

Britain does indeed need a pay rise - but it needs much...

Published: January 14, 2026, 11:07 am

[According to the Guardian:](#)

David Cameron will tell Britain's business leaders on Tuesday that the best way to protect themselves against 'attacks' from Ed Miliband is to reward their workers with a pay rise.

I could not agree more.

The share of profits in the UK economy has been rising. Real wages have fallen, as has labour's overall share of the total economy. I have argued Britain needs a pay rise for a long time, as have trade unions, including those I work with such as Unite.

But on the day that the [HSBC scandal shows that there is one rule for the wealthy](#) in this country and quite another for the rest of us this call rings very hollow indeed.

We do indeed need a pay rise but to get it we need a relaxation of restrictions on union rights.

In fact we need to encourage union membership.

And we need policies to cap high pay.

And to increase the minimum wage to a living wage.

And to abolish zero hours contracts.

And to stop forcing people into low paid, marginal self-employments.

And to ensure that everyone pays their tax.

We do not need empty promises. We need real action to transform the lives of those who struggle to make ends meet in a way the people Cameron is addressing will never come close to understanding.

So yes, Britain needs a pay rise, but it needs a lot more than that. It needs real rights for working people. And those are not, as far as I can see, are not being offered.