

Press release: Minister calls on businesses to reveal how many disabled staff they employ

Large companies should reveal the numbers of disabled people they employ, the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work Sarah Newton urged today as part of a drive to build a more inclusive society.

With around a fifth of the working age population living with a disability or health condition, the government has launched a [new framework](#) to encourage businesses to report how many of their staff have a disability or health condition.

The voluntary framework, created in partnership with employers and charities, will also call on businesses to set out how they are currently supporting their disabled employees.

This comes as Transparency is confirmed as the 10,000th business to sign up to the flagship [Disability Confident](#) scheme, which marks its second anniversary this month. The scheme focuses on the role employers play in ensuring disabled people are recruited, retained and supported in their careers.

The latest employment figures show more than half of disabled people are now in work, with almost a million more disabled people in the workplace over the last 5 years.

This afternoon the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work Sarah Newton hosted a roundtable at Downing Street with leading businesses, including Barclays, Channel 4 and KPMG, and disabled employees to discuss accessible employment and what more companies can do to build inclusive workforces.

The Prime Minister Theresa May said:

I am committed to creating a society where we empower disabled people, celebrate their talents, and enable them to achieve their hopes for the future.

And we've taken steps in the right direction with almost a million more disabled people in work over the last 5 years, and 10,000 businesses having signed up to the Disability Confident scheme.

But the disability employment gap is still too wide. I call on employers in every sector to take an honest look at how many disabled people they employ.

I ask them to look at the support they are offering and how accessible their workplaces are so everyone can be given the chance to reach their full potential at work.

Alongside this, the Access to Work scheme already in place helps to pay for support in the workplace to ensure someone's disability or health condition doesn't hold them back – providing up to £57,200 per person per year.

The Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work has confirmed 19 projects will receive a share of the £3.9 million Work and Health Challenge Fund to support disabled people and people with mental health conditions. The successful projects will enable people to stay in work by helping them to manage their conditions themselves and making it easier to access advice and support about what jobs they are most suited to.

The Access to Work scheme and the Work and Health Challenge Fund are the latest in a series of government measures which form part of a 10-year strategy to get one million more disabled people in work by 2027.

Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work Sarah Newton said:

Employers across the country this month have joined us in celebrating and promoting inclusive workforces as we mark Disability Confident's anniversary – and embraced the hashtag #IAmConfident to empower people to talk openly about a disability or health condition.

Our voluntary reporting framework builds on our longstanding commitment to companies to help them in supporting their staff at all levels to create more inclusive workforces as we set out to achieve our ambition of one million more disabled people in work by 2027.

Welcoming the announcement, Scope Director of Policy and Research Anna Bird said:

This is a watershed moment – we will only be able to tackle disability unemployment if we understand the scale of the problem.

We frequently hear from disabled people about difficulties they face – from negative attitudes and inaccessible recruitment processes, to inflexible workplaces and difficulties getting adjustments.

Data on disability is crucial for employers to understand what action they need to take to recruit and retain disabled people.

The government must ensure that this information shapes future approaches to increasing disability employment. This will be vital in realising the ambition to get one million more disabled people into work by 2027.

The [voluntary reporting framework](#) has been developed in partnership with a

range of leading employers, partners and supported by the Inclusive Economy Partnership.

Disability Confident, in collaboration with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, has published a [good practice guide](#) for managers to support disabled staff and those with mental health conditions. This user-friendly guide will support employers to voluntarily report their disability employment numbers and practices, and to give direction to those who intend to in the future.

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