

Press release

Work and Pensions Secretary slams labour market stats as ‘truly dire’ and affirms mission to Get Britain Working again

The ‘truly dire’ state of the labour market has been revealed today with the number of people classed as economically inactive has spiralled to 9.4 million, as the Work and Pensions Secretary reaffirms her Plan to Get Britain Working again.

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Work and Pensions
Secretary affirms
mission to **get Britain
working again**

- New labour market data shows economic inactivity at near record high with the UK the only G7 country whose employment rate is not back to pre-pandemic levels.

- Work and Pensions Secretary Liz Kendall says people have been ignored and denied the support they need to get into work and get on at work.
- Plan to Get Britain Working again and deliver growth includes overhauling jobcentres, delivering a youth guarantee, and new work, health, and skills plans.

Data published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) this morning also shows the percentage of people employed has fallen to 74.4%, while a near record 2.8 million people are now out of work due to long-term sickness.

Today's figures come a week after the Secretary of State set out how the Government's plan to get Britain working will tackle economic inactivity and drive growth in every corner of the country.

Alongside action to make work pay, overhaul skills and address the root causes of worklessness, including poor physical and mental health, the plan will deliver:

A new national jobs and career service to help get more people into work, and on in their work.

New work, health and skills plans for the economically inactive, led by Mayors and local areas.

A youth guarantee for all young people aged 18 to 21.

Work and Pensions Secretary, Liz Kendall MP said:

“ Spiralling economic inactivity, rising unemployment and the UK standing alone as the only G7 country where the employment rate is still not back to pre-pandemic levels. This is a truly dire inheritance which the Government is determined to tackle.”

“ Behind these statistics are real people, who have for too long been ignored and denied the support they need to get into work and get on at work.”

- “ It’s time for change - in every corner of the country. That is why we are taking immediate actions to deliver on our growth mission, and spread jobs, prosperity, and opportunity to everyone, wherever they live.”
- “ Our Plan to Get Britain Working again will overhaul jobcentres, deliver a youth guarantee, and give local areas the power they need to tackle economic inactivity and break down barriers to a brighter future.”

In the first few days in office the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, unveiled the Government’s first steps to securing economic growth as the only route to improving the prosperity of the country and the living standards of working people.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves MP added:

- “ Economic growth is our national mission and getting people back into work is central to that. It is the best way to improve living standards for everyone which is why I have already taken action to fix the foundations of our economy so we can rebuild Britain and make every part of our country better off.”

The plan to deliver growth, get people into work, and improve the labour market will be a truly cross-government effort, with the Health Secretary setting out how cutting NHS waiting times will get Britain back to health and back to work.

Further information

- More details on the Plan to Get Britain Working again 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>)
- Information on the Chancellor’s plan to rebuild Britain is available here: [Chancellor unveils a new era for economic growth - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-unveils-a-new-era-for-economic-growth)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-unveils-a-new-era-for-economic-growth>

- More details on the Health Secretary's plans to reform the NHS and get Britain back to health and work is available here: [Secretary of State makes economic growth a priority - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/secretary-of-state-makes-economic-growth-a-priority)
([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/secretary-of-state-makes-economic-growth-a-priority))
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/secretary-of-state-makes-economic-growth-a-priority>)

ONS data on the latest labour market statistics is available here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/uklabourmarketjuly2024>
(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/uklabourmarketjuly2024>)

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