

Briefing for the Public Petitions Committee on petition PE2234: Reduce MSP Salaries to the Median Scottish Full-time Income, lodged by Tomas Frydrych

Overview of petition

Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) receive an annual salary of £77,711.

The petitioner is calling on the Scottish Parliament to (a) permanently cap MSP salaries at the level of median Scottish income for full-time employment, adjusted annually of £39,719 (the equivalent of the salary of a band 5 NHS nurse)¹, and (b) cap any additional salaries and payments arising from MSPs extra duties (for parliamentary offices, Government positions, severance pay, etc.) proportionally to the adjustment of the MSPs annual salary (a reduction of 50%).

The petitioner notes that the MSP position requires neither qualifications nor work experience, has no binding workload, and comes with virtually no accountability, making such remuneration inappropriate.

The petitioner suggests that the Scottish median full-time salary, corresponding to that of a band 5 NHS nurse, would seem more appropriate, and would make MSPs invested in improving the living standard of the nation. The petitioner also states that capping the MSPs salaries at the Scottish median would fund 129 band 5 NHS nurses.

UK Legislatures

Members' remuneration varies across the UK's legislatures. The table below summaries the basic salary paid to elected members in each parliament and assembly.

Legislature	Basic Salary
UK House of Commons (MP)	£98,599
Senedd Cymru (Member of the Senedd)	£79,817
Scottish Parliament	£77,711
Northern Ireland Assembly (MLA)	£67,200

Source: Official remuneration and salary determinations published by the Scottish Parliament, UK Parliament, Senedd Cymru, and Northern Ireland Assembly.

¹ While SPICe has been unable to verify the specific figure cited by the petitioner (£39,719), this is broadly consistent with the latest available estimate of median annual full-time earnings, which was £39,878.84 in April 2025.

Scottish Parliament

The Scottish Parliament Corporate Body is responsible for the payment of salaries for MSPs and members of the Scottish Government. These arrangements are made under the [Scottish Parliament Salaries Scheme](#).

In 2001, the Review Body on Senior Salaries (SSRB) was commissioned to examine MSPs' remuneration. [It recommended](#) that MSPs' salaries be set at 87.5% of MPs' salaries at Westminster, based on the differing roles of MPs and MSPs. [SPCB have noted](#) that the linkage provided a "relevant, independent benchmark against which MSP salaries could be automatically uprated annually, without a requirement for MSPs to vote each year on their pay arrangements". In 2013, given IPSA's review of MPs' remuneration (see below) and the 10% salary increase proposed, [it was decided](#) to break the link with MPs' salaries.

Since then, changes in MSPs' salaries have been linked to the ASHE index for public sector salaries in Scotland.

The basic annual salary for a Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) from 1 April 2026 is £77,711.

Office holder	Annual salary	Annual salary (including MSP salary)
MSP	£77,711	£77,711
MSP (dual mandate)	£25,905	£25,905
First Minister	£112,573	£190,284
Cabinet Secretary	£58,401	£136,112
Minister	£36,586	£114,297
Presiding Officer	£58,401	£136,112
Deputy Presiding Officer	£36,586	£114,297
Lord Advocate	£76,295	£154,006
Solicitor General for Scotland	£55,172	£132,883

The petitioner suggests that the MSP position requires neither qualifications nor work experience, has no binding workload, and comes with virtually no accountability, making such remuneration inappropriate. While no formal qualification or prior work experience are required to become an MSP, and the role does not have prescribed working hours, MSPs are subject to electoral accountability and a formal standards regime, including an enforceable [Code of Conduct](#) and sanctions for misconduct.

Westminster

Since 2011 MPs' salaries and pensions have been set and administered by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA). Between 6 and 31 October 2025, [IPSA consulted on the mechanism for setting MPs' pay for the remainder of the current Parliament](#) (assumed to be 2026 to 2029).

IPSA announced its decision on the MP salary adjustment for the 2026-27 financial year. From 1 April 2026, both the basic salary for an MP and the additional salary for committee chairs increased by 5%, including a 3.5% cost-of-living element and a

1.5% benchmarking increase. The data, metrics and information considered and rationale for this decision were published in [IPSA's Supporting Democracy report](#).

The basic annual salary for a Member of the UK Parliament (MP) from 1 April 2026 is £98,599.

In addition to the basic salary, MPs may receive additional pay if they are a chair of a select committee, or a member of the Panel of Chairs. These additional salaries are also administered by IPSA.

MPs who are government ministers may also receive a ministerial salary. The Ministerial and other Salaries Act 1975, as amended, provides the terms on which salaries can be paid to government ministers. A list of all government ministers, indicating which ministers are paid and which are unpaid, is available on the [government website](#).

Senedd Cymru

In Wales, the [Independent Remuneration Board](#) of the Senedd Cymru determines members' remuneration packages each year in a process known as "Determination."

The basic annual salary for a Member of the Senedd Cymru from 7 May 2026 is £79,817.

Members who hold [additional offices](#) will be entitled to receive an additional annual salary.

Northern Ireland Assembly

In 2011, the Assembly Members (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) gave power to set members' remuneration to the [Independent Financial Review Panel](#), to be implemented by the Assembly Commission.

The basic annual salary for a Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly from 1 April 2026 is £67,200.

Members who hold additional offices will be entitled to receive an additional annual salary.

Earnings in Scotland

The latest data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings published by the Office for National Statistics show Scotland's median annual earnings for full time employees as of April 2025 is £39,878.84.

The petitioner calls for MSP salaries to be permanently capped at the median annual earnings for full-time employees. While SPICe has been unable to verify the specific figure cited by the petitioner (£39,719), this is broadly consistent with the latest available estimate of median annual full-time earnings, which was £39,878.84 in April 2025.

In this instance, each MSP would see a salary reduction of £37,833 per year, equivalent to a 48.7% pay cut.

The petition states that the reduction in MSP pay could be used to fund 129 nurses. This overstates the number of nurses that could be funded by the savings because it compares the gross salary saving from MSP pay reductions with a nurse's basic salary only. In practice, NHS employers must also meet pension, National Insurance and other employment costs, meaning the saving would fund significantly fewer nurses than claimed.

At £77,711, MSPs earn around twice the median full-time salary in the UK and are paid at approximately the 90th percentile of full-time employee earnings, placing them among the highest-paid 10% of employees.

Key Organisations and relevant links

- [Scottish Parliament salaries](#)
- [Westminster salaries](#)
- [Senedd Cymru salaries](#)
- [Northern Ireland Assembly salaries](#)
- [NHS staff pay scales](#)
- [SPICe Earnings in Scotland](#)

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9 September 2026

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at spice@parliament.scot

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