



FNET Fortnightly Call

EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY FROM 10.00 – 11.00AM

Competition Law and Safe Space Statements

Participant Identity:

*Please display your **name** and the **business name***

Competition Law Statement

“We are meeting to discuss issues raised in the forum of the Food Network for Ethical Trade.

We take competition compliance seriously. Whilst discussions can cover matters of interest to our industry, we cannot discuss or exchange sensitive commercial information.

If at any time during this meeting, you think our discussions may be in breach of competition rules, please inform the Chair. The Chair may close the meeting at any time if the chair believes that discussions are in breach of competition law”

Safe & Brave Space Statement

*The fortnightly members call is a **safe & brave** space for members to discuss and exchange ideas on human rights risks and improvement actions and all are reminded to please always respect this principle.*

Agenda – 30th July 2025

Time	Duration	Item	Speaker
10.00	20 mins	FNET updates Update on communications	Louise Nicholls, FNET Jessica Turner, FNET Surmaya Talyarkhan, FNET
10.20	15 mins	Employment Rights Bill: update	Joanne Young, Association of Labour Providers
10.35	15 mins	Low Pay Britain 2025 – research findings and recommendations	Charlie McCurdy, Resolution Foundation
10.50	10 mins	FNET wrap up	Louise Nicholls, FNET Jessica Turner, FNET Surmaya Talyarkhan, FNET



Member Questions

- A member is looking to hire Commonwealth nationals who are in the UK working for the British armed forces, through an agency, for part-time employment in the food industry. Do any other members have experience of hiring Commonwealth nationals whose primary employment is in the British armed forces? And if so, do you know of any restrictions and rules around secondary employment, or how to find out the answers to these questions?

Recent FNET meetings

Sedex call – 17th July

Updated member communication circulated

Raw Materials and Services Working Group – 17th July

Focus on haulage and warehousing.

Slides [here](#) (including notes) and recording [here](#).



Upcoming FNET meetings



FNET Fortnightly Call – Wednesday 13th August - 10.00-11.00

- Human Rights Impact Assessment: Poultry – Andy York, Pilgrims
- Slides on saliency for FNET members – Brett Dodge and Catherine Morgans, LRQA

FNET Fortnightly Call – Wednesday 27th August - 10.00-10.30

- Employer Pays Principle – SWS Taskforce update

FNET/Sedex 6 weekly call – Wednesday 27th August

FNET Onboarding Call – Wednesday September 17th - 10.00-11.30

For new starters in your company or companies new to FNET

Responsible Recruitment working group – Thursday September 18th 2-3.30pm

Empowering Work Q3 in-person meeting – 25th September, Hugh Lowe Farms, Kent

Due Diligence Working Group - Thursday 23rd October – 10.00-12.00

SAVE THE DATE for All members meeting and AGM at Tesco on 6th November

Communications at FNET

- Many thanks to members who participated in the communications review in 2024.
- We have been building actions based on these recommendations, including hiring a comms manager.
- Since joining, Jess has been focusing on long-term improvements and “quick wins” to improve the member experience.
- The website has been the biggest priority so far. Next steps include branding, more website work, weekly news and more.
- Hopefully you’ve seen us being more active on LinkedIn and on the website e.g. blogs.



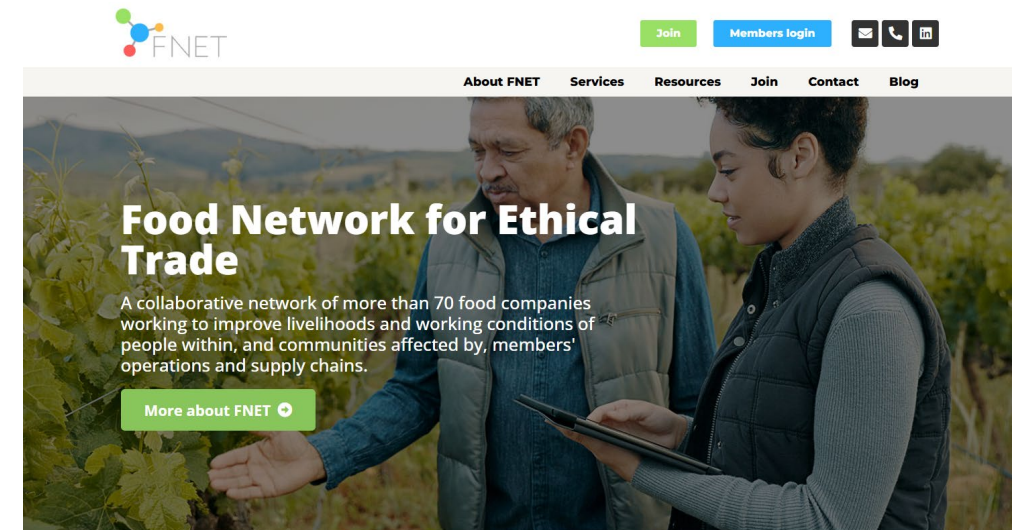
Imagery at FNET

- From now on, we are going to run an “opt-out” policy for photographs. Please get in touch with Jess directly if you don’t want your image to be taken, or for photographs of you to be shared publicly.
- At in-person events, we will remind members that we will be taking photographs and to speak to Jess if they don’t consent to their image being used.
- We know that some members have already been able to share some photos with us. **We would be so grateful if any other members would be able to share photographs or images.**
- **Photos really help us with our broader communications!**



Website improvements

- We have already made quite a few changes to the website.
- Next steps include:
 - An accessibility review
 - Stakeholder interviews with the web agency
 - Will need a few members to volunteer
 - Review public area of the site – improve SEO and content
 - Review member area of the site
 - Improve user experience, site content, knowledge sharing and image use.



Upcoming communications updates

- We are soon kicking off a brand review project, we will have better brand guidance, more consistent look and feel and more professional assets.
- We will be uploading external learning presentations from fortnightly calls and webinars to YouTube > embedded in the member area of the website.
- There will be ongoing improvements to the public and member areas of the website.
 - We will be asking for some members to sign up to meet with the web developers.
- More focus on images and video content.
- More highlights of the great work our members are doing.

Ask of members:

We would be so grateful if you could:

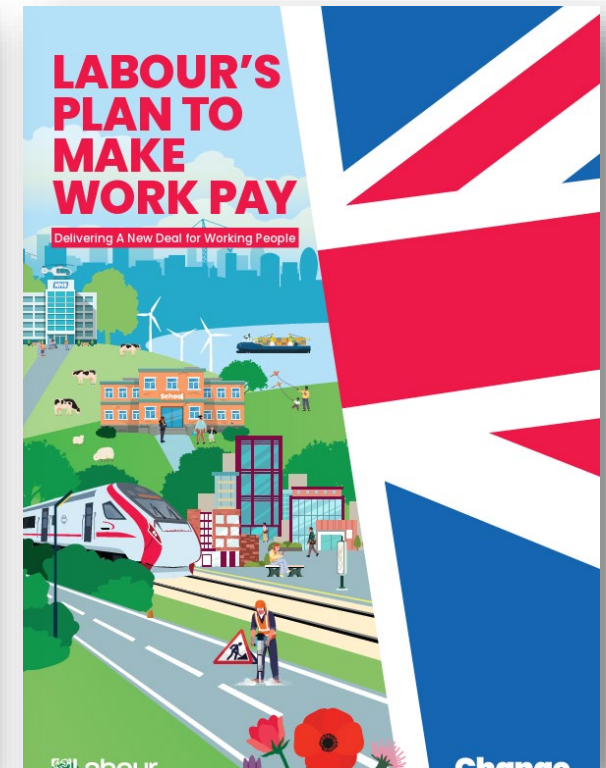
- Share images and case studies with us
- Consider writing a guest blog
- Engage with, and share our content on LinkedIn
- Share feedback with Jess on any communications-related improvements.



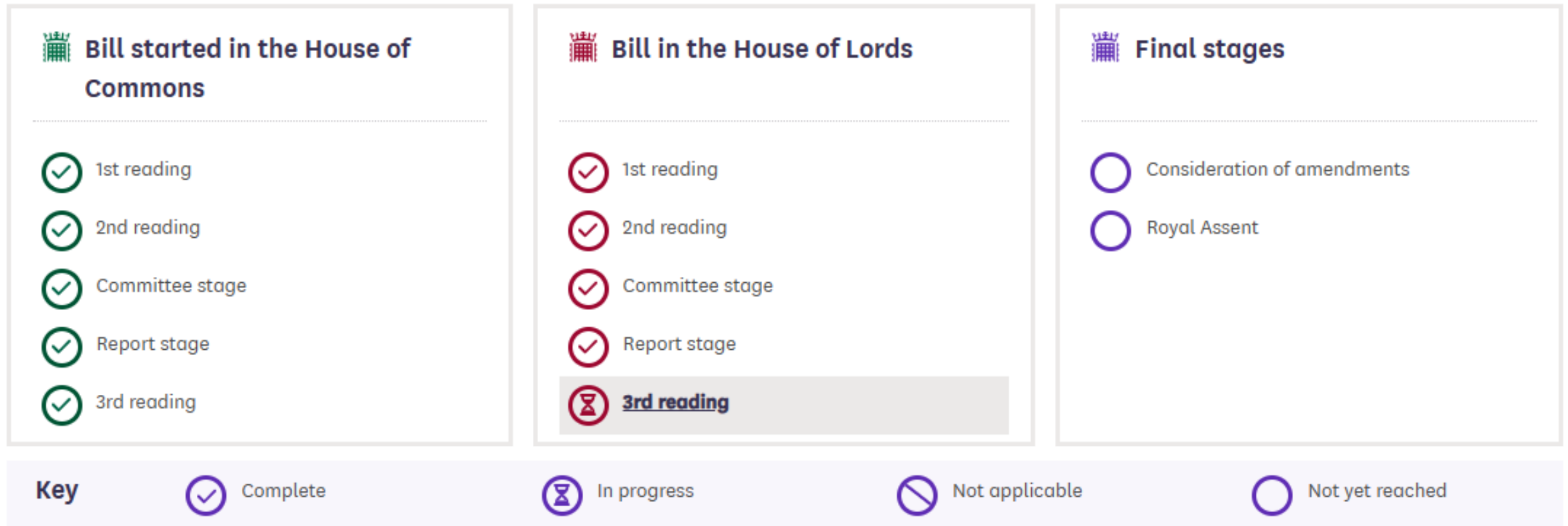
EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS BILL UPDATE

The Employment Rights Bill

- Manifesto pledge
- Aims to:
 - Boost job security
 - Improve workers rights
 - Support fairer workplaces



Parliamentary process



Progress of the Bill

- Report stage – 4 days booked until 23rd July
- Recess is 24th July
- 200+ amendments
 - Extension of bereavement leave for pregnancy loss during 1st 24 weeks
 - Non-Disclosure Agreements void if they seek to prevent disclosure of harassment or discrimination
 - Businesses can offer an agency worker a guaranteed hours contract at a lower rate, if their comparator is paid less
 - Extend fire and re-hire to fire and replace



Key non-government amends

- Right to be offered a guaranteed hours contract changes to right to request
- 'Short notice' defined as 48 hours
- Day 1 right to unfair dismissal changed to 6 months



ERB Roadmap

- Sets out a clear and phased timeline for rollout through 2026 and 2027
- Says this will provide employers with the time, certainty and support needed to prepare
- Detailed guidance to be issued ahead of each implementation dates



UK Government

Implementing the Employment Rights Bill

Our roadmap for delivering change

July 2025



gov.uk/makeworkpay

Immediately after the Bill is passed

Repeal of the *Strikes
(Minimum Service Levels) Act
2023* and most of the *Trade
Union Act 2016*

Repeal of the great majority
of the Trade Union Act 2016
(some provisions will be
repealed via commencement
order at a later date)



April 2026

Removal of the lower earnings limit and waiting period for Statutory Sick Pay

Establishment of the new Fair Work Agency

Day one rights to:

- Paternity leave
- Unpaid parental leave
- Protection from dismissal for whistleblowing

Doubling of the collective redundancy protective award maximum period

Trade union reforms including:

- Simplified recognition process
- Workplace and electronic balloting

October 2026

Ban on fire and rehire practices

Launch of Fair Pay Agreement body for adult social care in England

Strengthened tipping laws, requiring consultation with workers

New employer duties to:

- Take “all reasonable steps” to prevent sexual harassment
- Prevent third-party harassment of employees

Procurement – 2 tier code

Employment tribunal time limits

Additional trade union rights

2027

Zero hours
contracts/
agency
measures

'Day one'
protection from
unfair dismissal

Regulation of
umbrella
companies

Legal
bereavement
leave
entitlement

Stronger rights
to request
flexible working

Enhanced
pregnancy and
maternity
dismissal
protections

Gender pay gap
and menopause
action plans

Clearer guidance
on employer
duties to prevent
sexual
harassment

Modernisation of
the industrial
relations
framework

Blacklisting

Collective
redundancy
consultation
threshold

Consultation

Summer/Autumn 2025

Reinstating the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB)

Fair Pay Agreement for the Adult Social Care sector

Giving employees protection from unfair dismissal from 'day 1',

Autumn 2025

A package of trade union measures

Fire and rehire

Regulation of umbrella companies

Bereavement leave

Rights for pregnant workers

Ending the exploitative use of Zero Hours Contracts

Winter/early 2026

A package of trade union measures including protection against detriments for taking industrial action and, blacklisting

Tightening tipping law

Collective redundancy

Flexible working

What can/should you do?



Prepare for the changes that will take effect on Royal Assent and from April 2026



Keep up to date with progress



Respond to consultations where relevant

Questions?



Job (in)security and employment rights

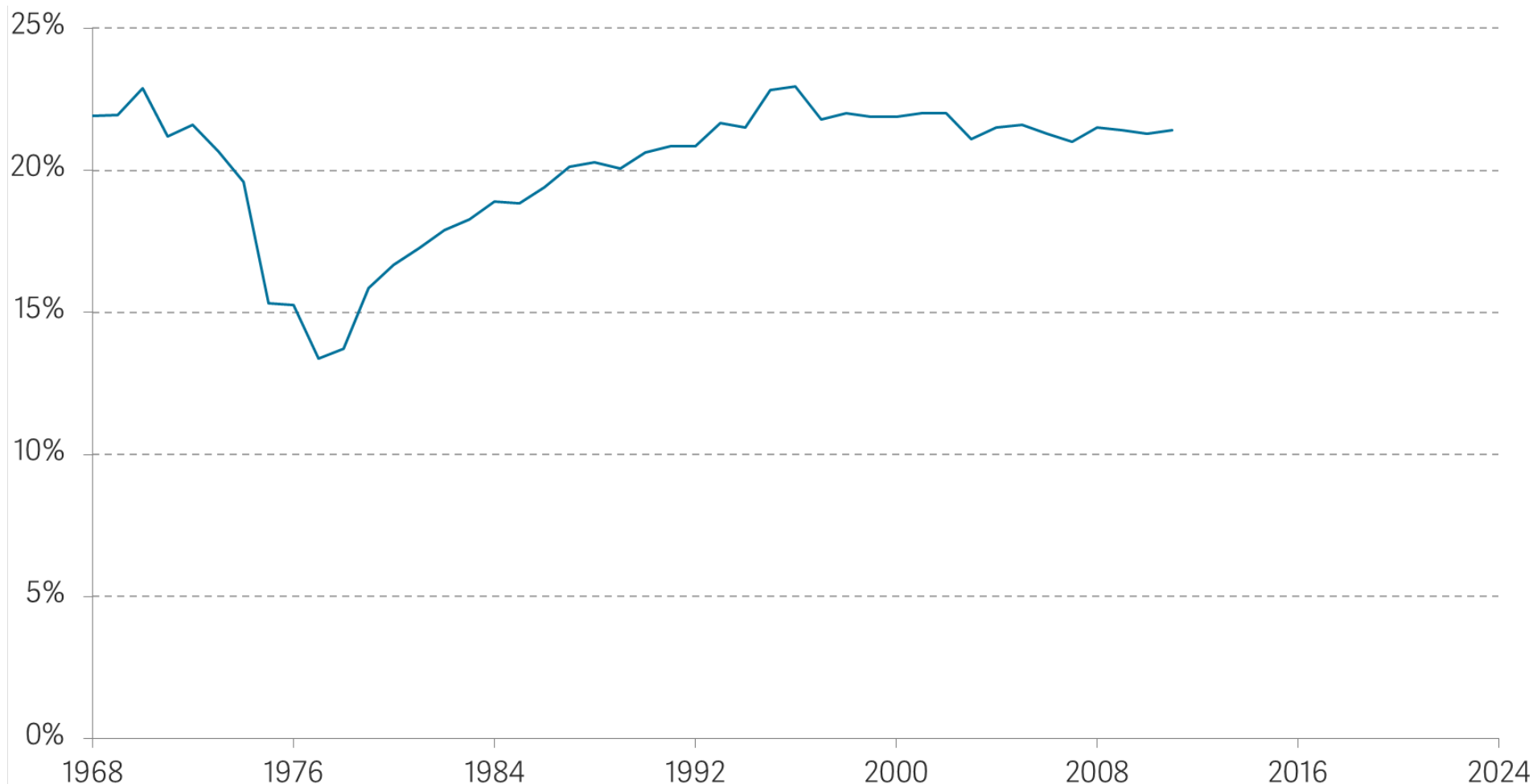
July 2025

Charlie McCurdy, Economist, Resolution Foundation

Progress on tackling low pay

The minimum wage has all but eliminated low pay

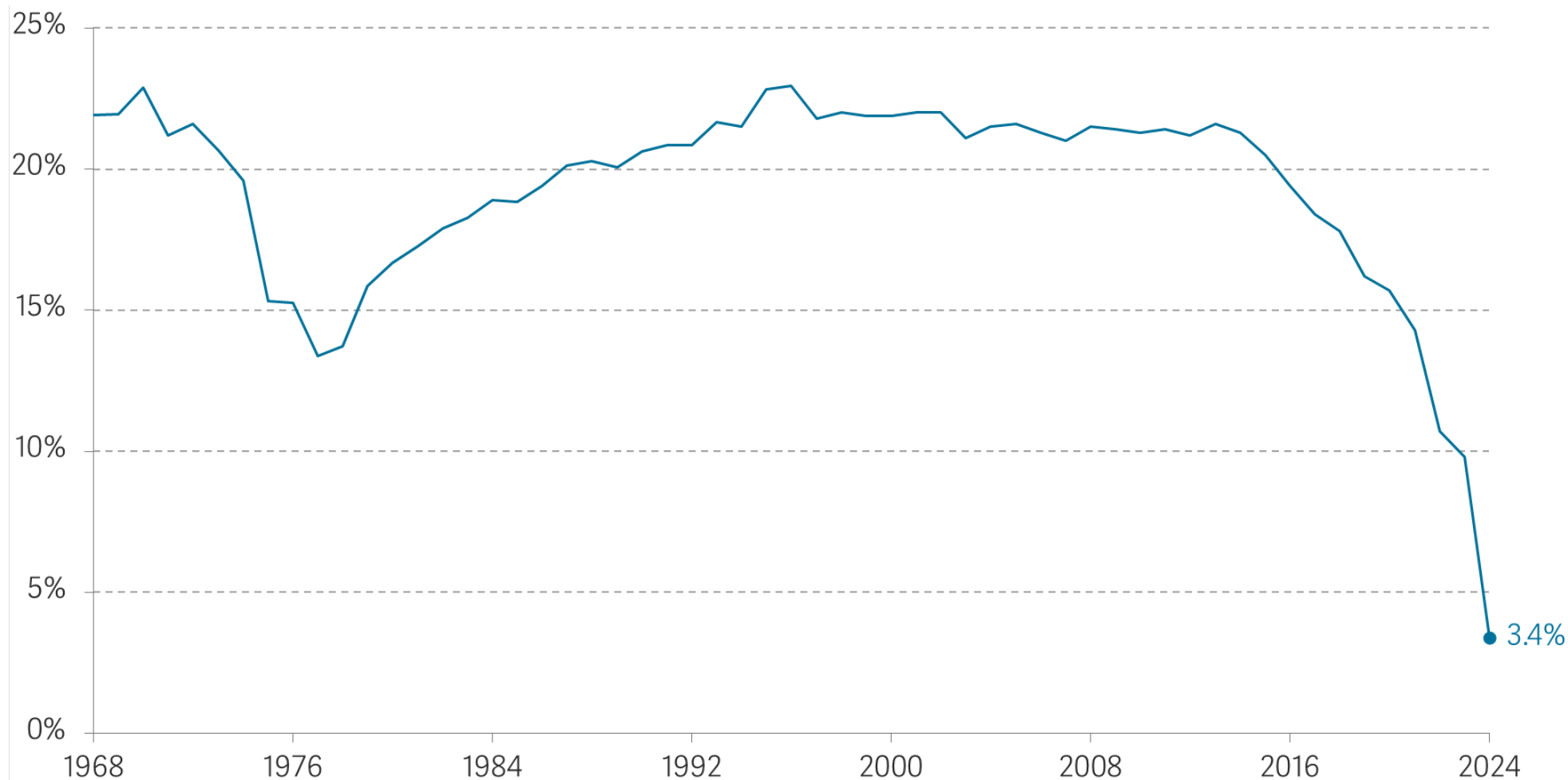
Proportion of employees with hourly pay below two-thirds median: UK



Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings and New Earnings Survey.

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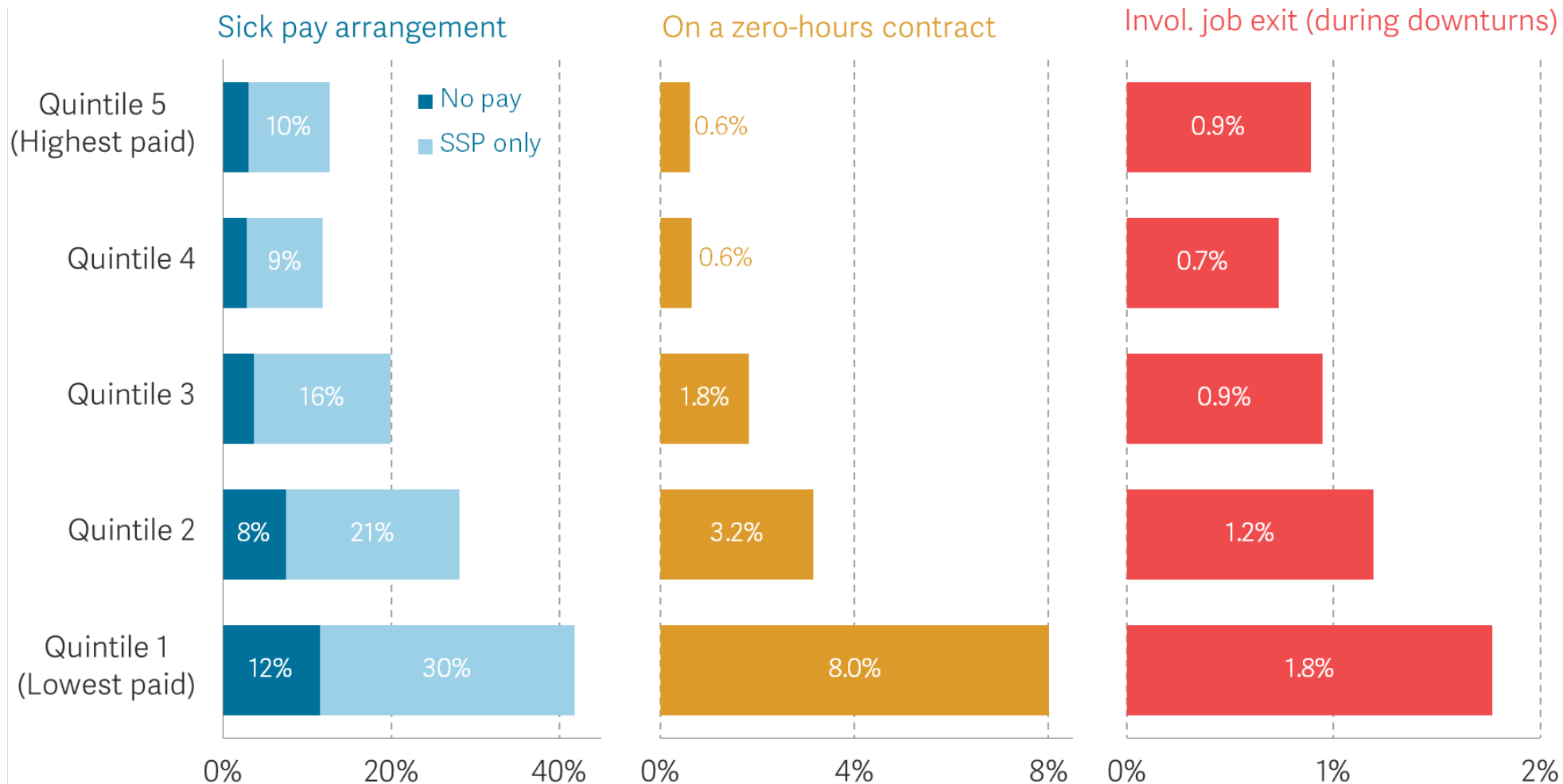
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But low-paid workers bear the brunt of job *insecurity*

Workers expecting SSP or no pay if off sick for a week (2023), on zero-hours contracts (2021-2023), and quarterly involuntary job exits (during Covid and Financial Crisis), by hourly pay quintile: UK



NOTES: Sick pay arrangement: sample is private sector workers only,. Involuntary job exit: measure is share of those employed in last quarter who have left a paid job within last three months where reason given was redundancy or dismissal. 'Downturn' periods covered include Financial Crisis (Q1 2008-Q1 2009) and Covid (Q1 2020-Q4 2020).

SOURCE: RF analysis of YouGov survey commissioned by RF, 2023; Zero-hours contracts ONS, Labour Force Survey; Involuntary job exits, ONS, Two-quarter Longitudinal Labour Force Survey

It's unsurprising, then, that the focus
has shifted to raising job quality

The Government is undertaking major employment reform

Day 1 unfair dismissal rights

Right to guaranteed hours + pay for cancelled shifts

SSP: remove LEL and waiting days

Stronger Trade Union rights (access, recognition, protection for reps...)

Social care Fair Pay Agreement

Fair Work Agency

Raising youth minimum wages to adult rate

End Fire and Rehire

Strengthen collective redundancy rights

Flexible working the default

Dismissal protection for pregnant workers

Day 1 right to bereavement leave, paternity leave, parental leave

Strengthen tipping law

Employers responsible for preventing sexual harassment

Whistle blowing protection against sexual harassment

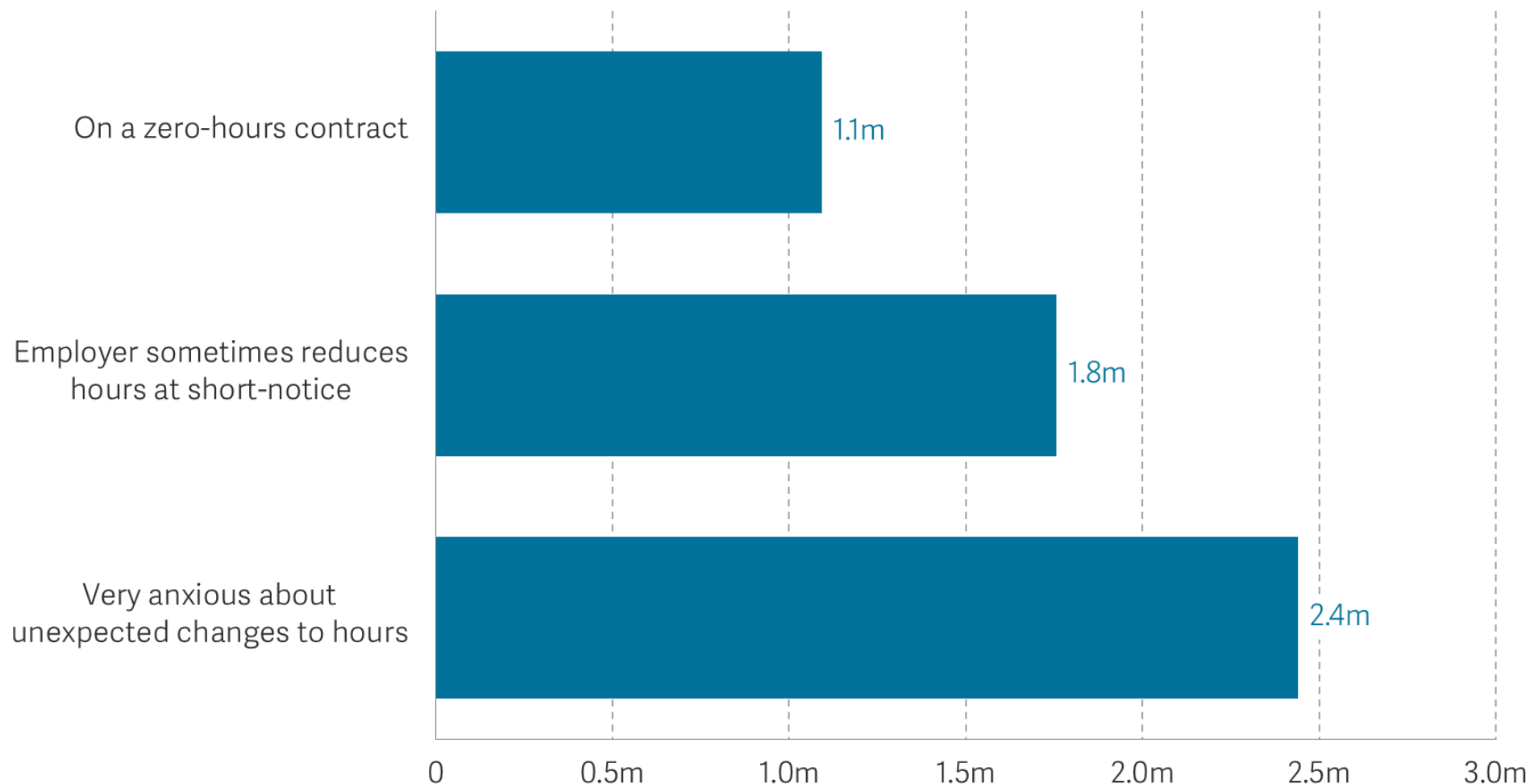
Close maritime redundancy notification loophole

Equality action plans from large employers

Include outsourced workers in gender pay gap reporting

Millions of workers will benefit from these reforms

Number of workers with designated characteristic: UK, 2024



Millions of workers will benefit:

- 1.1m workers on ZHCs
- 1.8m employers reduce hours at short-notice
- 2.4m low-paid workers very anxious about unexpected hours changes
- 1.7m social care workers
- 1.9m workers on the minimum wage

Notes: Number on zero-hours contracts is the average across 2024.

Source: Zero-hours contracts: ONS, Labour Force Survey; Short-notice hours reductions and anxiety about changes to hours: percentage figures from WISERD, 2024 Skills and Employment Survey, applied to total employment in the Labour Force Survey.

... but despite the ERB, job quality challenges will remain

- Income protection following sickness or job loss
 - UK's SSP ranks **3rd lowest** among OECD countries
 - UK's unemployment benefits are the **2nd lowest** in the OECD
- Bogus self-employment
 - UK has **2nd highest** share of dependent self-employed workers in EU
- Enforcement of existing rights
 - **Two-year waits** in the employment tribunal system
- There are sectors beyond social care that have specific issues
 - **Warehousing** – intense workloads and surveillance
 - **Cleaning** – personal safety (e.g. harassment)

Government should also support employers to hire and retain more people with disabilities. This should focus on:

1. Improving Access to Work to help **reimburse** employers with costs that go beyond reasonable adjustments.
2. Building on employment and pay gap **reporting** to help improve transparency and drive positive change.
3. Introducing a 'Right to Reintegration' to incentivise employers to **reintegrate** existing disabled workers.
4. Encouraging the **recruitment** of new disabled workers via the creation of a targeted 'Return-to-Work Recruitment Incentive'.
5. Having a clear ambition to create better working environments for all workers.

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2. Building on employment transparency and diversity
3. Introducing a 'Right to Reintegrate' for existing disabled workers
4. Encouraging the recruitment of a targeted 'Return-to-Work' cohort
5. Having a clear ambition to create more jobs for disabled workers.

Opening doors
How to incentivise employers to create more opportunities for disabled workers
Ben Baumberg Geiger & Louise Murphy
July 2025



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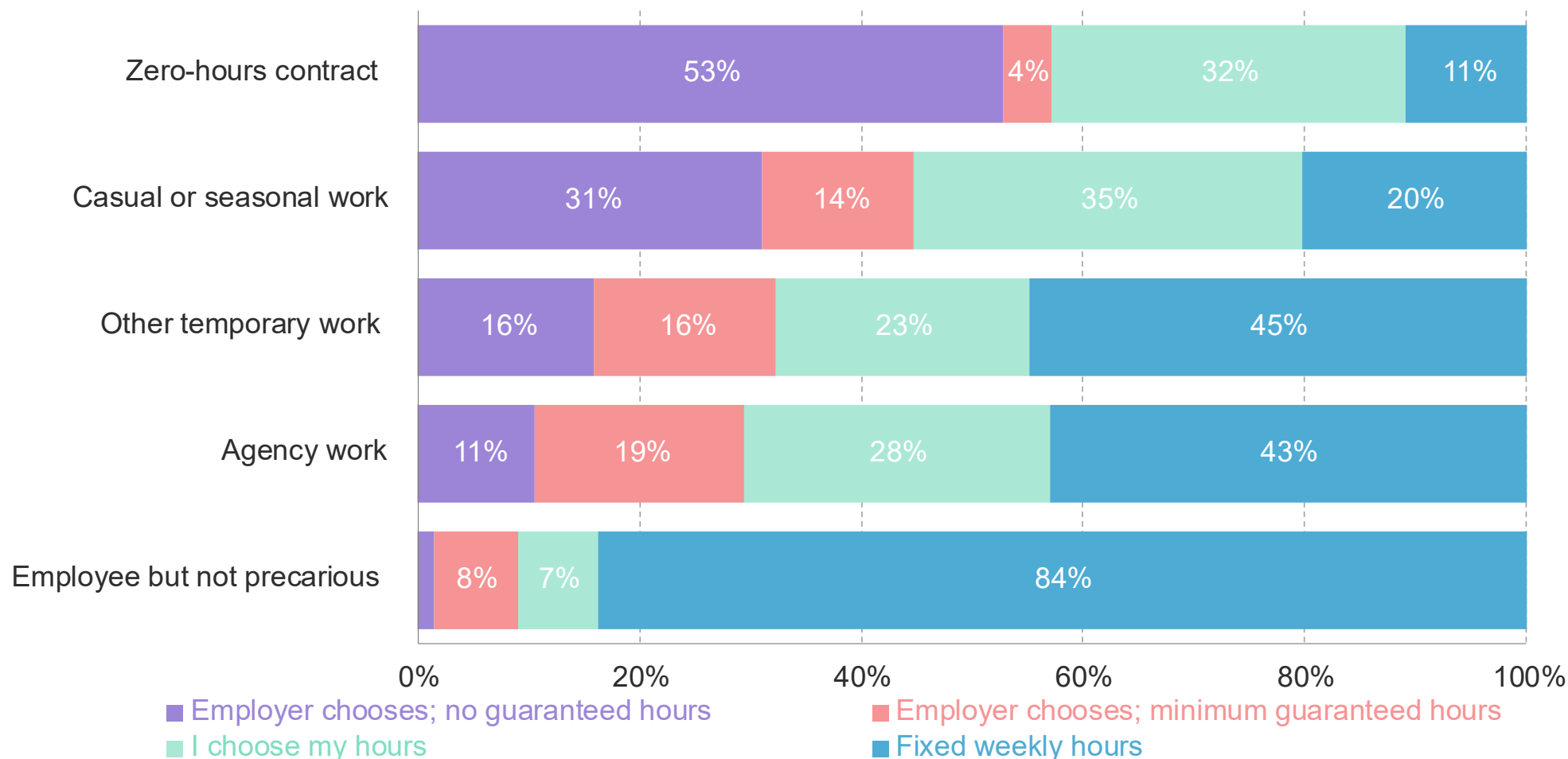
Zooming in: getting the detail right on hours insecurity

Two key measures to tackle hours insecurity

1. A right a contract that reflects the number of hours someone regularly works
2. A right to reasonable notice of shift patterns, including compensation if shifts are cancelled without reasonable notice

ZHC workers experience the most acute forms of insecurity

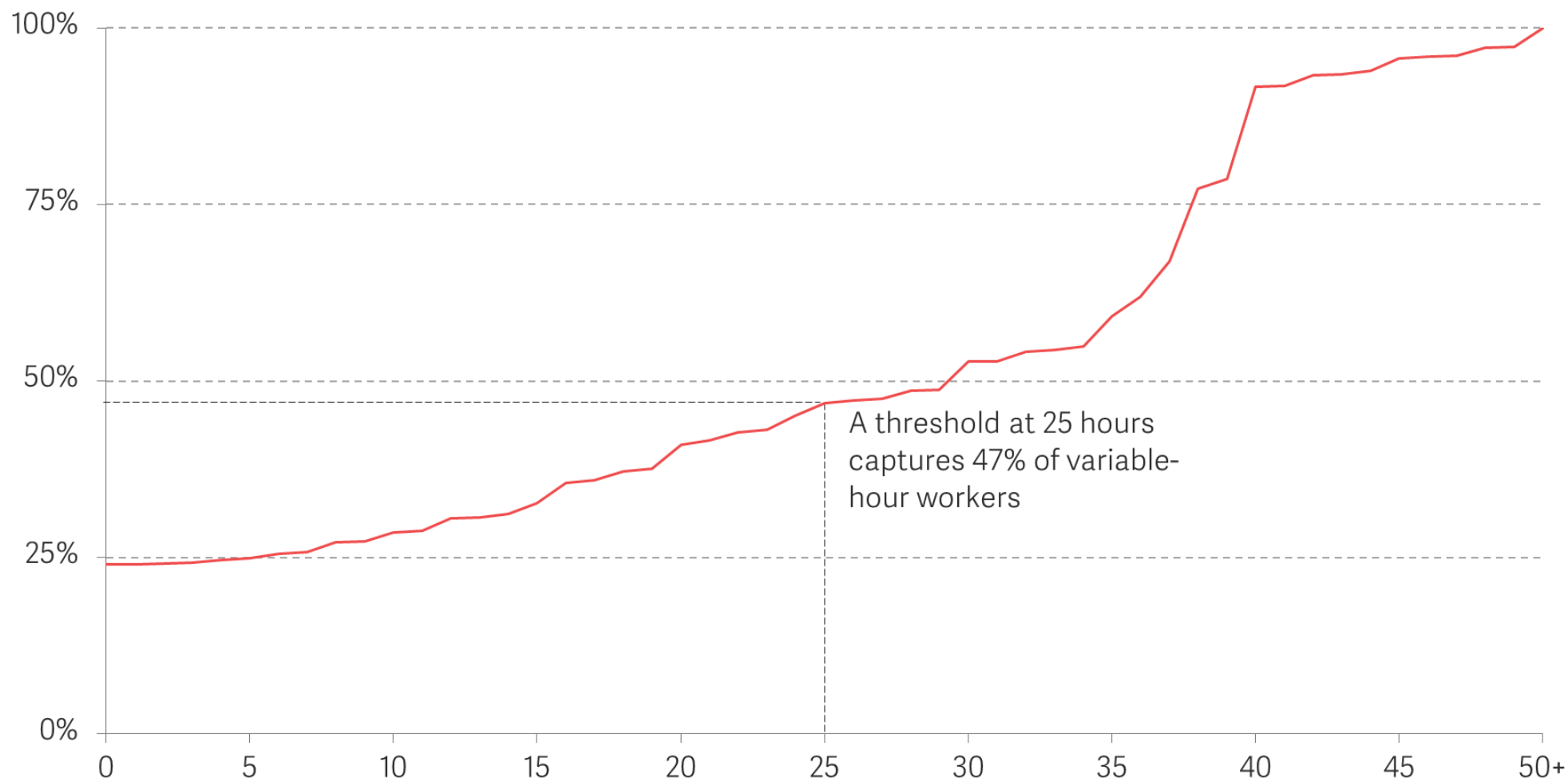
Proportion of variable contract workers' hours determined in various ways: UK, 2022-2023



But the protection will also apply to those on contracts below a yet-to-be defined 'low' hours threshold – with those above this level unaffected by the new rights.

The guaranteed hours entitlement should apply broadly

Estimated distribution of contracted weekly hours among workers on variable hours: UK, 2022-2025



Why?

- 1) Most variable-hours workers don't work low hours.
- 2) Anxiety about unpredictable hours isn't limited to those on the lowest hours.

Managing impact on flexibility:

- 1) 'Regularity' test
- 2) 'Seasonal' exclusions
- 3) Some 'buffer'

Short-notice shift cancellation makes things even worse

- How much notice should workers get of shifts?
 - 3 in 4 workers on variable-hours get less 2 weeks.
 - We propose a right to at least **2 weeks' advance notice** of shifts - this standard is fast-becoming best practice in the US.
- How much should workers get if shifts are cancelled?
 - As is stands, employers can cancel shifts last minute, but workers bear all the costs (childcare, travel, lost pay).
 - We propose employers pay **100% if cancelled with <24** hours notice, with a sliding scale as notice increases.
- **Getting the details right** will really matter: these reforms will reduce workers' anxiety, improve predictability and help them plan their lives better.

Job (in)security and employment rights

July 2025

Charlie McCurdy, Economist, Resolution Foundation



THANK YOU!