

Labour to give workers a break and bring our four nations together with four new national holidays

Jeremy

Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party, will announce Labour's plan to give Britain's workers the break they deserve and bring our four nations together with four new national holidays for the whole of the United Kingdom.

Under Labour's proposals, UK-wide public holidays will be held on St. David's Day (1st March), St Patrick's Day (17th March), St. George's Day (23rd April) and St. Andrew's Day (30th November). With eight public holidays, the UK currently has the fewest of any G20 or EU country.

Speaking on St George's Day to announce the policy, Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party, will say:

"For years, Britain's workers haven't had a proper pay rise, with wages for most people still below 2007 levels. After seven years of painful austerity, our workers deserve a break – and under a Labour government, they will have the opportunity of four more days off a year.

"The four nations that make up our great country have rarely been more divided due to the damaging and divisive policies of this Conservative government.

"But where Theresa May divides, Labour will unite our four nations. A Labour government will make St George's Day – England's national day and Shakespeare's birthday – a public holiday, along with St David's Day, St Andrew's Day and St Patrick's Day.

"And we will ask for the support of the governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland so that the same four holidays can be enjoyed across the United Kingdom.

"These holidays will be a chance for workers to spend time with their families, in their communities and with their friends. But they will also be a chance to celebrate the national cultures of our proud nations.

"The next Labour government will give workers the break they deserve and bring our country closer together."

The Leader of Scottish Labour, Kezia Dugdale will say:

“Scottish Labour believes that together we’re stronger, and that means celebrating what unites us across the four nations of the UK.

“St Andrew’s Day is a proud day of celebration in Scotland, and some workers already get the day off, but Labour would like to see that extended to all workers – not only in Scotland, but across the UK.

“Scotland is home to tens of thousands of people from England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and this policy will encourage the entire country to celebrate the four national days.

“Our country is far too divided as a result of the SNP’s plans for a second independence referendum and the Tories’ plans for a hard Brexit, and only by backing Labour can voters send Nicola Sturgeon and Theresa May a message that together we’re stronger.”

The Leader of Welsh Labour, Carwyn Jones will say:

“Welsh Labour has long been in favour of making St David’s day a public holiday in Wales. Today’s pledge would make that a reality for the 1.4 million hardworking people across Wales.”

Ends

Editor’s Notes:

1. The UK

has the lowest number of public holidays of the major economies – 8 compared with a G20 average of 12. Four extra holidays would take us to the G20 average.

2. St

Andrew’s Day is a public holiday in Scotland, where the issue is devolved, as is St Patrick’s Day in Northern Ireland. Labour’s proposal would be to seek the

support of the governments of the three devolved administrations for four public holidays, but the decision whether to go ahead in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland would be theirs.

3. Estimates

of the economic impact of public holidays (including by the DCMS) are contradictory, varying between a net benefit and net cost. There is no definitive measure. There is also evidence of productivity and wellbeing benefits, and the evidence of costs are that they are of delayed rather than lost output.

[http://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/economic-affairs/Economic Outlook/cEAC270312ev1.pdf](http://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/economic-affairs/Economic_Outlook/cEAC270312ev1.pdf)