

Press release: Wages rising fastest in a decade

The UK's employment rate is a joint-record 75.8%, rising by 3.55 million since 2010.

UK wages are increasing at their joint-fastest rate in a decade, with unemployment remaining low at 4 per cent. The figures, published today by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), showed that wages outpaced inflation for the eleventh month in a row.

The new figures confirmed that 2018 was a year of widespread employment opportunity showing:

- a record high employment rate for people from ethnic minority backgrounds of 66.2%
- 145,000 more disabled people found work since last year, an overall increase of 930,000 in the last 5 years
- more women are in the workplace than ever before, 15.31 million. The female employment rate is also a record – 71.4%

Minister of State for Employment Alok Sharma said:

While the global economy is facing many challenges, particularly in sectors like manufacturing, these figures show the underlying resilience of our jobs market – once again delivering record employment levels.

Our pro-business policies mean we have started the new year with a strong labour market, with wages outpacing inflation for the eleventh month in a row, and more people in work than ever before. It's also excellent news that we see the rate of women in employment at a record high.

Of course, we need to ensure that we continue to provide one-to-one support for anyone whose jobs may be at risk, or who might be looking to move to a new role.

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, while recent

Budget measures mean 2.4 million families will keep up to an extra £630 a year of what they earn:

- 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.

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