

Incomes and employment

Wages and working conditions



The government sets rules about how employers must treat their staff, such as minimum wages and the conditions that must be in place to keep people safe while they're at work. These policies have a huge impact on the lives and well-being of all workers in Aotearoa New Zealand. In this activity, we will explore wages and the workplace.

→ Go to policy.nz/2023/party-vote/policies/incomes-and-employment

→ Find and read the 'Wages and working conditions' section

→ Explore answers to these questions and share your ideas and reasoning with others

1. What is the difference between the minimum wage and a [living wage](#)? Do you think there should be a difference?
2. How is a [universal basic income](#) (UBI) different to a wage? White a PMI Chart for a UBI.
3. What are the current rules about the minimum wage in Aotearoa? Read [this summary](#). Pay close attention to the exemptions section, which covers groups of people that do not have to be paid the minimum wage. Discuss the following points in a small group:
 - Should the minimum wage apply to people under 16? Why or why not?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of having [starting-out and training minimum wage](#) categories? Do you think trainees should be paid less?
 - Should inmates (prisoners) be exempt from minimum wage for their work? How is their work different to work that people do outside of prison?
 - Is it fair that people with disabilities be exempt from minimum wage for the work they do?
4. Read this article on [wage theft](#). Is wage theft different to stealing? Discuss with a friend.

→ Go back to Policy.nz and browse the policies. Click on policies to read more detail

→ Save the policies you agree with by clicking the heart icon

4. Which parties advocate for higher minimum wages? Do any parties advocate for lower minimum wages? What might explain the difference in their views? Tip: consider if policies appeal to or benefit workers, or if they appeal to and benefit employers.
5. Are workers interests and employer's interests always the same? How might they be different? Explain your reasoning using a policy you have saved as an example.
6. Some employers think the government should not interfere with their workplaces. Which parties are more likely to create rules and guidelines for workplaces? Why do you think this is?