

Mission for fairer, greener jobs market agreed at UK-led International Employment summit

- UK Work and Pensions Secretary, Thérèse Coffey, chairs first OECD Ministerial meeting on employment and labour markets since 2016
- Ministers from all 38 countries agree to ambitious pledge to focus on sustainability, equality and young people
- Members condemn Russian aggression, whose participation with the OECD was suspended in March this year

Supporting careers for young people was at the heart of the agreement adopted by ministers from all OECD countries, as part of their commitment to create more diverse, sustainable, and robust labour markets.

Led by UK Work and Pensions Secretary, Thérèse Coffey, the discussion focused on the impacts of the pandemic as well as recent challenges, such as the rise in the cost of living triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The UK minister addressed her counterparts with insight into the UK's successful experience of building a strong labour market post-pandemic. Latest data shows the UK currently has a national unemployment rate of 3.7% – the lowest since 1974 with over a million more disabled people in work since 2017.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Thérèse Coffey said:

The importance of focusing on decent, sustainable and high-quality work for all was shared by international ministers around the table today, along with a commitment to promote life-long learning and build inclusivity in our workforce.

As we move on from the pandemic, and face common issues in our labour markets, we must continue to work together to find united solutions and build a fairer and greener global economy.

Delegates also condemned the ongoing Russian aggression, as countries stood in solidarity with Ukraine, after a decision was taken to suspend Russia's participation in OECD activity in March 2022.

Last year, the UK's G7 Presidency made it a priority to get people back into quality and more sustainable jobs and invest in skills to boost economic recovery.

Today's Employment and Labour Ministerial, which was held with an official

theme of looking beyond the COVID-19 crisis to a better labour market that works for all, reflected the UK's ongoing commitment to building a strong and inclusive labour market, including working internationally to tackle gender pay gaps.

Ministers also agreed to put environmental challenges at the heart of their plans, and support workers to transition to sustainable sectors, aligning with a key ambition set out by the UK Prime Minister at the COP26 Climate Change summit in Glasgow to create millions of green jobs by unlocking both public and private sector cash.

Further information

The OECD is a group of 38 like-minded countries. It was formed in 1961, as a permanent body for taking forward the reconstruction of post-war Europe, following the Marshall Plan.

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