

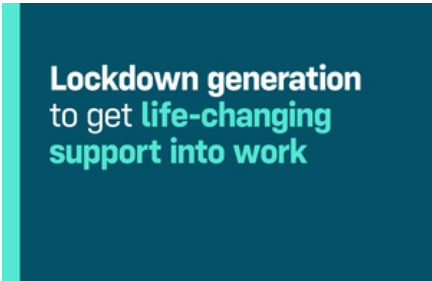
Press release

Lockdown generation consigned to the ‘scrapheap’ will get life- changing support into work, vows Minister

The ‘lockdown generation’ who’ve been consigned to the ‘scrapheap’ will get life-changing support through major reforms to get Britain working again, the Minister for Employment has vowed in her first speech since taking office.

From: **Department for Work and Pensions**
**(/government/organisations/department-for-work-
pensions)**

Published 18 September 2024



Lockdown generation
to get **life-changing**
support into work

- Record number of young people out of work due to long-term sickness – up 29% since the pandemic – and nearly 900,000 not in education, work, or training.

- We must move away from the obsession with welfare and boost employment with fundamental change, says Minister for Employment.
- Get Britain Working White Paper will transform workplaces and help drive government's national mission for growth.

These changes will form a key part of the government's mission to kickstart growth and spread prosperity and opportunity across the country, with the Prime Minister stating he wants the UK to have the highest sustained growth in the G7.

Speaking at the launch of a report by the Institute for Employment Studies, Alison McGovern MP pledged to 'turn the page' on years of failure, saying there has been too much focus on welfare and social security and not enough on helping people into work - leaving a generation of young people abandoned in a broken labour market.

She said the employment challenges the country faces now are similar to the mass unemployment of the past - with 2.8 million people out of work sick and over nine million people economically inactive – neither in work nor looking for work.

Nearly 900,000 young people are not in education, employment, or training – up 74,000 on the year - while latest figures from the ONS show around 600,000 16-24-year-olds are unemployed, 63,000 more than pre pandemic.

The sickness crisis amongst 16-24-year-olds has also worsened with a 29% increase in the number who are inactive and long-term sick – up from 184,000 before the pandemic to 237,000 in the most recent data, a record high.

Minister for Employment, Alison McGovern said:

“ The lockdown generation has been failed - consigned to the scrapheap because they have been denied the support and opportunities to find work, get into work, and get on at work.

- “ It’s truly shocking that we have businesses crying out for staff at the same time there are queues round the block for foodbanks – a dire situation that we’re determined to put right.
- “ The obsession with benefits management must end if we’re to bring about the change the country is crying out for, and that’s why we have a plan to get Britain working again.
- “ We’re going to set-up a Youth Guarantee to transform the lives of young people by providing work, apprenticeships and skills training to everyone who needs it.
- “ That is how we will deliver on our mission for growth across the country and ensure future generations are never abandoned by their government again.”

The IES report describes the UK’s employment service as ‘the least well-used in Europe’, arguing it often acts more as an extension of the benefit system. The organisation has called for a ‘clearer separation between employment support and social security delivery’.

This comes as Minister McGovern set out plans to make a fundamental shift to active labour market policies that break down barriers to opportunity, tackle the root causes of inactivity and help deliver the Government’s ambition to reach an 80% employment rate.

The government has taken immediate action to transform Britain’s workforce through Skills England, while plans to cut NHS waiting times will get Britain back to health and back to work.

A Get Britain Working Again White Paper, to be set out in the Autumn, will outline plans to overhaul jobcentres, deliver a youth guarantee, and devolve powers to Mayors and local areas to deliver work, health, and skills plans.

Additional Information

- More information on the Plan to Get Britain Working is available here: [Back to Work Plan will help drive economic growth in every region - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/back-to-work-plan-will-help-drive-economic-growth-in-every-region)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/back-to-work-plan-will-help-drive-economic-growth-in-every-region>)
- The Work and Pensions Secretary delivered a speech in Barnsley setting out her vision for employment support: [Getting Britain Working - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/getting-britain-working#:~:text=GETTING%20BRITAIN%20WORKING%20AND%20GROWING,Creating%20Skills%20England.)
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