

Press release: Youth unemployment down 50% since 2010

The figures also show that the unemployment rate of 4.0% has not been lower since 1975. Real wages are up for the seventh month in a row, rising by 0.7% above inflation and employment remained high at 75.5%, up 0.4% points on the year.

The proportion of young people who are unemployed is at a new record low, as more than 120,000 more young people have a job than in 2010. At the same time, fewer children are now growing up in a home without any adults in work than ever before. There are 637,000 fewer children in this position than in 2010, helping inspire more young people into work themselves.

It comes as over 3.3 million more people have entered work since 2010, meaning an average of 1,000 more people in work every day.

The UK saw a seventh month of real terms pay increases, with regular wages up by 3.1% in August, or 0.7% against CPIH inflation.

The [latest figures from the Office for National Statistics](#) also revealed the employment rate remains high, at 75.5%, with over 3.3 million more people in work since 2010.

On top of this, figures show the majority of jobs created since 2010 are full time, permanent roles that are in higher skilled occupations, which typically bring higher earnings – all ambitions of the government's [Industrial Strategy](#) which seeks to create better, well-paying jobs fit for the future.

Unemployment has fallen across all regions of the UK since 2010, with today's figures showing that the West Midlands, London and Wales in particular have seen the largest employment growth in work in the last year.

Work and Pensions Secretary Esther McVey said:

This month's figures show youth unemployment has fallen by 50 percent since 2010, down to a new record low, showing our welfare reforms are working and giving young people a better future.

We want to empower young people; open up new career opportunities – deliver a brighter future for them.

Minister of State for Employment Alok Sharma said:

I am particularly encouraged that wages continue to be on the up, outpacing inflation for the seventh month in a row with regular pay

up 3.1% on the year – the fastest growth in almost a decade.

And with unemployment at its lowest since the 1970s, since 2010 there are more people with the security of a job, more people with a regular salary, and more people able to support their families – and that is thanks to action this government has taken to build an economy that works for everyone.

The government is helping even more people benefit from a well-paid job by:

- backing businesses to create good jobs with our modern Industrial Strategy, while ensuring they play by the rules, so we are closing tax loopholes, strengthening workers' rights, and tightening the rules big businesses must follow
- investing in the infrastructure, training and apprenticeships we need for our future, with public investment at the highest sustained level in 40 years
- introducing Universal Credit which is helping people move into work faster and stay in it longer (separate figures out today show that 430,000 people are now receiving Universal Credit)
- helping people stay in work longer with our Fuller Working Lives strategy, which supports employers to recruit, re-train and retain older workers
- tackling inequalities in employment highlighted by the Race Disparity Audit, through targeted support in 20 areas around the country and £90 million announced by the Prime Minister to help young people

We are also arranging work experience sessions for students through Jobcentre Plus, in over 1,400 schools. The scheme is being rolled out across the country, to ensure young disadvantaged kids aged 12 to 18 get opportunities, including work experience, to learn about the world of work and consider future career options. So far, the partnership between Jobcentre Plus and local schools has resulted in around 12,000 sessions for pupils, parents and teachers helping to prepare pupils for the world of work.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5162

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[Speech: Proud to be dyslexic](#)

My name's Matt Hancock, I'm proud to be Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, a member of the Cabinet and of Made By Dyslexia.

And having not talked about it for almost the whole of my adult life, I'm proud to be here today at the Global Dyslexia Summit, saying to dyslexic

people the world over: you can do it.

For years, dyslexia was seen as a problem. And sure, it brings its challenges.

For me, I find long words hard to spell, and dense writing hard to read. I get frustrated when people use long words when a short one will do.

But for me, for us, and for the world, let us say it loud and clear: dyslexia brings challenge – your brain works in different ways, but with the right support, dyslexia brings big benefits too.

Dyslexia isn't a disability, but a difference. It's a distinction, not a drawback.

It's like we're on Android when most others are on Microsoft Windows.

Now, when you have different operating systems, there's going to be interface issues. Some misunderstandings.

Like when I was a boy driving home with my parents and I saw a sign saying: "Swan wood for sale."

In my mind, there was a whole wood of swans for sale.

Just picture it – like us dyslexics are so good at doing.

An entire wood full of swans. For sale!

After making my parents take a long detour, we arrived back at the sign.

My parents looked at the sign, and then looked at me.

"Matt, it's not swan wood for sale. It's sawn wood for sale."

That was a long drive back home, involving a lot of mickey-taking at my expense.

But. We did get a boot full of sawn wood to see us through the winter.

Like I said, some misunderstandings. But some big benefits also.

There's 3 things I would like to talk about today:

- ending stigma
- early assessment
- how the world needs more people to think like dyslexics do

Firstly, stigma.

I recently went public as a dyslexic. And I have been overwhelmed by the sheer outpouring of support. Texts, emails, messages from fellow dyslexics and other people with their own similar stories to tell.

Other MPs I had no idea were dyslexic. One other member of the Cabinet: Brandon Lewis, also dyslexic.

It turns out dyslexic ministers are a bit like buses. You wait ages for one to turn up then 2 come along at once.

It really shouldn't have been a surprise. Not when dyslexia affects 1 in 10 people. And when the skills the world increasingly needs – creativity, lateral thinking, empathy – these skills are often more prevalent in dyslexics because we find written communication that bit harder.

Just to put that in context: the same percentage of the population are dyslexic as are left-handed.

Not the majority. But certainly part of the mainstream.

So why did it take me so long to come out as a dyslexic?

If I'm honest, it's in part because there was still a fear. A fear that the old stereotypes about dyslexics would get dredged up.

That we're lazy. That we're stupid. That we can't do the things that come so easily to other people.

Now, those stereotypes have been proven to be lazy and stupid in themselves. Because there's nothing a dyslexic can't do. In fact, there's many things that we can do better.

A dyslexic painted the Mona Lisa, the most famous painting in Western art.

A dyslexic invented the electric lightbulb, ushering in a new age for mankind.

And a dyslexic discovered the theory of relativity, setting a new definition for the word 'genius'.

Yet, Made by Dyslexia's recent research found that 9 out of 10 dyslexics said they had been made to feel angry, stupid or embarrassed because they had dyslexia.

That's true for me too.

And only 3% of the wider public believe dyslexia is a positive trait. Unbelievable.

Somehow, in 2018, there is still a stigma, a prejudice.

That dyslexics are less rather than more. Or at the very least, not equal to other people.

And it's true. There are some things that come with greater difficulty to us – like spelling.

I used to dread spelling tests at school. And if it wasn't for the simple

invention of spellchecker there's a very good chance I wouldn't be standing before you today as health secretary.

It's one of the reasons I am such a firm believer in the potential of technology to help people fulfil their potential. So thank you Bill Gates for your incredible invention, and Steve Jobs for the one I use every day now too. I even used spellcheck to write this speech. I even find the word dyslexic quite hard – why couldn't they come up with a simpler name for it?!

But I think the real reason dyslexia is still seen by some as a drawback is because they still look at life through a 20th, or even 19th, century lens instead of a 21st century lens.

Where they prioritise straight-line thinking, not creativity or insight.

I can understand the importance of spelling and how we need a standardised system so we can read and write without misunderstanding each other, I just struggle to see what order the letters go on the page.

And I reject those who say that spelling isn't important.

Just because I find it hard, doesn't mean I don't value it.

For me, relearning spelling through phonics got me to a position I can just about manage on paper.

And then, like all dyslexics, I've got my workarounds.

Like requiring short briefings. And really scratchy handwriting, so it's harder to spot a spelling mistake.

It's what we specialise in: how to adapt and thrive in a non-dyslexic world.

But wouldn't it be so much easier, and better, for everyone involved, if we could change mindsets?

Change mindsets in schools and colleges? In offices and workplaces? If a young child coming into school isn't made to feel inferior to his or her classmates simply because their brain is wired differently?

Because that is where stigma starts. And the worst kind of stigma is the one that is internalised. When you actually believe that you're incapable. That you can't rather than can do something.

Schools that are using phonics are starting to address this.

Since the government introduced phonics screening checks in 2012, we have seen the number of 6-year-olds reaching the expected reading phonics standard go from 58% to 82% this year.

And I would like to pay tribute to the Department for Education for all of the work they have done, to fund specialist resources for teacher training, new advanced online modules on dyslexia so we can enhance teachers'

knowledge, understanding and skills.

This is all welcome, and it is what the government's reforms were designed to do.

I believe that education, health, public health and social care commissioners should work more closely together to better deliver for children and young people with different educational needs.

I want to see every child taught according to their needs. And this brings me to the second thing I would like to talk about – early assessment.

Now, I discovered I had dyslexia pretty late on. I was already at university. I'd made it through school by specialising in maths subjects. And then when a brilliant tutor saw that my ability to talk was very different to my ability to write, he suggested I go and get myself tested.

That was the breakthrough moment. I retaught myself grammar and spelling from scratch using computer courses.

I was caught early enough. Diagnosis made adaptation so much easier. But there are still too many stories of late assessment, which makes it that much harder.

Early assessment and identification of dyslexia is essential to keeping a child's life chances and horizons open. With the right support and technology anything is possible if you're dyslexic.

I think every child who needs a dyslexia assessment should get a dyslexia assessment to ensure children with different educational needs get the support they need.

It's only by early assessment that we can ensure dyslexics fulfil their potential and that, as a society, we start to see dyslexia not as a weakness, but as a strength. A huge strength to draw on, to meet the challenge of the changing nature of work, and the technological revolution coming around the corner.

That is my third point today: why the world needs more people to think like dyslexics do.

Over a generation, automation has moved the world of work from valuing brawn to valuing brains.

Over the next generation, as the march of the machines takes over straight-line cognitive functions, what will set human beings apart from the machines is our creativity, our intuition, our emotional and social intelligence, our ability to think laterally and imaginatively, our visualisation, our reasoning, and how we can bring a fresh perspective to an old, sometimes seemingly intractable, problem.

That's what will set us apart from the robots. And those are exactly the skills and strengths that dyslexics have in abundance.

We know that better decisions are made when people bring different perspectives. That's what underpins my profound belief in the value of diversity.

Throughout my career I've sought to promote diversity: of background, of race, of gender, of sexual orientation.

Not just because as a liberal conservative, I believe in the equality of opportunity for each and every one of us to reach their potential, and I believe in the role of society and the state to see that justice made real.

But more than that, I admire what Idris Elba calls diversity of thought.

Dyslexia is another dimension of diversity of thought: and maybe because I'm dyslexic that's why I feel so strongly about it.

So rather than trying to get dyslexics to think like everybody else, we should value the diversity of thought dyslexics bring.

Imagination, creativity, neuro-diverse dyslexic abilities are the skills of the future.

Our strengths can help build better businesses, spark innovation, and create new solutions.

We may in fact hold the answer to some of the biggest challenges in education, employment and wider society.

So we shouldn't fear dyslexia, or see it as a weakness. We should embrace it and see it as a strength.

And if anyone ever tells you dyslexia is just a disability or a drawback say: no.

It's a mark of distinction, a mark of difference, which has driven some of humanity's greatest ever achievements.

And let us each say, clear and loud: I am proud to be dyslexic.

[News story: CMA sets out scope of Sainsbury's / Asda merger investigation](#)

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) announced its decision to refer the deal for an in-depth (Phase 2) investigation on 19 September 2018.

Today's '[Issues Statement](#)' sets out the key areas the CMA expects to scrutinise, at both a local and national level – including groceries, bought both in-store and online; fuel; and other items such as toys, small electricals and children's clothing.

It will assess whether the merger could lead to a worse outcome for shoppers through higher prices, a poorer shopping experience, or reductions in the range or quality of products offered.

The level and impact of competition presented by newer or growing retailers – including Aldi and Lidl – will be considered alongside these issues, as well as whether the merger could make it easier for supermarkets to align their commercial decision-making, leading to less vigorous competition. In addition, the CMA will examine any potential efficiencies that might result from the merger and whether such savings might be passed on to shoppers.

The CMA will also look at whether the merged company could use its increased buyer power to squeeze suppliers and if this could have a potential knock-on effect for shoppers. This would be due to suppliers being less able to innovate or having to charge higher prices to other stores that compete with the combined Sainsbury's / Asda.

Stuart McIntosh, chair of the independent inquiry group carrying out the in-depth investigation, said:

Millions of people shop at Asda and Sainsbury's every week, so it is essential we carry out a thorough investigation into their proposed merger. Our job is to find out whether the merger will result in people paying more or being faced with less choice or a poorer quality shopping experience.

Today, we are setting out a number of areas that we expect to look at as part of our investigation. We welcome views on the effects of the merger and will carefully consider any evidence that we receive.

The CMA expects to gather a wide range of evidence to explore these issues, which will include surveying Asda and Sainsbury's shoppers – both in store and online – and drivers who fill up their tanks at either company's petrol stations. It will also be scrutinising extensive internal information from Sainsbury's and Asda, and seeking the views of rival retailers and suppliers.

Views are welcome from any individuals or organisations who are able to provide information useful to the investigation. Members of the public can find out how to respond on the [Sainsbury's / Asda page](#) of the CMA website, which also gives further detail on the investigation. Responses to the Issues Statement must be made in writing by 30 October and should focus on the areas outlined in the Issues Statement or any further ways in which the merger could affect competition in the markets that might be affected by the merger.

The CMA expects to issue its provisional findings early next year, ahead of

the statutory deadline for its final decision on the 5 March 2019.

Press release: Report 17/2018: Extensive track damage between Ferryside and Llangennech

PDF, 13.3MB, 53 pages

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Summary

On 30 October 2017, train 6B13, which was carrying oil-based products from Robeston oil terminal, Milford Haven, to Westerleigh oil terminal, Bristol, caused extensive damage to railway infrastructure over approximately 25 miles (40 km). After the train had been stopped, at the entrance to Llangyfelach Tunnel near Swansea, the driver found that there had been a catastrophic failure of the braking system on one of the fully laden wagons.

The investigation found that one of the wheelsets on the damaged wagon had locked up and slid, causing severe wheel flats, before starting to rotate again. Impacts from the wheel flats subsequently damaged the rails as well as equipment mounted on the bogie, some of which partially detached and was dragged under the train, causing damage to track-mounted equipment. The wheelset had locked up and then started rotating again because an object became caught between one of the wheels and the adjacent brake block holder. This was most likely to have been one of the brake blocks, which had fallen off the wagon during the journey of train 6B13, probably due to the omission of key components when the brake blocks were replaced on 27 October.

Recommendations

The RAIB has made one recommendation to Touax Rail and other affected parties regarding a risk assessment of the facilities and processes used for maintaining wagons operating out of Robeston terminal. The RAIB has also identified three learning points about checking the security of brake blocks before permitting a vehicle to re-enter traffic, the application of general signalling regulation 19, and signallers and control staff being aware of the potential consequences of an incident involving a train carrying dangerous goods.

Notes to editors

1. The sole purpose of RAIB investigations is to prevent future accidents and incidents and improve railway safety. RAIB does not establish blame, liability or carry out prosecutions.
2. RAIB operates, as far as possible, in an open and transparent manner. While our investigations are completely independent of the railway industry, we do maintain close liaison with railway companies and if we discover matters that may affect the safety of the railway, we make sure that information about them is circulated to the right people as soon as possible, and certainly long before publication of our final report.
3. For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

Newsdate: 16 October 2018

Open consultation: Renewable Heat Incentive: biomass combustion in urban areas

Defra's [Clean Air Strategy](#), published in May 2018, proposed that further support under the Renewable Heat Incentive should not be available for biomass installations in urban areas with access to the gas grid.

This consultation sets out details of the proposed restrictions and asks for views on the scope and nature of these changes to RHI eligibility.