](#):

“[inactivity rates] have increased over the past 18 months. What is interesting is that women account for much of the rise. The increase in female inactivity of over 50,000 (16-64) coincides with falling unemployment (-19,000) and employment (-32,000) (both 16+) over the past 18 months.”

How would Labour fix this?

We would stimulate our economy by using the power of procurement to ensure high quality jobs and front load investment in housebuilding.

We'd make work pay and invest in skills so we can compete for the jobs of the future. Building our economy from the ground up and for the long term. [You can read more here.](#)

Agree with our plan? [Then help spread our message.](#)

We can make working poverty history

6 April 2017

Working poverty in Scotland is at its highest level since devolution.

Since 2007 the number of households in poverty where at least one adult works has increased by 150,000 to 420,000. That's a failure of the SNP in government, and a sign of a broken economy.

A job should be enough to keep people above the breadline. Here is what Labour would do to change that:

Use the social security powers

We'd increase Child Benefit by £240 by 2020 and ensure that £2 billion worth of unclaimed payments like tax credits and housing benefit go to the people who are entitled to them. Increasing Child Benefit would lift around tens of thousands of children out of poverty, according to expert groups like the Child Poverty Action Group.

Make work pay

While the SNP dishes out millions of pounds in taxpayer funded grants to companies like Amazon, Labour will ensure that no business receives a public contract or taxpayer grant without guaranteeing to pay the real living wage.

We'll work to extend the real living wage into the jobs where it needs to be: low paid industries like hospitality and retail.

Tackle the cost of living

A decade on from promising to scrap the council tax, all the SNP has done is scrap the council tax freeze.

Labour would abolish the council tax and replace it with a fairer system where 80% of households would pay less.

We would move towards more flexible childcare, starting with a breakfast club in every school.

And we would take back control of public transport, meaning we could freeze or even cut fares on our trains and buses.

Invest for the long term

We'll only end working poverty for good if we give our people the skills they need to compete for the jobs of the future.

That means investing in education with more resources in our schools and fairer bursaries for our students.

We would reform our schools system to tilt the balance away from the richest and towards the rest.

And we'll future proof our economy to take steps towards coding being as vital in our classrooms as literacy and numeracy.

Agree with our plan? [Then spread our message.](#)

[Amazon has raked in millions in taxpayer grants from the SNP](#)

5th April 2017

The SNP government has channelled millions of pounds of taxpayers' cash to Amazon since 2007.

Now figures released by Scottish Enterprise, Scotland's economic development agency, show that Amazon has benefited from more than £3.6million of taxpayer grants since the nationalists came to power.

Amazon has [hit the headlines](#) in recent months for poor working conditions.

Despite this – these taxpayer grants were not conditional on paying the living wage.

Why does this matter?

Low pay is growing in Scotland. The number of Scots paid less than the real living wage has increased [by 70,000 since 2013.](#)

70 per cent of workers in the accommodation and food service sectors earn less than the real living wage, with 45 per cent in the wholesale and retail trade sector earning less than the real living wage.

People across Scotland urgently need a payrise, but instead their taxes are supporting companies who deliver fair pay.

What would Labour do differently?

We would extend the living wage to more jobs, especially to low pay sectors like retail and hospitality.

We wouldn't give companies taxpayer funded grants or contracts unless they delivered a living wage guarantee.

We tried to change the law on this a few years ago – [but the SNP voted against.](#)

Agree with our plan? [Then help spread our message](#)