

Real wages have fallen since 2008 in most areas of the ...

www.taxresearch.org.uk/Blog/2024/04/29/real-wages-have-fallen-since-2008-in-most-areas-of-the-c

Published: January 12, 2026, 8:29 pm

The [TUC has reported](#) this morning that:

- * Real wages still below 2008 level in 212 out of 340 UK local authorities
- * TUC says longest pay squeeze in modern era is a “damning indictment” of the Conservatives’ economic record
- * Wage performance in every corner of Britain is well below historic trends, analysis shows
- * Average UK worker would be £200 a week better off if real wages had grown at pre-crisis rate

This table shows the distribution of local authority areas where real wages have not grown:

Region	Number of LAs with real wages below 2008 level*	% of LAs with real wages below 2008 level*
North East	6	50%
North West	22	67%
Yorkshire and Humber	10	67%
West Midlands	13	43%
East Midlands	22	67%
East of England	26	60%
London	30	94%
South East	50	78%
South West	15	58%
England	194	68%
UK	212	62%

*English data is available

As they note, this data can be compared with that for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, covering 34 countries:

OECD data on wages is based on national accounts rather than the type of earnings survey conducted by the Office for National Statistics that is used in this analysis. It is not as accurate as the ONS survey, but it allows for comparisons between countries, as some nations do not conduct earnings surveys in the same way as the ONS. Under this approach, the UK shows a very small improvement in real wages from pre-financial crisis peak in 2007 to 2022 (the most recent year for which data for international comparisons is available). And it shows that the UK is in 27th place out of 34 OECD nations for wage growth across this period.

So, we are lagging behind in wage terms. Any growth is going to the richest and is not being shared, which is how the views are reconciled. That means that the elite are getting it all their own way. And it is very clear that it is that same elite that Labour now intends to serve.

But the TUC is not saying that. Why not, I wonder?