

News story: Trade unions to face new fines of up to £20,000 for breaking governance laws

Trade unions are set to face new fines of up to £20,000 for breaking governance laws under plans being consulted on by the government.

Under the proposals, the union regulator, the [Certification Officer](#), will be able to issue fines of up to £20,000 for breaking the law including serious breaches of election rules or mismanagement of their political funds.

Currently the Certification Officer cannot impose a financial penalty, instead issuing a declaration or an enforcement order if a union breaches its statutory obligations under the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act.

The new proposed powers the Certification Officer will be able to fine unions for breaches like:

- failing to ensure senior positions are not held by someone with a criminal record
- breaching requirements for elections to senior positions
- mismanagement of political funds

A spokesperson for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy said:

Trade unions exist to represent workers' interests and make decisions which can affect millions of people's lives, so it is right for the government to ensure they are run responsibly.

The proposed powers will make sure unions are properly regulated in the future to ensure they truly represent the interests of their members.

The government is consulting on these powers as agreed during the passage of the Trade Union Act last year.

The majority of the Act's new powers came into force on 1 March, bringing in tougher ballot requirements for industrial action – particularly for important public services like health, education and transport.

This will save more than 1.5 million working hours a year from being lost to undemocratic strike action.

The [consultation on the Certification Officer's powers](#) will run for 6 weeks from 9 April until 21 May.

1. The Certification Officer is responsible for regulating statutory functions relating to trade unions and employers' associations.
 2. The Certification Officer's complaint rulings are published online.
 3. The Trade Union Act which came into force on 1 March, is expected to reduce strikes:
 - on important public services like transport, education and health by 35%
 - in all other sectors from construction to water supply by 29%
-

After attacks, UN senior official in South Sudan urges protection of aid workers and civilians

8 April 2017 – Following recent attacks on civilians and aid workers in South Sudan, the top United Nations humanitarian official in the country today called on the Government and the opposition to protect civilians and ensure the safety and security of humanitarians.

Noting reports this week of "outrageous abuses" by both state and opposition actors in Upper Nile against aid workers, as well as reports of horrific attacks against civilians in Eastern Equatoria, Eugene Owusu, called the attacks "reprehensible and unacceptable."

"I call on those in power [to take swift action](#) to end the targeting of innocent people in this conflict and to hold those responsible to account," the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan said.

In his statement, Mr. Owusu noted two "serious" attacks against aid workers in Aburoc and Melut, both in the Upper Nile, since 31 March.

He condemned the attacks "in the strongest terms," and demanded authorities to investigate and bring the perpetrators to justice.

"Humanitarians are in this country to save lives. It is beyond reckoning that they continue to be killed, harassed and abused despite our repeated calls for action," Mr. Owusu stressed.

Also this week, in Pajok, Magwi County, Eastern Equatoria, at least 6,000 people have been forced to flee to Uganda and reportedly several dozen have been killed, following an attack by government forces on the town.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)) said that thousands more are thought to be sheltering in the bushes in areas surrounding the town, which was estimated to be home to up to 50,000 people.

“I am appalled by the reports,” said Mr. Owusu. “I implore the leadership in South Sudan to rapidly investigate these allegations and to end all attacks against civilians.”

The attacks come as the humanitarian situation in South Sudan is deteriorating. More than 3.5 million people have been forced to flee their homes, including nearly 1.9 million people who are internally displaced and more than 1.7 million who have fled as refugees to neighbouring countries.

OCHA estimates that an average of 2,000 South Sudanese refugees are arriving into Uganda each day, some 62 per cent of them children.

Getting on with the job this week

From new funding to support veterans to reducing energy bills, we've been getting on with the job.

We need to create more opportunities for our young people

9th April 2017

Youth employment levels in Scotland still haven't recovered from the global financial crash.

Before the full onset of the financial crisis the number of 16-24 year olds in employment stood at 365,000.

The latest figures show that youth employment has not recovered to pre-crisis levels and currently stands at 341,000.

What would Scottish Labour do?

We need to give our young people the skills they need to compete for the jobs of the future.

That means investing in education, not carrying on the cuts. It also means reforming the system so that it is fairer. Your chance to get on in life shouldn't be based on how much your parents earn but your own talent, ambition and work ethic.

We want to see better bursaries for the poorest students, and tailor our apprenticeship schemes more closely to the jobs market.

We'd stimulate our economy with investment, bringing forward infrastructure spending with a specific focus on housebuilding.

Across Scotland, Labour has a plan that works for your community

In Glasgow, Labour will offer guaranteed job for every 18-to-24 year old

In North Lanarkshire, Labour will create 10,000 new jobs and guarantee one for our young people.

In West Dunbartonshire, Labour will create 3,000 new jobs and apprenticeships to help people back into work and grow the local economy

In Edinburgh, Labour will expand and fund training opportunities for adults and young people, working with colleges, to help them raise their skills and earnings.

In Aberdeen Labour has a City Centre Masterplan which will create more than 5,000 jobs and attract investment of around £1 billion.

Like our plans? [Then spread our message.](#)

[News story: The AAIB have sent a team to a glider accident in Northumberland](#)

[unable to retrieve full-text content]The AAIB have sent a team to Northumberland to investigate an accident involving a glider.