DECENT WORK FOR SCOTLAND'S LOW-PAID WORKERS: A JOB TO BE DONE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents research findings about the priorities for 'decent work' for low-paid workers in Scotland and their current experiences of the workplace.[1] The research is unique as it employs a mixed method approach specifically targeted at the low-paid and with an emphasis on participation – it was not research on low-paid workers but research with low-paid workers.[2] The focus on the low-paid was chosen deliberately because for too many people work fails to provide a route out of poverty.

The project involved more than 1500 people who gave their views about what 'decent work' means to them. Views were elicited through focus groups, individual interviews, street stalls and an opinion poll. The research focused in particular on people with experience in low-wage sectors or with low earnings and intentionally included demographic groups facing additional disadvantages in the workplace, such as disabled people and members of ethnic minority groups.

The research produced a ranked list of 26 factors which research participants deemed to be most or least important to make work 'decent'. Using this list, a labour market assessment was undertaken in order to show how Scotland performs against the factors prioritised by participants. This assessment is based on an analysis of existing data on the labour markets of Scotland and the United Kingdom (UK) as a whole. The report combines this quantitative labour market data with the qualitative research and participants' quotes to highlight the impact of employment practices on people's lives.

The findings suggest a significant degree of consistency as to what matters most to low-paid workers. When asked, unprompted, 'what one thing is important for decent work?' focus group participants' tended to emphasise intrinsic characteristics of work such as satisfying and sociable work as well as work which affords recognition, dignity, and respect. Alongside this, they commonly highlighted decent pay, fair pay and job security. However, when asked to prioritise a number of factors, focus group participants particularly valued basic issues around pay and security as well as a supportive manager.

The full set of priorities from the focus groups is detailed within Table 1.

TABLE 1: PRIORITIES FOR DECENT WORK IDENTIFIED BY FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

RANK	DESCRIPTION
1	**Decent hourly rate:** An hourly rate or salary that is enough to cover basic needs such as food, housing and things most people take for granted without getting into debt
2	**Job security**
3	**Paid leave:** Paid holidays and paid sick leave
4	**Safe environment:** A safe working environment free from physical and mental risk or harm
5	**Supportive manager:** A supportive line manager
6	**Fair pay to similar jobs:** Being paid fairly compared to other similar jobs
7	**No discrimination:** A job which in which there is no discrimination because of who I am
8	**Purpose and meaning:** Work that provides a sense of purpose and meaning
9	**Regular hours:** Regular and predictable working hours
10	**Support after absence:** Appropriate support to return to work following absence due to injury or ill health
11	**Opportunities for progression:** Opportunities for promotion and career progression
12	**No unpaid overtime:** An employer that does not expect me to arrive before or leave after my allocated hours or undertake unpaid overtime
13	**Supportive colleagues**
14	**Enough time for tasks:** Enough time to do all the tasks required
15	**Workplace representation:** Available and effective representation to raise my voice within the workplace
16	**Additional benefits:** Access to financial benefits beyond pay such as help with childcare or signposting to additional support such as tax credits
17	**Develop and use skills:** Ability to develop and use skills in current role
18	**Predictable pay:** Predictable take-home pay
19	**Training opportunities:** Access to suitable and convenient training opportunities
20	**Accessible location:** A job that is easy to get to from where I live
21	**Flexible hours:** Flexibility in choosing my working hours
22	**No excessive hours:** Work that does not involve excessive working hours
23	**Fair pay vs senior staff:** Being paid fairly compared to senior staff
24	**Socially worthwhile:** Work that I believe is socially worthwhile
25	**Varied work**
26	**Control:** Control and flexibility over how I deliver my work

There was strong agreement amongst focus group participants that a 'decent hourly rate' involves a wage or salary which not only covers 'basic needs', but which is also sufficient to participate in society and to 'save for a rainy day'. For research participants 'job security' often meant having a permanent, open-ended contract. A 'supportive manager' was characterised by respect for the employee and appreciation for a job done well, the ability to listen, and an understanding of individuals' needs outside the workplace.

The results from the street stalls and opinion poll were largely consistent with those from the focus groups, in terms of what research participants said were the important factors for 'decent work'.

TABLE 2: TOP 5 PRIORITIES ACCORDING TO RESEARCH METHOD

LOW-PAID WORKERS VIA FOCUS GROUPS	PEOPLE AT STREET STALLS	LOW-PAID WORKERS VIA OPINION POLL
1. A decent hourly rate	1. A decent hourly rate	1. A decent hourly rate
2. Job security	2. Job security	2. A safe working environment
3. Paid leave	3. Paid leave	3. Fair pay to similar jobs
4. A safe working environment	4. A safe working environment	4. Job security; paid leave; and no discrimination (ranked equal fourth)
5. A supportive manager	5. A job with no discrimination	

While results show a strong level of consistency, there are some important differences between demographic groups, including between men and women. This is unsurprising, given that women's experience of the labour market differs to men's. Women face greater barriers in gaining a foothold in the labour market;[3] are more concentrated in low-paid sectors and occupations; and continue to be paid less than men for the same work.[4] Women are also more likely to have additional responsibilities beyond the workplace, particularly caring responsibilities.[5 6]

TABLE 3: GENDER COMPARISON

FACTORS WOMEN VALUE MORE	FACTORS MEN VALUE MORE
A supportive line manager	Being paid fairly compared to similar jobs
Support to return to work after absence	Regular and predictable hours
Additional benefits beyond pay	Work that does not involve excessive hours
Flexibility in choosing working hours	Being paid fairly compared to senior staff
A job which is easy to get to	

Participants' experiences highlighted that in many cases expectations in relation to 'decent work' are not being met in Scotland today. This is reinforced by an assessment of the labour market in Scotland as a whole. This assessment was complicated by the availability of data, with issues around the coverage and timeliness of labour market data for Scotland and the UK. Nonetheless, using the most recent data available, and looking specifically at the top five priorities for 'decent work' identified in the focus groups – our assessment suggests:

A decent hourly rate

444,000 workers in Scotland, a fifth of all employees (of which two thirds are women), were paid less than the voluntary living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation[7] in 2015.

It's just not enough, how can I pay all my bills and rents and... buy a bus pass... it's just not evening out... It means you can't participate in basic things. I've got... my cousin's fortieth birthday's coming up... and that's a real issue for me 'cause I'm thinking 'How am I gonnae manage this financially?'

Social care worker, female

Job security

138,000 workers in Scotland, 6% of all employees, are on temporary contracts – 45,000 (2%) of whom are seeking permanent employment.[8] In 2015, 51,000 people in Scotland were on a zero-hours contract,[9] while 12.6% of workers across the UK reported they might lose their job in the next six months.[10]

I lost my job today, because... well I didn't lose it, I just haven't got hours if that makes sense... and I've had no notice on that because I'm agency... and that's just been told today, 'Don't come back until the end of January'.

Agency worker, hospitality sector, male

Paid leave

118,000 workers in Scotland, 5% of all employees, did not receive the statutory minimum paid holidays they were entitled to in 2014.[11]

Everything is such an issue just to get time off. It really is difficult 'cause you give a lot of stuff up 'cause it's not worth the hassle... And then five years down the line you realise... that's all you do, is go to work

Social care worker, female

A safe working environment

88,000 workers in Scotland, 3% of the workforce, reported illness caused or made worse by work in the previous 12 months, while 33,000 reported stress, depression or anxiety caused or made worse by work.[12]

"I have been assaulted at work. And I had told my company they'd let me down, and they said 'No, we haven't let you down'... I just feel like I wasn't respected at all. I was just an inconvenience."
Social care worker, female

A supportive manager

13% of Scottish adults in employment reported feeling their line manager did not support them in 2013.[13]

"They humiliate you in front o' people, questioning why you were in the bathroom for too long. Some people, they're older women in my work, and they're about seventy, eighty and they get questioned because they take three minutes going tae the toilet."
Call centre worker, female

Conversations with research participants suggest a lack of decent work is having a significantly detrimental impact on individuals' lives. This confirms previous studies showing that, in some cases, poor quality jobs are associated with similar or worse health than unemployment.[14] The impact on individuals in itself should be a cause for serious concern and motivate action to improve the quality of work.

However, the failure of the labour market to provide 'decent work' for everyone also has consequences beyond the individual. Poor quality and low-paid work undermines physical and mental health for workers,[15] makes efforts by policymakers to reduce poverty much more difficult,[16] and negatively impacts on the economy. Conversely, research has shown that employers who invest in their workforce, through increased pay and improved conditions, can benefit significantly – for example, through increases in productivity and lower staff turnover.[17]

The top factors identified in this research are areas within which businesses and policymakers can make a real difference. Encouragingly, many employers are increasingly recognising the business case for better quality work[18] while, at the same time, seeking clarity about what constitutes decent work.[19] There is also a growing interest from policymakers in creating fairer work. This research adds to and significantly informs this overdue level of interest by highlighting what low-paid workers value from work and to what extent we are falling short in delivering on their priorities in Scotland.

CASE STUDY: FIONA

Fiona is a single mother, carer, and self-employed book-keeper, from Govan in Glasgow. At the time of the research she was doing accounts for three firms. Fiona was working for a fourth company but left because she says she was being bullied.

"I was getting shouted at, at least one day a week... the more stressed I was getting, the less sleep I was getting, the more mistakes I was making. The stress was unbelievable."

She says that leaving this fourth job has left her with financial difficulties and debt issues.

"At the moment I'm living on credit cards. Running up more and more debt to keep my head above water."

Fiona has a son with Asperger syndrome. She says this is one of the reasons she prefers being self-employed as it gives her flexibility in choosing her working hours in order to care for her son. However, being self-employed means Fiona doesn't get paid when she takes a day off. She says this makes taking a holiday and managing financially over Christmas particularly difficult.

Fiona's goal is to be 'debt free' in five years time.

While all of the decent work factors listed in Table 1 are important to varying degrees, the top 5 are fairly basic conditions which workers should be able to expect. None are unreasonable or extravagant. They should therefore be priority areas for policy and practice. To promote decent work across Scotland, this report makes a number of recommendations to the Scottish Government:

1. Give the Fair Work Convention an explicit role in investigating and publicising poor employment practices and driving up standards.
2. Be a strong and progressive advocate in Scotland – as well as at UK and, if relevant, European levels – to ensure employment legislation at least maintains and, wherever possible, strengthens workers' rights.
3. Establish strategies to tackle low pay in sectors where it is endemic as part of a wider effort to drive up the quality of work across Scotland.
4. Use public procurement to incentivise and reward payment of the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation as well as other good employment practices, publicising when this occurs.
5. Ensure Government agencies and public bodies do not support companies involved in sub-standard employment practices.
6. Ensure 'City Deals' promote decent work and connect economic development with wider efforts to reduce poverty.
7. Enhance the Business Pledge, including by placing a more robust and transparent accreditation process at its centre.
8. Use employability powers to design tailored programmes which address the different issues faced by different groups of people within the labour market and do not force people into jobs which are not suitable or sustainable for them.
9. Invest in more comprehensive and timely survey data to ensure analysis of Scotland's labour market supports measures to assess and improve work quality.

This report also makes recommendations for employers to ensure they provide a number of basic conditions for decent employment, such as paying a living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation, and reporting annually on the number and percentage of temporary and irregular contracts in their business, explaining why they are using these contracts and seeking to minimise their use.

In summary, this research provides critical insights into what low-paid workers in Scotland believe is required for work to be 'decent'. The input gathered from research participants, combined with an assessment of the labour market in Scotland as a whole, shows there is a significant job to be done to improve the quality of work available in Scotland. However, by working across Government, employers, trade unions and the third sector – and by ensuring the priorities of low-paid workers inform changes to policy and practice – Scotland can make major progress towards the delivery of decent work for all.

INTRODUCTION: WHY DECENT WORK MATTERS

The nature and experience of work, as well as the security and rewards flowing from it, have changed significantly in recent decades. Notwithstanding recent trends in the Scottish economy, a cursory glance at the headline employment and unemployment rates might suggest a relatively healthy labour market across Scotland and the UK compared to the mid 1990s or 2012. Yet a number of underlying trends are concerning.

Increasingly, large numbers of people across Scotland and the UK experience work which is insecure, does not provide enough regular hours and is paid at levels which do not allow families to live above the poverty line.[20] Paid work is far from being a means of avoiding poverty. In Scotland, after housing costs are accounted for, two thirds of children experiencing poverty – in total 110,000 children – live in households in which at least one person is in work. The same is true for 58% of working age adults experiencing poverty – in total 260,000 adults.[21]

Such in-work poverty is the result of three overlapping variables: the level of hourly pay, the number of hours worked, and the value of in-work benefits. All three aspects need to be addressed if in-work poverty is to be reduced. Additionally, significant numbers of workers move repeatedly between low-paid work and unemployment – the so-called 'low-pay, no-pay cycle'.[22] This indicates there is not a simple, clear divide between in-work poverty and out-of-work poverty.

Low-paid, poor quality work might not be seen to be such a big a problem if workers were able to progress into better work over time. However, this is not always the case: figures suggest almost three quarters of UK workers who were low-paid in 2002 had not managed to escape low pay a full decade later.[23] Large numbers of people are effectively 'trapped' in low-paid work, particularly women.

Furthermore, the experience of work is not only about the level of income derived from it – the quality of work matters, too. While there is strong evidence that unemployment is bad for health[24], it is also increasingly clear that poor quality work seriously undermines health. Indeed, poor quality jobs can be associated with similar or worse health than unemployment.[25] There is also evidence to suggest that moving from unemployment to a low-quality job results in a decline in an individual's mental health.[26] As the Marmot Review on Health Inequalities, 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives', warned in 2010: 'insecure and poor-quality employment is [...] associated with increased risks of poor physical and mental health'.[27] Yet the number of people in low-paid, insecure work has been growing.[28] It is therefore clear that improving employment standards should be an important aspect of efforts to reduce both poverty and health inequalities.

The business case for better quality work

Business leaders are increasingly taking seriously the benefits a 'decent work agenda' can have for their enterprises, too. As research has shown, employers who invest in their workforce, through increased pay and improved conditions, can benefit from increases in productivity and innovation,[29] enhanced reputation,[30] improved employee morale,[31] lower staff turnover and lower sick leave.[32] Research has also shown that the benefits of paying a living wage, at least in the retail sector, are maximised when combined with wider changes and improvements in conditions.[33] However, in order to realise a 'decent work agenda' within individual businesses, employers need 'clarity' about what decent work means in practice, as recent research undertaken as part of the UWS-Oxfam Partnership shows.[34]

The societal case for better quality work

A number of studies suggest that interventions to improve job quality also have benefits for the wider economy.[35] For example, across EU countries, there is a significant correlation between employment rates and components of job quality, suggesting that there is no trade-off between job quantity and job quality.[36] There are also wider knock-on benefits in the form of reductions in gender inequalities; increased social mobility; greater aggregate demand in the economy; and consequently increased tax revenues for Governments.[37] As further work from the UWS-Oxfam Partnership shows, decent work can also have a beneficial impact on social inclusion, for example, re-integrating people with convictions and supporting them to desist from criminal activity.[38] If Scotland and the UK are to succeed in a global economy there is a clear need to take the high-road and promote an economic model based on decent work.[39]

OXFAM RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY ON DECENT WORK IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Jobs are a critical driver of development in the world's poorest countries, but private sector employment practices often fail to meet the standards needed for sustainable human development, with one in four global workers earning less than $2 a day.[40]

In the last five years Oxfam's Private Sector team has published a range of reports and briefing papers on the issue of decent work in the global supply chains of UK companies, including a summary of five studies in developing countries, 'In Work but Trapped in Poverty';[41] a briefing paper on 'Steps towards a living age in global supply chains';[42] and a progress report on labour rights in the supply chain of Unilever.[43]

Photo: Tea picking, Malawi.
Photographer: Abbie Trayler-Smith.

Oxfam has a track record of driving improvements in labour standards within the export sectors of developing countries, dating back to the *Clothes Code Campaign* in the 1990s, the foundation of the Ethical Trading Initiative in 1998 and the *Make Trade Fair Campaign* (2002-2006). More recently the *Behind the Brands Campaign* (2013- ongoing) targeted the top ten global food and beverage companies across seven elements of supply chain management, including a pillar on employment standards for workers.

Oxfam also undertake advocacy and give advice to companies on good practice based on Oxfam's programme experience, subject expertise and research.

Opportunities for progress towards decent work for all

Globally the wider concept of decent work was pioneered by the International Labour Organisation[44] and, notably, the promotion of 'decent work for all' is one of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by 193 countries at the United Nations in 2015.[45] The goals are universal and apply to all countries, including Scotland, where the First Minister has committed to delivering them.[46]

The clear benefits of enhancing the quality of work available for individuals, business, and the economy create a strong rationale for faster progress in delivering more of it. Encouragingly, issues relating to the quality of work appear to be increasingly recognised by policymakers.

The Scottish Government has established a Fair Work Convention which earlier this year published a Fair Work Framework to drive forward this agenda.[47] The Convention's ability to bring employers, employees and others together could be pivotal to improving and enforcing fair employment practices in Scotland. In addition, the Scottish Parliament's Economy Committee has undertaken an Inquiry into Work, Wages and Wellbeing[48] which made a number of recommendations aimed at improving working practices in Scotland.

On a more practical level, the Living Wage Foundation[49] and Scottish Living Wage Accreditation Initiative[50] have had significant success in convincing employers to sign up to pay the voluntary Living Wage. The UK Government's increase in the minimum wage for those aged over 25 – called the 'National Living Wage' – should benefit millions of workers,[51] though it falls short of the voluntary Living Wage as calculated on the basis of what people need for a minimum acceptable standard of living.[52]

Although payment of the voluntary Living Wage is important, it only partially addresses the question of what is needed for 'decent work'. The more subjective experience of the work that people actually do – whether that be driving a van, providing care, or cleaning an office – alongside a host of other factors, are all important considerations in determining if someone has 'decent work'.[53]

'DECENT WORK' IN SCOTLAND: ASSOCIATED STUDIES UNDERTAKEN THROUGH THE UWS-OXFAM PARTNERSHIP

UWS-OXFAM PARTNERSHIP

Besides research with low-paid workers, the UWS-Oxfam Partnership has explored 'decent work' in the context of smaller-scale research projects on what young people think about 'decent work'; how employers and human resources managers perceive the concept; and how access to more good quality work can help people with criminal convictions to desist from crime.

Amanda Simpson, Janet Moffett and Graham Allan, from the University of the West of Scotland's School of Media, Culture and Society, worked with 82 Scottish secondary school pupils between the ages of 13 and 17 to understand their views and expectations around decent work. In their report – What Scotland's Future Workforce Thinks About 'Decent Work'[54] – the researchers find that the majority of their participants expect to get decent work when they leave school. Decent jobs for them are those that will allow them to live comfortably and be financially independent. These young people will value good bosses and friendly colleagues and are clear about the importance of equality and fair treatment in the workplace. Furthermore, they overwhelmingly believe that their future jobs will be valued by society and be socially worthwhile.

UWS Business School researchers Stephen Gibb and Mohammed Ishaq explored whether employers and human resources managers, from public and private organisations, had particular views on 'decent work'. Their interviewees welcomed the idea of a clear, widely accepted and easily measurable definition of 'decent work' for application in their own organisations. The research, 'Decent Work': the Employers' View[55], found that employers often believe that they already offer 'decent work' without, however, always having a clear understanding of what that means. The researchers found that a 'decent work agenda' in businesses could be embraced by employers because businesses are concerned with improving performance and want to be attractive places to work. The report suggests that if 'decent work' were seen as a productivity factor whilst also providing public recognition, a 'decent work employer badge' would be actively sought by employers.

The third report – Exploring 'Decent Work' with People with Criminal Convictions[56] – by Johanne Miller of the UWS School of Media, Culture and Society and Lisa Borchardt of Regensburg University, focussed on a group of people finding it harder than most to move into paid employment. Drawing on a series of interviews, the authors present findings on what people with criminal convictions think about 'decent work' and whether access to it could support them to desist from crime. It found that one of the main barriers to employment was disclosure of criminal convictions and the 'criminal conviction tick box' at the first stage of the job application process. The research also found that many participants said they would accept any paid job – 'decent work' was seen as an aspiration beyond that. It also emphasised the importance of 'decent volunteering' to the social integration of people with criminal convictions.

THE RESEARCH APPROACH

The research was conducted using a mix of methods with an emphasis on participation. Methods consisted of one-to-one interviews, focus group sessions, and 'street stalls' – generating both qualitative and quantitative data. In addition to these participatory methods, a non-representative opinion poll was conducted with workers earning less than £20,000. In total, the research involved more than 1500 participants with data collected Scotland-wide. These methods allowed for a better understanding of the views of low-paid workers – including how they perceive their workplace as well as the impact work has on their everyday lives. Significantly, these methods also allowed low-paid workers to prioritise the factors they believe are needed for work to be decent.

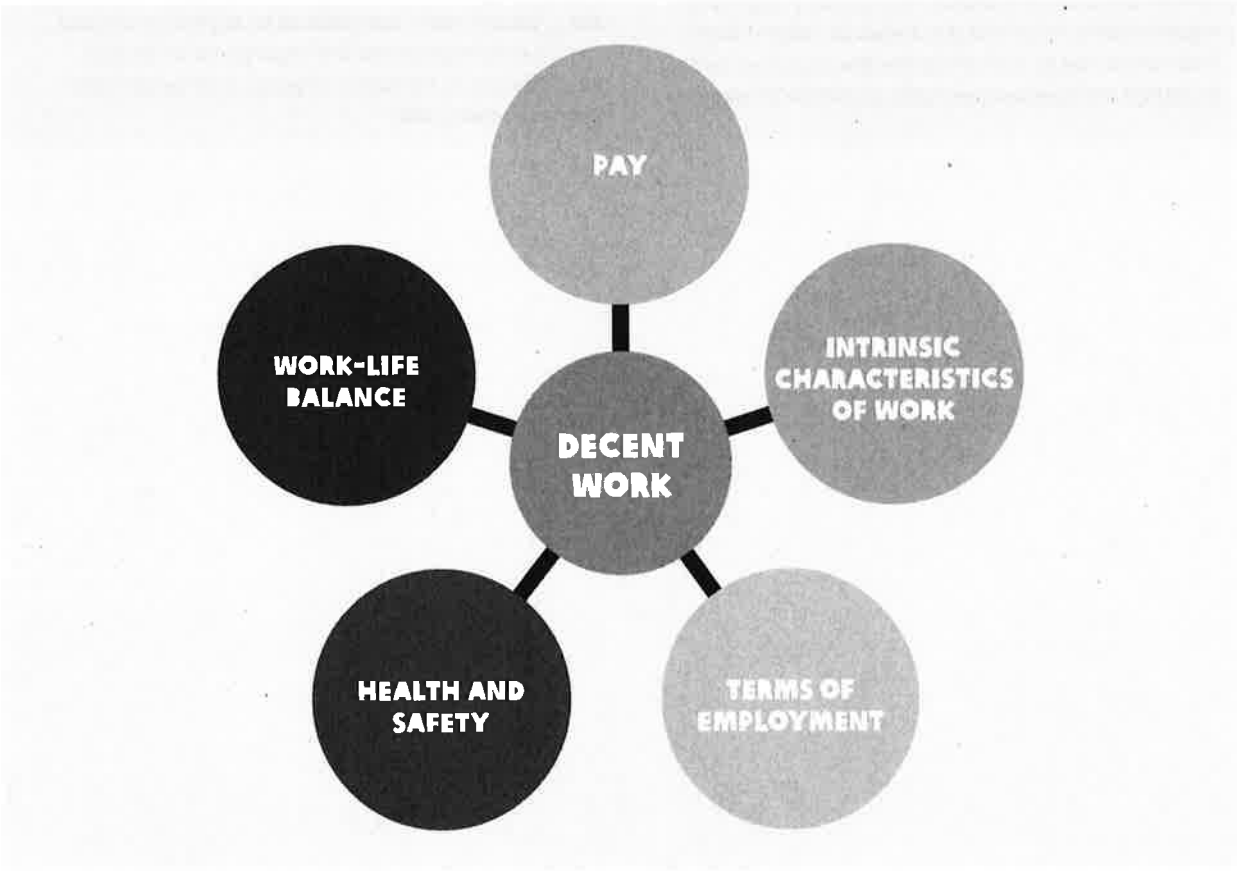
The approach leaned heavily on the Oxfam Humankind Index, which used mixed methods to ask people about their priorities, concerns and ambitions in relation to what they need to live well.[57] Applying that approach to this project, the research was designed around the central question of 'what makes for decent work?'.

In addition to this research and the analysis of the resultant data, we undertook a desk-based statistical analysis of nationally available data to assess how the Scottish labour market is faring against the priorities identified by participants in this research.

On the basis of a review of the literature on 'decent work' and job quality, five distinct 'dimensions of decent work' were identified: pay; terms and conditions; health and safety; work-life balance; and the intrinsic characteristics of work (for the purposes of the focus groups this was titled 'the work itself'). These five dimensions – which are illustrated below – were used as the conceptual framework to underpin the structure and content of the outreach.

Each dimension contains a range of factors which make for decent work. Taking account of the literature review, advice from the project advisory group,[58] and feedback from pilot focus groups, 26 factors for decent work were identified. These factors formed the basis for a voting exercise for participants in the focus groups and the street stall outreach, which is explained in more detail below.

DIMENSIONS OF DECENT WORK



PAY

1. An hourly rate or salary that is at least enough to cover basic needs such as food, housing and things most people take for granted without getting into debt
2. Being paid fairly compared to other similar jobs
3. Being paid fairly compared to senior staff
4. Predictable take-home pay
5. Access to financial benefits beyond pay such as help with childcare and signposting to additional support such as tax credits

INTRINSIC CHARACTERISTICS OF WORK

6. Ability to develop and use skills in current role
7. A supportive line manager
8. Supportive colleagues
9. Control and flexibility over how I deliver my work
10. Work that I believe is socially worthwhile
11. Work that provides me with sense of purpose and meaning
12. Varied work

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

13. Paid holidays and paid sick leave
14. Job security
15. Regular and predictable working hours
16. Available and effective representation to raise my voice within the workplace
17. Opportunities for promotion and career progression
18. Access to suitable and convenient training opportunities
19. A job in which there is no discrimination because of who I am

HEALTH AND SAFETY

20. A safe working environment free from physical and mental risk or harm
21. Appropriate support to help employees return to work following absence due to injury or ill-health

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

22. Enough time to do all the tasks required
23. Work that does not involve excessive working hours
24. Flexibility in choosing my working hours
25. A job that is easy to get to from where I live
26. An employer that does not expect me to arrive before or leave after my allocated hours or undertake unpaid overtime

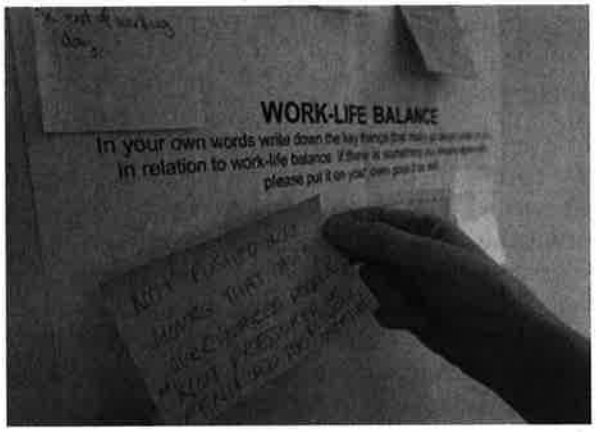
Research methods – a mixed approach

FOCUS GROUPS

In total 30 focus groups engaging 277 people – 135 women and 141 men – were undertaken. Participants were mostly employees in low-paid sectors and occupations such as social care, hospitality, retail and cleaning. In recognition that people's experiences of the labour market will be impacted by a range of factors, particular efforts were made to engage demographic groups facing additional disadvantages in the workplace beyond low pay. These included young people, disabled people, black and ethnic minority communities, and lone parents. Sessions were held in Ayr, Cambuslang, Clydebank, Coatbridge, Edinburgh, Elgin, Glasgow, Livingston and Paisley.

The focus groups involved three distinct exercises.

1. First, participants were asked to identify 'one thing' they considered important for decent work. The results of this exercise were written on flipchart paper by the facilitators.
2. Second, a 'stations exercise' involved participants being given post-it notes and asked to write, in their own words, factors that they thought important for decent work. They were then asked to place them next to five stations placed around the room. The stations were based on the five dimensions of decent work identified in the literature review. Post-it notes were colour-coded to enable researchers to match comments to individual demographic information such as gender, ethnicity, age, income, and contract status, while maintaining the anonymity of participants.
3. The final exercise was a 'voting exercise'. Here, participants were shown the list of 26 factors outlined above. Participants were asked to place their individual 'budget' of 15 stickers – in effect, votes – against those factors they thought were most important. Participants had the option to place more than one sticker against a single factor in order to stress its importance. Again, stickers were colour-coded enabling researchers to match comments and votes to individual demographic information whilst maintaining the anonymity of participants.



Each exercise was followed by a facilitated discussion which was recorded and transcribed. This meant that focus groups generated qualitative and quantitative data. Twenty-two of the focus groups lasted in the region of two hours although eight shorter half-hour sessions, were undertaken with a number of Unite the Union members. Due to time constraints these only involved the first 'one-thing' exercise and the final 'voting exercise'. In order to address barriers to participation, participants were offered £10 for taking part in the two-hour sessions as well as support with travel expenses and childcare.

STREET STALLS

A total of 11 'street stalls' were held which engaged 433 people – 271 women and 161 men. The stalls involved the same 'voting exercise' as the focus groups – participants were shown a board with the 26 factors and asked to place 15 stickers against those they wanted to prioritise. Stickers were coded to allow a gender comparison. Stalls were held across Scotland, with special effort to include areas with relatively high levels of multiple deprivation according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).[59] Stalls were also held at the Poverty Alliance Annual Assembly and the STUC's women's conference. Five stalls were held in Glasgow and one each in Dundee, Falkirk, Edinburgh, Motherwell, Inverness and Paisley.

INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured one-to-one interviews were conducted with 18 individuals – 11 women and seven men – in Dumfries, Dundee, Edinburgh, Galashiels and Glasgow. The questions were structured around the five dimensions identified in the literature review. While focus group and street stall data generated a weighted list of 26 individual 'decent work factors', the interviews helped highlight the interrelationships between different factors such as pay, work-life balance, the nature of a particular job, the contractual arrangements, or health and wellbeing. The interviews also allowed participants to speak in more depth about the personal impact of good and bad working practices on their daily lives, outwith a potentially constraining group setting. Again, to remove barriers to participation, participants were offered £10 for taking part as well as support with travel expenses and childcare.

MAP OF OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

OPINION POLL

To test the findings from these methods, YouGov was commissioned to undertake an online opinion poll of 802 Scottish workers – 518 women and 284 men – aged 18-64 earning less than £20,000.[60] Given the requirement to be earning less than £20,000, it was not possible to make this a representative sample. For the purposes of the opinion poll, in order to present respondents with a more manageable list from which to select, the list of 26 factors was reduced to 15 – the top 15 factors from the focus group ranking. Participants were then asked to rank each factor on a scale of 1-7 between not at all important (1) and extremely important (7).

PRODUCING A PRIORITY LIST

One of the main outputs from the focus groups, the street stalls and the opinion poll was a set of weighted rankings for decent work, reflecting the relative importance of each of the 26 factors to the participants involved. The weightings were calculated based on the mean score for each factor in the final focus group 'voting exercise', the street stall 'voting exercise' and the opinion poll ranking exercise.[61] Rather than amalgamate the results from the different methods, they were kept separate for simplicity and to ensure transparency.

The focus groups were the most in-depth and deliberative of the methods. The data generated also allows for disaggregation by various characteristics beyond gender. The findings from the focus groups are also largely corroborated by subsequent methods. For these reasons the focus group rankings are used as the basis for the order in which findings are reported in this document.

A range of different methods were used to triangulate results, giving a strong indication that the findings accurately reflect what low-paid workers in Scotland value as important for decent work.

LABOUR MARKET ASSESSMENT

Having produced a weighted list of priorities for decent work on the basis of focus group, street stall, and opinion poll data, a labour market assessment of how Scotland is doing against the factors prioritised by participants was undertaken. This assessment involved a desk-based analysis of existing survey data on Scottish and UK labour markets including the Labour Force Survey; the Annual Population Survey; the Scottish Health Survey; the European Working Conditions Survey; the Workplace Employment Relations Study; and other available data. It also integrates data produced by Citizens Advice Scotland from its bureaux across Scotland[62] as well as other sources. A more detailed labour market assessment is published alongside this report.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

It must be emphasised that while we have used the best available and most recent data, labour market data for Scotland is neither fully comprehensive nor sufficiently timely and this means that there are clear gaps in our assessment. In particular, for certain indicators we have had to use data from as far back as 2010. We have also had to use UK data where Scottish data is not available. Some indicators do not clearly reflect the concept described. For example, we have not identified a suitable indicator to reflect the concept of fair pay versus senior staff, although some relevant information on the general topic area is included. We have disaggregated data by gender where possible, however, some data does not allow for this. For some calculations we have had to combine data sources.

FINDINGS

The project's central aim was to develop a better understanding of what low-paid workers think is most important for 'decent work'. The different research methods used generated results which were highly consistent.

Overall, there was strong agreement amongst focus group participants that a decent hourly rate or salary to meet 'basic needs' involves an income that covers food, clothing and housing, but which is also sufficient to participate in society and to 'save for a rainy day'. Having 'job security' for participants meant, for example, having a clear and open-ended contract. A number of participants were not aware whether they actually had a written contract. A 'supportive manager' for research participants meant respect and appreciation for a job done well, the ability to listen, and an understanding of individuals' needs outside the workplace.

Results from the focus groups

TABLE 4: FOCUS GROUP RANKINGS

	ALL (277 PARTICIPANTS)			WOMEN (135 PARTICIPANTS)			MEN (141 PARTICIPANTS)		
RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Decent hourly rate	1.131	7.54	Job security	1.110	7.40	Decent hourly rate	1.184	7.89
2	Job security	1.069	7.13	Decent hourly rate	1.076	7.17	Job security	1.023	6.82
3	Paid leave	0.899	5.99	Supportive manager	0.929	6.19	Paid leave	0.979	6.53
4	Safe environment	0.833	5.55	Paid leave	0.815	5.43	Safe environment	0.866	5.77
5	Supportive manager	0.765	5.10	Safe environment	0.790	5.27	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.782	5.21
6	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.719	4.79	Support after absence	0.697	4.65	Regular hours	0.699	4.66
7	No discrimination	0.670	4.47	No discrimination	0.658	4.39	No discrimination	0.687	4.58
8	Purpose and meaning	0.636	4.24	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.650	4.33	Purpose and meaning	0.643	4.29
9	Regular hours	0.632	4.21	Supportive colleagues	0.639	4.26	Supportive manager	0.613	4.09
10	Support after absence	0.613	4.09	Purpose and meaning	0.633	4.22	Workplace representation	0.610	4.07
11	Opportunities for progression	0.550	3.67	Additional benefits	0.623	4.15	No unpaid overtime	0.575	3.83
12	No unpaid overtime	0.547	3.65	Flexible hours	0.582	3.88	No excessive hours	0.562	3.75
13	Supportive colleagues	0.527	3.51	Opportunities for progression	0.561	3.74	Opportunities for progression	0.543	3.62
14	Enough time for tasks	0.510	3.40	Regular hours	0.560	3.73	Support after absence	0.538	3.59
15	Workplace representation	0.502	3.35	Accessible location	0.546	3.64	Develop and use skills	0.512	3.41
16	Additional benefits	0.475	3.17	Enough time for tasks	0.517	3.45	Enough time for tasks	0.499	3.33
17	Develop and use skills	0.464	3.09	No unpaid overtime	0.515	3.43	Predictable pay	0.492	3.28
18	Predictable pay	0.455	3.03	Training opportunities	0.487	3.25	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.488	3.25
19	Training opportunities	0.451	3.01	Predictable pay	0.420	2.80	Training opportunities	0.420	2.80
20	Accessible location	0.447	2.98	Develop and use skills	0.417	2.78	Supportive colleagues	0.418	2.79
21	Flexible hours	0.445	2.97	Socially worthwhile	0.409	2.73	Socially worthwhile	0.384	2.56
22	No excessive hours	0.440	2.93	Workplace representation	0.385	2.57	Accessible location	0.348	2.32
23	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.395	2.63	No excessive hours	0.308	2.05	Additional benefits	0.337	2.25
24	Socially worthwhile	0.395	2.63	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.293	1.95	Flexible hours	0.317	2.11
25	Varied work	0.234	1.56	Varied work	0.221	1.47	Varied work	0.248	1.65
26	Control	0.198	1.32	Control	0.162	1.08	Control	0.234	1.56
		15	100		15	100		15	100

*The factor wording is shortened in this table. For the full wording which participants voted on, please refer to Table 1.

Results from the street stalls

TABLE 5: STREET STALL RANKINGS

	ALL (433 PARTICIPANTS)			WOMEN (271 PARTICIPANTS)			MEN (161 PARTICIPANTS)		
RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Decent hourly rate	1.297	8.65	Decent hourly rate	1.300	8.67	Decent hourly rate	1.299	8.66
2	Job security	0.997	6.65	Job security	0.964	6.43	Job security	1.044	6.96
3	Safe environment	0.904	6.03	Paid leave	0.934	6.23	Safe environment	0.912	6.08
4	Paid leave	0.897	5.98	Safe environment	0.903	6.02	Paid leave	0.835	5.57
5	No discrimination	0.832	5.55	No discrimination	0.838	5.59	No discrimination	0.826	5.51
6	Supportive manager	0.715	4.77	Supportive manager	0.780	5.20	Purpose and meaning	0.687	4.58
7	Support after absence	0.660	4.40	Support after absence	0.714	4.76	No unpaid overtime	0.682	4.55
8	No unpaid overtime	0.658	4.39	No unpaid overtime	0.642	4.28	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.627	4.18
9	Purpose and meaning	0.630	4.20	Purpose and meaning	0.603	4.02	Opportunities for progression	0.624	4.16
10	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.594	3.96	Supportive colleagues	0.600	4.00	supportive manager	0.601	4.01
11	Supportive colleagues	0.553	3.69	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.573	3.82	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.559	3.73
12	Predictable pay	0.541	3.61	Predictable pay	0.549	3.66	Workplace representation	0.556	3.71
13	Workplace representation	0.529	3.53	Workplace representation	0.511	3.41	Support after absence	0.552	3.68
14	Opportunities for progression	0.525	3.50	Develop and use skills	0.498	3.32	Predictable pay	0.537	3.58
15	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.496	3.31	Opportunities for progression	0.469	3.13	Regular hours	0.483	3.22
16	Develop and use skills	0.489	3.26	Regular hours	0.456	3.04	Socially worthwhile	0.483	3.22
17	Regular hours	0.468	3.12	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.454	3.03	Supportive colleagues	0.477	3.18
18	Enough time for tasks	0.457	3.05	Enough time for tasks	0.447	2.98	Enough time for tasks	0.472	3.15
19	Training opportunities	0.417	2.78	Flexible hours	0.435	2.90	Develop and use skills	0.472	3.15
20	Socially worthwhile	0.412	2.75	Training opportunities	0.421	2.81	No excessive hours	0.433	2.89
21	No excessive hours	0.409	2.73	No excessive hours	0.397	2.65	Training opportunities	0.415	2.77
22	Flexible hours	0.376	2.51	Additional benefits	0.376	2.51	Accessible location	0.306	2.04
23	Additional benefits	0.339	2.26	Socially worthwhile	0.376	2.51	Control	0.294	1.96
24	Accessible location	0.336	2.24	Accessible location	0.352	2.35	Varied work	0.288	1.92
25	Control	0.264	1.76	Control	0.250	1.67	Additional benefits	0.274	1.83
26	Varied work	0.198	1.32	Varied work	0.150	1.00	Flexible hours	0.256	1.71
		15	100		15	100		15	100

*The factor wording is shortened in this table. For the full wording which participants voted on, please refer to Table 1.

Results from the opinion poll

TABLE 6: OPINION POLL RANKINGS

	ALL (802 PARTICIPANTS)				WOMEN (518 PARTICIPANTS)				MEN (284 PARTICIPANTS)			
RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Decent hourly rate	6.43	7.40	1	Decent hourly rate	6.52	7.40	1	Decent hourly rate	6.27	7.46
2	Safe environment	6.20	7.13	2	Safe environment	6.33	7.13	2	Safe environment	5.95	7.08
3	Fair pay to similar jobs	6.10	7.02	3	Fair pay to similar jobs	6.22	7.02	3	Fair pay to similar jobs	5.89	7.01
4	Job security	6.02	6.93	4	Paid leave	6.15	6.93	4	Job security	5.88	6.99
4	Paid leave	6.02	6.93	4	No discrimination	6.15	6.93	5	Enough time for tasks	5.81	6.91
4	No discrimination	6.02	6.93	6	Job security	6.09	6.93	6	Paid leave	5.79	6.89
7	Enough time for tasks	5.94	6.83	7	Enough time for tasks	6.01	6.83	6	No discrimination	5.79	6.89
8	Supportive manager	5.84	6.72	7	Supportive manager	6.01	6.72	8	Purpose and meaning	5.60	6.66
9	Purpose and meaning	5.77	6.64	9	Supportive colleagues	5.89	6.58	9	Supportive manager	5.52	6.57
10	Supportive colleagues	5.72	6.58	10	Purpose and meaning	5.86	6.64	10	Regular hours	5.44	6.47
11	Regular hours	5.64	6.50	11	Regular hours	5.75	6.5	11	Supportive colleagues	5.42	6.45
12	Support after absence	5.53	6.36	12	Support after absence	5.61	6.36	12	Support after absence	5.38	6.40
13	Workplace representation	5.43	6.25	13	No unpaid overtime	5.50	6.24	13	Workplace representation	5.33	6.34
14	No unpaid overtime	5.42	6.24	14	Workplace representation	5.48	6.25	14	No unpaid overtime	5.27	6.27
15	Opportunities for progression	4.83	5.55	15	Opportunities for progression	4.88	5.55	15	Opportunities for progression	4.73	5.63
			100				100				100

*The factor wording is shortened in this table. For the full wording which participants voted on, please refer to Table 1.

Analysis of findings by gender: women and men have different preferences

While there was a strong overall degree of consistency in the data from street stalls, focus groups and opinion poll, the findings also highlight some important gender differences. This is important – and possibly not surprising – given that women face greater barriers in gaining a foothold in the labour market compared to men,[63] are more concentrated in low-paid sectors and occupations, and continue to be paid less than men for the same work.[64] Women are also more likely to undertake additional responsibilities beyond the workplace, particularly those revolving around care.[65 66]

Our research shows that women valued a number of factors higher than men: a supportive line manager; support to return to work after absence; additional benefits beyond pay; flexibility in choosing working hours; and a job which is easy to get to. In contrast, men valued higher than women: being paid fairly compared to similar jobs; regular and predictable hours; work that does not involve excessive hours; and being paid fairly compared to senior staff. It seems likely that much of this reflects the barriers to female labour market participation and the need to balance working with additional responsibilities beyond the workplace, such as care – which still disproportionately falls to women.[67] Similarly expectations and gender norms based on the traditional 'breadwinner model', may explain men's preferences for regular and predictable but not excessive hours, and issues around fair pay.

Both male and female research participants emphasised that a supportive line manager was someone who recognised and understood the personal and work-life balance needs of employees. Additional concerns beyond the immediate workplace may therefore explain women's likelihood to value a supportive line manager more than men. Similarly, childcare responsibilities, which tend to fall to women more than men, may account for women emphasising: additional benefits beyond pay; flexibility in choosing working hours; and a job that is easy to get to. The priority that many women gave to having access to appropriate support to return to work may reflect their experiences following maternity leave.

Analysis of findings by age group: young and old have different preferences

The findings show that young workers aged 16-24 valued certain factors more highly than did older workers: a job with no discrimination; a sense of purpose and meaning; socially worthwhile work; supportive colleagues; opportunities for progression; and flexible hours. In contrast, workers aged over 55 valued job security; a safe working environment; fair pay to similar jobs; and workplace representation.

Interestingly, 16-24 year olds were significantly less likely to value training opportunities as important – indeed this was ranked last overall for that age group. This may be due to young workers being more likely to be undertaking non-workplace learning opportunities, transitioning in and out of employment and working in temporary jobs.[68]

Similarly, much of the other preferences are likely to reflect people's current experiences of the labour market. Younger workers are twice as likely to report discrimination[69] and are less likely to be unionised than older workers.[70] A greater probability of balancing work with study may explain young workers' likelihood to value flexible hours while the fact that they have recently set out on their career will likely explain why they tend particularly to value opportunities for progression. This relatively new experience of work might also explain their desire for work that provides a sense of purpose and is socially worthwhile. This theory is in line with associated research undertaken through the UWS-Oxfam Partnership highlighting that a substantial number of young people believe their future jobs will be "valued by society" and also "socially worthwhile".[71]

TABLE 7: FOCUS GROUP RANKINGS BY AGE GROUP

	16 TO 24 YR OLDS (N=46)			25 TO 34 YR OLDS (N=37)			35 TO 44 YR OLD(N=57)			45 TO 54 YR OLDS (N=81)			55 YRS OR OLDER (N=48)		
RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Decent hourly rate	1.13	7.53	Decent hourly rate	1.18	7.89	Decent hourly rate	1.11	7.38	Decent hourly rate	1.19	7.94	Job security	1.28	8.51
2	Paid leave	0.94	6.23	Job security	0.98	6.55	Job security	1.1	7.35	Job security	1.1	7.30	Paid leave	0.99	6.58
3	No discrimination	0.89	5.93	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.86	5.73	Paid leave	0.87	5.81	Paid leave	0.91	6.05	Safe environment	0.93	6.17
3	Job security	0.89	5.93	Paid leave	0.77	5.14	Safe environment	0.83	5.52	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.89	5.90	Decent hourly rate	0.89	5.95
5	Supportive manager	0.87	5.80	Supportive manager	0.72	4.80	Supportive manager	0.71	4.75	Safe environment	0.87	5.80	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.85	5.67
6	Purpose and meaning	0.85	5.67	Opportunities for progression	0.72	4.80	Regular hours	0.69	4.59	Supportive manager	0.85	5.69	Regular hours	0.78	5.17
7	Socially worthwhile	0.83	5.53	Support after absence	0.7	4.69	Support after absence	0.65	4.31	Workplace representation	0.73	4.87	Workplace representation	0.7	4.67
8	Supportive colleagues	0.78	5.23	Additional benefits	0.7	4.65	Supportive colleagues	0.62	4.11	Support after absence	0.72	4.77	Purpose and meaning	0.69	4.61
9	Safe environment	0.78	5.21	Safe environment	0.7	4.63	Opportunities for progression	0.61	4.08	No discrimination	0.59	3.95	Supportive manager	0.66	4.37
10	Opportunities for progression	0.78	5.20	No discrimination	0.69	4.63	Purpose and meaning	0.61	4.07	No excessive hours	0.59	3.90	No discrimination	0.64	4.28
11	Regular hours	0.7	4.68	Flexible hours	0.62	4.15	Develop and use skills	0.6	3.97	Purpose and meaning	0.57	3.81	Predictable pay	0.6	4.00
12	Flexible hours	0.59	3.95	Regular hours	0.61	4.09	Accessible location	0.56	3.74	No unpaid overtime	0.54	3.60	Support after absence	0.59	3.91
13	Accessible location	0.46	3.09	Predictable pay	0.53	3.53	No unpaid overtime	0.56	3.71	Training opportunities	0.53	3.52	No unpaid overtime	0.57	3.80
14	No unpaid overtime	0.46	3.03	No unpaid overtime	0.51	3.39	No discrimination	0.55	3.65	Enough time for tasks	0.53	3.52	Enough time for tasks	0.5	3.31
15	Predictable pay	0.43	2.89	Supportive colleagues	0.51	3.37	Enough time for tasks	0.53	3.51	Regular hours	0.48	3.19	Supportive colleagues	0.49	3.25
15	Enough time for tasks	0.43	2.89	Training opportunities	0.51	3.37	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.52	3.49	Develop and use skills	0.47	3.10	Training opportunities	0.49	3.23
15	Support after absence	0.43	2.89	Develop and use skills	0.51	3.37	Training opportunities	0.51	3.41	Accessible location	0.46	3.07	Develop and use skills	0.44	2.93
18	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.43	2.88	Enough time for tasks	0.5	3.35	Predictable pay	0.49	3.28	Additional benefits	0.46	3.04	Additional benefits	0.4	2.68
19	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.41	2.75	Purpose and meaning	0.48	3.21	Additional benefits	0.47	3.14	Opportunities for progression	0.4	2.69	No excessive hours	0.37	2.49
20	Additional benefits	0.39	2.58	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.47	3.13	No excessive hours	0.46	3.05	Flexible hours	0.39	2.61	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.37	2.43
21	No excessive hours	0.37	2.45	Accessible location	0.35	2.35	Flexible hours	0.42	2.83	Predictable pay	0.37	2.43	Opportunities for progression	0.36	2.39
22	Develop and use skills	0.35	2.31	Varied work	0.35	2.32	Workplace representation	0.41	2.75	Supportive colleagues	0.36	2.37	Socially worthwhile	0.36	2.39
23	Varied work	0.24	1.59	Socially worthwhile	0.32	2.14	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.41	2.74	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.33	2.23	Accessible location	0.32	2.11
24	Control	0.2	1.31	No excessive hours	0.31	2.09	Socially worthwhile	0.28	1.86	Socially worthwhile	0.3	1.99	Flexible hours	0.27	1.83
25	Workplace representation	0.19	1.29	Workplace representation	0.26	1.74	Varied work	0.24	1.62	Control	0.21	1.42	Varied work	0.25	1.67
26	Training opportunities	0.17	1.15	Control	0.14	0.90	Control	0.19	1.29	Varied work	0.19	1.24	Control	0.24	1.60
		15	100		15	100		15	100		15	100		15	100

Analysis of findings by disability status

Our research shows that disabled people allocated higher priority to: a job with no discrimination; a sense of purpose and meaning; support after absence; the opportunity to develop and use skills; opportunities for progression; training opportunities; and flexible hours. In contrast, the factors disabled people tended to value less than people who are not disabled were: a supportive line manager; fair pay to similar jobs; and regular hours more than disabled people.

Disabled people's greater risk of being subjected to discrimination at work[72] is likely to account for why they attach higher significance to this factor when they think about what 'makes work decent'. The need for flexibility and support to manage their disability might be the reason why disabled people value flexible hours and support after absence higher than people who are not disabled. Disabled people's disadvantaged position in the labour market,[73] and/or feelings of under-appreciation might explain why they prioritise: the opportunity to develop and use skills; progression opportunities; and training opportunities.

Further results from the focus groups disaggregated by other characteristics including labour force status; income group; employment contract status; hours, status and gender; trade union membership and gender; and ethnicity/nationality are available in the appendix.

TABLE 8: FOCUS GROUPS RANKINGS BY DISABILITY STATUS

	DISABILITY (N=48)			NO DISABILITY (N=213)		
RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Decent hourly rate	1.042	6.95	Decent hourly rate	1.136	7.57
2	No discrimination	0.944	6.29	Job security	1.129	7.53
3	Paid leave	0.926	6.17	Paid leave	0.909	6.06
4	Job security	0.924	6.16	Safe environment	0.850	5.67
5	Purpose and meaning	0.785	5.23	Supportive manager	0.829	5.53
6	Safe environment	0.782	5.21	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.766	5.11
7	Support after absence	0.765	5.10	Regular hours	0.688	4.59
8	Develop and use skills	0.728	4.85	Purpose and meaning	0.598	3.99
9	Opportunities for progression	0.695	4.63	No discrimination	0.598	3.99
10	No unpaid overtime	0.615	4.10	Support after absence	0.587	3.91
11	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.604	4.03	No unpaid overtime	0.526	3.51
12	Supportive colleagues	0.574	3.83	Enough time for tasks	0.525	3.50
13	Workplace representation	0.570	3.80	Opportunities for progression	0.516	3.44
14	Training opportunities	0.539	3.59	Supportive colleagues	0.509	3.39
15	Flexible hours	0.535	3.57	Workplace representation	0.496	3.31
16	Supportive manager	0.501	3.34	Predictable pay	0.481	3.21
17	Additional benefits	0.448	2.99	Accessible location	0.468	3.12
18	No excessive hours	0.447	2.98	Additional benefits	0.465	3.10
19	Regular hours	0.404	2.69	No excessive hours	0.443	2.95
20	Enough time for tasks	0.401	2.67	Training opportunities	0.427	2.85
21	Socially worthwhile	0.398	2.65	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.420	2.80
22	Predictable pay	0.361	2.41	Develop and use skills	0.415	2.77
23	Accessible location	0.292	1.95	Flexible hours	0.406	2.71
24	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.289	1.93	Socially worthwhile	0.376	2.51
25	Varied work	0.276	1.84	Varied work	0.224	1.49
26	Control	0.154	1.03	Control	0.213	1.42
		15	100		15	100

DETAILED ANALYSIS: WHAT LOW PAID WORKERS TOLD US

This section analyses how focus group participants understood each of the different 26 decent work factors. It uses quotes from the focus groups and individual interviews to highlight the impact a certain factor has on people's lives. It then combines this with statistics from the labour market assessment to assess the extent to which Scotland is delivering decent work.

1. An hourly rate or salary that is enough to cover basic needs such as food, housing and things most people take for granted, without getting into debt

Focus group participants spoke of the importance of having a wage or salary that covered the basics, but was also sufficient to 'participate' in society. This included having sufficient money to socialise, go for a meal with a friend, take a holiday or 'save for a rainy day'. The links between a decent salary and independence – from parents, family, or a partner – were also emphasised.

"As long as you can live and you can pay your bills and you can get a holiday every year... and save a bit, know what I mean? Especially if you've got young kids, you're wanting tae put a bit by and make sure they're alright."

Former construction worker

"I'd love tae just say it was no' a' aboot the money... like the job satisfaction. I really dae want that. But I need the money."

Lone parent, female

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING A DECENT HOURLY RATE?

In 2015, 444,000 employees in Scotland (19.5%) were paid less than the then voluntary Living Wage of £7.85 an hour.[74] Almost two-thirds of this group were women.[75]

1 IN 5

EMPLOYEES IN SCOTLAND WERE PAID LESS THAN THE LIVING WAGE IN 2015

Source: Scottish Government, 2016

The proportion of employees earning less than the voluntary Living Wage has increased by 0.2% from 2014.[76] It should also be acknowledged that the voluntary Living Wage does not necessarily meet basic needs, particularly when considering the extra costs certain households face, including those with children or disabled people who are unable to work.[77] For these households, while pay is undoubtedly important, it needs to work in conjunction with a social security system that recognises the extra costs they face.

As well as making up two-thirds of low-paid workers in absolute terms, female employees are relatively more likely to be low-paid compared to male employees (24% versus 15%) and concentrated in low-paid undervalued sectors.

2. Job security

Focus group participants spoke about the importance of a permanent, open-ended contract. A number of them were not aware whether they actually had a written contract. There was also overlap with the 'regular and predictable working hours' factor.

"I would... work for two weeks at the distillery, because it was through the agency, then I would get the phone call on the Friday saying that I was paid off – so I'd have to sign off, sign back on the dole, then after the week they would phone me back up again and I was going through this for about three-and-a-half months."

Former distillery worker, out-of-work, male

"The few times when I complained I got the worst schedule ever... like five or ten hours less... a friend in my job was on holiday, called into ask if she could stay a week longer and was told 'yes', came home, and she was fired."

Waitress, female

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING JOB SECURITY?

Figures from April 2015 to March 2016 there were 138,000 temporary employees (70,000 women and 68,000 men) in Scotland. This represents almost 6% of all employees. 45,000 people (26,000 men and 19,000 women) reported being in temporary employment because they could not find a permanent job.[78] This represents almost 2% of all employees.

Source: ONS, 2016

In addition, self-reported data from the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) shows that in the UK in 2015, 12.6% of workers reported they might lose their job in the next six months.[79] This was a slight fall from 12.9% in 2010 but significantly higher than the 6.8% reported in 2005.[80]

3. Paid holidays and paid sick leave

Focus group participants emphasised paid holidays and paid sick leave in relation to their work-life balance, but also raised more general issues related to terms and conditions.

"You put your names intae the hat tae see who's eligible for Christmas off. Your name doesn't get pulled, you work it... I've worked Christmas Day for the last three year... Never even got Boxing Day off."

Call centre worker, female

"They refused to pay me when my gran died. They refused to gie me one day for the funeral off."

Fast food worker, female

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING PAID LEAVE?

In late 2014, an estimated 118,000 employees in Scotland (5.2%) did not receive the statutory minimum entitlement to paid holidays.[81] While a gender split is not available for Scotland, at a UK level, women made up 53.3% of those who lost out.

118,000

EMPLOYEES IN SCOTLAND DID NOT RECEIVE THEIR MINIMUM LEGAL ENTITLEMENT TO PAID HOLIDAYS IN 2014

Source: TUC, 2015

4. A safe working environment free from physical and mental risk or harm

Some focus group participants had faced problematic experiences, such as insufficient access to safe and suitable tools and equipment for the job. Wider research suggests this can be a particular problem for women given that personal protective equipment is often designed for men.[82] Participants also reported problematic experiences regarding psycho-social aspects – such as bullying. Aspects which straddled both, such as the lack of communal spaces to interact with colleagues, were also emphasised.

[Working with people] that's got mental health [issues], they attack you, verbally, physically. 'Shut it you tramp.' [The company] don't wantae know.

Social care worker, female

A few girls have left in tears... there's something far wrong when you're leaving your work crying isn't there?

Community worker, female

ARE SCOTLAND'S WORKPLACES SAFE?

Based on a 12 month rolling average between 2011/12 and 2014/15, 58,000 people in Scotland, 2.3% of the workforce, reported a non-fatal injury at work in the previous 12 months.[83]

During the same time-period, 88,000 people in Scotland, 3.25% of the workforce, reported illness caused or made worse by work in the previous 12 months.[84]

33,000 people in Scotland, 1.2% of the workforce, reported stress, depression or anxiety caused or made worse by work in the previous 12 months.[85]

5. A supportive line manager

Focus group participants emphasised the importance of a manager who supports staff to do their job well, is appreciative when employees do good work, and who understands both the personal and work-life needs of employees. Themes around respect, acknowledgement, and good communication from 'management' in general also featured heavily.

Our bosses, they've done things like paid people's flights to see their parents in another country when they've got ill.

Kitchen worker, female

I'd go in, dae my ain shift fae seven o'clock tae four, go hame for a couple o' hours, and then go in and cover for an extra three hours because they were short-staffed. And I just did not feel appreciated for dae'in that.

Lone parent, female

DO SCOTLAND'S EMPLOYERS PROVIDE SUPPORTIVE LINE MANAGERS?

In 2013, 13% of Scottish adults in employment disagreed that their line manager encouraged them at work (18% were neutral, 60% agreed and 9% reported the question did not apply – they did not have a manager).[86] There do not seem to be discernible gender differences.

324,000

EMPLOYEES IN SCOTLAND DID NOT FEEL THEY HAD A SUPPORTIVE LINE MANAGER IN 2013

Source: Scottish Government, 2013

6. Being paid fairly compared to other similar jobs

Focus group participants emphasised the importance of 'equal pay for equal work'. While, at times, this was specifically about equal pay between men and women, participants often raised concerns about a sense of general unfairness between workers doing similar roles. The vast majority of the time this referred to the situation within their workplace but, on occasion, participants referred to those doing similar roles at other employers. This factor ranked significantly higher than 'being paid fairly compared to senior staff', which suggests people are likely to be more concerned with fairness in comparison to their peers, rather than their managers.

"I know I get paid less than a male in my team with the exact same role, we've worked the same job and I know I'm on a lower salary than him, 'cause he's quite brazen about it. And I could challenge it but I'm just like... [shrugs]."

Bank administrator, female

"I was dae'in the asbestos removal off the top o' the distillery roofs... the boy... he'd been working with them for six or seven years but... I was taking home more money than him and I'd only been there two months."

Former janitor, currently out of work, male

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING FAIR PAY FOR SIMILAR JOBS?

In Scotland in 2016, 37% of workers aged 18-64 earning less than £20,000 per year surveyed in a YouGov opinion poll for for this research disagreed that they were fairly paid compared to other similar jobs.[87] Men were more likely to feel they were not being paid fairly – 46% disagreed with the statement they were paid fairly, compared to 32% of women.

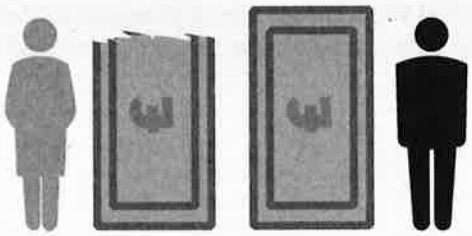
37%

OF WORKERS EARNING LESS THAN 20K SURVEYED IN SCOTLAND FEEL THEY ARE UNFAIRLY PAID COMPARED TO SIMILAR JOBS

Source: YouGov for Oxfam, 2016

THE GENDER PAY GAP.

In Scotland in 2015, the gender pay gap for all employees (full-time and part-time) stood at just under 15%.[88]



WOMEN WERE PAID 15% LESS THAN MEN IN SCOTLAND IN 2015

Source: Close the Gap, 2015

7. A job which in which there is no discrimination because of who I am

During focus group discussions, and individual interviews, people described clear examples of discrimination – including allegations of sexual harassment. One story, which stands out was of a disabled man who, having successfully applied for a job, went to sign his contract only for the employer to notice his disability and withdraw the job offer. Beyond such clear examples, many of those who faced additional barriers – such as disabled people – felt employers were not willing to understand or accommodate their condition. More broadly, research participants spoke about a lack of fairness in the workplace in general. When asked 'what one thing is important for decent work' a significant number of focus group participants spoke about the importance of fair rules and procedures being applied to everyone equally.

CASE STUDY: LAURA

Laura used to work in sales and took her company to an employment tribunal for alleged sexual discrimination. She said her boss made comments on what the females in the team were wearing and their appearance, and made inappropriate comments.

Laura was the only female in her sales team. She says she was expected to be one of the boys, but wasn't treated like an equal member of the team. Laura says there was no balance and respect and that some comments made her feel embarrassed, self-conscious and intimidated.

She describes how her boss spoke to her on a night out:

> **There was redundancies coming and we were up on a list for redundancies and at one point he said to me on a night out: 'go and get me a drink and you can keep your job'.**

Laura says she went straight to the Managing Director and told him. She says he told her that such behaviour wasn't acceptable, but then nothing happened, and nothing was said to her manager about it.

Laura says the outcome of the tribunal was that the company was told that it had to put policies and plans in place to improve communication with their staff.

> **When I became a manager... it was quite difficult because people used to say to me... you're disabled... how are you getting a job above me?**

Former public sector worker, disabled, male

> **I honestly really think that people who are younger than me they should get paid the same as me. It's not fair that I'm on like almost seven pound an hour and they're on like four pound an hour... we're doing the same job.**

Fast food worker, female

ARE SCOTLAND'S WORKPLACES FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION?

In the UK in 2010, 5.2% of workers (5.5% of women and 4.8% of men) reported they were subject to discrimination at work in the previous 12 months.[89] In the same survey, 2.4% of workers (3.5% of women and 1.5% of men) reported being subject to unwanted sexual attention at work in the previous 12 months.[90] This was down from 3.6% in 2005.[91]

Research this year by the TUC, in collaboration with the Everyday Sexism Project, found that 52% of women polled had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. The figure rises to 63% for 18-24 year olds.[92]

Research by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in 2015 found that 11% of mothers experienced pregnancy and maternity discrimination resulting in them having to leave their jobs.[93]

1 IN 9

MOTHERS REPORT HAVING TO LEAVE THEIR JOB DUE TO NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES RELATING TO PREGNANCY

Source: Equality & Human Rights Commission & Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2016

8. Work that provides a sense of purpose and meaning

Focus group participants spoke about the importance of satisfying and enjoyable work. For some these characteristics stemmed from helping clients and customers, while for others they derived from a sense of pride about achieving set objectives or completing tasks from start to finish.

I think it's nice to know that we're part of a group that has... a common purpose. And I think that that's important in any office.
Street fundraiser, female

There is job satisfaction as well. You know that you've done a good job... walking through the [building], I mean, it is spotless.
Cleaner, female

DO SCOTLAND'S WORKERS ENJOY PURPOSEFUL AND MEANINGFUL WORK?

In Scotland in 2011, 8% of employees indicated their work did not provide a sense of achievement while 9% were not satisfied with 'the work itself'. There did not seem to be discernible gender differences.[94]

CASE STUDY: STEPHEN

Stephen, from Paisley, has been relying on ad-hoc agency work since he was made redundant two years ago. He says he has applied for many jobs – sometimes as many as 60 in a single week – but has not found a permanent position.

He is currently registered with three separate agencies for work. Through this, Stephen gets various types of work as he is registered to do office work, hospitality and catering assistance. With one agency the wage is £7.33 an hour, rising to £7.85 after 12 consecutive weeks of work. With another agency, it is £6.70 an hour.

Stephen's weekly hours vary wildly. He says that one week he does 40 hours, but in others it could be as low as just 10. Stephen feels he can't say 'no' when he is asked to work in case the agencies do not call him again. He says there is always someone else who is willing to do the job.

9. Regular and predictable working hours

During focus group discussions, several participants spoke about problems with unpredictable shift patterns which did not allow employees to plan their life outside work. Others emphasised the importance of having enough guaranteed and reliable hours in order to have an adequate income without having to work a second job.

My daughter was fourteen... she could be left alone, but I did specify I wasn't gonnae be doing shifts after nine o' clock at night. But then... they put me on a zero hours contract for that reason as well. They wouldn't give me a full-time contract 'cause they says I was 'inflexible'.
Social care worker, female

Right now I'm on a zero hour contract. ... When within uni it was good 'cause then I was quite flexible, but now... I need something a bit more sustainable... something that I can say that I'm doing these hours each week, rather than not knowing.
Charity worker, recently graduated, male

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING REGULAR HOURS?

In April-June 2015, an estimated 51,000 people in employment in Scotland (1.9% of the total) were on a zero-hours contract.[95] A breakdown by gender is not available for Scotland, although at a UK level more women in employment are on a zero-hours contract than men (2.8% compared to 2.1%).

In 2015, 233,000 people in employment in Scotland were underemployed: 9.2% of the total workforce.[96] Women are more likely to be underemployed than men. In 2014: 121,700 of women (9.9%) were underemployed compared to 94,900 men (7.3%).[97]

51,000

EMPLOYEES IN SCOTLAND WERE ON ZERO-HOUR CONTRACTS IN 2015

Source: ONS, 2015

10. Appropriate support to return to work following absence due to injury or ill health

Appropriate support to return to work was a particularly important issue for focus group participants who were currently out-of-work but looking for work; they ranked it second overall. Many of these participants emphasised difficulties navigating the current sanctions regime, whereby out-of-work benefits are withdrawn if job seekers are judged not to have met various conditions.[98] It seems therefore that many out-of-work research participants used this factor as a proxy for general support to return to work, rather than short-term support from employers to return to work.

"If you were off on long-term sick, which I was unfortunately, you were left to rot. You were not updated about anything. You'd get called in for your monthly... assessment, just to hand over a sick certificate."
Former public sector worker, male

"I ended up, like, going off sick for three months. And then having to go back into work and resolve issues with my manager... at one point, we just weren't speaking. That's really stressful."
Social care worker, female

DO SCOTLAND'S EMPLOYERS DELIVER SUPPORT AFTER ABSENCE FROM WORK?

In Scotland in 2016, 21% of workers aged 18-64 earning less than £20,000 per year surveyed in a YouGov opinion poll for this research disagreed that their employer provides appropriate support to help employees return to work following an absence due to injury or ill-health.[99] Men were more likely to disagree than women (26% to 19%).

1 IN 5

WORKERS EARNING LESS THAN £20K SURVEYED IN SCOTLAND FEEL THEY DON'T HAVE SUPPORT FROM THEIR EMPLOYERS IN RETURNING TO WORK

Source: YouGov for Oxfam, 2016

11. Opportunities for promotion and career progression

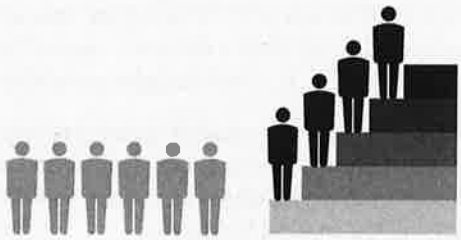
During focus group discussions, many participants emphasised that while they may want to progress, this possibility was not a realistic or even desirable option within their occupation or industry. This lack of progression routes within sectors, alongside the undervaluation of low-paid sectors in general, locks workers into low-wage jobs.

"Yeah, we're asked every year if we want tae progress, if there's anything else that we would like tae do, we do get asked. But we've reached our peak."
Cleaner, female

"To be honest, I think I've been in it for a long time now and I think I want to get out of it because I don't see an awful lot of career progression, other than going into a team leader's role which, to be honest, I think that's quite a stressful job as well."
Social care worker, female

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRESSION?

In Scotland in 2016, 59% of workers aged 18-64 earning less than £20,000 per year surveyed in a YouGov opinion poll for this research disagreed that they have opportunities for promotion and career progression in their current job.[100] There do not seem to be discernible gender differences.



59%

OF WORKERS EARNING LESS THAN £20K SURVEYED IN SCOTLAND FEEL THEY DON'T HAVE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THEIR CURRENT JOB

Source: YouGov for Oxfam, 2016

12. An employer that does not expect me to arrive before or leave after my allocated hours or undertake unpaid overtime

Focus group participants spoke about the difficulty in balancing their employer's expectations with their personal commitments outside work. Several participants reported negative experiences of changes to their terms and conditions relating to overtime.

Sometimes it's a wee bit harder for, like, single mums... I've got the childcare but what can I dae when childminders only work certain hours and they want me tae work a wee bit extra? Lone parent, female

Conditions are important, like... if you work overtime, do you get paid for it or is it expected that you just have to work extra hour because, well, you're lucky you've got a job? Lone parent, female

DO SCOTLAND'S EMPLOYERS EXPECT UNPAID OVERTIME?

In the UK in 2010, 35% of workers (39.5% of men and 30% of women) worked in their 'free time' once a month or more in order to meet work demands in the past year.[101]

13. Supportive colleagues

During focus group discussions, participants emphasised the importance of having good relationships within their workplace. Furthermore, they emphasised the significance of the enjoyment that comes from working in a team and the importance of having 'respect' and being able to 'speak up' – both to peers and senior staff.

[This workplace is] inclusive, everybody feels an equal, but loads o' places are awfully cliquish... if you feel alone in your workplace... and you're no fitting in wi' a clique, it's no good for you.
Male volunteer with community charity

What made that job is you got a good laugh on the line... You wer'nae standing there just nae speaking tae naebody. You actually did get a good banter.
Former food manufacturing worker, male, out-of-work

DO PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND WORK WITH SUPPORTIVE COLLEAGUES?

In 2013, 7% of Scottish adults in employment disagreed they got the help and support they needed from work colleagues.[102] There did not seem to be discernible gender differences.

14. Enough time to do all the tasks required

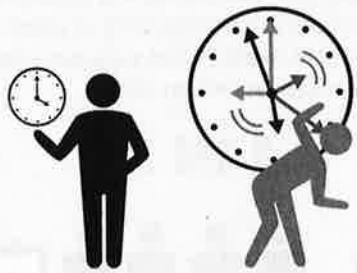
Focus group participants spoke about the need for management to properly account for the time it takes to perform tasks and not increase workload without additional support. The need for clear, realistic and achievable targets into which employees have input was also raised.

If you have a ratio of something like 1:8 working wi' young children, you get a member of staff who's off, and then suddenly your ratios are kicking up to 1:10... By God, the difference... That pressure on people... is overlooked.
Former children's worker, male

A' the cuts that's in the governments the noo... the jobs are getting cut, the staff are getting cut... you're doing double your work.
Lone parent, female

DO WORKERS IN SCOTLAND HAVE ENOUGH TIME FOR TASKS?

In 2013, 55% of Scottish adults in employment reported they sometimes, often, or always had unrealistic time pressures at work.[103] There did not seem to be discernible gender differences across the Scottish workforce as a whole. However, female workers earning less than £20,000 are 12-13% more likely to report sometimes, often, or always having unrealistic time pressures at work. Given 75% of part-time workers are female, this may relate to part-time workers having a workload that is not commensurate with their contracted hours.



MORE THAN HALF

OF SCOTTISH ADULTS REPORTED FACING UNREALISTIC TIME PRESSURES AT WORK IN 2013

Source: Scottish Government, 2013

15. Available and effective representation to raise my voice within the workplace

During focus group discussions, participants spoke about the importance of trade unions to represent them individually and to bargain collectively for better terms and conditions as well as the need, more generally, for good respect and communication between management and the workforce. Several participants spoke about the unequal balance of power within the workplace.

"You have to go there and hope that they're gonna be kind enough to give you what you've earned... you don't feel like you have any power to say, 'No, I know what I'm entitled to... you have to give me this'. It's kinda like you're hoping that that person will [give you it]."
Hospitality worker, female

"The members are quite scared. And then we have a lot of zero hours contracts as well. So they don't want to put their head above water 'cause they know [what would happen]."
Trade union workplace rep and social care worker, female

DO SCOTLAND'S EMPLOYEES HAVE WORKPLACE REPRESENTATION?

In 2015, 32% -730,000 employees – in Scotland were trade union members. While this figure was up 1.6% from 2014, trade union membership has declined by 7% since 1995.[104] In 2014 women were more likely to be trade union members than men (34.2% versus 29.8%).

Beyond trade union membership, in 2013, 47% of Scottish adults in employment agreed that staff at their employer were consulted about changes at work; 31% disagreed. Men were slightly more likely to agree that consultation took place compared to women (48% versus 45%).[105]

ONLY
1 IN 3
EMPLOYEES IN SCOTLAND WERE MEMBERS OF A TRADE UNION IN 2015

Source: ONS, 2016

16. Access to financial benefits beyond pay such as help with childcare or signposting to additional support such as tax credits

Focus group participants, particularly lone parents, spoke about the importance of support with childcare. A small number spoke about having 'a decent pension' and being able to 'retire at a reasonable age'. Tax credits or welfare advice did not really come up – other than people saying they thought they should be able to earn a decent enough wage so they did not have to rely on tax credits.

"Childcare is very expensive... but I'm sure companies like [names removed]... they could have a crèche, like a day thing, but there shouldn't be an age limit on it."
Lone parent, female

"We used tae have a programme within our organisation... it operated from six in the morning tae ten at night, but they watched the children in your own home... it meant if you were starting at seven... [it provided flexibility]."
Lone parent, female

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL BENEFITS BEYOND PAY?

Provisional figures for 2015 show that the proportion of employees without workplace pensions in Scotland was 42% in the private sector and 11% in the public sector.[106] Workplace pension membership has increased since 2014, driven by an increase of 5.9% in the private sector, although the public sector saw a 1.5% decrease.[107] The data does not allow a gender breakdown. However, wider research suggests women are less likely to have access to an occupational pension scheme and are more likely to experience poverty in retirement.[108]

A poll of low-paid workers across the UK in 2015 found that 20% reported their employer provided assistance with childcare, 58% reported they did not and 22% said they did not know.[109] The same poll found that 21% of respondents reported their employer provides financial advice from a third party - e.g. access to a free confidential information phone line - while 56% reported they did not and 23% said they did not know. Similarly, 18% reported their employer provides financial assistance to employees in need, 54% reported they did not and 26% reported they did not know.[110]

17. Ability to develop and use skills in current role

Within the focus groups, participants spoke about the importance of undertaking work that matched their skill-set, having their experience outside their workplace valued by their manager, and having access to in-job training.

It's important tae have a good quality o' work... and know that if something needs done, your manager can approach you and ask you 'Do you want tae dae that because you know what tae dae?' or 'Can you use that hoist?' 'Do you know how to work that stair lift?'

Former care worker, male

Being able to develop as an employee, that's important.

Health worker, female

DO SCOTLAND'S EMPLOYEES HAVE THE ABILITY TO DEVELOP AND USE SKILLS?

In Scotland in 2011, 22% of employees were not satisfied that their work provided the opportunity to develop their skills in their job. There did not seem to be discernible gender differences.[111]

There are also issues with workers being overqualified or skills being underused within the current labour market. The UK Commission on Employment and Skills estimated that 17% of the Scottish workforce was over-qualified or over-skilled for their job in 2013, unchanged from 2011.[112]

18. Predictable take-home pay

Focus group participants spoke about similar issues to those raised around the 'regular and predictable hours' factor (ranked ninth) – particularly the lack of security through contract types which did not guarantee regular hours. The lack of guaranteed pay in sales or commission-based employment was also raised. Some participants spoke about difficulties with the social security system including how moving into new paid employment or changing working hours could cause budgeting difficulties by, for example, impacting on their tax credit income.

I'm now down to four hours so I'm having to go and do the whole signing back on... I'm making twenty-one pound something from that... and obviously I'm now not getting working tax credits and my housing benefit has been affected.

Dinner lady, female

When I first got here, I found a job in a coffee [shop]... I lasted a week pretty much... you get your working schedule a day in advance, they pay you cash in hand, six pounds an hour, and not more, you never see the tips, and I had no breaks... I found out that I wasn't gonna be paid my first two weeks of work because, just in case I decided to quit... yeah, that was really bad.

Female immigrant, former barista

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING PREDICTABLE PAY?

While no specific indicator has been identified for this area, there is clearly overlap with the 'regular and predictable working hours' factor (ranked 9th) and 'job security' (ranked 2nd). Specifically, 51,000 people in Scotland were on zero-hours contracts in April-June 2015[113] while there were 138,000 temporary employees in 2015.[114]

In addition, self-employment is a particular issue given the unpredictability of income and the large number of self-employed workers – 49% across the UK – who are estimated to be low-paid.[115] Between December 2015 and February 2016, 287,000 people in Scotland were self-employed – 191,000 men and 96,000 women.[116]

19. Access to suitable and convenient training opportunities

During focus group discussions, participants mainly spoke about support and training to properly do the job they were in. Some spoke about opportunities to learn new skills. The importance of a supportive line manager was also emphasised.

"You just got thrown in... you got put on a line and this person is working beside you, 'they'll keep an eye on you'. That was basically it... It was actually funny, in a way, when you seen new starts happening... them trying tae get the triangle lids on and bottles going everywhere."

Former bottle factory worker, currently out-of-work, male

"If you decided you were gonnae take a course... it's really, really tough. There's people who go to college and the manager shows her major disapproval of it."

Social care worker, female

DO SCOTLAND'S EMPLOYEES HAVE ACCESS TO TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES?

In Scotland in 2011, 21% of employees were not satisfied with the amount of training they received. Excluding health and safety training, 30% of employees reported not receiving any training in the previous 12 months. There did not seem to be discernible gender differences.[117]

1 IN 3

EMPLOYEES IN SCOTLAND IN 2011 REPORTED NOT RECEIVING ANY TRAINING IN THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

Source: Workplace Employment Relations Study, 2013

20. A job that is easy to get to from where I live

Focus group participants spoke about the difficulties of planning their commute to work on public transport. Longer commutes seemed to be less of an issue compared to the difficulty in managing multiple public transport connections, which are also very expensive for someone on a low income.[118] Several social care workers spoke about issues around not being paid for their travel time.

"There's some shifts that I have travelled more than it's taken me to do the shift."

Social care worker, female

"Some business parks will actually put on a bus, like, from the city centre or from certain locations to take you there."

Lone parent, female

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING JOBS IN ACCESSIBLE LOCATIONS?

In Scotland in 2011, excluding those who worked from home, 8% travelled 30 kilometres or more while 43% travelled between 5-30 kilometres.[119]

21. Flexibility in choosing my working hours

During focus group discussions, participants emphasised the importance of having an employer that recognised the pressures on employees outside work, such as childcare needs and the need for flexibility in order to deal with emergencies.

"You need a job where, at least if your boss or your supervisor is understanding and accommodates you... if your kids are off sick, you need someone who's gonna understand you need to take time off."
Lone parent, female

"I can feel fine one day and I can wake up the next day and struggle to walk... if you're having a bad day and you cannae do the full shift that day - you make [it] up on a day that you are feeling better, but you can come and go flexibly"
Disabled person, male

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING FLEXIBLE HOURS?

In Scotland in 2011, 31% of employees reported having no influence over the time they start and finish the day.[120]

22. Work that does not involve excessive working hours

Focus group participants spoke about the need for hours which allowed for work-life balance and difficulties with shift patterns. Some participants suggested a weekly limit to working hours. In addition, regular paid breaks were emphasised as important but not necessarily the rule. For example, one participant spoke about how they only had seven minutes 'personal time' in a nine hour shift, after which their pay would be docked.

"The job I was doing used to rota me for a set time and there wasn't enough [time] for what had to be done for the next day. So I was consistently, some weeks constantly working two, three hours, four hours [extra]. Once I got the train at midnight... I was meant to finish at six."
Agency worker, male

"A lot of people that I work with they work forty plus, fifty hours, because they need the money... Whereas then there's other people in the same job who need more hours but they can't get the hours from those people who are working fifty hours... it's not being spread evenly."
Waitress, female

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING WORK THAT DOES NOT INVOLVE EXCESSIVE HOURS?

In 2015, an estimated 244,000 workers in Scotland were working more than 48 hours a week.[121] This represents an increase of 6% on 2010, following a decline in the previous decade. A gender breakdown at a Scottish level is not possible. However, at a UK level men were significantly more likely to work long hours than women (although long hours for women were on the increase).[122]

1 IN 10
EMPLOYEES IN SCOTLAND WERE WORKING MORE THAN 48 HOURS A WEEK IN 2015
Source: TUC, 2015

In 2015, 769,000 people in employment in Scotland (35%) reported they would prefer to work shorter hours than at present in their current job. Men were more likely than women to report they wanted to work shorter hours (37.4% vs. 33.4%).

23. Being paid fairly compared to senior staff

During focus group discussions, a small number of participants spoke about pay inequality between the company boss and frontline staff, while others spoke about pay bands more narrowly. Other participants were more relaxed about senior staff earning a bit more, if it could be justified.

I was just thinking, whereas the execs are getting paid millions and millions of dollars, I was getting paid less than the living wage for my work.

Former film industry worker, now working in retail, male

I think if you've got a decent manager and they're worth their pay then they deserve that wee bit extra.

Nursery worker, female

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING FAIR PAY COMPARED TO SENIOR STAFF?

No appropriate indicator for this factor was identified. However, the High Pay Centre estimated that in 2014, median pay for the highest-paid Executives working for 12 Scottish-based companies listed in the FTSE 350, was 40 times that of the median salary. It was also 77 times the pay of a worker on the minimum wage.[123]

Further research suggests the richest 1% of Scotland's population increased their share of total pre-tax incomes from 6.3% in 1997 to 9.4% by 2009.[124]

Source: High Pay Centre, 2015

24. Work that I believe is socially worthwhile

Focus group participants spoke about satisfying, enjoyable work that they felt was worthwhile. In this regard there seemed to be significant crossover with the issues people spoke about in relation to purpose and meaning.

I'm happier with what I'm dae'in because it's something I want to do. And I feel it's worthwhile, because I've seen the carnage it's caused [drug abuse], I've seen people dying and everything... and if I can help one person, I'm happy.

Peer support volunteer worker with drug rehabilitation charity, male

I don't know, there's no point dae'in a job that you don't like 'cause you're gonnae be stressful, you're not gonnae work as hard, you would be quite negative, so as long as you have like a job that you enjoy, you like, and other people like it and you're helping, kind o' the social good aspect of it.

West of Scotland Racial Equality Council focus group participant, male

IS SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET DELIVERING SOCIALLY WORTHWHILE WORK?

In the UK in 2010, 7.3% of workers (8.5% of men and 5.8% of women) said that their job rarely or never gave them the feeling of doing useful work.[125] 76.4% said their job gave them the feeling of doing useful work always or most of the time.

25. Varied work

Some focus group participants expressed an acceptance that the nature of their job did not allow for varied work. A working environment that allowed for social interaction and regular breaks were both themes that came up, perhaps as a response to the inherently monotonous nature of some employment.

I think the last job that I did, I did find it repetitive because it was inputting a lot of data into the computer... it was a bit repetitive and sometimes you can feel quite isolated because of that.
Software company worker, female

There's a lot of different things to do in the job and it keeps me going, it keeps my ain heid on as well, know? It's different every day.
Peer support volunteer worker with drug rehabilitation charity, male

DO SCOTLAND'S WORKERS HAVE VARIED WORK?

In the UK in 2012, 66% of employees (aged 20-65) reported that there was a great deal or quite a lot of variety in their job. 19% reported some variety, 10% a little and 5% none at all.[126] Women were slightly more likely to report having little or no variety at work (15.8% to 13.8%).

26. Control and flexibility over how I deliver my work

During focus group discussions, participants spoke about being treated 'like a person, not a number'. A related theme emerged relating to not being pressured or forced to undertake work that they did not want to do. Several participants spoke about having 'dignity' through being able to 'choose' the work that they did as well as the ability to reject unsafe work. The need for input into any targets was also raised.

Just noo we're given a diary in each client's house and you're supposed tae stick tae whit's in that diary. If you go in tae a wee client's hoose and she goes, 'I really don't need anything that's in that diary, but could you put a washing on for me?' We're supposed tae say 'no'.
Social care worker, female

You're just a number... They just said 'you dae it my way or it's the highway.' That's no' right. It's going back to the respect thing again, isn't it?
Former construction worker, male

DO SCOTLAND'S WORKERS HAVE CONTROL AND FLEXIBILITY OVER THEIR WORK?

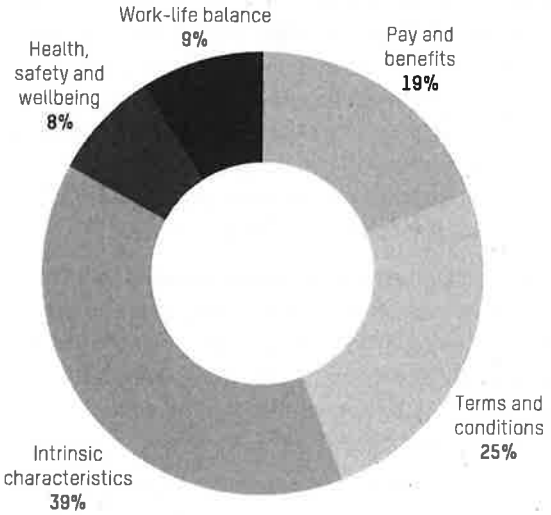
In 2013, 18% of Scottish adults in employment said that they seldom or never had a choice in deciding how they did their work.[127] Women were more likely to seldom or never have a choice in how they deliver their work – 21% of women compared to 15% of men.[128]

BEYOND THE RANKINGS: A DEEPER ANALYSIS

While the detailed rankings are useful in understanding the priorities of low-paid workers – and of different demographic groups – many of the twenty-six factors interrelate with each other. For this reason, additional analysis of focus groups data and individual interviews was undertaken. Specifically, data was used from the first and second focus group exercises. In these exercises, participants were asked to think about what makes for decent work without being presented with the list of 26 factors. The section below outlines some of the key findings.

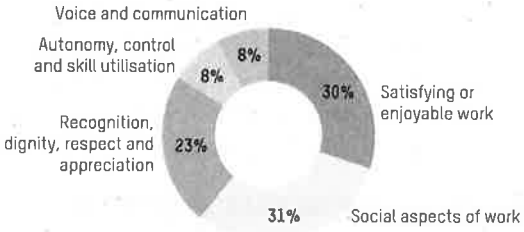
What one thing is most important for decent work?

In the first exercise, which was conducted during all 30 focus groups, participants reported 346 individual comments about one thing they thought was most important.[129] The researchers grouped participants' responses within the five dimensions of decent work identified in the literature review. The graphic below details the findings:

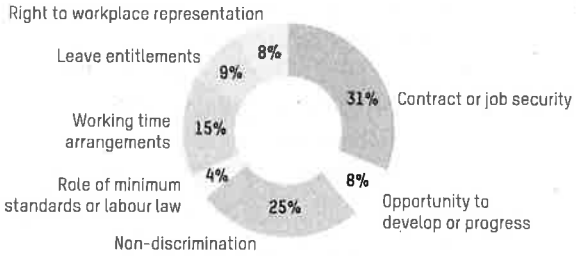


The next stage consisted of identifying any possible 'sub-themes'. Findings from this process are detailed on the right-hand side:

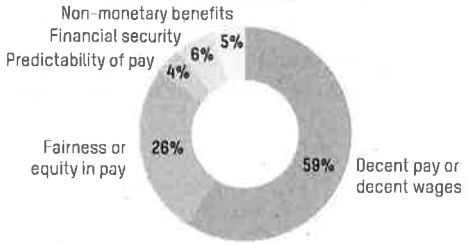
INTRINSIC CHARACTERISTICS OF WORK



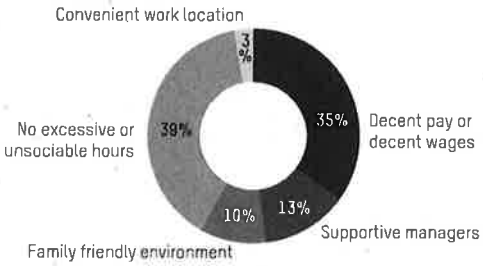
TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT



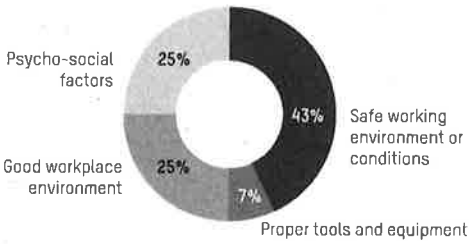
PAY AND BENEFITS



WORK-LIFE BALANCE



HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING



OVERLAP BETWEEN DIMENSIONS

In total, 107 of the 346 individual comments overlapped across two or more dimensions. This reflects the inter-connectedness of the sub-dimensions of decent work. The three largest overlaps were between the dimensions of the 'intrinsic characteristics of work' and 'terms and conditions' (48 comments); 'pay and benefits' with 'terms and conditions' (13 comments); and the 'intrinsic characteristics of work' with 'health, safety and wellbeing' (13 comments).

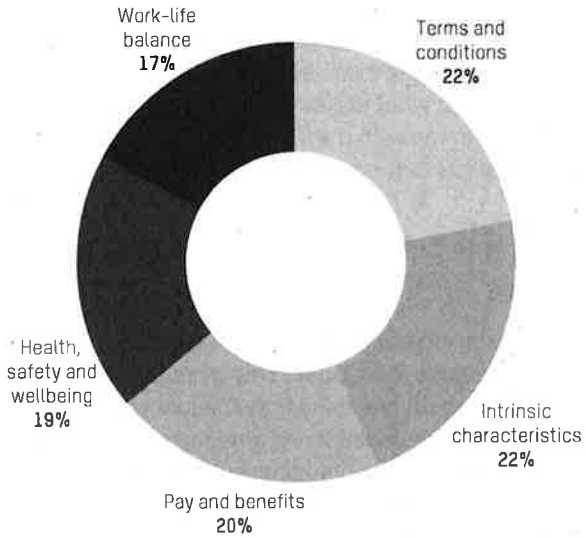
DIFFERENCES WITH THE RANKING EXERCISE

The relatively high proportion of comments about the intrinsic characteristics of work and relatively lower proportion about pay and benefits reveal a slightly different picture of what matters to low paid workers when compared to the findings from the rankings exercise, where decent and fair pay were generally ranked highly while indicators about the intrinsic characteristics of work were generally ranked much lower. This is likely to reflect the different nature of the exercises.

Given participants had not had any deliberative discussion for the first exercise, and were not made to prioritise different factors as they were in the final exercise, the results of the final exercise are more robust than this exercise. That said, the results highlight some of the issues people think are important for decent work when asked unprompted.

What did focus group participants say when prompted with the five dimensions of decent work?

In the second exercise conducted during 22 focus groups, participants wrote a total of 1,082 individual comments.[130] The graphic below shows how these were spread across the five dimensions:



Researchers also mapped the 1,082 comments back to the 26 factors of decent work. This allows for a clearer picture of the sub-dimensions participants emphasised most. Also of interest are comments from the post-it note exercise that are ***not captured*** (or not adequately captured) by any of the 26 decent work factors. This is detailed in Table 9. Factors which were not part of the 26 original factors are highlighted in red.

There is a degree of consistency between this exercise and the final focus group voting exercise. The top four factors mentioned in this exercise – a 'decent hourly rate'; a 'safe environment'; 'fair pay to similar jobs'; and 'paid leave' – also appeared in the top six factors in the final voting exercise.

A clear contract was an additional, new factor which appeared in this exercise. It is likely that 'job security' was used as a proxy for this in the final voting exercise, explaining why it appeared further up the rankings in the final voting exercise.

Similarly, having both a 'supportive manager' and 'supportive colleagues', while appearing in the middle of the rankings for this exercise, had a good number of mentions. When participants were pressed to prioritise factors in the final exercise it seems they prioritised a 'supportive manager' over 'supportive colleagues'. This would explain why a 'supportive manager' appears further up the rankings in the final exercise.

TABLE 9: MAPPING OF COMMENTS TO OUR 26 INDICATORS OF DECENT WORK[131]

DECENT WORK INDICATOR	PAY AND BENEFITS	TERMS AND CONDITIONS	INTRINSIC CHARACTER-ISTICS	HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING	WORK-LIFE BALANCE	TOTAL
Decent hourly rate	90	17	1	1	7	116
Safe environment	0	7	20	75	5	107
Fair pay to similar jobs	76	1	3	0	0	80
Paid leave	13	44	1	10	11	79
No excessive hours	0	3	1	5	59	68
Flexible hours	1	19	1	1	42	64
Job security	0	49	3	4	0	56
Regular hours	0	29	2	1	23	55
Purpose & meaning	0	0	50	2	1	53
Training opportunities	0	5	13	31	1	50
Supportive manager	0	8	17	21	2	48
Supportive colleagues	0	1	31	10	3	45
Clear contract or instructions	0	14	9	4	0	27
Additional benefits	10	10	0	2	1	23
Bonuses or performance-based rewards	6	1	0	7	8	22
Varied work	0	0	21	0	0	21
No discrimination	0	6	4	8	1	19
Control	0	0	11	1	5	17
Workplace representation	0	4	1	11	0	16
Socially worthwhile	1	0	13	0	2	16
Predictable pay	12	3	0	0	0	15
Opportunities for progression	0	3	12	0	0	15
No unpaid overtime	3	3	0	0	9	15
Develop & use skills	0	1	13	0	0	14
Enough time for tasks	1	1	6	2	1	11
Support after absence	0	2	0	8	0	10
Accessible location	0	0	1	1	7	9
Miscellaneous	0	5	0	0	0	5
Adequate rest or breaks	0	1	2	0	1	4
Fair pay vs senior staff	2	0	0	0	0	2
	215	237	236	205	189	1,082

Note: Factors which were not part of the 26 original factors identified are highlighted in red within this table.

What do the individual interviews illustrate?

One-to-one interviews were an opportunity to listen to individuals talking about what decent work means for them, to analyse how the various factors interrelate, and to better understand how they may impact on other aspects of life otherwise not explored in this research. Such analysis also allows a more differentiated understanding of the 26-factor priority list as it shows the links between, for example, a highly-ranked factor such as 'a decent hourly rate' or 'job security' and a factor such as 'predictable take home pay', which was ranked relatively lowly at eighteenth.

HEALTH & WELLBEING AND PAY

For interviewees, there were obvious connections between the 'decency' of pay and good health and personal well-being. However, they also understand that there is an advantage for the employer if pay is decent:

if you're getting good pay, and you've got good health, good holidays, and you're treated okay, you're gonnae go tae your work, and you're gonnae be happy... you're going to be mair productive to the company, aren't you? So, everybody's a winner
voluntary worker, male

PAY AND PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE

A decent wage is not only deemed to be important to afford 'basic things', as the street stalls and focus groups made clear, but also a necessary prerequisite for a young working women to live independently of the support from parents or husband:

I think it's when you feel independent from everybody, you don't need your husband or your mum and your dad, yes, and the most important for me is that when you feel you are on your own and you can be, do everything you want
part-time worker, female

Similarly, a young man who lost his job as a comparatively well-paid administrative worker due to company redundancies relayed the impact of having his first paid job:

I flew the nest, I left home and me and my friend got a private let, we got wur own flat for six month and that, kinda, they [the employer] sent me on my way to get the money together so I could fly the nest
voluntary worker, male

PAY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The interviews further demonstrated the relationship between 'decent pay' and social inclusion. This relates to the discussions in the focus groups where participants stated that low levels of pay result in social exclusion, with participants reporting that their income often only covers what was described as 'the basics' – rent, utility bills, food.

A social care worker and mother of one reported that working full-time for a low wage has not only meant material difficulties, such as paying the rent and bills, but also has had, over the years, a detrimental impact on her personal life. She said that her low wage, in addition to unsociable working hours and their lack of predictability, had pushed her to

the periphery of everything because everything's got a financial cost to it... And quite often that just means you just don't go out... So you're kinda socially isolated [and] see friends drift off because I've never went out with them because I've just not had the money
social care worker, female

This social care worker also expressed a concern that was voiced more widely in interviews and focus groups:

A basic wage should be able to pay for your rent, food on the table, pay your bills, your council tax. After that it would be nice, also, to be able to have some participation in the social life of the society you're in, you know? Whatever that is, going to concerts or going to the football, cinema
social care worker, female

Conversely, an interviewee reported what his stable and comparatively well-paid work in an administrative function allowed him to do:

It allowed me to save up enough money so that I could get the deposit down on my first flat... if one of my friends phoned up and says 'Do you want tae dae this? Do you want tae do that?' I could say 'Aye, we'll do it'
voluntary worker, male

RESPECT, WORK AND PERSONAL IDENTITY

Among the interviewees some reported that their work – paid or unpaid – had positive and negative impacts on how they felt about themselves. For example, the importance of the meaning and purpose of work was particularly emphasised by those who had experience of voluntary work.

Respect – or the lack of it – from employers, but also from colleagues and clients or service users, emerged as an important feature of decent work and was reported to influence the individuals'

personal identity. Two interviewees in low-paid work in the social care sector reported that low pay and conflictual relationships with their line managers, but also with their service users, had a detrimental impact on their personal identity. The first said:

you do feel like the longer you're in it, the more of yourself you lose
social care worker, female

The other, a former carer blamed the quality of line-management. He said:

I get mair respect oot of the patients than I did oot of half the staff... [management see you as] just a robot coming in to do a job, they don't care who you are or what you are, they just want the job done, they want the shift covered... you just don't feel like you matter at all
voluntary worker, male

Conversely, a volunteer in a drug rehabilitation charity reported how his unpaid work had helped him to control his own alcoholism. He said:

[voluntary work had] a massive positive effect on my mental and physical health... [I got] that self-esteem back, that confidence again. I had people say to me 'we want you to come and work with us on a voluntary basis. And then at some point in the future it'd be great if you were actually working here as well'
voluntary worker, male

All interviewees who could speak about experience of unpaid work in the voluntary sector reported that they felt 'part of the team' and that this was highly relevant with regards to their personal identity. One said:

Last Thursday I was out for dinner with the Chief Executive. That would never have happened before... I've got the codes to the doors... I've got the keys, and the alarm code to your building outside where we are the noo... for somebody's that never had trust
voluntary worker, male

However, interviewees suggested that respect is not only expressed through the personal conduct of those higher up in the hierarchy but also through pay. The voluntary workers emphasised this in reference to their past experience in mostly low-paid jobs:

You want to be valued, feel valued, you're no' wanting to work for a pittance
voluntary worker, male

Furthermore, respect for employees is also expressed in access to a 'proper' contractual agreement between employee and employer. One interviewee – who currently worked at a charity as a volunteer and was not generally used to contracts from previous work in the private sector – said:

[a contract] is a very good thing... It takes the volunteer role seriously... and it also kind of acts almost as like a bridge into the so-called real world in inverted commas, back into the world of work, 'cause you'll have to deal with that with an actual employer
voluntary worker, male

The relationship between work and personal identity also touches upon the question of whether work – paid or unpaid – is considered to be meaningful or not. A volunteer with prior experience in the low pay sector said:

it is purposeful work, when you actually get out in the morning, get up in the morning... it's like 'I'm gonnae do something good here, this is gonnae be a good day'
voluntary worker, male

Comparing low-paid employment in the removal industries with his voluntary work, another interviewee said:

I feel as if I'm putting mair back intae society than taking oot... In the previous employment, I was just lifting and carrying and 'Put it there. Put it there'. And that was it. At the end of the day you'd a wage packet and that was it
voluntary worker, male

IMPACT OF LINE MANAGERIAL PRACTICES

The interviews also provided the opportunity to explore in more depth the potential impact of line managerial practices on employees.[132]

One care worker reported that her line manager openly disapproved of their employees' commitment to furthering their educational qualifications. Another interviewee suspects that her manager:

just wants to keep us as flexible as possible, which doesn't really have much regard for our own work/life balance
care worker, female

Similarly another former care worker also expressed how line managers need for shifts to be covered could result in excessive working hours:

If they were short-staffed...you knew basically you had to dae it... Sometimes I done like a day shift and then I'd go straight ontae a night shift. And then I would dae another half-a-day shift, and then go hame like a zombie and expect to get up that next night and then go through with a night shift.
former care worker, male

Little advance notice of rotas was identified as a particular problem – one interviewee felt that the way

that rotas are delivered impedes upon her long-term planning:

> **I don't know when I'm working from week to week necessarily, so it makes it hard to plan ahead for the future**
>
> social care worker, female

One interviewee reported reprisal measures when employees were: 'kinda outspoken'. She added:

> **They were dae'in the job wrang, they were cutting corners. But everybody does it. You're no' supposed to say anything, are you? You're just supposed to go with it. I said 'Well, that's no' right... And then I got sacked. [I was told] 'Troublemaker – Don't come back'**
>
> care worker, female

One former public sector employee said managerial support to return to work after prolonged illness was woefully lacking, with mental illness a particular problem. He said:

> **They didn't take that seriously at all. They paid lip service to it. And that's kind of what done for me in the end, to be honest. I saw a therapist, one hour, once, and that was – as far as they were concerned, that was enough to deal with the fact that I'd been on long-term sick with various issues. And they thought 'Well, we've done our bit, we've ticked our little box to say that we've taken it seriously'**
>
> voluntary worker, male

Managerial support for people with health issues, said a former worker in the construction sector, is also important to keep others at the workplace safe:

> **somebody's got an alcohol problem, and they know they've got an alcohol problem, it should be addressed... if you're using machinery, or you're working on building sites, you're no' just a danger to yourself, you're a danger to other people round aboot you**
>
> voluntary worker, male

There were positive stories, too. One employee reported that one of his former employers extended a short-term contract despite and because of his admittance of an alcohol problem:

> **I'd told my line manager about my alcohol problem and she's the one that says right, go up and tell her boss what I just said, and says 'See, for your honesty? I'm gonnae gie you three months... we'll get you the help'**
>
> voluntary worker, male

One interviewee said that illness can also be a problem if line managers are unwilling or unable to help employees struggling with health issues:

> **people have phoned sick and been told to get their shifts covered... people being really ill and wanting, needing to go to the hospital and being told to wait till somebody turns up to cover their shift**
>
> former care worker, male

ANALYSIS: WHAT THE INTERVIEWS REVEAL

The themes which emerged in the interviews make clear that work can be both a source of wellbeing and a source of stress and ill-health. In this context it is important to remember the nature of low-paid jobs: employees are often considered to be easily replaceable due to the low level of qualification required to do the role and its (supposedly) low productivity. Low-paid sectors have low unionisation rates so that workers not only have little bargaining power but also have minimal protection against line managerial decisions and malpractice. Low-paid work often has little prospect for training opportunities and workplace progression while employers have few incentives to offer training or further qualification measures.[133] For example the dismissive attitudes to training, outlined above, from a social care manager can perhaps be explained, inter alia, by understanding that participation in an evening course places limits on employees' flexibility – a particular feature of care work. This could be considered an unwelcome obstacle to managerial planning.[134] Positively,[135] there is some evidence of employers in low-paid sectors taking steps to improve employment conditions for workers, although it is clear much more needs to be done.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report has presented findings from a unique research project aimed at establishing what low-paid workers in Scotland value as important when it comes to 'decent work'. Whilst recognising variations for specific groups, the research has identified remarkable consistency in respondents' priorities for decent work.

When participants were asked, unprompted, 'What one thing is important for decent work?' focus group participants tended to emphasise intrinsic characteristics of work such as satisfying and sociable work as well as work which affords recognition, dignity, and respect. Alongside this, they commonly highlighted decent pay, fair pay and job security.

However, when asked to prioritise a number of factors presented to them on the basis of a prior review of existing research on 'decent work', focus group participants particularly valued five factors: sufficient pay to cover basic needs; job security; paid holidays and sick leave; a safe working environment; and supportive management. This picture was relatively consistent with the other methods used within this research, including the street stalls and the opinion poll.

Beyond these factors, the individual interviews highlighted the positive and negative impact that managerial practices can have on individuals as well as the importance of decent pay for social inclusion and personal independence.

None of the factors respondents prioritise are unreasonable or extravagant. They represent what many of those who are not low-paid would see as 'givens' and should be common practice in twenty-first century Scotland. Nonetheless, it is apparent from participants' personal stories and the assessment of Scotland's labour market that these are too often not met. It is clear that 'decent work' is something that too many people only hope to experience rather than something that they can take for granted.

There is therefore a significant job to be done to improve the quality of work which is available in Scotland. However, by ensuring the priorities of low-paid workers significantly inform changes to policy and practice, Scotland can make major progress towards the delivery of decent work for all.

To achieve this objective, there is an urgent need to improve pay and working conditions for low-paid workers within a broader strategy of enhancing job quality in Scotland. This will require action from: the UK and Scottish Governments; employers; unions; and the third sector.

Significant power to deliver change – including over employment legislation – rest at Westminster and we would expect the UK Government to take action on this important agenda. In light of 'Brexit', the UK Government should ensure employment legislation at least maintains and, wherever possible, strengthens workers' rights.

However, there is welcome momentum on this agenda within Scotland. We have therefore focused our recommendations, at this stage, on actions the Scottish Government can take to drive forward the decent work agenda.

Alongside this, we recognise that employers have a huge role to play, and we therefore make some recommendations as to how they can ensure the basic conditions needed for decent employment are provided for low-paid workers.

Recommendations for the Scottish Government

IMPROVING AND ENFORCING BASIC EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

This research has highlighted that existing minimum standards for decent work are inadequate and, in many cases, not properly enforced. Despite existing legislation, participants reported stories of: not being paid enough to live on; being in an endless cycle of being paid off and then re-employed;[136] effectively losing their job without any notice;[137] not receiving paid holidays or sick leave; and being bullied, harassed and discriminated against in the workplace. In short, employment legislation is failing many of the people we spoke to.

Enforcement of adequate standards will require a range of measures, including sanctions against companies found to be flouting the law. As the Fair Work Convention's Fair Work Framework states:

> **It is very widely accepted that a suite of proportionate sanctions is necessary to respond to unacceptable employment practices and to signal the seriousness with which our society views these matters.**[138]

The Scottish Government should consider how it can use its devolved powers to ensure better enforcement of basic employment practices in Scotland. Specifically, the Fair Work Convention should be given an explicit role in investigating and publicising poor employment practices, ensuring people's legal

entitlements are being adhered to in practice, and driving up standards where this is needed.

This is not the first time that such a move has been recommended. Citizens Advice Scotland has previously said: "[the] Fair Work Convention could also take on a role overseeing enforcement of employment law under Scots law".[139] In addition, they have called for an 'Employment Commission' to "oversee the enforcement of employment law... and 'name and shame' unfair employers". The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) currently do this for employers failing to pay the minimum wage,[140] but we should go beyond this to include other employment conditions. Lessons could also be learnt from Australia where the Government has established a Fair Work Ombudsman.[141]

The devolution of employment tribunals to the Scottish Parliament also provides an opportunity to minimise barriers to justice for low-paid workers. The First Minister's commitment to abolish tribunal fees[142] is welcome: however, there is also a need to speed up the tribunal process and ensure awards are paid in full.[143]

There are clearly limitations to what the Scottish Government can do. While the implications of Britain leaving the European Union are far from clear at the time of writing, there are evidently risks and opportunities stemming from 'Brexit' with regard to employment legislation.[144] The Scottish Government should be a strong and progressive advocate – at UK and, if relevant, European levels – to ensure employment legislation at least maintains and, wherever possible, strengthens workers' rights. For example the Scottish Government could put pressure on the UK Government to end exploitative zero-hours contracts.[145]

Our recommendations:

1. Give the Fair Work Convention an explicit role in investigating and publicising poor employment practices and driving up standards.
2. Be a strong and progressive advocate in Scotland – as well as at UK and, if relevant, European levels – to ensure employment legislation at least maintains and, wherever possible, strengthens workers' rights.

EFFECTIVE WORK AND EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

The Scottish Government has recently published a Labour Market Strategy and announced the creation of a Labour Market Strategic Group.[146] The challenge for this group, and any effective strategy, is to combine overarching macro-economic objectives with tailored interventions to support low-paid workers.

A key driver of low-paid, insecure work is a lack of demand for labour.[147] While acknowledging the constraints on the powers of the Scottish Government, consideration must be given to demand-side measures to boost employment,[148] recognising the limits of supply-side, skills-based interventions in providing decent work for all.[149]

Addressing the problem of underemployment may also require work to be 'shared' better. In this context, there may be a case for limiting excessive working in order to provide enough work for all.[150] Consideration must also be given to the impact of technology and automation on the labour market which is likely to impact differently across sectors and occupations.[151]

As well as macro-economic issues, there is a need to address the specific and sustained issue of low pay in sectors in which it is endemic. Currently a disproportionate number of low-paid workers work in a small number of sectors, such as social care, retail and hospitality. These sectors often feature a predominantly female workforce and provide paid-work which is socially undervalued and therefore likely to be low-paid. The Scottish Government should establish specific, tailored strategies to tackle low pay in these sectors. In doing so, it should address the specific business models which apply to each of these sectors, some of which – due to the regulatory framework – appear to oblige the pursuit of low-paid work. For example, the social care sector has specific challenges around productivity, with the poorest record on productivity among public service areas since the late 1990s.[152] At the same time it has issues around quality, with a high number of visits limited to 15 minutes in duration meaning the care of people often has to be rushed.[153] Ultimately much social care funding is dependent on the public purse.[154] Given many of the interventions to improve the lives of low-paid workers have cost implications, we may have to rethink how government, employers and consumers value certain types of work and – if necessary – pay more for it to be done.

Public procurement is one of the levers which governments can use in order to raise pay levels and ensure more decent work exists. As the Fair Work Convention's Fair Work Framework states:

> **Procurement – by government and the public sector is also an important lever. Crucially, public contracting can be creative in delivering good use of scarce public resources without sacrificing fair work in the process.** [155]

Public procurement should be used to incentivise and reward payment of the voluntary living wage, as defined by the Living Wage Foundation, as well as other good employment practices.[156]

Beyond procurement, Government and public bodies support companies in a number of ways, including

financially. The Scottish Government is currently undertaking a review of Scotland's Enterprise Agencies.[157] This must ensure that public agencies, such as Scottish Enterprise, do not provide public money for companies engaged in sub-standard employment practices.

In a similar vein, significant sums of money look set to flow to local authorities and partners through 'City Deals'.[158] The Glasgow City Deal alone is estimated to involve funding of more than £1 billion.[159] This money must not be used to fund development based on precarious work and high levels of socio-economic inequality.[160] Instead City Deals should be used to promote decent work and connect economic development with wider efforts to reduce poverty.[161]

Our recommendations:

3. Establish strategies to tackle low pay in sectors where it is endemic as part of a wider effort to drive up the quality of work across Scotland.
4. Use public procurement to incentivise and reward payment of the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation as well as other good employment practices, publicising when this occurs.
5. Ensure government agencies and public bodies do not support companies engaged in sub-standard employment practices.
6. Ensure 'City Deals' promote decent work and connect economic development with wider efforts to reduce poverty.

ENHANCING THE BUSINESS PLEDGE

The Scottish Business Pledge is a commitment by accredited companies to adopt fair and progressive business practices, based around nine key components.[162] When first announced in the Programme for Government 2014-15, the Scottish Government said:

> **We will introduce a new Scottish Business Pledge setting out what is expected of businesses in return for receiving support from the Scottish Government and its agencies**.[163]

Since that announcement, the Business Pledge has become an entirely voluntary scheme.[164] Concerns have also been raised around the certification process[165] as well as the clarity of language used in the pledge.[166] In addition, there have been calls for the content to be strengthened, for example through a commitment to family friendly working.[167]

Nevertheless, alongside a robust regulatory framework, there is merit in an approach which publicly recognises and accredits employers who meet a range of social criteria. Research undertaken with employers in Scotland has shown that public recognition of good practice can be a valuable tool in improving practices.[168] Oxfam's international experience of working to improve the practices of the world's largest food and drinks companies – whilst increasing transparency – also reinforces this.[169]

However, to perform this type of role, the Business Pledge must be strengthened. Specifically, the findings from this research about what low-paid workers value from work should inform the content of a reformed Pledge. Consideration should also be given to requiring businesses seeking accreditation to disclose their pay ratios – an area the Poverty and Inequality Adviser, Naomi Eisenstadt, recommended in her report to the First Minister as a measure which could help tackle pay inequality.[170] Critically, there is also a need for a more robust and transparent accreditation process to ensure the integrity of the Pledge is protected. This could potentially involve a number of civil society groups mirroring the successful approach adopted by the Living Wage Campaign. Such a model could also broaden the reach of the Pledge in supporting low-paid workers.[171]

Our recommendation:

7. Enhance the Business Pledge, including by placing a more robust and transparent accreditation process at its centre.

MAKING EMPLOYABILITY POWERS WORK BETTER FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE

The Scottish Parliament will soon be given employability powers. It should use these powers to design tailored programmes which address the different issues faced by different groups of people in the labour market. Specifically, different programmes may be needed for those individuals who are far from the labour market; those who have recently lost their job; and those in low-paid work.[172] Such programmes must also take account of women's and men's differing circumstances outside of work, seek to minimise sanctions, and address issues of occupational segregation.[173] They should have an explicit aim of helping people move out of poverty [174] and should not force people into jobs which are not suitable or sustainable for them.

Our recommendation:

8. Use employability powers to design tailored programmes which address the different issues faced by different groups of people within the labour market and do not force people into jobs which are not suitable or sustainable for them.

BETTER INFORMATION AND DATA ABOUT THE TRUE NATURE OF SCOTLAND'S LABOUR MARKET

In order to effectively measure progress in increasing the availability of decent or fair work, better understanding of the nature of work in Scotland today and the extent to which people's needs are being met is needed. It is clear from our initial assessment that labour market data for Scotland, and indeed for the UK more widely, is inadequate to perform this task. Specifically, some factors deemed important by low-paid workers do not have appropriate data indicators which could help to analyse whether Scotland provides 'decent work' to its low-paid workers. Moreover, some data is not available for Scotland; some data is not disaggregated by gender; and some data is not timely. Enhanced data is further required to ensure we can measure the effectiveness of policy interventions in this area.

There is currently no Scottish survey (or UK survey that can be properly disaggregated at Scottish level) which considers quality of work issues. Therefore, the Scottish Government should invest in a new survey – similar to the Workplace Employee Relations Study (WERS) – to help establish a baseline and measure progress in delivering decent work in Scotland. Such surveys are not inexpensive but the investment will provide a crucial evidential base to support progress towards a key Scottish Government priority.

Our recommendation:

9. Invest in more comprehensive and timely survey data to ensure analysis of Scotland's labour market supports measures to assess and improve work quality.

Recommendations for employers

The Fair Work Convention's Fair Work Framework states: "Fair work must be located in the workplace and delivered by employers and workers".[175] We believe the priorities of low-paid workers identified in this research provide critical insights in support of this ambition.

Specifically, this research has pointed to a number of conditions employers should provide for 'decent employment'. These conditions are detailed below. It should, however, be made clear that this research has not engaged with employers directly (though research undertaken separately as part of the UWS-Oxfam Partnership did [176]), and the conditions are solely based on an analysis of the issues faced by low-paid workers. We therefore recognise that further work is needed to explore what employers should do and the barriers to change that exist for them. We would welcome engagement with employers, in a range of sectors, to consider this. In the meantime, we contribute the following provisional conditions for decent work:

1. Employers should pay the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.[177]

2. Employers should ensure written contracts are in place, with all employees given a copy. They should also report annually on the number and percentage of temporary and irregular contracts in their business, explain why they are using these contracts and seek to minimise their use.

3. Employers should not employ workers on exploitative zero-hours contracts[178] or 'bogus self-employment' contracts.[179] They should look favourably on requests for employees to change their hours or contractual status and give as much notice period as possible when informing staff of their shift patterns.

4. Employers should provide annual leave in excess of the statutory minimum and be flexible and accommodating in allowing employees to use this.[180]

5. Employers should provide sick leave linked to the employee's rate of pay rather than the statutory minimum.[181] Employers should produce a return-to-work plan, in partnership with the individual concerned, to ensure appropriate support is provided to employees returning to work after an absence.

6. Employers should recognise the rights of workers to associate freely in the workplace, to join or form a trade union, and to bargain collectively. Employers should ensure trade unions are involved in consultation and decision-making. As the Fair Work Convention states: "delivering fair work is at the core of the activities of trade unions".[182]

7. Employers should undertake equal pay reviews[183] and put in place fair pay systems which limit pay discrepancies. These pay systems should minimise individual bargaining, maximise pay transparency, and ensure baseline pay and pay increases reward staff based on objective and transparent criteria.

8. Employers should promote structured training and career development opportunities for low-paid staff. This could include encouraging peer learning, linking job roles with development opportunities and appointing 'champions' at different levels to promote the progression of low-paid staff.[184]

9. Employers should facilitate the provision of information to new starters and existing employees about potential sources of support, including statutory benefits and local services. Employers should ensure their pension policy is adequately explained to all staff.

APPENDIX: DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF FOCUS GROUP RANKINGS

TABLE 10: FOCUS GROUP RANKINGS BY LABOUR FORCE STATUS

	EMPLOYED (INCLUDING SELF-EMPLOYED) (N=174)			ZERO-HOURS CONTRACT (SUB-SET OF EMPLOYED) (N=16*)			OUT OF WORK BUT LOOKING FOR WORK (N=40)			STUDENT (N=17*)		
RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Job security	1.13	7.52	Decent hourly rate	1.37	9.12	Decent hourly rate	1.33	8.83	Job security	1.13	7.51
2	Decent hourly rate	1.11	7.43	Purpose and meaning	1.06	7.09	Support after absence	1.02	6.77	No discrimination	1.06	7.06
3	Paid leave	0.99	6.61	Job security	0.94	6.26	Job security	0.91	6.06	Purpose and meaning	1	6.67
4	Supportive manager	0.91	6.08	Paid leave	0.8	5.34	Safe environment	0.86	5.70	Opportunities for progression	0.82	5.49
5	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.87	5.77	Regular hours	0.75	5.01	Accessible location	0.79	5.24	Flexible hours	0.82	5.49
6	Safe environment	0.82	5.48	Safe environment	0.75	5.00	No discrimination	0.77	5.12	Regular hours	0.77	5.15
7	Regular hours	0.64	4.25	Develop and use skills	0.69	4.59	Additional benefits	0.76	5.07	Safe environment	0.77	5.10
8	No discrimination	0.6	3.97	Opportunities for progression	0.68	4.56	Opportunities for progression	0.7	4.69	Supportive colleagues	0.71	4.73
9	Workplace representation	0.58	3.83	No discrimination	0.68	4.53	Paid leave	0.69	4.57	Predictable pay	0.71	4.71
10	Purpose and meaning	0.56	3.76	Supportive manager	0.62	4.15	Flexible hours	0.66	4.42	Paid leave	0.71	4.71
11	No unpaid overtime	0.56	3.72	Predictable pay	0.62	4.15	Purpose and meaning	0.65	4.30	Decent hourly rate	0.71	4.71
12	Enough time for tasks	0.55	3.64	Accessible location	0.62	4.14	Regular hours	0.59	3.91	Support after absence	0.71	4.71
13	Supportive colleagues	0.53	3.55	Flexible hours	0.57	3.78	Supportive manager	0.58	3.86	Develop and use skills	0.66	4.37
14	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.5	3.33	No excessive hours	0.51	3.39	Training opportunities	0.55	3.68	No unpaid overtime	0.59	3.92
15	Support after absence	0.48	3.20	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.5	3.34	Develop and use skills	0.5	3.35	Training opportunities	0.54	3.61
16	No excessive hours	0.48	3.17	Enough time for tasks	0.5	3.31	Supportive colleagues	0.45	3.03	Enough time for tasks	0.48	3.17
17	Opportunities for progression	0.47	3.16	Supportive colleagues	0.5	3.31	Socially worthwhile	0.44	2.92	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.47	3.14
18	Predictable pay	0.46	3.07	Additional benefits	0.43	2.89	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.42	2.81	Accessible location	0.42	2.77
19	Socially worthwhile	0.42	2.81	Support after absence	0.43	2.89	No unpaid overtime	0.38	2.53	Additional benefits	0.41	2.75
20	Develop and use skills	0.41	2.75	Socially worthwhile	0.37	2.47	Enough time for tasks	0.37	2.45	Socially worthwhile	0.29	1.96
21	Additional benefits	0.41	2.75	Training opportunities	0.37	2.47	Varied work	0.36	2.38	No excessive hours	0.29	1.96
22	Accessible location	0.38	2.51	Workplace representation	0.31	2.09	No excessive hours	0.36	2.37	Supportive manager	0.24	1.59
23	Training opportunities	0.37	2.47	Varied work	0.31	2.06	Predictable pay	0.33	2.20	Control	0.24	1.59
24	Flexible hours	0.34	2.27	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.25	1.64	Control	0.26	1.71	Workplace representation	0.24	1.57
25	Varied work	0.24	1.57	No unpaid overtime	0.25	1.64	Workplace representation	0.15	1.01	Varied work	0.12	0.79
26	Control	0.2	1.34	Control	0.12	0.81	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.15	1.00	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.12	0.79
		15	100		15	100		15	100		15	100

TABLE 11: FOCUS GROUP RANKINGS BY INCOME GROUP

	0 TO £15,000 P.A. (N=107)			£15,000 TO £25,000 P.A. (N=46)			£25,000 P.A. OR MORE (N=57)		
RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Job security	1.1	7.35	Decent hourly rate	1.29	8.61	Job security	1.04	6.95
2	Decent hourly rate	1.03	6.85	Job security	1.22	8.12	Decent hourly rate	1.02	6.80
3	Paid leave	0.98	6.51	Supportive manager	0.89	5.93	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.99	6.59
4	Supportive manager	0.87	5.81	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.83	5.55	Paid leave	0.94	6.26
5	Safe environment	0.85	5.67	Paid leave	0.82	5.46	Safe environment	0.87	5.83
6	No discrimination	0.76	5.08	Workplace representation	0.76	5.03	Regular hours	0.7	4.66
7	Support after absence	0.73	4.89	Safe environment	0.75	4.97	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.66	4.41
8	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.67	4.45	No discrimination	0.63	4.20	Supportive manager	0.66	4.37
9	Purpose and meaning	0.66	4.41	Purpose and meaning	0.6	3.99	Purpose and meaning	0.62	4.15
10	Regular hours	0.64	4.28	No unpaid overtime	0.59	3.94	No unpaid overtime	0.62	4.15
11	Supportive colleagues	0.62	4.14	Enough time for tasks	0.58	3.88	Workplace representation	0.62	4.12
12	Opportunities for progression	0.58	3.87	Training opportunities	0.57	3.77	Develop and use skills	0.59	3.91
13	Additional benefits	0.57	3.79	Regular hours	0.52	3.49	No excessive hours	0.58	3.86
14	Enough time for tasks	0.54	3.58	Socially worthwhile	0.52	3.44	Opportunities for progression	0.57	3.77
15	Flexible hours	0.53	3.56	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.5	3.34	Predictable pay	0.56	3.74
16	Accessible location	0.51	3.42	Predictable pay	0.5	3.32	Enough time for tasks	0.54	3.57
17	No unpaid overtime	0.46	3.09	Develop and use skills	0.5	3.32	No discrimination	0.52	3.45
18	Training opportunities	0.44	2.93	Opportunities for progression	0.5	3.30	Support after absence	0.52	3.43
19	Develop and use skills	0.43	2.87	No excessive hours	0.48	3.23	Socially worthwhile	0.42	2.79
20	Predictable pay	0.4	2.66	Accessible location	0.4	2.66	Supportive colleagues	0.39	2.60
21	No excessive hours	0.36	2.39	Supportive colleagues	0.34	2.27	Training opportunities	0.36	2.41
22	Socially worthwhile	0.33	2.18	Varied work	0.3	2.02	Additional benefits	0.34	2.27
23	Workplace representation	0.31	2.05	Support after absence	0.28	1.85	Control	0.25	1.66
24	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.3	1.98	Flexible hours	0.23	1.50	Flexible hours	0.25	1.63
25	Varied work	0.2	1.31	Additional benefits	0.22	1.44	Varied work	0.21	1.37
26	Control	0.13	0.87	Control	0.2	1.36	Accessible location	0.19	1.27
		15.00	100		15.09	100		15.00	100

TABLE 12: FOCUS GROUPS RANKINGS BY EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT TYPE

	PERMANENT (N=153)			TEMPORARY (N=27)		
RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Job security	1.181	7.87	Purpose and meaning	1.093	7.29
2	Decent hourly rate	1.093	7.29	Decent hourly rate	1.014	6.76
3	Paid leave	1.029	6.86	Supportive manager	0.924	6.16
4	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.936	6.24	Safe environment	0.778	5.19
5	Supportive manager	0.873	5.82	Socially worthwhile	0.778	5.19
6	Safe environment	0.853	5.69	Regular hours	0.775	5.17
7	No unpaid overtime	0.613	4.09	Paid leave	0.773	5.15
8	Regular hours	0.613	4.09	No discrimination	0.757	5.05
9	No discrimination	0.597	3.98	Supportive colleagues	0.741	4.94
10	Workplace representation	0.592	3.95	Job security	0.701	4.67
11	Enough time for tasks	0.553	3.69	Opportunities for progression	0.667	4.45
12	Purpose and meaning	0.521	3.47	Accessible location	0.590	3.93
13	Support after absence	0.510	3.40	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.574	3.83
14	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.500	3.33	Enough time for tasks	0.572	3.81
15	Supportive colleagues	0.498	3.32	Develop and use skills	0.553	3.69
16	No excessive hours	0.464	3.09	Predictable pay	0.477	3.18
17	Predictable pay	0.461	3.07	Flexible hours	0.444	2.96
18	Additional benefits	0.438	2.92	Support after absence	0.426	2.84
19	Opportunities for progression	0.423	2.82	Additional benefits	0.370	2.47
20	Develop and use skills	0.406	2.71	Training opportunities	0.370	2.47
21	Training opportunities	0.402	2.68	No excessive hours	0.370	2.47
22	Accessible location	0.371	2.47	Varied work	0.368	2.45
23	Flexible hours	0.356	2.37	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.331	2.21
24	Socially worthwhile	0.317	2.11	No unpaid overtime	0.220	1.47
25	Varied work	0.200	1.33	Control	0.185	1.23
26	Control	0.199	1.33	Workplace representation	0.148	0.99
		15	100		15	100

Note: Permanent: 47% female/53% male; Temporary: 59% female/41% male; Overall sample: 49% female/51% male

TABLE 13: FOCUS GROUP RANKINGS BY HOURS, STATUS AND GENDER

	PART-TIME HOURS								
RANK	WOMEN (N=52)			MEN (N=12*)			ALL (N=64)		
	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Supportive manager	1.28	8.50	Decent hourly rate	1.51	10.05	Job security	1.18	7.87
2	Job security	1.24	8.26	Purpose and meaning	1.25	8.30	Supportive manager	1.18	7.85
3	Decent hourly rate	1.1	7.30	Paid leave	0.92	6.16	Decent hourly rate	1.17	7.82
4	Paid leave	0.95	6.30	Job security	0.92	6.16	Paid leave	0.94	6.27
5	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.76	5.09	Supportive manager	0.76	5.05	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.73	4.87
6	Safe environment	0.72	4.77	No discrimination	0.76	5.05	Safe environment	0.71	4.74
7	Supportive colleagues	0.7	4.65	Safe environment	0.69	4.61	Supportive colleagues	0.66	4.41
8	Flexible hours	0.63	4.17	No unpaid overtime	0.68	4.53	Purpose and meaning	0.66	4.37
9	Support after absence	0.62	4.11	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.59	3.94	Flexible hours	0.59	3.91
10	Regular hours	0.58	3.84	Enough time for tasks	0.59	3.94	Regular hours	0.56	3.75
11	Accessible location	0.56	3.75	Develop and use skills	0.58	3.89	Support after absence	0.56	3.75
12	Enough time for tasks	0.55	3.64	Opportunities for progression	0.58	3.85	Enough time for tasks	0.56	3.70
13	Additional benefits	0.54	3.58	Training opportunities	0.58	3.85	No discrimination	0.51	3.42
14	Purpose and meaning	0.52	3.47	Supportive colleagues	0.51	3.39	Training opportunities	0.5	3.35
15	Training opportunities	0.49	3.23	Regular hours	0.5	3.33	No unpaid overtime	0.5	3.35
16	Predictable pay	0.48	3.18	Socially worthwhile	0.5	3.30	Accessible location	0.49	3.27
17	No unpaid overtime	0.46	3.07	Predictable pay	0.42	2.78	Additional benefits	0.48	3.22
18	No discrimination	0.46	3.05	Flexible hours	0.42	2.78	Predictable pay	0.47	3.11
19	Workplace representation	0.44	2.93	Workplace representation	0.34	2.27	Opportunities for progression	0.43	2.89
20	Opportunities for progression	0.4	2.66	No excessive hours	0.33	2.22	Workplace representation	0.42	2.81
21	No excessive hours	0.35	2.32	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.33	2.22	Develop and use skills	0.39	2.60
22	Develop and use skills	0.35	2.30	Control	0.33	2.19	No excessive hours	0.35	2.30
23	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.32	2.15	Support after absence	0.33	2.19	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.33	2.17
24	Socially worthwhile	0.23	1.54	Additional benefits	0.25	1.63	Socially worthwhile	0.28	1.87
25	Varied work	0.19	1.27	Accessible location	0.18	1.19	Varied work	0.19	1.24
26	Control	0.13	0.87	Varied work	0.17	1.11	Control	0.17	1.12
		15	100		15	100		15	100

	FULL-TIME HOURS								
RANK	WOMEN (N=35)			MEN (N=83)			ALL (N=119)		
	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Job security	1.16	7.73	Decent hourly rate	1.07	7.11	Job security	1.09	7.24
2	Decent hourly rate	1.05	6.97	Paid leave	1.05	7.02	Decent hourly rate	1.06	7.06
3	Paid leave	0.88	5.85	Job security	1.04	6.96	Paid leave	1	6.67
4	Safe environment	0.85	5.68	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.96	6.39	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.91	6.08
5	No discrimination	0.83	5.50	Safe environment	0.88	5.88	Safe environment	0.88	5.88
6	Supportive manager	0.82	5.47	Regular hours	0.76	5.05	Supportive manager	0.71	4.72
7	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.8	5.31	Workplace representation	0.67	4.49	Regular hours	0.68	4.53
8	Purpose and meaning	0.77	5.11	Supportive manager	0.67	4.46	No discrimination	0.66	4.40
9	Socially worthwhile	0.68	4.55	No unpaid overtime	0.65	4.31	No unpaid overtime	0.59	3.95
10	Supportive colleagues	0.68	4.53	No excessive hours	0.62	4.10	Workplace representation	0.58	3.85
11	Additional benefits	0.6	3.99	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.6	4.01	Purpose and meaning	0.57	3.80
12	Opportunities for progression	0.54	3.59	No discrimination	0.6	3.99	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.56	3.73
13	Enough time for tasks	0.54	3.57	Enough time for tasks	0.53	3.56	Enough time for tasks	0.54	3.59
14	Support after absence	0.51	3.41	Predictable pay	0.53	3.53	No excessive hours	0.51	3.42
15	Regular hours	0.48	3.21	Develop and use skills	0.51	3.39	Opportunities for progression	0.51	3.37
16	No unpaid overtime	0.46	3.03	Opportunities for progression	0.5	3.31	Socially worthwhile	0.5	3.34
17	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.45	3.00	Purpose and meaning	0.49	3.29	Predictable pay	0.49	3.23
18	Develop and use skills	0.43	2.85	Support after absence	0.44	2.91	Develop and use skills	0.48	3.20
19	Flexible hours	0.4	2.67	Socially worthwhile	0.43	2.87	Support after absence	0.46	3.03
20	Predictable pay	0.4	2.63	Training opportunities	0.37	2.43	Supportive colleagues	0.45	3.02
21	Accessible location	0.37	2.45	Supportive colleagues	0.35	2.34	Additional benefits	0.38	2.53
22	Training opportunities	0.34	2.29	Accessible location	0.32	2.13	Training opportunities	0.36	2.37
23	Workplace representation	0.34	2.26	Additional benefits	0.29	1.94	Accessible location	0.34	2.26
24	No excessive hours	0.26	1.71	Varied work	0.26	1.75	Flexible hours	0.25	1.68
25	Control	0.2	1.33	Control	0.23	1.51	Varied work	0.24	1.61
26	Varied work	0.2	1.32	Flexible hours	0.19	1.28	Control	0.22	1.44
		15	100		15	100		15	100

Note: n=1 gender missing, Men n=7 prefer not to say hours, n=39 missing hours and Female n= 3 prefer not to say hours and n= 45 missing hours removed from hours categories but included in totals

TABLE 14: FOCUS GROUP RANKINGS BY TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP AND GENDER

	TRADE UNION MEMBERS (INCLUDES FORMER MEMBERS)								
RANK	WOMEN (N=57)			MEN (N=71)			ALL (N=129)		
	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Job security	1.23	8.21	Decent hourly rate	1.22	8.14	Job security	1.18	7.84
2	Supportive manager	1.18	7.85	Job security	1.12	7.47	Decent hourly rate	1.16	7.73
3	Decent hourly rate	1.09	7.25	Paid leave	1.02	6.80	Paid leave	0.97	6.49
4	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.92	6.16	Safe environment	0.94	6.27	Supportive manager	0.88	5.83
5	Paid leave	0.92	6.10	Workplace representation	0.81	5.42	Safe environment	0.85	5.64
6	Safe environment	0.71	4.72	No unpaid overtime	0.77	5.10	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.81	5.42
7	Supportive colleagues	0.65	4.35	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.72	4.81	Workplace representation	0.69	4.58
8	Purpose and meaning	0.61	4.07	Regular hours	0.66	4.38	No unpaid overtime	0.68	4.56
9	Enough time for tasks	0.6	4.01	Supportive manager	0.64	4.29	Regular hours	0.6	4.01
10	No unpaid overtime	0.58	3.85	No discrimination	0.64	4.25	Purpose and meaning	0.59	3.92
11	Workplace representation	0.53	3.50	No excessive hours	0.6	4.02	No discrimination	0.55	3.67
12	Regular hours	0.52	3.49	Purpose and meaning	0.58	3.85	Enough time for tasks	0.5	3.32
13	Training opportunities	0.51	3.43	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.57	3.82	No excessive hours	0.49	3.25
14	Accessible location	0.51	3.41	Support after absence	0.52	3.45	Supportive colleagues	0.49	3.23
15	Additional benefits	0.48	3.17	Develop and use skills	0.52	3.43	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.48	3.22
16	No discrimination	0.45	3.01	Opportunities for progression	0.48	3.17	Support after absence	0.48	3.19
17	Support after absence	0.44	2.93	Predictable pay	0.42	2.77	Training opportunities	0.46	3.04
18	Opportunities for progression	0.42	2.78	Training opportunities	0.42	2.77	Opportunities for progression	0.45	2.97
19	Flexible hours	0.41	2.75	Enough time for tasks	0.41	2.71	Develop and use skills	0.44	2.92
20	Predictable pay	0.4	2.65	Socially worthwhile	0.39	2.62	Predictable pay	0.41	2.70
21	Socially worthwhile	0.37	2.44	Supportive colleagues	0.34	2.29	Socially worthwhile	0.38	2.52
22	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.36	2.42	Additional benefits	0.29	1.94	Additional benefits	0.37	2.47
23	Develop and use skills	0.35	2.33	Varied work	0.25	1.67	Accessible location	0.36	2.41
24	No excessive hours	0.33	2.23	Accessible location	0.23	1.56	Flexible hours	0.31	2.05
25	Control	0.26	1.73	Flexible hours	0.23	1.51	Control	0.24	1.58
26	Varied work	0.17	1.15	Control	0.22	1.48	Varied work	0.22	1.43
		15	100		15	100		15	100

	NOT TRADE UNION MEMBERS								
RANK	WOMEN (N=49)			MEN (N=41)			ALL (N=90)		
	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Decent hourly rate	1.03	6.85	Decent hourly rate	1.15	7.67	Decent hourly rate	1.08	7.23
2	Job security	0.99	6.58	Job security	0.94	6.26	Job security	0.97	6.43
3	Safe environment	0.96	6.43	Paid leave	0.92	6.11	Safe environment	0.9	6.01
4	Support after absence	0.88	5.84	Purpose and meaning	0.9	5.99	Paid leave	0.87	5.81
5	Paid leave	0.84	5.57	Regular hours	0.87	5.79	Purpose and meaning	0.8	5.35
6	Supportive manager	0.8	5.31	Safe environment	0.83	5.50	Support after absence	0.75	5.01
7	Purpose and meaning	0.72	4.82	No discrimination	0.74	4.91	Supportive manager	0.71	4.75
8	Additional benefits	0.71	4.75	Supportive colleagues	0.67	4.49	No discrimination	0.7	4.67
8	Supportive colleagues	0.71	4.75	Enough time for tasks	0.66	4.39	Regular hours	0.7	4.67
10	Flexible hours	0.69	4.63	Supportive manager	0.61	4.09	Supportive colleagues	0.7	4.63
11	No discrimination	0.67	4.48	Support after absence	0.6	4.01	Accessible location	0.61	4.06
12	Accessible location	0.62	4.12	Accessible location	0.6	3.99	Opportunities for progression	0.6	4.01
13	Opportunities for progression	0.61	4.08	Predictable pay	0.6	3.97	Flexible hours	0.58	3.89
14	Regular hours	0.56	3.73	Opportunities for progression	0.59	3.91	Predictable pay	0.57	3.79
15	Predictable pay	0.55	3.65	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.53	3.53	Enough time for tasks	0.52	3.44
16	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.45	2.99	Socially worthwhile	0.49	3.29	Additional benefits	0.49	3.25
16	Socially worthwhile	0.45	2.99	No excessive hours	0.49	3.27	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.49	3.24
18	Develop and use skills	0.43	2.87	Flexible hours	0.45	3.00	Socially worthwhile	0.47	3.13
19	Enough time for tasks	0.4	2.65	Develop and use skills	0.44	2.93	Develop and use skills	0.43	2.89
20	Training opportunities	0.39	2.59	Training opportunities	0.39	2.59	No excessive hours	0.4	2.63
21	No unpaid overtime	0.35	2.36	No unpaid overtime	0.32	2.15	Training opportunities	0.39	2.59
22	No excessive hours	0.32	2.10	Control	0.32	2.13	No unpaid overtime	0.34	2.27
23	Workplace representation	0.29	1.91	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.27	1.79	Workplace representation	0.26	1.71
24	Varied work	0.29	1.91	Workplace representation	0.22	1.48	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.26	1.71
25	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.25	1.63	Additional benefits	0.22	1.45	Varied work	0.25	1.63
26	Control	0.06	0.41	Varied work	0.2	1.31	Control	0.18	1.19
		15	100		15	100		15	100

Note: n=1 missing gender, Male n= 3 prefer not to say, Male n=26 missing, Female n= 1 prefer not to say, n=28 missing removed from union categories but included in totals

TABLE 15: FOCUS GROUP RANKINGS BY ETHNICITY/NATIONALITY

	ALL (N=277)			WHITE SCOTTISH & BRITISH (N=236)			NON-WHITE & NON-BRITISH (N=41)		
RANK	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	WEIGHT
1	Decent hourly rate	1.13	7.54	Job security	1.098	7.30	Decent hourly rate	1.28	8.50
2	Job security	1.07	7.13	Decent hourly rate	1.094	7.27	Support after absence	1	6.65
3	Paid leave	0.9	5.99	Paid leave	0.907	6.03	Flexible hours	0.9	5.97
4	Safe environment	0.83	5.55	Safe environment	0.842	5.60	Job security	0.89	5.91
5	Supportive manager	0.77	5.10	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.793	5.27	Supportive manager	0.86	5.73
6	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.72	4.79	Supportive manager	0.762	5.07	No discrimination	0.86	5.73
7	No discrimination	0.67	4.47	Purpose and meaning	0.657	4.37	Opportunities for progression	0.8	5.35
8	Purpose and meaning	0.64	4.24	Regular hours	0.652	4.33	Paid leave	0.78	5.19
9	Regular hours	0.63	4.21	No discrimination	0.638	4.24	Supportive colleagues	0.75	5.01
10	Support after absence	0.61	4.09	No unpaid overtime	0.591	3.93	Safe environment	0.69	4.62
11	Opportunities for progression	0.55	3.67	Support after absence	0.559	3.72	Accessible location	0.65	4.31
12	No unpaid overtime	0.55	3.65	Workplace representation	0.555	3.69	Additional benefits	0.64	4.25
13	Supportive colleagues	0.53	3.51	Enough time for tasks	0.531	3.53	Socially worthwhile	0.56	3.73
14	Enough time for tasks	0.51	3.40	Opportunities for progression	0.523	3.48	Regular hours	0.51	3.39
15	Workplace representation	0.5	3.35	Predictable pay	0.500	3.32	Develop and use skills	0.47	3.13
16	Additional benefits	0.48	3.17	Supportive colleagues	0.492	3.27	Purpose and meaning	0.45	2.98
17	Develop and use skills	0.46	3.09	No excessive hours	0.466	3.10	Training opportunities	0.44	2.94
18	Predictable pay	0.46	3.03	Develop and use skills	0.460	3.06	Enough time for tasks	0.39	2.58
19	Training opportunities	0.45	3.01	Additional benefits	0.456	3.03	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.33	2.21
20	Accessible location	0.45	2.98	Training opportunities	0.453	3.01	Control	0.31	2.05
21	Flexible hours	0.45	2.97	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.400	2.66	Varied work	0.28	1.85
22	No excessive hours	0.44	2.93	Accessible location	0.392	2.61	No excessive hours	0.28	1.85
23	Fair pay vs senior staff	0.4	2.63	Flexible hours	0.386	2.57	No unpaid overtime	0.28	1.85
24	Socially worthwhile	0.4	2.63	Socially worthwhile	0.378	2.51	Fair pay to similar jobs	0.25	1.65
25	Varied work	0.23	1.56	Varied work	0.278	1.85	Predictable pay	0.19	1.29
26	Control	0.2	1.32	Control	0.181	1.20	Workplace representation	0.19	1.27
		15	100		15	100		15	100

ENDNOTES

1 The concept of decent work has been pioneered by the International Labour Organisation: http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/decent-work-agenda/lang--en/index.htm. However, this reports use of the term is wider than the indicators identified by the ILO and is focussed on what low-paid workers in Scotland prioritise as important for decent work.

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12 Health and Safety Executive (October 2015) using Labour Force Survey data in 'Health and Safety in Great Britain 2015': http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/regions/country-and-region.pdf and http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/regions/tables.htm. Statistics based on a rolling 12 month average between 2011/12 and 2014/15.

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58 The advisory group was made up of: Anna Ritchie Allan (Close the Gap), Chik Collins (University of the West of Scotland), Chris Warhurst (Warwick Institute for Employment Research), Jamie Livingstone (Oxfam Scotland), Martin Taulbut (NHS Health Scotland), Patricia Findlay (Strathclyde University and Fair Work Convention), Rachel Wilshaw (Oxfam GB), Rob Gowans (Citizens Advice Scotland), Stephen Boyd (STUC) and Stuart King (Scottish Government).

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145 Citizens Advice Scotland define a zero-hours contract as exploitative if "a worker would prefer a more secure part-time or full-time contract, if it causes hardship to individuals due to regularly changing patterns of work, if it denies individuals their basic employee rights, or if it acts to deter workers from asserting their basic employment rights" cited in Economy Committee, Scottish Parliament (January 2016) 'Taking the High Road – Work, Wages and Wellbeing in the Scottish Labour Market': http://www.parliament.scot/gettinginvolved/90669.aspx

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178 Citizens Advice Scotland define a zero-hours contract as exploitative if "a worker would prefer a more secure part-time or full-time contract, if it causes hardship to individuals due to regularly changing patterns of work, if it denies individuals their basic employee rights, or if it acts to deter workers from asserting their basic employment rights" cited in Economy Committee, Scottish Parliament (January 2016) 'Taking the High Road – Work, Wages and Wellbeing in the Scottish Labour Market': http://www.parliament.scot/gettinginvolved/90669.aspx

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