

Public Sector Disability Employment Consultation

Easy Read version

May 2018



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Introduction

The Scottish Government wants to close the disability employment gap by at least half. For this to happen, the public sector needs to employ more disabled people.

The disability employment gap is the difference between those who are working who have a disability and those who are working who don't.

The '**public sector**' means organisations that give services to the public, like the police, the army, public transport, health services, education, councils and the government.

This consultation aims to find the best ways to make sure that more disabled people get jobs in the public sector. We want to make sure this is making a difference to the lives of disabled people in Scotland.

A '**consultation**' is how the government asks the public for their thoughts and ideas before we make changes to the law.

We will set out our ideas and ask what you think about them. We will also ask if you have any new ideas of your own.

We will publish a Disability Employment Action Plan in the Autumn of this year saying what we will do to close the disability employment gap by at least half. What you tell us in this consultation will be part of that plan.

1: Public Sector Disability Employment in Scotland

The public sector in Scotland employs about 600,000 people.

About 77,000 disabled people were employed in the public sector in 2016 (aged 16-64). This is 11.7% of the total workforce.

The law says that public sector organisations are not allowed to discriminate against people and must give everyone equal employment opportunities.

The law also says they have to collect information every year and report every two years on how many disabled people they employ.

Public sector organisations usually ask their employees to say if they have a disability but the number of people who say they do is lower than it should be.

Some public sector workers might not want to say they are disabled because they are worried about how they will be treated. They worry that other workers will not understand and that their career might be affected.

Other people do not think of themselves as disabled, even though the law would say they are.

We need a better way to find out how many disabled people are working in the public sector. NHS Scotland is doing good work in this area, so that staff feel more comfortable with saying they have a disability.

Question 1 - 3:

1. What changes could public sector organisations make to give better support to their workers so they will say they have disabilities?

2. How soon should these changes happen?

3. What support would public sector organisations need to make these changes?

2. Target Options

This section sets out our suggestions for the things we might aim for. We call these targets. We will ask what you think about them.

It might be useful to have targets for public sector organisations because then we can tell how well they are doing.

Target Option A

The Scottish Government will set one public sector disability employment target. Public sector organisations will have to meet this target by a certain date.

Target Option B

As in option A the Scottish Government will set one public sector disability target. But organisations will have to meet this in lots of smaller steps instead.

Target Option C

Scottish public sector organisations will set their own targets. These will be based on how many disabled people they have in their workforce, their size and the work they do.

Target Option D

The Scottish Government will set a target for its own workforce, and work with other public sector organisations to help them set their own targets.

Questions 4 – 7:

4. Do you think setting targets will help to close the disability employment gap in the public sector?

If you said yes, please go to Question 5 below. If you said no, please go to Question 7 below.

5. If you said yes to Question 4, please give each of the options a score from 1 to 4, where 1 is the worst option, and 4 is the best.

Option A Score:

Option B Score:

Option C Score:

Option D Score:

Please explain your score below:

6. Please also tell us:

How long do you think it will take to make your favourite option happen?

7. If you do not think setting targets would help to close the disability employment gap in the public sector, please tell us why.

Please tell us anything else about these options or targets that you haven't covered already. Please tell us if you have other ideas for how to close the disability employment gap in the public sector.

3. Other ways to close the disability employment gap

As well as setting targets, there are other ways that we could employ more people in Scotland's public sector.

The Scottish Government and other public sector organisations are doing work to make a difference. This includes:

- Understanding why staff aren't saying they are disabled
- Better advertising, promotion and recruitment
- Making employers see why it is good for a business to employ disabled people
- Raising awareness about disability
- Thinking about the support that employers might need to employ disabled people
- More paid work experience and internships
- Sharing what other public sector organisations have learned about employing disabled people

NHS Scotland and the Scottish Government have found that paid work placements and internships can help people find work. Even if they don't lead directly to a job, they give disabled people good work experience. This gives them a better chance of finding a job.

Question 8:

8. Can you think of any other ways that we can:

a) employ more disabled people in the public sector, and

b) support disabled people to stay in employment in the public sector?

4. Monitoring and Reporting

To make a real difference to the number of disabled people employed in the public sector, we need a good way to check and report on how we are doing.

One suggestion is that the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) would make sure the disability employment targets are being met and report on how this was going.

We will keep thinking about the best ways to check on how the Disability Employment Action Plan is working and report on it.

Question 9:

Whether targets are set or not, it will be important to check if the plan to employ more disabled people in the public sector is working. We would like to hear your ideas about this.

9. Do you have any views on the best way to check how the plan is going forward and report on it?

5. Events you can arrange

We plan to hold a number of events to get organisations involved across Scotland. Anyone interested in going to one of the events should contact:

ConsultationDisabilityEmployment@gov.scot

We know that disabled people's organisations and other groups might want to hold their own events to get the views of the people they work with.

Employability staff from the Scottish Government will go to these events if possible.

6. How to give your answers

Please give us your answers to these consultation questions by

15 August 2018.

Please read and give your answers to this consultation online through our Citizen Space at <https://consult.gov.scot/fair-work-employability-and-skills/disability-employment> Please make sure that consultation answers are given before the closing date of 15 August 2018.

If you are unable to respond online, please complete the Respondent Information Form (see "Handling your Response" below) to:

Employability Policy Unit
Employability Division
Fair Work, Employability and Skills
6th Floor Atlantic Quay,
Glasgow G2 8LU

What will we do with your answers?

If you give your answers through Citizen Space (<http://consult.scotland.gov.uk/>), you will be asked to fill in the Respondent Information Form. Please tell us how you want your answers to be handled and whether you are happy for them to be published.

If you are unable to use Citizen Space, please complete and return the Respondent Information Form at the end of this document. If you say you do not want your answers to be published, we will treat it as private.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government has to follow the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

What happens next?

If you said you are happy for your answers to be made public, and after we have checked that they contain nothing inappropriate, they will be made available to the public at <http://consult.scotland.gov.uk/>. If you use Citizen Space to respond, you will get a copy of your answers by email.

After the closing date, all answers will be looked at closely with any other information, to help us make our Disability Employment Action Plan.

Comments and complaints

If you have any comments or complaints about this consultation, please send them to: ConsultationDisabilityEmployment@gov.scot

Or write to us at:

Employability Policy Unit
Employability Division
Fair Work, Employability and Skills
6th Floor Atlantic Quay,
Glasgow G2 8LU

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- Individual
 Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

Phone number

Address

Postcode

Email

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

- Publish response with name
 Publish response only (without name)
 Do not publish response

Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

- Yes
 No



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