

Factsheet – Employment

- The employment rate of the working age disabled population has risen from 38.1% to 47.2% between 1998 and 2007, and the gap between the employment rate of disabled people and the overall employment rate, (which was 74.9% in 2007) is 26.5%, which has fallen from 35% in the same period.¹
- Employment rates differ across impairments and are particularly poor for those with learning difficulties (less than 1 in 5) and mental health problems (just over 1 in 10). The highest employment rates of over 6 in 10 exist for those with diabetes, skin conditions or chest/breathing problems.
- Disabled people who face multiple labour market disadvantage tend to experience lower employment rates than the overall employment rate of disabled people. For example fewer than 1 in 4 disabled people from a Pakistani background are in employment and just over 1 in 5 disabled people with no qualifications are in employment.
- Employment rates for disabled people also differ across regions, ranging from just over 3 in 10 in Inner London to over 6 in 10 in the South East of England. Wales and the North of England tend to have lower employment rates of disabled people than the overall rate.
- Approximately 5 in 10 disabled employees were satisfied with the amount of influence they had over their job compared to nearly 6 in 10 non-disabled employees.²
- Over 2 in 3 disabled employees are satisfied with the scope in their job for using their initiative, compared to over 7 in 10 non-disabled employees.³
- Almost 4 in 10 disabled people had not received any on the job training compared to 1 in 3 non-disabled people.⁴

¹ Labour Force Survey 1998-2007

² Workplace Employee Relations Survey 2004

³ Workplace Employee Relations Survey 2004

⁴ Workplace Employee Relations Survey 2004

Note – Unless stated otherwise, all figures are from Labour Force Survey 2007, the definition of disability includes all those with a current long term disability that substantially limits their day-to-day activities. Figures cover working age people in Britain.

- Disabled people in work on average earn almost £1 less an hour than non-disabled people in work, and nearly half of disabled employees are dissatisfied with their pay.⁵
- Nearly 6 in 10 disabled employees feel they possess higher personal skills than those required in their job compared to just over 5 in 10 non disabled employees.⁶
- When asked about satisfaction with the work they do itself, around 6 in 10 of both disabled and non-disabled employees were satisfied and about 1 in 10 of both disabled and non-disabled employees were dissatisfied.⁷
- The average annual rate of disabled people making a transition from benefits into employment is 4%, while it is six times higher for non-disabled people, with disabled people citing 5 main reasons for viewing the transition as a risky/complicated process:
 - Incapacity Benefit claimants are worried that looking for work will trigger benefit reviews
 - The financial incentives of employment are not strong enough, many disability benefit claimants experienced no change or a loss of income from entering employment
 - In addition, awareness of tax credits that strengthen incentives to return to work is low
 - Claimants are wary of having to reclaim their entire benefits package should their job not work out.
 - For those who do enter employment, incentives to work more than 4 hours are low due to working tax credits not becoming applicable until working more than 16 hours a week and the continued availability of Incapacity Benefit to those working up to 4 hours a week at national minimum wage.⁸
- Over 1 in 3 disabled people not in work would like to work, including almost 3 in 10 disabled people currently classified as inactive.

⁵ Workplace Employee Relations Survey 2004

⁶ Workplace Employee Relations Survey 2004

⁷ Workplace Employee Relations Survey 2004

⁸ 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People', Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, 2005

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- Over 90% of disabled people currently in employment were in employment twelve months ago, and almost 40% have been in continuous employment for over 5 years.
- Only 2% of disabled people currently in employment made the transition from inactivity due to their illness/disability twelve months previously.
- Only 6% of currently inactive disabled people of working age were in employment twelve months previously. Almost two-thirds were inactive due their disability.
- Nearly a quarter of disabled people currently unemployed were in employment 12 months ago.
- Over half of disabled people currently out of work, have been out of work for over 5 years.
- Over half of disabled workers who had given up their job in the past 3 months left because of health reasons.

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