

A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: Employment Action Plan

Joined up for Jobs

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Overview

- Policy Context – Disability Employment
- Progress to Date
- Fair Start Scotland
- Supported Employment Review
- The effect of COVID-19
- Future Plans and Next Steps

Policy Context - Ambition

To address barriers to employment for disabled people and seek to reduce, by at least half, the employment gap between disabled people and the rest of the working age population by 2038.

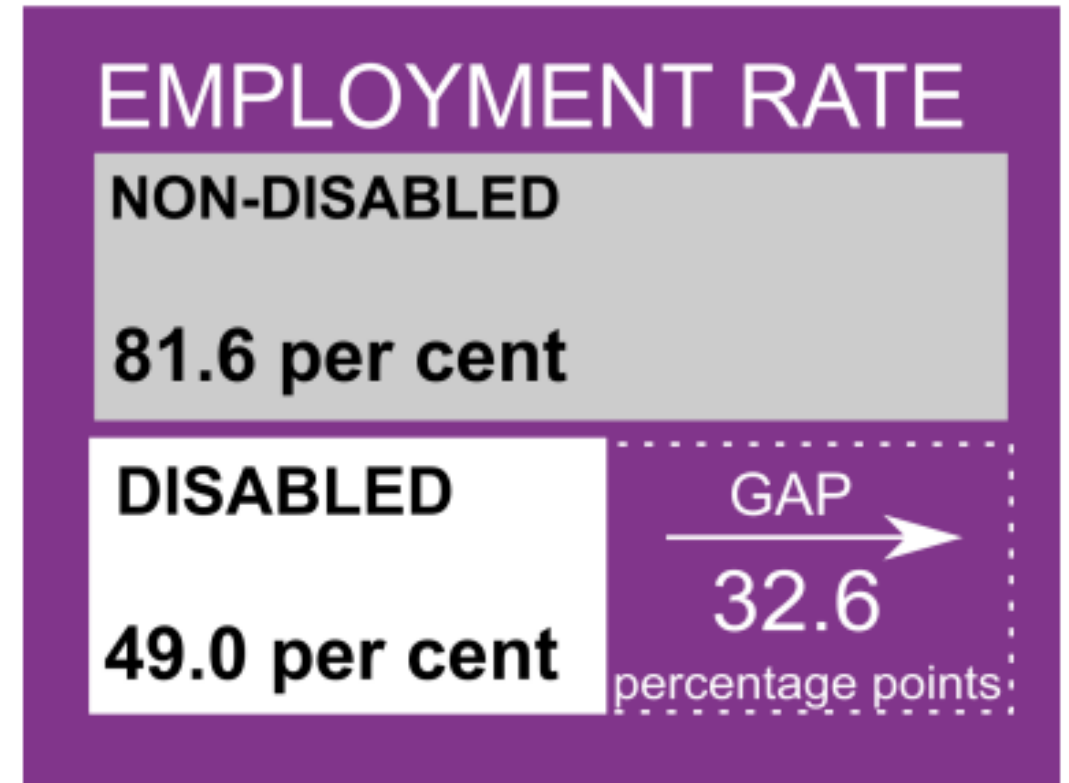
– A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: Employment Action Plan, 2018

Policy Context – Employment Action Plan

- Our focus since the publication of the plan has been in three main areas:
 - Supporting Employers to Recruit and Retain Disabled People
 - Supporting Disabled People to Enter Employment
 - Support for Young People in their transition period

Policy Context – Year Two Progress Report

- Published 8th March 2021
- Disability Employment Gap narrowed from 35.5 percentage points (p.p) in 2018 to 32.6 p.p in 2019 (APS Jan-Dec 2019)



Supporting Employers to Recruit and Retain Disabled People

- SG Recruitment & Retention Plan for Disabled People
 - Targets set for new recruits to SG
 - New model around workplace adjustments for all new staff entering Scottish Government piloted
- Public Social Partnership established
- Workplace Equality Fund relaunched in November 2020

Supporting Disabled People to Enter Employment

- Fair Start Scotland contract extended to 31st March 2023 to provide stability and continuity for participants during the pandemic
- First Scottish Access to Work Stakeholder forum established October 2020
- Individual Placement Support (IPS) Review to be published Summer 2021

Young People & Transitions

- Modern Apprenticeships

Measure	2021 target (%)	Actual achieved (%)	Actual achieved (%)	Actual achieved (%)	Actual achieved (%)
Year		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
% of MA starts self-identified as disabled or with a health condition	12.5	3.7	8.1	11.3	14.1

- SG funding Association for Real Change (ARC) Scotland to deliver the two year *Principles in to Practice* trial programme
- SG Cross-policy Transitions group

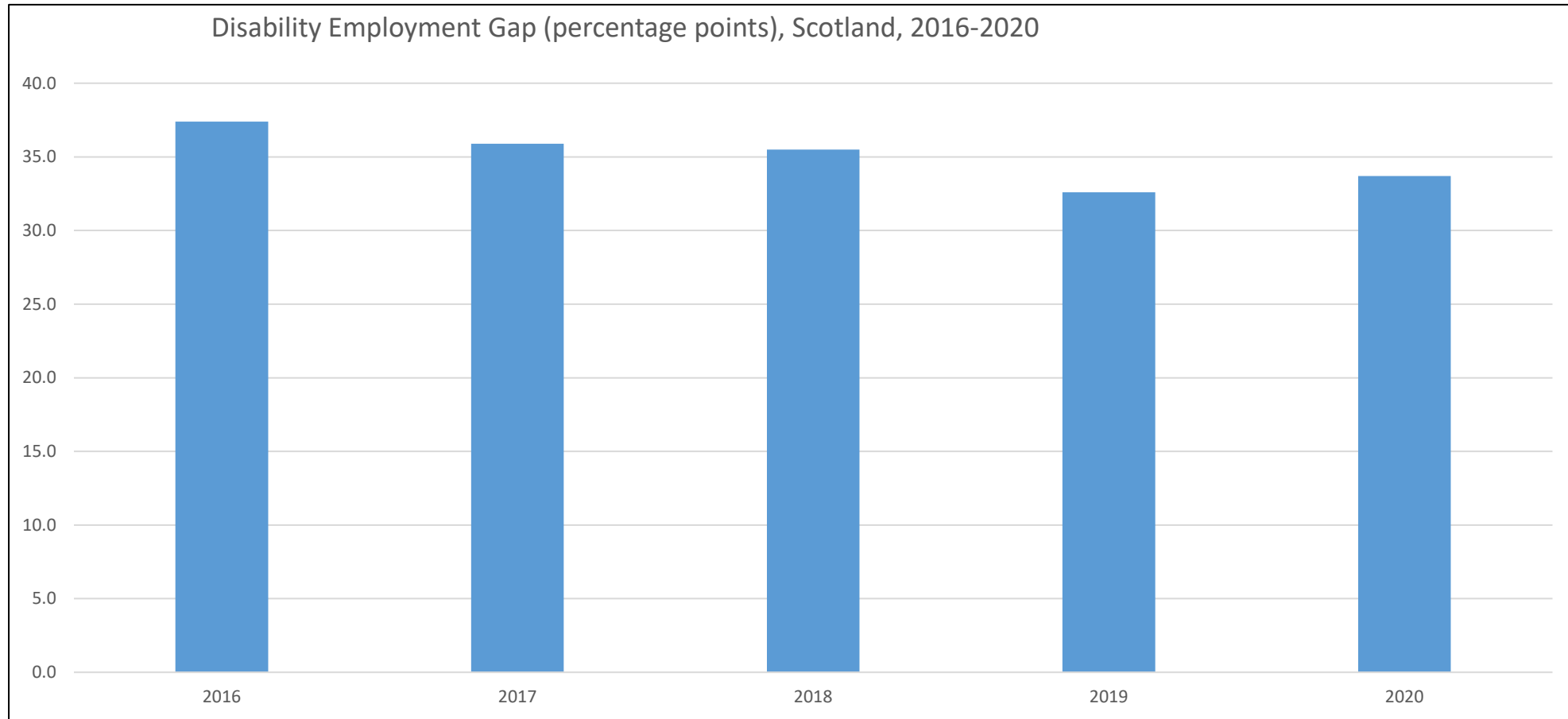
Policy Context – Where does disability employment “fit” in Scottish Government

- There are many strategies and action plans released by Scottish Government.
- How do they all fit together? What is the joint aim?
- Ours, and Local Government’s, overarching ambition is to design an employability system that leaves **No One Left Behind**, by:
 - Providing Flexible and Person-Centered support
 - Is more straightforward for people to navigate
 - Is better integrated and aligned with other services
 - Providing pathways into sustainable and fair work
 - Focusing on the evidence, including data and the experience of others
 - Supporting people to move into the right job at the right time.

Employability in Scotland Website

- [Employability in Scotland | Supporting the employability sector in Scotland](#)
- www.employabilityinscotland.com

Current Picture – Disability Employment Gap



Fair Start Scotland

- Scotland's first fully devolved employment support service Fair Start Scotland provides tailored, flexible, and person-centred support to people who want help to find work, and stay in work. The service also works with employers to help with recruitment and support for the employer and their new employee by offering up to 12 months in-work support.
- Statistics published on 26 May 2021 show just over 32,500 people have joined Fair Start Scotland (FSS) in the first three years of delivery (April 2018 to March 2021) and more than 10,000 people have been supported into work.

Fair Start Scotland - For Individuals

- There are lots of people who want to work but find it hard to find the right job that meets their needs and is flexible enough for their circumstances. Fair Start Scotland treats people with **dignity** and **respect** by providing flexible support, taking into account personal circumstances and removing barriers to accessing work.
- Fair Start Scotland can support you if you have struggled to find a job which meets your needs, participation is completely voluntary and choosing to take part won't affect your existing benefits.

Fair Start Scotland - For Employers

- Provides a single point of contact that will take the time to understand the business and recruitment needs providing support throughout the process.
- Delivers a free full recruitment service which includes advertising, pre-screening, recommending applicants for interview and co-ordinating interview schedules/inductions/training days.
- Highlights any potential funding that they may be eligible for to support employees.
- Provides up to 12 months in-work support; offering a tailored package of support for the employer and their new employee; aiding with job retention.
- Provide the opportunity for businesses to demonstrate their social responsibility by showcasing commitment to a diverse workforce.

Supported Employment - Review

In 2019, Scottish Government conducted a review of how Supported Employment is Working in practice.

The review seeks to address the following core research questions:

- **Where** is supported employment being implemented and where are the gaps in provision?
- **What type of service** is being provided by local authorities, for whom, and what are the outcomes?
- What are some of the **reasons for gaps** in the service and how can these be addressed?
- How can the service providers be further supported to **promote greater consistency** and use of supported employment services?

Impact of COVID-19

- We know that previous economic crisis have shown that protected groups (such as disabled people) are often disproportionately impacted in the labour market.
 - This is why COVID-19 in particular is said to have supercharged the impacts of inequality in Scotland, and in the UK more generally.
- In addition to an increase in the unemployment rate, disabled people also:
 - Faced an increased Pay Gap, and are more likely to have been asked to reduce their hours than non disabled peers.
 - Are more likely to have reported zero earnings by mid 2020
 - More likely to be worried about health and safety conditions at work
- How do we know? We use the Annual Population Statistics, Labour Force Survey, and perhaps most importantly, disabled people themselves tell us



Risks on the horizon

- How will the end of Furlough in September 2021 affect disabled people?
- Will we see large scale lockdowns in order to control the spread of the virus again?
- Some disabled people are reporting an increase in flexibility from their employers, how can we retain this as the pandemic recedes?
- How will the effects of school closures compound the barriers that young disabled people face?
- If/When will the next systemic shock to the labour market happen?

While we can estimate the effects of some or all of these things, ultimately, we can never know for sure. Which is why its so important for us to deliver a joined up employability system, that is able to flex and respond to crisis, via No One Left Behind.

Future Plans

- In the short term:
 - We will continue to respond to the immediate economic crisis, across central and local government, via **No One Left Behind**
 - We will procure training for School Coordinators, to help ensure that disabled young people are best able to transition to further/higher education or employment.
 - Scottish Government have commissioned the review of Supported Employment.
- In the medium/long term
 - We will refresh our Action Plan to ensure that it is fit for purpose in a post COVID-19 world. We are keen to ensure that we hear the voices of disabled people, and employers throughout the country.

Any Questions?

Our contact details

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We are keen to talk to as many employers as possible. So please contact us if you have any questions, or if you want to log your contact details with us so that we can contact you as we engage stakeholders ahead of our Action Plan Refresh.



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