



**BRIEFING PAPER**

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# People with disabilities in employment

By Andrew Powell

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# Summary

## Headline Figures

There were an estimated **3.7 million** people of working age (16-64) with disabilities **in employment** in January-March 2018, an employment rate of **50.7%**. The employment rate for people without disabilities was 81.1%.

**376,000** people with disabilities of working age were **unemployed**. People with disabilities have an unemployment rate of **9.1%**. The unemployment rate for people without disabilities was 3.6%.

**3.3 million** people with disabilities of working age were **economically inactive**. These people were not in work and not looking for work. The economic inactivity rate for those with disabilities was **44.2%**.

## Employment Gaps

The 'disability employment gap' is the difference in the employment rate of people with disabilities and people without disabilities. People with disabilities had an employment rate **30.3 percentage points lower** than people without disabilities in January-March 2018.

For all health conditions people with disabilities had lower employment rates than those without disabilities. Less than a quarter of people with learning difficulties, a speech impediment or mental health conditions were in employment.

## Government Policy

The Conservative Party 2017 manifesto pledged to get *"1 million more people with disabilities into employment over the next ten years"*.

To achieve this goal there would have to be 4.5 million people in employment with disabilities by 2027, an increase of 21% on current levels.

In November 2017, the Government set out its strategy on how it intends to get a million more disabled people into employment in the [Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability](#) White Paper.

# 1. Headline figures

There were an estimated **3.7 million** people of working age (16-64) with disabilities **in employment** in January-March 2018, an employment rate of **50.7%**. The employment rate for people without disabilities was 81.1%.

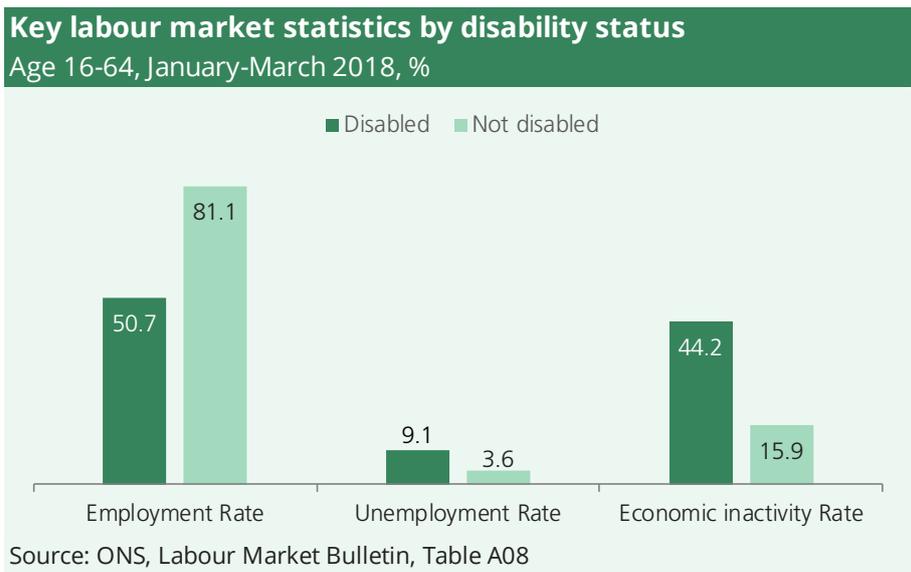
The Office for National Statistics did not publish employment figures for disabled people in November 2017 and February 2018 due to concerns over disability data. Although the ONS has published updated figures in May 2018, they have raised **concerns** over the accuracy of the figures for July-September 2017 onwards, and are continuing their investigations into an apparent discontinuity within the figures. Figures within this briefing paper should be used with caution, and readers should be aware that they may change as the ONS continues to investigate the data. Further details are provided in section 1.1 of this note.

Here the unemployment rate refers to the proportion of economically active people aged 16- 64 who are unemployed, rather than the economically active population aged 16+.

**376,000** people with disabilities of working age were **unemployed**. These people were not in work and were actively seeking work.<sup>1</sup> People with disabilities have an unemployment rate of **9.1%**. The unemployment rate for people without disabilities was 3.6%.

**3.3 million** people with disabilities of working age were **economically inactive**. These people were not in work and not looking for work. The economic inactivity rate for those with disabilities was **44.2%**.

People with disabilities were considerably more likely than those without disabilities to be economically inactive. The economic inactivity rate for people without disabilities was 15.9%.



<sup>1</sup> Someone is unemployed if they are not in work but are looking for work (having done so at some point during the past four weeks) and are available to start work in the next fortnight.

The high rate of economic inactivity, alongside a higher unemployment rate, explains why people with disabilities have a low employment rate. People with disabilities have an **employment rate** that is **30.3 percentage points lower** than that of people without disabilities. This difference is often referred to as the **disability employment gap**. See *section 1.4 for details*.

## 1.1 Disability and employment data

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) suspended the publication of its *Labour market status of disabled people* statistics in November 2017 and February 2018 due to an apparent discontinuity in the data. This data is derived from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

The number of people aged between 16 and 64 who reported that they had a disability increased by almost 400,000 in July-September 2017 compared with the quarter before.

Although in subsequent quarters the number of people who have reported that they have a disability has decreased, it still remains at a higher level than was the case prior to July-September 2017.

The ONS has started an investigation into the apparent discontinuity, and as of May 2018, the results of this investigation are inconclusive. However, the ONS has stated that they “cannot identify any quality issues”, and have therefore taken the decision to reinstate the database in May 2018.

The ONS have advised, however, that comparisons should be made with caution between the April-June 2017 figure, and the figures for subsequent quarters. They will provide further recommendations on historical comparisons of the data in November 2018.<sup>2</sup>

## 1.2 Employment trend

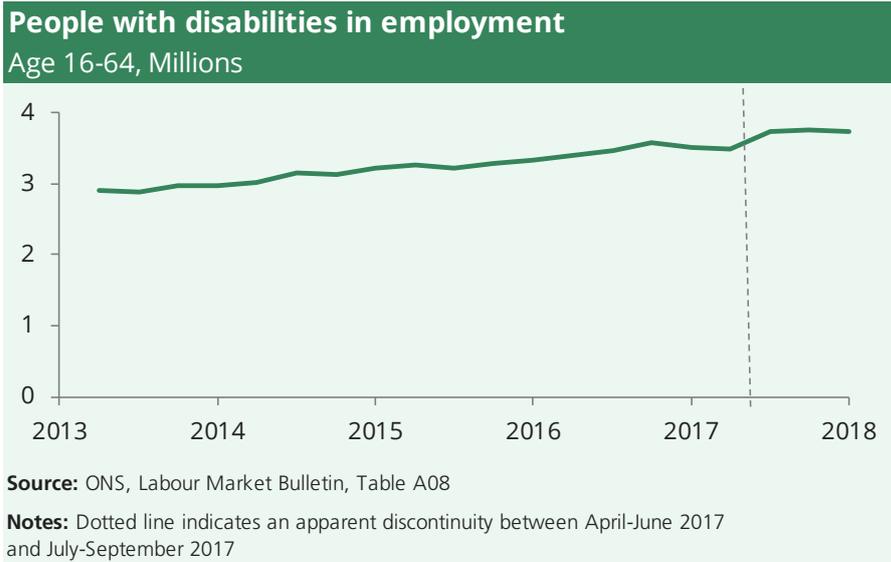
The number of people with disabilities who are in employment has been increasing since 2013.

Between January-March 2014 and January-March 2018, the number of people with disabilities in employment increased by around 760,000, an increase of 26%. In this period, the number of people in employment without disabilities has grown by around 4%.

**This increase may be affected by the apparent discontinuity between the second and third quarters of 2017 (see section 1.1).**

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<sup>2</sup> ONS, [Analysis of the discontinuity in the Labour Force Survey disability data: April to June 2017 to July to September 2017](#), 15 May 2018



### 1.3 Conservative manifesto pledge

The Conservative Party 2017 manifesto pledged to get “1 million more people with disabilities into employment over the next ten years”.

To meet this target there would have to be 4.5 million people in employment with disabilities by 2027, representing growth of 21% on current levels.

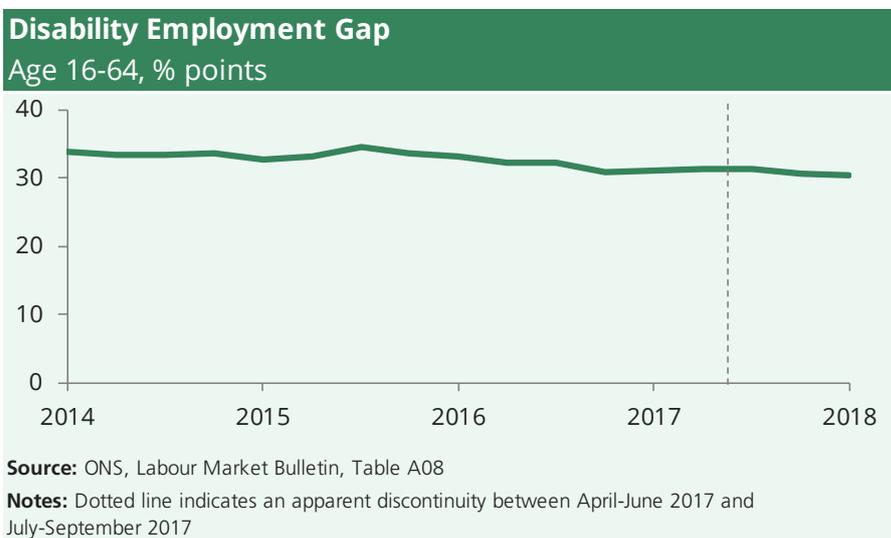
In the Conservative Party 2015 manifesto, the Government had committed to halving the gap between the employment rates for disabled and non-disabled people. The Work and Pensions Committee reported that this would require an extra 1.2 to 1.5 million disabled people to be in employment.

### 1.4 Disability employment gap

The ‘disability employment gap’ is the difference in the employment rate of people with disabilities and people without disabilities. In January-March 2018 the gap was **30.3 percentage points**.

The 2015 Conservative Party manifesto included an aim to halve the disability employment gap. The gap was 32.7% points at the time the manifesto was published.

Their 2017 manifesto replaced this with a pledge to increase the number of disabled people in work by 1 million.



Over the last two years the disability employment gap has reduced by 2.7 percentage points. This has been because the employment rate for people with disabilities has been rising faster than the employment rate for people without disabilities.

## 1.5 Regional employment data

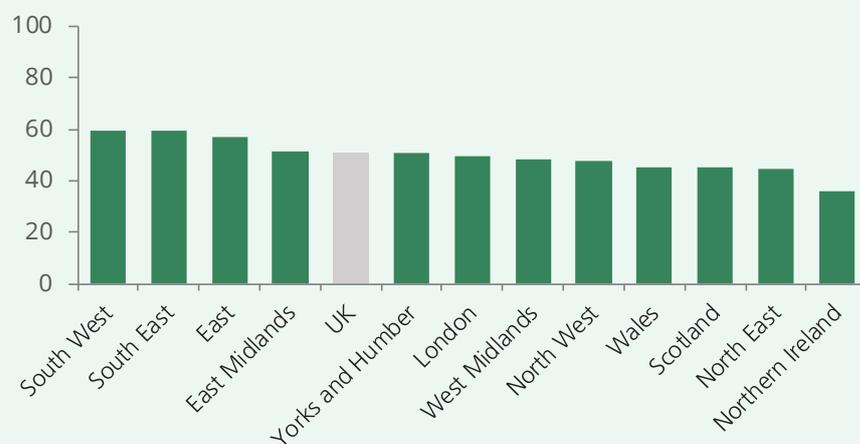
Data from the Annual Population Survey shows employment figures for disabled people by region. These statistics use an '[Equality Act core disabled](#)' definition to categorise people as having a disability rather than the Government Statistical Service harmonised definition of disability that is used for national figures. **These figures are therefore not directly comparable to statistics used in the rest of this note.**

Between January and December 2017 the employment rate was highest for people who were disabled in the South West at 59.6%, and lowest in Northern Ireland at 36.1%. The distribution is largely reflective of the regions where overall employment rates are generally high or low.<sup>3</sup>

For those who were not disabled, the employment rate was also lowest in Northern Ireland and highest in the South West. However, the range of values was smaller, from 77.6% in Northern Ireland to 83.1% in the South West.

### Employment rate of disabled people

Age 16 to 64, January-December 2017



Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey, accessed via nomis

Notes: Definition of 'disabled' is different to that used elsewhere in this note. Here it refers to those who are 'Equality Act core disabled'

<sup>3</sup> See Library briefing paper [Labour market statistics: UK regions and countries](#) for details on employment rate by region for the whole population.

## 2. Characteristics

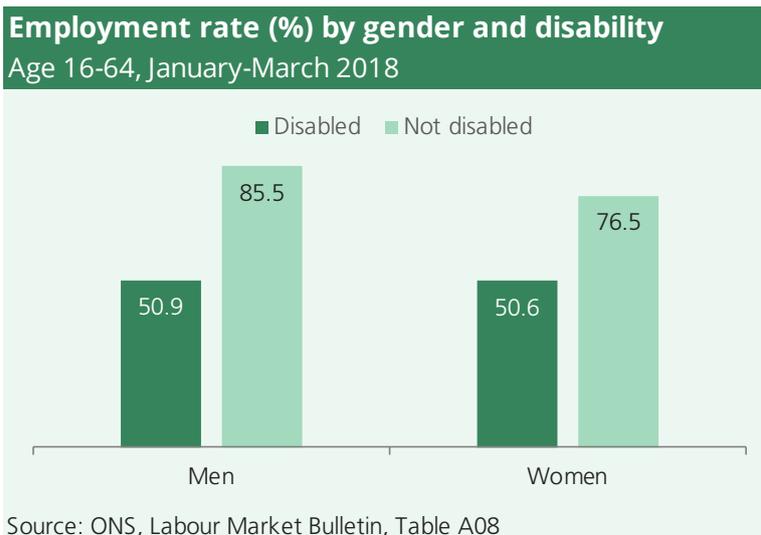
### 2.1 Gender

The employment rates of men and women with disabilities are very similar. In January-March 2018, there were 2.1 million **women with disabilities** in work, an employment rate of **50.6%**. During the same period there were around 1.7 million **men with disabilities** in work, an employment rate of **50.9%**.

For those without disabilities, the employment rate for men was 9.0 percentage points higher than the employment rate for women. In January-March 2018, men without disabilities had an employment rate of 85.5%, while the rate for women was 76.5%.

The gap between the employment rate for women with disabilities and those without was smaller than the equivalent gap for men. The employment rate for women with disabilities was 25.9 percentage points lower than that for women without disabilities, whereas the gap was 34.6 percentage points for men.

There are more women of working age with disabilities than there are men; this explains why women with disabilities have a slightly lower employment rate despite there being more disabled women in work.



### Trend over time

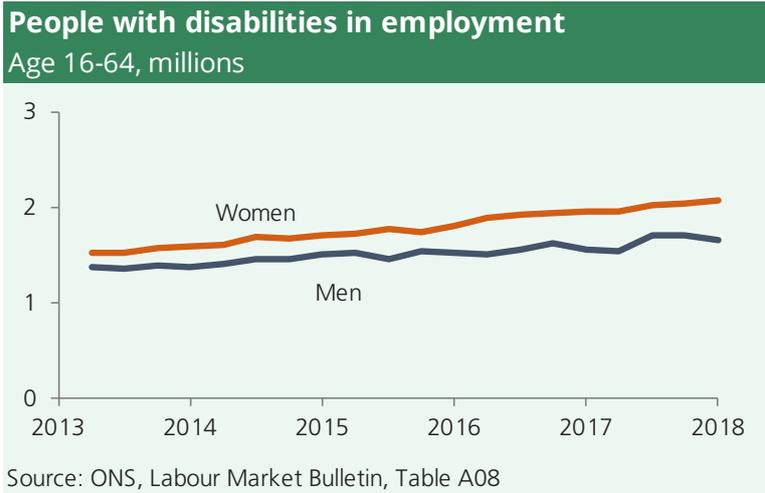
Since 2013, both the number of men and women with disabilities in employment has been increasing, although at a slightly faster rate for women.

Between January-March 2014 and January-March 2018, the number of women with disabilities in employment increased by around 474,000, an increase of 30%. Over the same period, the number of men with disabilities in employment increased by around 290,000, an increase of 21%.

The employment rate for women with disabilities has increased by 7.5 percentage points and the employment rate for men with disabilities has increased by 5.3 percentage points.

**These increases may be affected by the apparent discontinuity between the second and third quarters of 2017 (see section 1.1).**

*These statistics are based on a small numbers of survey respondents. Changes between quarters, or lack thereof, could be down to survey error.*

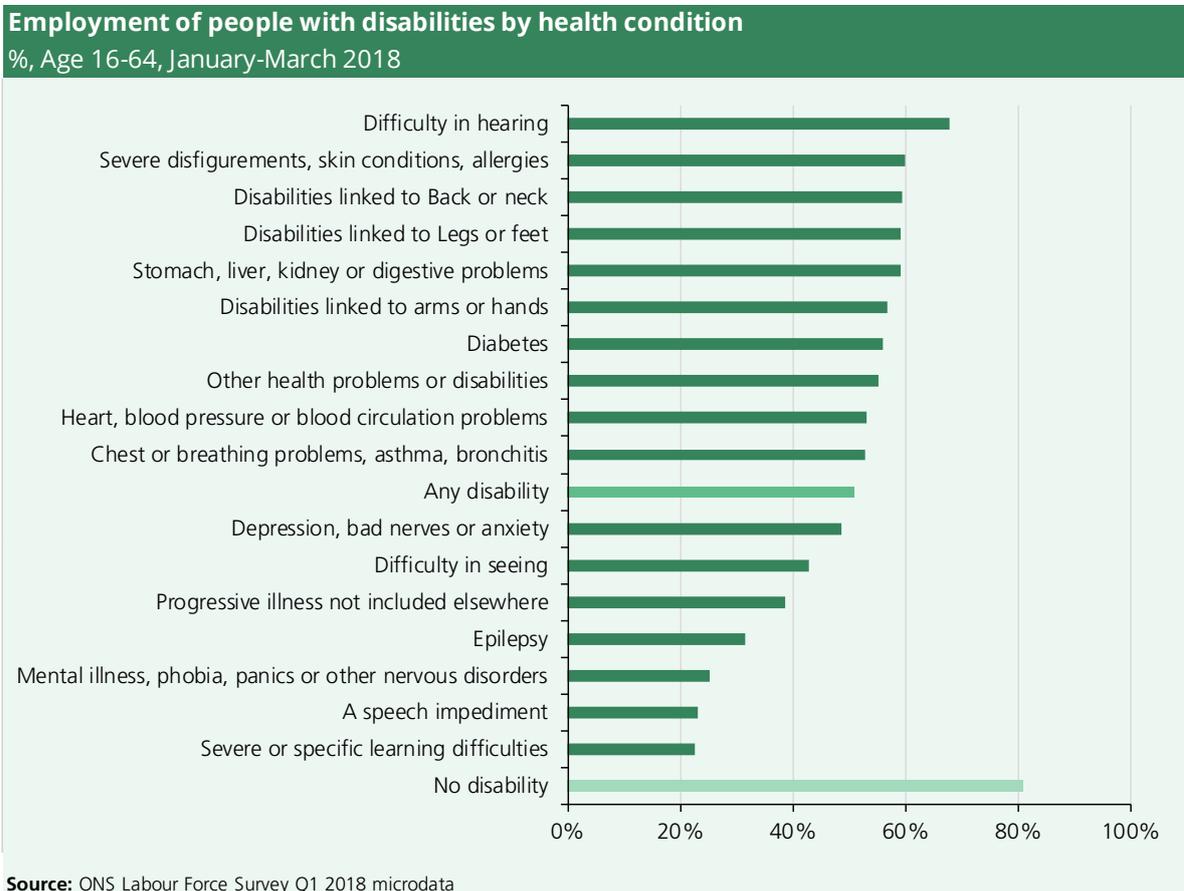


## 2.2 Health condition

Employment rates vary considerably depending on the disability or health condition, as shown in the chart below.

For all health conditions people with disabilities had lower employment rates than those without disabilities. The highest employment rate for a health condition group (difficulty in hearing) was still 13 percentage points below the equivalent figure for non-disabled working age adults.

Less than a quarter of people with learning difficulties, a speech impediment or mental health conditions were in employment.



## 2.3 Data from the Work, health and disability Green Paper

In October 2016 the Government published the Green Paper [Work, Health and Disability Green Paper: Improving Lives](#) in which they outlined the package of employment support for people with disabilities. Alongside the Green Paper the Government published a data pack which included detailed employment statistics relating to people with disabilities.

This data is sourced from the Office of National Statistics Labour Force Survey and it relates to April to June 2016.

### Part-time working

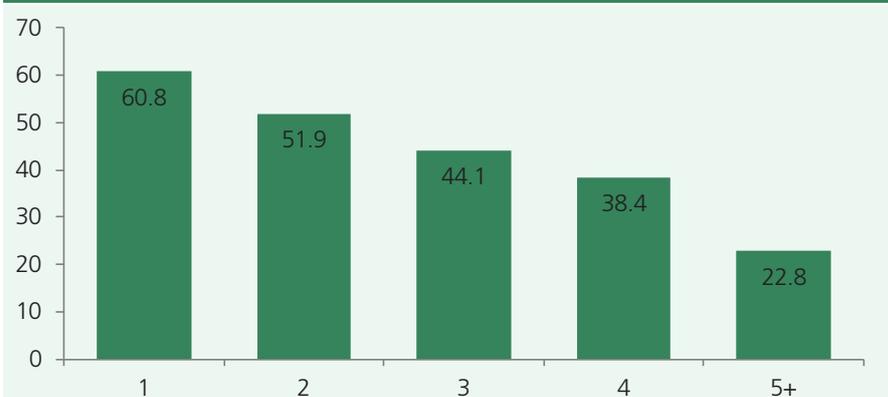
People with disabilities were more likely to be working part-time than those without disabilities. 24.1% of people with disabilities aged 16-64 were working part-time compared to 36.0% of people without disabilities of the same age.

### Multiple Health conditions

Disabled people with multiple health conditions had lower employment rates than those with one health condition. People with one health condition had an employment rate of 60.8%. Disabled people with at least two health conditions had an employment rate of almost nine percentage points lower than those with one condition.

#### Employment rate (%) by number of health conditions

Age 16-64, April-June 2016



Source: Department of Work and Pensions and Department of Health, Work, health and disability green paper: data pack

### Employment rate by other characteristics

#### Age

- The employment rate was highest for people with disabilities aged 25 to 49 (56.4%)
- The employment rate was lowest for people with disabilities aged 16- 24 (38.2%).
- The gap between the employment rate of disabled people aged 16-24 and that of non-disabled people aged 16-24 was the smallest of any age band, at 18.3 percentage points.

- The gap between the employment rates of the disabled and non-disabled population was largest for workers aged 50-64, at 39.8 percentage points.

**Qualifications**

- The employment rate was highest for disabled people with a degree (or equivalent) at (71.7%)
- The employment rate was lowest for those without a qualification (17.0%)
- People with disabilities whose highest level of qualification was GCSEs had an employment rate of 45.6%.

## 3. Increasing the number of disabled people in work

In the Conservative 2017 manifesto, the Government pledged to increase the number of disabled people in work by a million over the next ten years.<sup>4</sup>

The government has reported that finding work for an additional 1% of eligible Employment and Support Allowance claimants in 2018/19 would save the Exchequer £240 million, and provide a boost to the economy of £260 million.<sup>5</sup>

[PQ HL7861](#) asked what steps are being taken to promote a more inclusive work environment for people with disabilities and increase their participation in the workforce. The Government highlighted three steps that they have taken:

- The Disability Confident scheme (see section 3.1)
- Access to Work (section 3.2)
- The [Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability](#) Command Paper (section 3.4)

Section 3.3 highlights the steps the Government has taken to increase the number of young people with disabilities in work.

### 3.1 Disability Confident

[Disability Confident](#) aims to help organisations “improve how they attract, recruit and retain disabled workers”. In the *Improving Lives* White Paper, the Government reported that it intends to “increase the reach and effectiveness of this voluntary scheme”.<sup>6</sup>

As of June 2018, over 6,500 employers had signed up to the Disability Confident scheme.<sup>7</sup>

There are three levels of the Disability Confident Scheme:

- **Disability Confident Committed** - an employer needs to agree to the Disability Confident commitments (see box to the right), which they should be carrying out within 12 months of becoming Disability Confident. They also need to commit to offer a disabled person an opportunity within their organisation, and again this should be in place within 12 months of them becoming Disability Confident.<sup>8</sup>
- **Disability Confident Employer** - the employer needs to show they are actively looking to attract and recruit disabled people, that they support disabled staff within their organisation and that

Disability Confident commitments:

1. Inclusive and accessible recruitment
2. Communicating vacancies
3. Offering an interview to disabled people
4. Providing reasonable adjustments
5. Supporting existing employees who develop a disability to stay in work

<sup>4</sup> [Parliamentary Question 3585](#), Answered on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017

<sup>5</sup> DWP, [Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability](#), 30 November 2017, p6

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p26

<sup>7</sup> DWP, [Disability Confident: employers that have signed up](#), 4 June 2018

<sup>8</sup> DWP, [Level 1: Disability Confident Committed guidance](#), July 2017

they are making reasonable adjustments as required. They also need to commit to various actions to both encourage disabled people to join their organisation, and to develop the disabled people within their organisation.<sup>9</sup>

- **Disability Confident Leader** – the employer will be independently validated in whether they are meeting the criteria for a Disability Confident Leader, and show that they are encouraging and supporting other employers to become Disability Confident.<sup>10</sup>

All main government departments are Disability Confident Leaders

Of the 6,519 employers signed up the scheme in June 2018,<sup>11</sup>

- 2,666 were Disability Confident Committed
- 3,730 were Disability Confident Employers
- 123 were Disability Confident Leaders

At a Westminster Hall Debate on the Disability Confident scheme in January 2018, the Shadow Minister for Disabilities, Marsha de Cordova, stated that there is little evidence that the scheme is enabling more disabled people to find sustainable and supportive employment, and reported that the Government has stated that they are “not able to measure the number of disabled people moving into employment as a direct result of [the disability confident scheme]”.<sup>12</sup>

## 3.2 Access to Work

[Access to Work](#) provides support to meet the needs of disabled people in the workplace. Access to Work grants are available to both employees and those who are self-employed, and aims to provide practical and financial support to help disabled people find or stay in work.

Access to Work provision was approved for 25,000 people in 2016/17. This provision included elements such as:<sup>13</sup>

- Communication support for interviews
- Special aids and equipment
- Adaptations to premises and vehicles
- Help with travel costs
- Support workers
- A mental health support service

The maximum annual amount that an individual can receive has been set at £57,200 from 1 April 2018. This is updated annually each April.

<sup>9</sup> DWP, [Level 2: Disability Confident Employer guidance](#), July 2017

<sup>10</sup> DWP, [Level 3: Disability Confident Leader guidance](#), July 2017

<sup>11</sup> DWP, [Disability Confident: employers that have signed up](#), 4 June 2018

<sup>12</sup> HC Deb 10 Jan 2018, [Disability Confident Scheme](#), c133WH

<sup>13</sup> DWP, [Access to Work Statistics](#), 10 October 2017

Employers may be expected to pay some of the cost of the elements that are implemented by Access to Work.<sup>14</sup>

In the *Improving Lives* White Paper, the Government stated this scheme “will be significantly enhanced over the next year”.<sup>15</sup>

### 3.3 Support for young people

Some of the employment support that the Government provides for people with disabilities is offered specifically to young disabled people, to help them find work.<sup>16</sup>

The **Jobcentre Plus Support for Schools** programme aims to provide targeted high quality careers advice. One group that this is targeted at is young people aged 12-18 who, due to a health or disability issue, face a potential disadvantage in the labour market.

This support was rolled out nationally across England in November 2016. An evaluation of the support, carried out in April 2018, reported that the programme “was seen as positive in engaging with students from a wide range of schools” and that the targeted support “was felt to have a greater effect on student outcomes”. It also states that more resources, or a focus on more specific groups, will be required as demand for this support grows.<sup>17</sup>

**Supported Internships** have been in place since September 2013, and provide “coherent, personalised, learning programmes” to help young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities move into employment. 500 people took part in these internships in 2016/17.<sup>18</sup>

Presently a number of projects targeted at young people are at the “proof of concept” stage:

- The **Young Person’s Supported Work Experience programme** provides a “personally tailored supported work experience opportunity” for young people aged 18-24. This is being tested in five Jobcentre Plus districts.
- **Tri-Work** is a supported work experience scheme aimed at young people with special educational needs in years 10 and 11 in schools and special schools. This is being tested in three local authorities.
- The **Local Supported Employment ‘place and train’ model** aims to move disabled people into real jobs, at the going rate of pay, with support for both the individual and employer. This is being tested in nine local authorities.

In addition, the Government has funded specialist training to improve **careers advice** for young people with special educational needs and

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<sup>14</sup> DWP, [Access to Work guidance for employers](#)

<sup>15</sup> DWP, [Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability](#), 30 November 2017, p26

<sup>16</sup> [PQ 904565](#), 26 March 2018

<sup>17</sup> DWP, [Jobcentre Plus Support for Schools: qualitative national roll-out evaluation report](#), 9 April 2018

<sup>18</sup> [PQ 120168](#), 21 December 2017

disabilities, and has set in place a target of a 20% increase in the proportion of **apprenticeship starts** by people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by 2020.<sup>19</sup>

### 3.4 Improving Lives

In November 2017, the Government set out its strategy on how it intends to get a million more disabled people into employment in the [Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability](#) White Paper. The strategy is partly based on supporting disabled people and people with long-term health conditions to find work, but also to provide investment to support these people to stay in work.

This document includes a review of the consultation that followed the publication of the [Improving Lives Green Paper](#) in October 2016.

The main policies and proposals relating to employment support for disabled people are explained in brief below, although this is not an exhaustive list.

#### Personal Support Package

One of the key announcements in the *Improving Lives Green Paper* was a new Personal Support Package, rolled out from April 2017 onwards. The initiative offers tailored employment support for disabled people and people with health conditions, delivered through Jobcentre Plus.<sup>20</sup>

The initiative includes the following support:

- 200 **Community Partners** will be recruited into Jobcentres who will provide expert knowledge of disability, and support work coaches and Disability Employment Advisers. As of March 2018, 116 Community Partners were in post, and a further 38 had accepted a post.<sup>21</sup>
- 102 **Small Employer Advisers** will be recruited and will raise awareness with small employers of the support available to them when employing a person with a long-term health condition or disability.
- An extra 1,000 **Mental Health Support Service** places will be provided. This provides 6 months of support to start a new job as part of the Access to Work scheme.
- Extra places were funded on the **Work Choice** scheme. This scheme stopped taking new applicants following the roll-out of the Work and Health Programme.

**Disability Employment Advisers** have been recruited to work alongside work coaches to provide additional professional expertise and local knowledge of mental health conditions. 470 full time equivalent advisers were in place as at February 2018.<sup>22 23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> [PQ 120168](#), 21 December 2017

<sup>20</sup> DWP, [March 2017: Touchbase edition 119](#)

<sup>21</sup> [PQ 131726](#), 15 March 2018

<sup>22</sup> DWP, [Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability](#), 30 November 2017, p55

<sup>23</sup> [PQ 131726](#), 15 March 2018

Extra funding will also be provided to the [Flexible Support Fund](#) (FSF). The FSF gives Jobcentre Plus Districts greater freedom to tailor back-to-work support to individual and local need. Working within local guidelines and priorities, Jobcentre Plus advisers have discretion to decide how to help individuals move closer to or into work.<sup>24</sup>

New **training for work coaches** (frontline jobcentre staff) has been introduced since the Green Paper as part of the Health and Work Conversation with the aim of improving the working relationships that work coaches form with their customers.<sup>25</sup>

The Department for Work and Pensions will work with 9 local authorities on a pilot of a **Local Supported Employment** scheme. This will support people with a learning difficulty or autism.<sup>26</sup>

## Work and Health Programme

The Work and Health Programme is an employment support programme which was launched in North West England and Wales in November 2017. The programme rolled out across the rest of England during early 2018.<sup>27</sup>

The Programme provides support to help people find and keep a job. It is available, on a voluntary basis, to those with health conditions or disabilities, and to various groups of vulnerable people.

It also provides support to those who have been unemployed for over two years and is compulsory for this group.

The Work and Health Programme replaces the [Work Programme](#) and [Work Choice schemes](#).<sup>28</sup>

Further information on this programme is available in the Library briefing note [Work and Health Programme](#) (January 2018).

## More complex needs

Support for those with the greatest needs and in the most complex situations is provided through [Specialist Employability Support](#) (SES). The Government is currently exploring the best options to provide this support after SES contracts end in October 2018.<sup>29</sup>

The White Paper also discussed support for those who are furthest from the labour market: those in the Employment and Support Allowance Support Group. People in this group are likely to be severely limited in what they can do as a consequence of their illness or disability, and are unlikely to volunteer for employment support.

The Government started to research the needs of customers in the Support Group in October 2017, and are testing different voluntary engagement methods. A larger trial is planned for late 2018.<sup>30</sup>

The Health and Work conversation takes place between a work coach and new people claiming Employment Support Allowance. It focuses on what they can do, rather than what they cannot do.

<sup>24</sup> House of Commons Library Briefing Paper, [Jobcentre Plus Flexible Support Fund](#), October 2016

<sup>25</sup> DWP/DoH, [Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability](#), pp 16-18

<sup>26</sup> DWP, [December 2017: Touchbase edition 123](#)

<sup>27</sup> DWP, [April 2018: Touchbase edition 126](#), 23 May 2018

<sup>28</sup> HM Treasury, [Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015](#), p89

<sup>29</sup> DWP/DoH, [Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability](#), p 19

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, pp 22-23

## Apprenticeships

In Autumn 2017 changes were made to the regular English and maths requirements for people with a learning difficulty or disability, in response to a Government-commissioned report from a [taskforce led by Paul Maynard](#). The expectation is that this will make apprenticeships more accessible to disabled people. The Government is continuing to explore how it can support employers to increase the number of apprenticeships accessible to people with a disability, and whether the funding system is working for apprentices with a learning difficulty or a disability.<sup>31</sup>

## Continuing schemes

Existing employment schemes and initiatives that will continue to operate include:

- [Fit for Work](#) offers free, expert and impartial advice to anyone looking for help with issues around health and work. The Command Paper reports that this scheme has had very low take-up, and that the current model of Occupational Health provision does not meet the needs of employers or individuals. The Government intends to appoint an Expert Working Group on occupational health to explore the “fundamental issues” in this area, and produce a strategy for future reform by 2019/2020.
- The [New Enterprise Allowance](#) helps jobseekers start or develop their own business, including disabled jobseekers. In the Command Paper the government reports that it is going to carry out research into the barriers that disabled people may experience in self-employment.

## Other areas of support

Other announcements in the *Improving Lives* White Paper include:

- There will be a cross-government approach to increase support for young people with health conditions or disabilities. The [Green Paper on Children and Young People’s Mental Health](#) considers how mental health support can be improved.<sup>32</sup>
- A consultation on potential changes to the Statutory Sick Pay system, with the aim of having a system that supports more flexible working, and helps people return to work after they have been unwell.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p 60

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p 47

<sup>33</sup> DWP/DoH, *Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability*, pp 31-32

## 18 People with disabilities in employment

- Reform of the Work Capability Assessment to offer an improved customer experience of the assessment process and to provide more personalised support and services.<sup>34</sup>
- The introduction of a programme of work to support action to encourage people to stay healthy. Part of this is a series of [toolkits](#) to help employers support the mental and physical health of their employees.<sup>35</sup>
- The development of tools that will raise the profile of work as a health outcome, and to help support healthcare professionals in addressing health needs and barriers to work. This is based on the understanding that good work is good for health.<sup>36</sup>

The Work Capability Assessment is the process for assessing Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit claimants' capability for work.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, pp 21-22

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, pp 35-36

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 36-37

## 4. Assistance needed to support disabled people in work

The [Equality Act 2010](#) prohibits both direct and indirect disability discrimination in employment and recruitment.

Direct disability discrimination occurs where an employer treats a disabled person less favourably because they are disabled.

Indirect disability discrimination occurs where an employer applies a policy, criterion or practice which has the effect of putting a disabled person at a particular disadvantage as compared with non-disabled persons. Indirect discrimination may be lawful if it can be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

The Act also prohibits employers from harassing or victimising disabled people.

### Reasonable adjustments

As part of the [Equality Act 2010](#), employers must make **reasonable adjustments** to support disabled job applicants and employees. As stated in the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) guidance:

This means ensuring disabled people can overcome any substantial disadvantages they may have doing their jobs and progressing in work.

The DWP has published guidance on [Employing disabled people and people with health conditions](#). It states that:

- The costs of making reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled employees are often low.
- The benefits of retaining an experienced, skilled employee who has acquired an impairment are usually greater than recruiting and training new staff.

Examples of reasonable adjustments included in the guidance and on the gov.uk page [Reasonable adjustments for workers with disabilities or health conditions](#) are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list of potential adjustments.

- Making changes to a disabled person's working pattern. Allow those who have become disabled to make a phased return to work.
- Doing things another way, such as allowing someone with social anxiety disorder to have their own desk instead of hot-desking, or allowing someone with a wheelchair to work on the ground floor.
- Providing training or mentoring. This will include training to non-disabled workers on how they can be more inclusive to disabled people.
- Either employing a support worker to assist a disabled worker, or arrange for a colleague to assist them with certain tasks.
- Making alterations to premises, like installing a ramp for a wheelchair user or an audio-visual fire alarm for a deaf person.

## 20 People with disabilities in employment

- Ensuring that information is provided in accessible formats, for example in Braille or on audio tape.
- Modifying or acquiring equipment, such as special keyboards for those with arthritis.
- Changing the recruitment process. Modify procedures for testing or assessment to ensure they don't disadvantage people with particular disabilities.
- Allowing extra time during selection tests.

[Access to Work](#) funding can be applied for towards the cost of making such reasonable adjustments.

The [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) has provided [Examples of reasonable adjustments in practice](#).

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