

Unpaid overtime reaches 'extreme' levels

The number of people working 'extreme' levels of unpaid overtime soared to almost 900,000 last year, with teachers and lawyers the most likely to put in hours of extra work, according to new figures released by the TUC. The union body's annual survey of working hours showed that the number of people doing more than 10 hours of unpaid overtime a week rose by 14,000 last year. Among teachers and lawyers one in five clocked up an extra 17 hours of free work a week. The analysis of official statistics was published on 26 February to mark Work Your Proper Hours Day (WYPHD). Last year over five million people across the UK put in an average of 7 hours 12 minutes of unpaid overtime a week, worth £27.4 billion - or £5,402 eah. The TUC analysis shows that teachers, health and social service managers and lawyers are most likely to do unpaid overtime, with around half of all staff in these occupations regularly giving away unpaid hours. One in four (25.3 per cent) public sector workers worked unpaid overtime in 2009, worth nearly £9 billion a year, compared to one in six staff in the private sector (18.3 per cent). Single women are more likely to do unpaid overtime than single men, married or cohabiting couples or lone parents. TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: "There is no direct link between excess overtime and underemployment but those people who are struggling to find enough or indeed any hours to work must be wondering why some workers are doing so much for free." He added: "Staff are understandably doing all they can to help their company recover from the recession - and bosses should thank them for going that extra mile. But working time still needs to be properly managed. A long hours culture is bad for workers' health and family life - whether the hours are paid or not."

- [TUC news release](#). [Work Your Proper Hours Day](#). [UNISON news release](#). [UCU news release](#). [The Guardian](#).