

## Employment

Disabled people face considerable employment disadvantages. In general, disabled people have lower rates of employment than non-disabled people, and lower earnings on average.

- Forty-five per cent of London's disabled (working age) population are in employment relative to three quarters (75 per cent) of the non-disabled population.
- Disabled people make up ten per cent of all Londoners in work, but over 18 per cent of the whole working age population<sup>1</sup>.
- Disabled women have a slightly lower employment rate than that of disabled men. However, the employment gap with non-disabled people is greater for men than for women<sup>2</sup>.
- Employment rates are very low for disabled parents<sup>3</sup>.
- Disabled people from ethnic minorities have especially low employment rates. The employment rate for BAME disabled Londoners is considerably lower (38 per cent) compared to White disabled Londoners (50 per cent)
- Even with the same qualifications, disabled people have lower employment rates<sup>4</sup>.

## What we have done

In the last two years there has been a focus on ensuring that Londoners and businesses are supported during the recession. The Mayor set out an **Economic Recovery Action Plan** (ERAP) – a detailed package of measures to help London through the economic downturn. Activity included:

- The Mayor, with the London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB), focused the combined skills and training spend of the London LSC and the LDA – in excess of £700 million a year – to increase support for people who have recently lost their jobs, helping them to get back into employment quickly and access the training they need<sup>5</sup>.
- The Mayor and the LSEB directed additional funding to the Skills for Jobs scheme, a national programme, which prepares people for work who might not otherwise enter the labour market, including disabled people, long term unemployed and people without skills
- The Mayor has made a commitment to deliver 1,000 new apprenticeship positions per annum through the GLA group and its supply chains. The TfL Supplier Skills Team, funded through the LDA, has been working proactively with the GLA group to help meet targets. The Mayor is also working with national agencies to increase the supply of apprenticeships in London, which include targets for disabled people
- Through our responsible procurement programme, we have encouraged our key suppliers to promote supplier diversity in their own workforces and in their supply chains. Details of the GLA group Responsible Procurement policy, and case studies of how equality and diversity outcomes have been delivered can be

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Population Survey, 2008

<sup>2</sup> Annual Population Survey, 2009

<sup>3</sup> Greater London Authority, 'Disabled people and the labour market in London: Key facts, GLA', London March 2007

<sup>4</sup> Disability Rights Commission, Disability Briefing, May 2007

<sup>5</sup> Source: Greater London Authority Economic Recovery Action Plan

<http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/publications/2008/docs/economic-recovery-action-plan.pdf>

found on the Responsible Procurement website. For further information visit [www.london.gov.uk/rp](http://www.london.gov.uk/rp)

- Commissioning of the London Business Network has resulted with more disabled owned businesses registering and accessing procurement opportunities.
- Diversity Works for London (DWfL) is the Mayor's programme to support London's businesses to improve equality and diversity practices. DWfL online tool-kit, enables suppliers to assess their equalities performance and provides guidance to achieve best practice standards. Over 3,000 businesses are registered users of the DWfL on-line tools, and over 1,000 of these have completed the self-assessment toolkit. 100 businesses have self-assessed themselves at gold level; and ten leading businesses are seeking independent verification of their self assessment status.
- The Deputy Mayor supported DWfL at an event in March 2010, to reinforce the business case benefits for embedding equality and diversity practices

The Mayor's Economic Development Agency (LDA) has delivered disability equality training across the Agency; and, addressed capacity building and knowledge improvement amongst 240 business support advisers towards addressing the needs of disabled entrepreneurs

The London Health Commission (LHC) Team, has developed a range of initiatives including: health as a cross-cutting theme into the London Regional ESF (European Social Fund) programme 2007-13. ESF providers will be targeting disadvantaged groups to support them into employment and to progress in work. LHC will assist with identifying positive health outcomes for participants. The Good Jobs Employer Campaign promotes flexible working arrangements to help with access to work for people who may not otherwise be able to do so. The LHC is represented on the London Mental Health and Employment Partnership

The London Development Centre's 'Working for Wellness' Programme is carrying out pilots that integrate psychological therapies with employment services. The programme will cover at least 60 per cent of London's Primary Care Trusts by 2011. The pilots include working with Jobcentre Plus to raise awareness and improve understanding of mental health issues amongst employers, and to promote best practice in recruiting and keeping people in work that may require specific levels of support and therapy<sup>6</sup>.

### **What we plan to do**

The Mayor's plans for employment and skills are focused on helping remove barriers to employment through personalised support.

- The Mayor recently published his Economic Development Strategy (EDS). The Strategy contains five objectives one of which is "to give all Londoners the opportunity to take part in London's economic success, access sustainable employment and progress in their careers". The EDS recognises that substantial numbers of people experience barriers which prevent them realising the opportunities provided by an economy with long-term growth.
- The EDS sets an action for the Mayor to work to close the employment rate gap between London and the national level by 2020, and to maintain the London

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<sup>6</sup> London Child Poverty Commission, 'Progress and next steps', DRAFT report for LCPC, 2010. London Child Poverty Commission, 'Capital Gains - One Year On', LCPC March 2009.

employment rate at or above the national level subsequently. To achieve this, the Mayor " will work with partners to reduce the employment rate gap for disadvantaged groups by removing barriers and disincentives to work, seeking to eliminate discrimination and providing more personalised and joined-up services to help people into employment and in career progression" <sup>7</sup>.

This objective is also reflected in the London Skills and Employment Board's strategy: Recession to Recovery which sets out a target to, by 2014, "Reduce the gap in employment within London for BAME, disabled people and lone parents from 19.4 per cent to 16 per cent".<sup>8</sup> For further information visit: <http://www.london.gov.uk/lseb/strategy.jsp>

- Volunteering is a beneficial way of helping the long term unemployed back into employment market. The Mayor is currently developing a programme to encourage volunteering in London with a focus on ensuring that volunteering opportunities help to improve the long-term employability of participants.
- Through the LDA's Diversity Works for London initiative, the Mayor will continue to engage with London's businesses to enable them to harness the benefits of a diverse workforce, marketplace and supplier base.
- Develop effective mechanisms to reduce the employment gap between disabled and Deaf people and the London average, through the London Skills and Employment Board and the delivery agencies.
- Ensure that disabled and Deaf people are fully represented in, and enabled to maximise opportunities from the London Skills for Jobs programmes.
- Promote disability equality through the procurement policies of the GLA and functional bodies.
- Maximise the skills and employment opportunities available to disabled and deaf people through London 2012.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Greater London Authority, Economic Development Strategy: <http://London.gov.uk/economic-development-strategy>

<sup>8</sup> Source: London Skills and Employment Board revised strategy: [note: This target is based on measures using April-June 2008 quarterly data from the Labour Force Survey 2008 and is a composite indicator and includes BAME, lone parents and disabled people.]<http://www.london.gov.uk/lseb/docs/strategy-2009.pdf>