



**Stewart McDonald MP**  
Member of Parliament for Glasgow South  
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
stewart.mcdonald.mp@parliament.uk

Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson MP  
Prime Minister

Sent by Email

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**Re: Statutory Sick Pay**

Dear Prime Minister

I wanted to follow up with you in writing the issue I raised with you at today's session of PMQs.

Whilst you are of course right to point out the many other avenues of financial assistance open to people during the current crisis, I'm afraid this rather misses the point.

Even before the lockdown started, it has been clear for some time that the UK's SSP system is woefully inadequate. In comparison to our neighbours in Europe, the UK ranks second from the bottom in the continental league table, only covering around 20% of a workers' income.

In 2018 UK SSP was described as 'manifestly inadequate' and 'not in conformity' with the European Social Charter by the European Committee of Social Rights.

Only last year the government conceded that up to two million workers did not meet the earnings threshold and we know that many gig economy workers don't qualify because they are treated as self-employed.

Even pre-COVID, this was an injustice that required changing. The current crisis has only served to highlight the need for political action.

I wish to press upon you the need for your government to tackle this matter head on. I believe that you will find maximum cooperation from parties across parliament, trade unions and goodwill from millions of workers, if the government seeks to level up the current SSP offer – which, as it stands, is out of kilter with international norms, financially punishes people for being sick and doesn't give workers the workplace dignity that they deserve.

I hope you will agree.

Best

Stewart McDonald MP