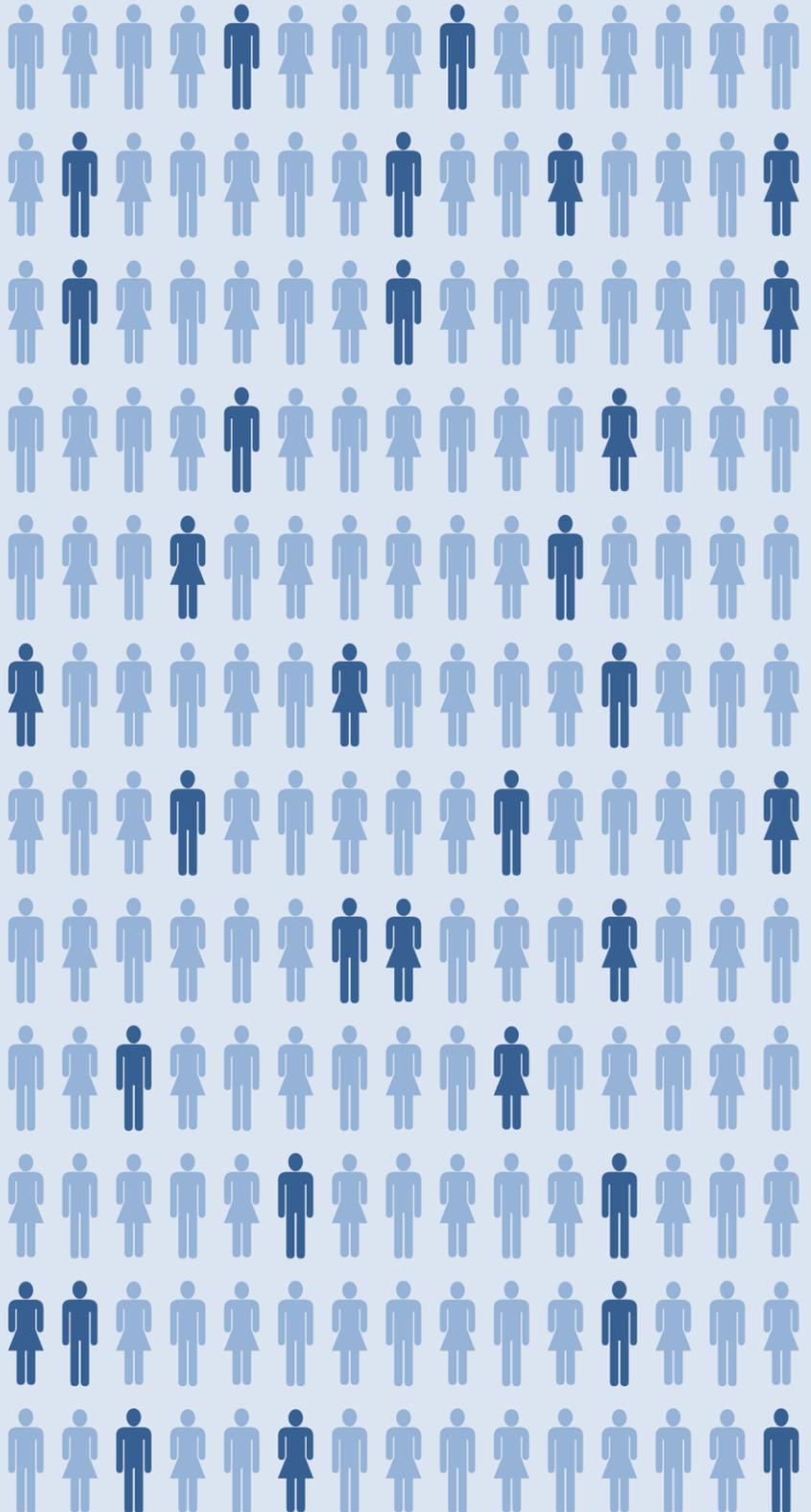


## Facts and information on the employment of Disabled people



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# 1. Introduction

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## Disabled people

There are:

- 11.5 million people in the UK who are covered by the disability provisions set out in the Equality Act. This is 19 per cent of the population<sup>1</sup>.
- Just under 1.3 million disabled people aged 16 to 64 years are resident in the London<sup>2</sup>.

### Definitions

Economically inactive people are not in work. They are people without a job who have not actively sought work in the last four weeks and/or are not available to start work in the next two weeks

Unemployed people are out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the last four weeks and are available to start work in the next two weeks or are currently out of work, have found a job and are waiting to start it in the next two weeks.

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<sup>1</sup> Fulfilling Potential: Building Understanding report <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/fulfilling-potential/index.php>

<sup>2</sup>

[http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assessment\\_gla\\_deaf\\_disabled\\_equality\\_2013.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assessment_gla_deaf_disabled_equality_2013.pdf)

## 2. Facts and statistics on Disabled people of working age (16-64 years)

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### London's population

According to Nomis there are 924,800 disabled people of working age resident in London, compared to 4,480,200 non-disabled residents.

### Employment figures

According to Nomis in 2013 there were:

- **48.3%** of all disabled London residents of working age are in employment compared to 74% of the non-disabled population; this means there is nearly 26% percentage points difference in employment rates between disabled and non-disabled people in London.
- **71,100** unemployed disabled people in London compared with
- **301,800** non-disabled people aged 16-64 unemployed in London.

### National employment figures

The information below was obtained from the Fulfilling Potential: Building Understanding report available at:

<http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/fulfilling-potential/index.php> unless other references are provided.

Another source of information is available at:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20131128110838/http://odi.d>

[wp.gov.uk/disability-statistics-and-research/disability-equality-indicators.php](http://wp.gov.uk/disability-statistics-and-research/disability-equality-indicators.php)

## Employment rates

In the UK, according to Nomis in 2013 **49%** of disabled people are employed compared with **76.7%** non-disabled people, nearly **30 percentage** points difference. In some other countries disabled people's employment rates are far better, for instance in Sweden **62.3%** of disabled people are employed.<sup>3</sup>

Disabled people are also out of work for longer: 47% of unemployed disabled people have been unemployed for a year or more, compared with 31% of unemployed non-disabled people.

Employment rates are slightly increasing for older disabled people but decreasing for younger disabled people, reflecting the national trend for non-disabled people.

## Older disabled people (50 years plus)

Employment rates for older disabled people in 2012 were:

- **41.0% or 1.4 million** employed disabled people, compared to 77.1% or 5.9 million non-disabled people in 2012.<sup>4</sup>
- Employment of disabled people has risen from **34.9%** in **2001** to the **41%** in **2012**.

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[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/49779/sayce-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/49779/sayce-report.pdf)

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[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf) Labour Force Survey FS Q2 2012, Appendix Table 40.2

## Young disabled people (aged under 25 years)

There is a gap in employment rates between young disabled and non-disabled people; **36%** compared to 52% respectively.

The gap between disabled people and non-disabled people widens according to the level of qualification:

- **26%** disabled people without two A-levels or equivalent that want but lack work, compared with 12% non-disabled.<sup>5</sup>
- **14%** of disabled people who have equivalent to two A-Levels or higher lack work but want work, compared 6% for non-disabled people with same level of qualification.<sup>6</sup>
- There is an employment rate gap of **35.4 percentage points** between disabled and non-disabled people with no qualifications.
- The employment gap between disabled people and non-disabled people with a degree is 10 percentage points until the age of 50 when it doubles to 20 percentage points.<sup>7</sup>

## Learning difficulties

The employment rates for people with some impairments such as learning difficulties and mental health conditions remains consistently low. For example:

- the employment rate of people with learning difficulties is under 15%, while it is 76.4% for non-disabled people.
- Around 2 percent of the total disabled working age population have a learning disability.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <http://data.jrf.org.uk/data/disability-work/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://data.jrf.org.uk/data/disability-work/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fulfilling-potential-understanding-disability>

## Young people with LDD

Latest figures from 2010 show that

- **12.3%** of 16-18 year olds with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) are not in education, employment or training compared to 5.5% of young people with no learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## Mental health conditions

- The employment rate of people with mental health conditions is only about **14%**.
- 349,000 disabled people, around 5% of the total disabled working age population, have a mental health condition, other than depression or anxiety.<sup>9</sup>

The number of impairments has a strong impact on levels of employment:

- people reporting five or more impairments are **61 percentage points** less likely to have a job than otherwise similar non-disabled people,
- for people reporting only one impairment, the deficit is only **7 percentage points**.

## Low skilled jobs

Disabled people are more likely to do lower skilled jobs;

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<sup>8</sup> <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/fulfilling-potential/index.php>

<sup>9</sup> Ref Building Understanding <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/fulfilling-potential/index.php>

- Around **31%** of disabled people are in semi-routine or routine occupations compared with 25% of non-disabled people
- **34%** disabled people compared with 43% non-disabled people are in managerial or professional roles.<sup>10</sup>

## Low pay

According to the Labour Force Survey 2012 rates of pay are also lower for disabled people; in 2012: hourly wage rate of disabled people was **£12.15**, while that of non-disabled people was £13.25.

Disabled people with the same qualification as non-disabled people are paid less:

- **16%** of disabled people with two A-Level or the equivalent are low paid compared to **13%** for non-disabled people with the same level of qualification.<sup>11</sup>
- **41%** of disabled people in work with less than two A-levels or the equivalent are low paid, compared to 35% of non-disabled people with the same level of qualification.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2012, the mean hourly wage rate of disabled people was £12.15, while that of non-disabled people was greater at £13.25<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>

[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers\\_and\\_unfair\\_treatment\\_final.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers_and_unfair_treatment_final.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <http://data.jrf.org.uk/data/disability-work/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://data.jrf.org.uk/data/disability-work/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20131128110838/http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disability-statistics-and-research/disability-equality-indicators.php>

## Part-time work

- Disabled people are more likely than non-disabled people to work part-time and less likely to work full-time, **33%** compared to 25%.<sup>14</sup>
- 13% of Disabled people compared with 11% of non-disabled people are under-employed and would like to work more hours

## Private/public sector

Most disabled people in work are employed in the private sector. Although disabled people make up 12.9% of the Public sector workforce and 11 percent of the Private sector workforce.<sup>15</sup> However, there has been an increase of 30% (188,000) in the number of disabled people working in the public sector compared to 24% in the private sector (445,000) since 2002.<sup>16</sup>

# 3. Barriers to employment

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There are many barriers that prevent disabled people from working,<sup>17</sup> which include discriminatory attitudes of employers, so disabled

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<sup>14</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf) LFS Q3 2012

<sup>15</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf) Labour Force Survey Q2 2012, Appendix Table 43.1

<sup>16</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf) Labour Force Survey Q2 2012

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/disability-policy-equality-summary.pdf>

people are not offered jobs. The lack of flexibility employment practices also creates difficulties for disabled people in obtaining and maintaining employment.<sup>18</sup> Other barriers to employment include inaccessible transport and issues with access and support, (e.g. difficulties in getting into buildings or obtaining aids and equipment). The barriers disabled people experience impact more than impairments when seeking employment.<sup>19</sup>

Barriers vary according to the impairments a disabled person has as a survey of economically inactive people highlighted:

- physical barriers such as difficulty with transport, difficulty getting into buildings, difficulty using facilities, and lack of special aids or equipment are mentioned more by visually impaired people.
- People with hearing and communication impairments are more likely to mention lack of special aids or equipment, lack of assistance, and attitudes of colleagues;
- People with learning impairment are more likely to mention anxiety or lack of confidence, difficulty with transport and the attitudes of employers.<sup>20</sup>

At all levels of qualification disabled people are less likely to be employed than non-disabled people for instance there is an

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[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf)

[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/rr77\\_opening\\_up\\_work.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/rr77_opening_up_work.pdf)

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[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers\\_and\\_unfair\\_treatment\\_final.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers_and_unfair_treatment_final.pdf)

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[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers\\_and\\_unfair\\_treatment\\_final.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers_and_unfair_treatment_final.pdf)

employment gap between disabled people and non-disabled people with a degree of 10 percentage points, which doubles to 20 percentage points from the age of 50.<sup>21</sup> Disabled people also bear the brunt of regional variations in the availability of jobs, while non-disabled people enjoy consistent prospects wherever they live.<sup>22</sup>

## Maintaining employment

Even when the search for employment is successful there are still negative attitudes towards disabled people to contend with, which are still common in many workplaces according to research.<sup>23</sup> Also various barriers prevent effective participation at work, which include:

- a lack of understanding or knowledge about some impairments
- negative assumptions about the capability of disabled people
- resentment by colleagues of perceived 'special treatment'
- Conditions like depression and anxiety were trivialised and there was a lack of awareness of the possible severity of these conditions. Also discussion of mental health conditions was still largely taboo.<sup>24</sup>

According to the Fair Treatment at Work Survey, 2008, (the most recent data), **27%** of Disabled people in Great Britain said they had experienced some form of unfair treatment, discrimination, bullying or

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fulfilling-potential-understanding-disability>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/disability-policy-equality-summary.pdf>  
[https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/files/iser\\_working\\_papers/2011-03.pdf](https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/files/iser_working_papers/2011-03.pdf)

<sup>23</sup>

[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/rr77\\_opening\\_up\\_work.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/rr77_opening_up_work.pdf)

<sup>24</sup>

[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/rr77\\_opening\\_up\\_work.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/rr77_opening_up_work.pdf)

harassment at work in the previous two years, compared with 17% for non-disabled people.<sup>25</sup>

Six per cent of Disabled respondents to the Life Opportunities Survey currently in work say they have been treated unfairly by their employer or work colleagues in the preceding 12 months because of a health condition, illness or impairment or a disability.<sup>26</sup>

The proportion of disabled people in the population has increased, as has gap between Disabled people being employed compared to otherwise similar non-disabled people'.<sup>27</sup> Many have 'assumed that it is people with 'relatively minor impairments' that have been affected by the changes in prevalence and in employment prospects, but research shows that it is people with 'severely disadvantaging sets of health conditions' that have been more affected by the trends'.<sup>28</sup>

Successive governments, worried by the cost of increasing in the numbers claiming unemployment benefits seem to have presumed that disabled people with minor impairments are malingering on benefits, so disabled people have been subjected to the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) to test eligibility for Employment Support Allowance, (ESA). Many disabled people have had to appeal against the WCA decisions, which wrongly insisted that they were capable of working: In 2013-14, 232,639 appeals were lodged against ESA decisions at a total cost to DWP of £69.9 million.<sup>29</sup> Figures

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<sup>25</sup>

[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers\\_and\\_unfair\\_treatment\\_final.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers_and_unfair_treatment_final.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> Office for National Statistics. Social Survey Division, *Life Opportunities Survey: Wave One, 2009-2011* [computer file]. *3rd Edition*. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], March 2012. SN: 6653, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-6653-2>

<sup>27</sup> [https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/files/iser\\_working\\_papers/2011-03.pdf](https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/files/iser_working_papers/2011-03.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> [https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/files/iser\\_working\\_papers/2011-03.pdf](https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/files/iser_working_papers/2011-03.pdf)

<sup>29</sup>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmworpen/302/30209.htm>

published by the DWP in June 2014 show that 30% of appeals were successful.<sup>30</sup> Inclusion London believes that the WCA should be abolished and a new assessment co-produced with disabled people.

Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment Support Allowance sanctions, which are often wrongly imposed, are pushing disabled people into debt and poverty and therefore less likely to be in a position to take up employment.<sup>31</sup>

The government has compounded the impact of the inaccurate WCA and the barriers disabled people face in obtaining work with providing back to work schemes that do not deliver: According to DWP figures released in September 2014, only 22% of those that had undergone the Work Programme achieved 3 or 6 months in work whilst on the scheme and around 70% (568 thousand people) 'returned to Jobcentre Plus at the end of their two years on the programme', presumably because they were unemployed.<sup>32</sup>

The record for people with mental health problems is much, much lower as only **5%** of nearly 150,000 people with mental health problems on ESA have been helped by the Work Programme. This is very concerning because over **45%** of those on ESA having mental health problems as their primary condition. The Work Programme often pushes disabled people further away from work, especially when sanctions are imposed and the programme is particularly detrimental

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[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/319250/esa-wca-summary-jun-14.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/319250/esa-wca-summary-jun-14.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.inclusionlondon.co.uk/Jobseekers-Allowance-sanctions-Inclusion-Londons-views?device=web>

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[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/355896/Work\\_Programme\\_Statistical\\_Release\\_Sep14\\_Final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/355896/Work_Programme_Statistical_Release_Sep14_Final.pdf)

to people with mental health conditions, as Mind’s recent report highlights.<sup>33</sup>

Reports of ‘creaming and parking’ were confirmed by the DWP’s own evaluation report which said: ‘those participants considered most job-ready are seen more frequently by many Work Programme providers. In contrast, those with high or multiple barriers are likely to experience infrequent meetings’.<sup>34</sup>

The Work Choice programme of support, specifically for disabled people has much greater success as **47%** of the disabled people that started the programme between 1st October 2013 and 31st March 2014, had a job by 30th September 2014.<sup>35</sup>

The figures below also show that Work Choice is more successful for people with mental health problems:

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Started</b>	<b>Job outcomes</b>	<b>Success rate<sup>36</sup></b>
Severe mental health	650	240	36.9%
Mild-moderate mental health	11,020	4,490	40.7%

However, if data from the whole period since Work Choice started in 2010 is looked at there is only a **29%** success rate and all the figures

<sup>33</sup> [http://www.mind.org.uk/media/1694795/back-to-work-report\\_2015\\_web-v3.pdf](http://www.mind.org.uk/media/1694795/back-to-work-report_2015_web-v3.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/193323/rep821.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/193323/rep821.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/373185/work-choice-official-statistics-nov-2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/373185/work-choice-official-statistics-nov-2014.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> [http://www.mind.org.uk/media/1694795/back-to-work-report\\_2015\\_web-v3.pdf](http://www.mind.org.uk/media/1694795/back-to-work-report_2015_web-v3.pdf)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/work-choice-official-statistics-november-2014>

show the majority of disabled people do not have a job, even when given Work Choice support, so improvements are still needed.<sup>37</sup>

There is ample evidence available on how to improve employment support; recommendations from various reports include:

- Specialised person centred support, with peer mentoring available<sup>38</sup>
- Choice and control over how employment support funding is used<sup>39</sup>
- Disabled people involved in shaping and directing the type of support they receive.<sup>40</sup>
- Supporting disabled people through careers that match their capabilities, interests and ambitions makes working lives more sustainable than ‘simply placing individuals in any available job. When aligned with effective in-work support, good jobs can also act to prevent employees acquiring impairments’.<sup>41</sup>
- Disabled people should have far more opportunity ‘to gain experience and skills through work, rather than the endless ‘work preparation’ currently available. This could include ‘work trials, work placements, traineeships, internships and apprenticeships’.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/work-choice-official-statistics-november-2014>  
[http://www.mind.org.uk/media/1694795/back-to-work-report\\_2015\\_web-v3.pdf](http://www.mind.org.uk/media/1694795/back-to-work-report_2015_web-v3.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/policy-campaigns/reports-and-research/taking-control-employment-support>  
[http://www.mind.org.uk/media/1694795/back-to-work-report\\_2015\\_web-v3.pdf](http://www.mind.org.uk/media/1694795/back-to-work-report_2015_web-v3.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/policy-campaigns/reports-and-research/taking-control-employment-support>

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/policy-campaigns/reports-and-research/taking-control-employment-support>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/news/disability-charities-consortium-calls-for-urgent-rethink-on-employment-support-for-people-with-disabilities/#.VIgaak1yblU>

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/policy-campaigns/reports-and-research/taking-control-employment-support>

- Employment support should centre on the relationship between disabled people and participating employers.<sup>43</sup>

Support also needs to differ according to the impairment:

### **Mental health**

55% of individuals with a mental health conditions given Individual Placement and Support (IPS), 'place then train' support gained employment and worked for significantly longer.<sup>44</sup> This type of support makes financial sense as the Government will save £1.41 for each £1 spent on the IPS model.<sup>45</sup> Early engagement is also important and integration of psychological therapies and tailored support. Evidence shows that peer-led group work can be effective in improving wellbeing and employment.<sup>46</sup>

### **Sensory impairment**

Specialist adviser support is important and support with computer skills including use of assistive technology; independent travel; and effective employer engagement.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> <http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/policy-campaigns/reports-and-research/taking-control-employment-support>

<sup>44</sup> <http://informahealthcare.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09540260802564516?journalCode=irp&http://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/employment/ips.aspx>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/psychological-wellbeing-and-work-improving-service-provision-and-outcomes>  
[http://www.mind.org.uk/media/1694795/back-to-work-report\\_2015\\_web-v3.pdf](http://www.mind.org.uk/media/1694795/back-to-work-report_2015_web-v3.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.cesi.org.uk/publications/fit-purpose-transforming-employment-support-disabled-people-and-those-health-conditions>

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.cesi.org.uk/publications/fit-purpose-transforming-employment-support-disabled-people-and-those-health-conditions>

Across all impairment the timing of interventions, partnership working, and quality management are important.<sup>48</sup>

The Centre for Social Justice has suggested remedies to improve the performance of Work Programme providers, which include:

- Providers should be rewarded according to the number of people who have actually moved into work and stayed there, rather than rewarding providers for removing claimants from benefits.
- A proper assessment of barriers to work to identify the full range of barriers to work and to give the right support.
- New back-to-work providers from the voluntary, private and public sectors. (Inclusion London would recommend that local Deaf and disabled people's user led organisations are well placed to provide this support).
- Up-front payments for supporting the most disadvantaged claimants to incentivise providers
- 'Progress payments' for providers working with the most disadvantaged to recognise progress towards the labour market – again to act as an incentive to providers to work with more disadvantaged claimants.

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<sup>48</sup> <http://www.cesi.org.uk/publications/fit-purpose-transforming-employment-support-disabled-people-and-those-health-conditions>

## 4. Improvements in working conditions

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Disabled people have found that flexible working practices such as being able to change the way they work, their work tasks or the timing of their work is very important in maintaining employment.<sup>49</sup>

The EHRC has produced a 'Flexible working guide for employers, which is available at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/guidance-for-all/best-practices/working-better/a-managers-guide-to-flexible-working>

Disabled people said a more open and supportive workplace culture could be created by various measures which include:

- Increasing the number of disabled people within the workforce.
- Ensure that flexible working measures and policies are not focused exclusively on disabled people, but are designed to accommodate all employees.
- Work hard to promote a culture where disabled people are included, and are not viewed with suspicion.
- Raise the awareness of staff and management of the prevalence of impairments and long-term health conditions.
- Arrange disability-awareness training and development for staff at all levels.
- Implement effective policies and disciplinary procedures to prevent prejudicial attitudes or treatment.<sup>50</sup>

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[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/320509/building-understanding-main-report.pdf)

<sup>50</sup>[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/rr77\\_openin](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/rr77_openin)

Modifications that help retain employment can vary according to impairment according to respondents of an EHRC survey:

- modified hours or days or reduced work hours are mentioned most frequently by those with a mental health impairment (36 per cent);
- Those with mobility impairment are more likely than other impairments to say they had been helped by modified duties (17 per cent).
- Visually impaired people are more likely to say they had been helped both by changes to their work area (24 per cent) and by building modifications (16 per cent).<sup>51</sup>

Also economically inactive respondents cited different adjustments that helped according to impairment, for instance:

- those with communication impairment are more likely to say they would be helped by a job coach (21 per cent), changes to work area (20 per cent), and building modifications (24 per cent).
- 20% of people with learning impairment mentioned a job coach more frequently by those with a learning impairment (20 per cent) and those with an intellectual impairment (24 per cent), compared with other respondents.
- Those with a hearing impairment and mobility impairment are more likely than other respondents to say they would be helped by building modifications (32 per cent and 24 per cent).

[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers\\_and\\_unfair\\_treatment\\_final.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers_and_unfair_treatment_final.pdf)

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[g\\_up\\_work.pdf](#)

<sup>51</sup>[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers\\_and\\_unfair\\_treatment\\_final.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/barriers_and_unfair_treatment_final.pdf)

## 5. Access to Work

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Disabled people consistently report that Access to Work (AtW) is one of the most positive services that enables the obtaining and maintaining of employment and developing a career. It is extremely important that government not only continues to fund and support AtW but expands and improves the service so more disabled people have a genuine opportunity to secure employment.

The government website states that, 'An Access to Work grant can pay for practical support if you have a disability, health or mental health condition.'<sup>52</sup>

The funding can pay for things like:

- adaptations to the equipment you use
- special equipment
- a support worker
- a British Sign Language interpreter

### Numbers of AtW recipients dropped

According to the government's own figures the numbers of those receiving AtW support have dropped dramatically since the 2010 election as 37,280 disabled were 'helped' in 2009/10m, while this dropped to 30,780 in 2011-2012.<sup>53</sup> This is borne out by the drop in

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<sup>52</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/what-youll-get>

<sup>53</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/303353/access-to-work-statistics-april-2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/303353/access-to-work-statistics-april-2014.pdf)

expenditure on AtW, which fell from £107 million in 2010-2011 to just £93 million 2011-2012.<sup>54</sup>

However from April 2010 large employers had to contribute more towards special aids and equipment and adaptations to premises, so it possible that numbers dipped because of this and may be recovering because 35,530 disabled people were 'helped' in 2013-14, but numbers still haven't returned to the figures before the election (37,280).<sup>55</sup>

### Changes in Access to Work

Another factor in the decrease in expenditure may be the changes to Access to Work (AtW), which are resulting in support for claimants being significantly reduced, thereby threatening disabled people employment security and future employment opportunities.

Many Deaf people are finding that the level of support provided by AtW has reduced, despite their needs remaining the same. Not only has support been reduced or cut altogether but AtW does not inform the Deaf person that this has happened, as the review or re-assessment has occurred without their knowledge. Consequently Deaf people have continued to employ the RBSLI, while incurring large debts.

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<sup>54</sup> <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm121015/text/121015w0001.htm>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/access-to-work-individuals-helped-to-end-of-jun-2014>

## Stop changes to AtW campaign

A 'Stop changes to Access to Work' campaign have started to combat the changes which are hitting Deaf people hard. You can sign a 38degrees petition at:

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/stop-changes-to-access-to-work>

More information about action you can take to Stop Changes to Access to Work is available at: <http://www.deafatw.com/>

- Improvements are urgently needed to the way Access to Work currently operates. Below are four of the recommendations that Inclusion London made to the Access to Work Inquiry:
- Collaboration and engagement should be at the centre of AtW working practices.
- The design of the assessments should involve Deaf and disabled people and the assessment itself should represent a process of engagement between scheme users and AtW staff, to determine the most adequate support.
- Improved Deaf and disability awareness training for AtW staff should be implemented, ideally delivered by experienced Deaf and disabled trainers.
- The scheme must provide an amount of support that is sufficient to enable Deaf employees to perform in their job roles.

The full list of recommendations can be found in Inclusion London's response, which is available at:

<http://www.inclusionlondon.co.uk/ATW-ILs-%20and%20stop-changes2atw-respond-to-call-for-evidence>

## 6. Conclusion

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Disabled people face barriers to obtaining employment, which include discriminatory attitudes of employers, lack of opportunity, inaccessible transport and lack of flexible working conditions.

Disabled people are paid less and employed less than non-disabled people and are more likely to be employed in part-time work, but would like to work more hours. People with learning difficulties or mental health conditions are less likely than people with other impairments to be employed. The employment gap increases when disabled people have fewer qualifications.

Changes to the 'into work' support provided by the government are much needed. There is plenty of evidence available to design better back to work schemes which should be put into action. Suggestions include: Individual Placement and Support (IPS) or 'place then train' support and specialised, individual, timely support. Disabled people also need more control over how funding for their support is used.

The contracts with Work Programme providers should be changed to provide rewards when a claimant is successful in obtaining and maintaining employment.

Access to Work is one of the most positive services available to obtain and maintain employment and flexible working conditions are also important. Measures to improve disabled people's experience of employment include increasing the number of disabled people within the workforce, ensuring that flexible working measures are available

for disabled and non-disabled staff and the provision of disability-awareness training and development for staff at all levels.<sup>56</sup>

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[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/rr77\\_opening\\_up\\_work.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/rr77_opening_up_work.pdf)

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