

Theresa May's reckless approach to our country's future will see a generation of young people losing out – Rayner

Angela Rayner MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Education, commenting on the Social Mobility Commission report, said:

"This report from the Government's own Social Mobility Commission shows that their policies will not improve social mobility in Britain.

"School budgets are being slashed, Sure Start Centres are being lost and there is nothing approaching a skills plan that will let us face the challenges of post-Brexit Britain.

"Theresa May's reckless approach to our country's future will see a generation of young people losing out. The next Labour government will ensure that wealth, power and opportunity are enjoyed by the many not the few."

Press release: More than 105,000 businesses helped through start-up fund

More than 105,000 businesses have been launched with the support from the New Enterprise Allowance (NEA), a fund available to jobseekers with a business idea.

Successful applicants get access to a business mentor, financial support for up to 6 months and may be able to apply for a loan of up to £25,000 to help with start-up costs.

The latest NEA figures show that the North West had the highest number of start-ups (16,090), followed by London (12,870) and Yorkshire and Humberside (11,590).

Minister for Employment Damian Hinds said:

As these latest figures show, thousands of people across the country have great business ideas, and are taking the steps to turn them into a reality.

The NEA provides the right mix of expert, tailored advice and support to people of all backgrounds which can be invaluable in the early days of starting a company.

The figures also show that of the individuals launching a business:

- over two thirds were aged between 25 and 49
- 24% were over the age of 50
- 7% were aged between 18 and 24
- 40% were women
- 22% have a self-declared disability
- 13% were from a black and minority ethnic background

Sunderland-based Colin Young, 51, made use of the scheme to launch his business after being made redundant. The NEA helped him start North East Drone Services, a professional drone photography service.

After working as a TV and photography technician for 13 years, I decided to invest in myself with the New Enterprise Allowance.

I met with an adviser who not only helped me with my business plan, but also to plan for any pitfalls that I might not have considered.

The full regional breakdown of figures:

Region	Individuals with an NEA business start (entries are rounded to the nearest 10)
North West	16,090
London	12,870
Yorkshire and Humberside	11,590
West Midlands	10,210
Scotland	9,600
South East	8,040
South West	7,240
East of England	7,210
North East	7,180
Wales	6,130
East Midlands	6,100

105,500 businesses have been set up through the NEA scheme.

The financial support is paid as a weekly allowance of £65 a week for 13 weeks and then £33 for the following 13 weeks (a total of £1,274 over 26 weeks).

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5124

Follow DWP on:

[Use Queen's Speech to end cuts to emergency services – Jeremy Corbyn](#)

Labour has tabled an amendment to the Queen's Speech, which will be the first vote of the new Parliament, when voted on tomorrow (Wednesday), and a test case for MPs' approach to austerity.

After seven years of austerity, the amendment seeks to force the government to end cuts to the police and fire service and lift the Public Sector Pay Cap to give emergency and public service workers a pay rise.

Commenting on the amendment, Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party, said:

"You can't have safety and security on the cheap. It is plain to see that seven years of cuts to our emergency services has made us less safe; it's time to make a change.

"Our emergency service workers make us proud at the worst of times for our country, such as the Grenfell Tower Fire and the recent terrorist attacks, and deserve the pay rise they have been denied for seven years.

"Conservative cuts have failed. Labour has a different approach, which values those who look after us and will transform Britain for the many not the few."

[News story: Jellyfish collagen pioneers set up biomaterial plant in Wales](#)

Cardiff is now home to the first commercial manufacturing plant for extracting high-purity collagen from jellyfish.

The 7,500 square foot facility – established by medtech and biomaterials company [Jellagen](#) at Capital Business Park, Wentloog – will serve the

research, medical, biotech and pharmaceutical markets.

Collagen is the most abundant protein in the human body and provides structural support for cells in the body's tissues and organs. It has been used in medical device and research applications for many years. It is usually sourced from pigs, cows, rats and horses.

Manufacturing in bulk quantities

As these mammals carry a risk of disease, Jellagen is moving away from traditional sources to develop a next generation collagen. This is with the help of £225,000 in grant funding from Innovate UK.

The company carries out sustainable harvesting of jellyfish off the west coast of Wales and operates a depot at Pembroke Dock.

Professor Andrew Mearns Spragg, Chief Executive and Founder, said:

This is a key milestone in Jellagen's evolution. To be able to manufacture jellyfish collagen in bulk quantities enables us to supply and meet the needs of world-leading medical device, biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies.

Jellyfish collagen is, in essence, the root of all collagens and is compatible with a broad range of cell types. This makes it ideally suited to support the growth of a wide range of human cells and enables it to be an effective biomaterial for applications such as cell culture, wound care and regeneration.

Investment from Finance Wales

The next step for the business is [ISO13485](#) certification, allowing it to produce material suitable for medical application and devices and to sell to the market. This will be in place by the end of 2017.

Since it was founded in 2013, Jellagen has raised more than £2.4 million in funding from grants and investment. That has included £1.8 million through the [Angels in MedCity](#) programme, with involvement from Finance Wales.

Last year the firm won the [Life Sciences Hub Wales](#) Boost Cymru competition to find the most innovative new life sciences business in Wales.

[News story: Department for Education](#)

Reports Gender Pay Gap

The Department for Education has today become the first Government department to publish its gender pay gap and bonus pay gap, setting an example to other employers on promoting gender equality in the workplace.

The department has reported a mean pay gap – the difference between average salaries for men and women – of 5.3% and a median pay gap of 5.9%. This is compared to the UK's national gender pay gap of 18.1% which is the lowest since records began in 1997.

The pay gap data will be published by all government departments and large private companies by April 2018 – shining a light on our workplaces to see where there is more to do and helping people make informed decisions about their career.

Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities Justine Greening said:

I'm proud that the Department for Education has taken an important step in reporting its gender pay gap, setting an example to other employers as we build a stronger economy where success is defined by talent, not gender or circumstance.

The UK's gender pay gap is at a record low, but we are committed to closing it. As one of the UK's largest employers, the public sector has a vital role to play in leading the way to tackle the gender pay gap which is why the DfE's step to publish our gender pay gap matters.

Through transparency we can find out what the situation is, where there is best practice and create pressure for more progress.

The Department for Education is committed to reducing its gender pay gap and has introduced a range of initiatives to support women in the workplace, including:

- Support for women returning to work: through shared parental leave, job sharing or part time opportunities. The department has also updated its guidance on supporting staff returning from maternity or adoption leave.
- Helping women progress in their careers: through talent management schemes such as the Positive Action Pathway, open to all from protected characteristic groups.
- Providing networks: the departmental women's equality network, Network 58, runs upskilling events, promotes campaigns and holds talks to support women in the workplace.
- Monitoring pay: to identify any pay differences and take targeted action where appropriate.
- Improving the recruitment process: the department has anonymised the

application process to reduce unconscious bias and ensuring that all interviewers have undergone unconscious bias training.

- Focus on gender equality: the department has made gender equality a central part of the departmental Diversity and Inclusion strategy.

These initiatives have helped to create a culture that supports women in the workplace and have been supported by strong leadership across the organisation, helping to close the gender pay gap.

In April, the UK became one of the first countries in the world to require mandatory gender pay gap reporting, a key part of the government's work to eliminate the gender pay gap. Private, public and voluntary sector employers with 250 or more employees will be required to publish their gender pay gap and bonus pay gap by April 2018. The published gender pay gap data can be viewed [here](#).

The detailed information published today shows the department has also reported a mean bonus pay gap of only 0.8% and a 0.0% median bonus pay gap. Its bonus awards are based on performance and this 0.0% pay gap reflects the fact that men and women's performance is valued equally and fairly.

Breaking down the gender pay gap data by quartiles has helped the department to identify exactly where attention should be focused. Over half (55%) of the department's senior civil servants are female and there is a higher proportion of women than men in the department's top pay quartile. However, there is also a higher concentration of women to men in the department's lowest pay quartile, which has contributed to the gender pay gap. Through the initiatives referenced above, the department will work to continue to support women's progress in the workplace.

The gender pay gap mandatory reporting requirements are part of wider work the Government is doing to support women in the workplace. This includes £5 million to support returners, offering 30 hours of free childcare, and introducing shared parental leave and new rights to request flexible working. There is also extensive cross-Government work to get more women into the top jobs at the UK's biggest companies and to get more girls taking STEM subjects at school.