# Becoming a fair work nation - Scottish Government consultation Scottish Youth Parliament response December 2021

#### Questions - Fair Work in the current economic context

# 6. What do you believe are the barriers to delivering Fair Work given the current economic challenges in Scotland?

The following response is based on current Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) policy, previous research, and discussion with eleven Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) who took part in a focus group to discuss this inquiry on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

Young people have identified the following barriers to Fair Work in Scotland:

#### Low wages and poor remuneration

Low wages and poor remuneration was the biggest barrier to delivering fair work in Scotland highlighted in discussions at the December 2021 focus group with young people. In particular, young people noted:

- The age brackets for receipt of national minimum wage are unfair. One young person asked "Why should someone who's 18 earn less than someone aged 24 for doing the same job?".
- Young people are unaware of what they are legally entitled to be paid, and therefore aren't able to challenge employers if they are not receiving this. One young person commented "I just learnt that the national minimum wage for under 16s is £4.62. I know a lot of young people in my area won't know that, and aren't getting paid that."
- There is a discrepancy between the National Living Wage rate as prescribed by the UK Government, and between the Real Living Wage as calculated on living costs by organisations such as the Living Wage Foundation. One young person highlighted the experience of one of their constituents: "They work for the NHS in the Highlands and travel 300-400 miles each week. The cost of fuel has gone up, but their pay has been dropped, and they have to buy their own PPE because frontline workers are not getting the right PPE to keep themselves and others safe."
- Young people are particularly concerned that zero hour contracts prevent young people from making the money they need in order to pay rent and bills, buy food, or even to travel to work.

We recognise that employment is a reserved matter, and therefore the Scottish Government has limited powers in relation to tackling income inequality. However, this issue is a major concern to many young people.

## Racism and discrimination in the workplace

Another barrier highlighted by young people at the focus group on 15<sup>th</sup> December was the presence of racism and discrimination in the workplace.

In March 2020, SYP carried out a survey and focus group to find out young people's views for the Scottish Parliament's Race Equality, Employment and Skills Inquiry. More information is available in <u>SYP's response to this inquiry</u> and on pages 7-8 of the <u>#WhatsYourTake report</u>. In summary, our recommendations in this response were:

- Work experience and placements should be made available to young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Interview skill development opportunities, apprenticeships, and peer support / network groups should be made available to young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

In April 2020, the Scottish Youth Parliament, alongside Young Scot and YouthLink Scotland, carried out research that demonstrated a need for action to address racism in the workplace. The *Lockdown Lowdown* reports asked young People of Colour about their experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic, and they told us:

"There's two different situations, [People of Colour] haven't been able to go to work because ... they don't want to put themselves at risk, they don't want to put their kids at risk, they don't want to put their family at risk, so they haven't been able to go to work which is hurting their finances. Or they are having to work where they are putting themselves into danger which ... isn't like a good option either." [Participant - Lockdown Lowdown 2.0 Report]

#### "A specific group of Black people affected more - carers, hospital workers, nurses, service-industry people, bar-tenders, those were the people who we saw being discriminated against" [Participant - Lockdown Lowdown 2.0 Report]

<u>This blog post</u> by Imaan Hussain MSYP outlines her views on why tackling racial inequality is essential.

For more information and insight into the experiences of young Black and young People of Colour, we recommend Intercultural Youth Scotland's <u>'Mapping the Young Person's</u> <u>Journey'</u> report.

# The long-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

In April 2020, SYP, Young Scot, and YouthLink Scotland published <u>Lockdown Lowdown</u> - a report showing what young people in Scotland are thinking about COVID-19. This report contains the results of a survey carried out at the start of the first lockdown. The survey received 2,421 completed responses.

- Of those who answered a question about their employment situation, over a third (36%) stated that they were moderately or extremely concerned.
- Of those who answered a question about their financial situation, almost a third (30%) said that they are moderately or extremely concerned.
- Almost two thirds of respondents (61%) stated that they were moderately or extremely concerned about the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on their future.

A further *Lockdown Lowdown* consultation was carried out in November 2020 to find out young people's experiences as lockdown restrictions change. This consultation included a <u>survey of over 6,000 young people</u> from across Scotland, and a number of <u>focus groups</u> with young people from seldom heard groups.

When asked if they felt good about their current employment situation, 29% of those in fulltime employment and of those in part-time employment disagreed or strongly disagreed.

"I finished my degree during lockdown and cannot find a graduate job. Now the bar I work in is closing and i have been made redundant. This wasn't supposed to happen after going to uni." The most common impact of the pandemic for those in part-time employment was that their hours had been reduced (41%). Almost two fifths (38%) stated that they were furloughed. A quarter (26%) have had to alter their working conditions, and 12% said they have lost their job.

"Many of my friends across the country have been made redundant or are now unemployed through no fault of their own. The closure or limits upon opening of pubs, bars, etc. (current and/or previous) has impacted many of my friends' employment, lifestyles, financial support or financial independence."

Over half of the respondents in full-time employment had to alter their working conditions (54%). Almost two fifths (38%) stated that they were furloughed. Around a fifth (22%) had experienced a reduction in hours, and 8% said they have lost their job.

"Everywhere seemed to be cutting jobs like mad before coronavirus and since the start it's gotten worse so getting a job in the near future will probably be incredibly difficult when so many other people are now also looking for jobs."

When asked if they felt good about their future employment prospects, 39% of those in fulltime employment and 38% in part-time employment disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

"It is so hard as a youth trying to get a job at the moment, before lockdown it was already difficult as employers don't want someone with no work experience but now it's even more challenging as thousands of people lost their job and are also looking."

"I am a recent masters graduate and feel like my future employment has been impacted greatly by COVID. There are higher numbers of those looking for employment. If I was in the top 20% of candidates before, I am now probably in the bottom 40%."

For further information about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people's career prospects, please see <u>SYP's response</u> to the Scottish Parliament's inquiry into this issue (January 2021).

During August 2021, SYP held a number of 'Covid Conversations' with MSYPs to find out their views on a range of issues relating to the pandemic. One of these sessions focused on the impact of the pandemic on young people's futures, and it was apparent that the pandemic has had a particularly negative impact on some young people who have a disability or additional support needs. For instance, during this session, one young person who has a visual impairment told us:

"[Only] 26% of blind students leave school with the grades they want. Because of the pandemic this number has dropped and school and education is harder than it has ever been for visually impaired people. 1 in 5 visually impaired or blind people have a part-time job. This is mainly because of discrimination - employers just turn away blind people due to their disability - but due to school grades being lowered, [fewer are] getting a job... Being visually impaired, either you have to work 10 times harder than everyone else or you have to sacrifice something, and [some young people have done this] by dropping one or two Highers as it was just too much work. They said that if we weren't in Covid time, they would never have dropped a subject - and this dropping of a subject has made them reconsider their future."

Young people who took part in the 'Covid Conversations' also noted that having a degree no longer guarantees young people a good job:

"I think a lot of graduates have had to take jobs in fields completely unrelated to their degrees, so that's going to mean that young people will struggle to get a job in the field they actually want to work in. For example, I've heard of drama graduates having to take jobs in Asda stacking shelves. Studying at uni should be the ticket to guaranteeing the graduate can get a job in the field they actually specialised in."

"I think even without COVID-19, our futures were bleak. The pandemic has just made things even worse because companies don't want to offer internships or let people get experience, and those companies that do offer experience or internships are flooded with applications, so people are struggling to get accepted because everyone is fighting over the few opportunities available. I dread what things will be like after I've hopefully done my Masters as even having a Masters isn't a guarantee of getting a good job now."

## The costs of working

Young people have noted that the cost of working can be a barrier to accessing fair work. For instance, the cost of public transport in many parts of Scotland can mean some young people spend a significant portion of their income on travel to work.

SYP's 2018 <u>All Aboard</u> report found that nearly half of respondents (49.0%) pay more than £9 per week to travel to work or an apprenticeship. This is equivalent to two hours work at the national minimum wage rate for under 18s (£4.55 per hour in December 2020). As many young people only work part time, this is a significant amount of money for a young person to be paying in order to earn money and to get work experience. One young person from the Sestran region told us "It costs me two hours' worth of wages a week on average to get to work. I get paid less than an adult, and am expected to pay the same for transport as an adult."

Whilst we welcome the Scottish Government's commitment to extend the concessionary bus fare to all young people under 22 from January 2022, we know there are many groups who face additional barriers to participating in society. A young parent told us that having free or discounted travel "would help quite a bit because there's been times where I would want to go somewhere, even just to a park with the kids, but I can't because it's so far away ... If I was to get a job or college it would have to be somewhere very local so I could afford it."

Furthermore, for young people living in island communities, the cost of ferries are an additional barriers to accessing work as they are still required to pay the full ferry fare; and public transport is not always available and therefore they are required to use a car or to rely on family members for a lift. Further detail is provided in <u>SYP's response</u> to the Scottish Government's consultation on the impact on islands communities of free bus travel (June 2021).

# Lack of support with transition from education to employment

A further barrier young people who took part in our focus group on 15<sup>th</sup> December highlighted was the lack of support with transition from education to employment. A number of issues were raised, including a lack of awareness of the range of options available, a lack of knowledge about where to find reliable information about employment opportunities, a lack of education about the role of trade unions, and the need for apprenticeships in a broader range of fields.

Through consultation for <u>SYP's response</u> to the Scottish Government Consultation on Education Reform, undertaken by Professor Ken Muir in November 2021, young people

identified a number of areas where they feel support for transition from education to employment is lacking. Whilst we hope these issues will be addressed through ongoing attempts to reform the Curriculum for Excellence, we note the need for cross-departmental work in order to ensure reforms translate into fair work for all young people in Scotland.

A particular issue that was shared by all young people involved in our education consultation was the lack of careers support available to them at school. Learners discussed that in many cases they received only annual appointments with their careers advisors, with some going as little as once every two years. They felt these were a 'tick-box' meeting, meaning they would be guided around what they would be able to do with the grades they had and nothing more. The lack of careers guidance and advice to learners on where their academic progression will lead them clearly highlights there are many learners who are not receiving the guidance and support to achieve their full potential. This disproportionately affects groups such as learners with disabilities and/or additional support needs, learners who do not speak English as a first language, and young carers or care experienced young people.

# **Digital exclusion**

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, it has become increasingly apparent that many young people, particularly those in remote and rural areas, and those living in areas of deprivation, may experience exclusion from education and employment due to a lack of access to digital technologies and the internet.

Digital exclusion is therefore a barrier to ensuring fair work for everyone in Scotland.

"I didn't have digital access until the end of April, so I went a month and a half without any digital access. I had to find a way to get online. The government were telling us "you have to get online" but they weren't providing support. With universal credit, I get about £230/£240 a month, which is actually under the recommended allowance for a week, but that's a story for a different day... how can you expect somebody on £200 a month to go buy a laptop? ... The only way I could make it work was to go for the buy now pay later option, so for the next two years I'll pay it back. With the interest on top of that, I'm paying double what that laptop actually costs, so that's affecting my credit score and putting me in debt."- care experienced young person, Lockdown Lowdown Phase Two (November 2020)

<u>This blog post</u> by Mollie McGoran MSYP outlines the experiences of a young person from a rural community during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Transition to green industries

A final barrier to fair work highlighted by the young people who took part in our focus group in December was the lack of support for transition to green industries. One young person noted "training and jobs are needed for those moving out of the oil industry in the North East as Scotland transitions to renewables. It's vital to not leave these people and places behind as we do."

# 7. What do you believe are the opportunities for delivering Fair Work in the current economic climate in Scotland?

The following response is based on current Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) policy, previous research, and discussion with eleven Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) who took part in a focus group to discuss this inquiry on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

Young people have identified the following opportunities for delivering Fair Work in Scotland:

- Tackling income inequality\* by removing age brackets for receipt of national minimum wage; promotion and payment of the real living wage; payment of a Universal Basic Income which guarantees everyone a minimum income, regardless of their age or experience; and banning zero hour contracts.
- More targeted action to address systemic racism and discrimination in the workplace.
- Making young people aware of the role of trade unions, and the support these organisations can offer to employees and workers.
- Improved support for young people as they transition from education to employment, through improved careers advice and support, and an increased focus on development of relevant skills and experiences in the Curriculum for Excellence.
- Increasing awareness of apprenticeships, and more apprenticeships in a broader range of fields.
- Improving support for young people to cover the costs of working by reducing public transport costs and improving public transport routes, and by addressing the issue of digital exclusion.
- Support and opportunities for young people with disabilities to enter employment, and support and training for employers to provide a safe and welcoming working environment.

\*We recognise that employment is a reserved matter, and therefore the Scottish Government has limited powers in relation to tackling income inequality. However, this issue is a major concern to many young people, and therefore we hope the Scottish Government will use their limited powers to address concerns in this area.

# Questions - Further actions to deliver Fair Work

8. Please set out any further actions you think the Scottish Government should take to deliver fair work for everyone. This may include, for example, any further support you think is needed.

SYP held a focus group with eleven MSYPs to discuss this inquiry on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021. During this discussion, young people agreed the actions of the Scottish Government are of the highest importance to ensuring Scotland becomes a fair work nation.

Young people feel the Scottish Government should take action in the following areas:

## Meaningful involvement of young people

In 2021, Scotland committed to incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots law. In line with this commitment, it is essential that the Scottish Government takes action to ensure young people are meaningfully involved in all stages of the process to becoming a Fair Work Nation in Scotland.

'Children and young people from seldom heard groups (such as immigrants and refugees, gypsy traveller communities, single parents, disabled people, Armed Forces,

care experienced, and justice experienced) must be listened to by policymakers on issues that affect them.' (*From Scotland's Young People manifesto statement - 80% agree*)

'Public bodies (such as the NHS, the SQA and Police Scotland) should work with young people to ensure that information is made available in a youth-friendly and accessible manner. They should also ensure that young people's views are taken into account when making decisions that affect them.' (*From Scotland's Young People manifesto statement - 86.6% agree*)

#### Covid-19 recovery

Young people tend to work in sectors such as retail, hospitality, and tourism, and therefore are one of the groups that has been most negatively impacted by the shutdown of these sectors. Many of these jobs use zero-hour contracts, so young people haven't always been eligible for furlough schemes, and there haven't been enough part-time or seasonal jobs, which some young people rely on to access further education or to pay for basic living costs. This may have led some young people to seek employment in more hazardous environments, or to take on work that impacts their ability to attend classes or focus on their education.

With this in mind, the following policy statements outline actions we believe are necessary to ensure a rights-based approach is taken to deliver fair work for young people during and after Scotland recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic:

'Children and young people's rights should be at the forefront of decisions made during the COVID-19 crisis and recovery process.' (*From Scotland's Young People manifesto statement - 68.5% agree*)

'Policies and initiatives should be created to ensure that young people have good employment prospects throughout the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, such as youth employment schemes, work experience initiatives and skills development programmes.' - (<u>From Scotland's Young People</u> manifesto statement - 83.8% agree)

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that adequate support must be provided to young people making the transition from school to university, college, employment and other positive destinations to mitigate against the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.' (99% agree) - Committee Motion by Education and Lifelong Learning Committee (passed 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020)

'Colleges, universities and employers should amend their admissions and recruitment policies to ensure young people whose grades and/or work experience were affected by the COVID-19 crisis are not penalised.' (*From Scotland's Young People manifesto statement - 84.3% agree*)

#### Anti-racist employment

SYP has a number of policy statements calling for action to eradicate racism and discrimination in workplaces, and to promote anti-racist employment:

'The Scottish Youth Parliament has significant concerns about the employment gap for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people living in Scotland, in particular those who belong to multiple minority groups, and calls on the Scottish Government and other employers to review and update recruitment practices and human resources guidelines to encourage career retention and progression for these individuals.'- 98% agree (Committee Motion by the Jobs, Economy and Fair Work Committee and the Equalities and Human Rights Committee, passed 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021)

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a particularly adverse impact on Black, Asian and minority ethnic young people's employment, exacerbating existing inequalities; and therefore calls on decision-makers and employers to work proactively in eliminating the additional barriers they face.' - 94% agree (*Members' Motion by Imaan Hussain MSYP, passed 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021*)

'The Scottish Youth Parliament calls on the Scottish Government and other employers to review and update recruitment practices and human resources guidelines to encourage career retention and progression for young Black People and People of Colour.' (<u>Committee Motion</u> by SYP's Jobs, Economy & Fair Work and the Equalities & Human Rights Committees. 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021 - 98% agree)

'Work experience and placements should be made available to young Black People and People of Colour.' (Recommendation from SYP's <u>'What's Your Take'</u> report. June 2020)

'Interview skill development opportunities, apprenticeships, and peer support / network groups should be made available to young Black People and People of Colour.' (Recommendation from SYP's <u>'What's Your Take'</u> report. June 2020)

## Apprenticeships

At the focus group with MSYPs in December 2021, MSYPs identified a number of actions they would like the Scottish Government to take relating to apprenticeships:

- Offer a wider variety of apprenticeships, in a wider range of fields.
- Support and encourage schools, colleges and universities to promote apprenticeships, using both online and offline methods of promotion.

SYP also has the following policy relating to apprenticeships:

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that the national minimum wage for apprenticeships should be increased.' - 95% agree (Committee Motion by the Jobs, Economy, and Fair Work Committee, passed 21<sup>st</sup> March 2020)

## **Trade Unions**

At the focus group with MSYPs in December 2021, MSYPs highlighted that they would like to see more promotion of trade unions, and better education in schools about the role of trade unions. SYP has policy supporting these calls:

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that all young people should leave secondary school having received education on the Trade Union Movement, workers' rights and their influence.' (83% agree) - Members' Motion by Aaran McDonald MSYP (passed 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018)

## Transition from education to employment

As highlighted, many young people do not feel they are adequately supported to move from education to employment. MSYPs who took part in the focus group in December 2021 would like the Scottish Government to act on this in the following ways:

• Ensure young people leaving school have an easy route to employment.

- Improve careers advice and support for young people.
- Embed skill development into the Curriculum for Excellence to ensure young people are able to develop employability skills.
- Encourage and support schools, colleges, and universities to enable young people to take part in meaningful work experience as part of their education.
- Encourage and support employers to offer more work placements / opportunities in work places for young people to gain experience.

SYP has the following policy supporting these calls:

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that adequate support must be provided to young people making the transition from school to university, college, employment and other positive destinations to mitigate against the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.' (99% agree) - Committee Motion by Education and Lifelong Learning Committee (passed 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020)

'State schools should be financially supported by decision-makers to reduce or eliminate the costs of attending work experience.' (*From Scotland's Young People manifesto statement - 81.4% agree*)

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that efficient careers advice services are vital to ensuring young people are well informed about their options, and should cater for all accessibility requirements.' (94% agree) - Members' Motion by Maya Tams-Gray MSYP (passed 21<sup>st</sup> March 2020)

#### Universal Basic Income

At the focus group with MSYPs in December 2021, MSYPs highlighted that they would like the Scottish Government to provide a guaranteed basic income to ensure everyone is able to work, learn, and support themselves. They felt a Universal Basic Income that is not means tested is necessary. SYP has the following policy supporting these calls:

'All citizens should be provided with a guaranteed minimum of support to ensure that no individual faces hardship' (*From Scotland's Young People manifesto statement - 76% agree*)

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that all citizens should be provided with a guaranteed minimum of income support to ensure that no individual faces financial hardship; and therefore supports the principles of Universal Basic Income to ensure all citizens, no matter what their circumstances, are able to live with dignity and economic security.' (77% agree) - Members' Motion by Keiran O'Neill MSYP (passed 14<sup>th</sup> April 2018)

#### Support to participate in employment

As previously discussed, young people face barriers to accessing fair work due to the cost of work (eg, public transport costs and the cost of PPE and uniforms) and digital exclusion. The young people who took part in the focus group on 15<sup>th</sup> December would like the Scottish Government to provide more support to reduce these barriers and ensure people in work do not end up living in poverty.

SYP has a great deal of <u>policy calling for action</u> to reduce the costs and improve accessibility of public transport. In addition, SYP believes:

'Every young person in Scotland should have access to fast and reliable internet and devices to access the digital world, regardless of their geographical location or financial standing.' (*From Scotland's Young People manifesto statement - 83% agree*)

## Employment rights

MSYPs who participated in the focus group on 15<sup>th</sup> December highlighted that many young people are unaware of their employment rights, and therefore at greater risk of these rights being breached. These young people suggested the following action should be taken to address this:

- Provide training for employers to ensure their responsibilities are understood.
- Ensure young people learn about their employment rights, know how to find out the terms of their employment, and understand what to do if these rights are breached, before they leave school.
- Ensure action is taken when employers are not complying with their responsibility to uphold employees' rights.
- Encourage and support the establishment of worker panels, particularly for young people, to ensure individuals have a stronger say on their work conditions.

SYP has the following policy supporting this call:

'The Scottish Youth Parliament supports the Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC) Youth Committee's "<u>Better than Zero</u>" campaign, which combats exploitative working conditions for young people.' - (86% agree) - Members' Motion by Keiran O'Neill MSYP (passed 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016, extended November 2020)

# 9. Please set out any other actions you think are required to deliver Fair Work for everyone, including who should take this action.

The following response is based on current Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) policy, previous research, and discussion with eleven Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) who took part in a focus group to discuss this inquiry on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

## Improving accessibility

SYP has the following policy calling for accessibility in employment to be improved for specific groups in society:

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that all people who menstruate should be offered an optional period of paid menstrual leave from their workplace in order to reduce the stigma of periods and accommodation for those living with menstrual health conditions' - 74% agree (Members' Motion by Erin Campbell MSYP (passed 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021)

'The Scottish Youth Parliament calls on the Scottish government to review their public service accessibility policies for deaf and hard of hearing young people to ensure full inclusivity of this community.' - 95% agree (Members' Motion by Members' Motion by Aimee Purdie MSYP; Ilse Cuthbertson MSYP and Erin McCluskey MSYP, passed 21<sup>st</sup> March 2020)

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that there should be more public awareness of sight loss and calls on decision makers to ensure that all places of work are given mandatory information about sight loss and the issues those affected by it face on a daily basis.' - 94% agree (Members' Motion by Claire Forde MSYP, passed 21<sup>st</sup> March 2020)

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that Scotland should implement legislation that would grant people who have experienced domestic abuse a period of paid leave from their employment, allowing them to build a safer, more stable living environment and protect themselves and any children without having to worry about income or work.' - 92% agree (Members' Morion by Huw Sherrard MSYP and Robbie Burgess MSYP, passed 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018)

## Tackling income inequality

We recognise that employment is a reserved matter, and therefore the Scottish Government has limited powers in relation to tackling income inequality. However, this issue is a major concern to many young people, and we believe **action is required to tackle income inequality**, as outlined in the following SYP policy statements:

'The UK Government should take action to ban or reform zero-hour contracts.' - (<u>From</u> <u>Scotland's Young People</u> manifesto statement - 59% agree)

'The national minimum wage should be raised to the Living Wage for everyone, regardless of age.' - (<u>Lead the Way</u> manifesto statement, extended February 2021 - 79% agree)

'The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that there should be one mandatory living wage for everyone, no matter what age they are.' - 68% agree (Members' Motion by Andrew Kirk MSYP and Skye Brettell MSYP, passed 24<sup>th</sup> October 2015, extended November 2020)

'Employers should increase efforts to close the gender pay gap by:

- Carrying out investigations into equal pay.' 85% agree
- Improving equal opportunity policies.' 87% agree
- Having flexible working policies.' 84% agree
- Ensuring equal pay for equal work.' 91% agree

(From Scotland's Young People manifesto statements)