

Disability figures deal blow to 1m jobs target

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Theresa May's pledge to get one million more disabled people into work has been called into question after figures showed more people with disabilities are leaving jobs than starting them.

At the general election the prime minister vowed to narrow the disability employment gap and help one million more people with disabilities find employment over the next ten years. But the current rates of retention make clear the scale of the government's task.

Between October last year and this March, 123,000 disabled people left work, according to the Office for National Statistics. During the same period only 108,000 disabled people found jobs.

The figures meant that for every 100 disabled people who moved into work, 114 moved out of work.

Scope, the disability charity, called on the government to explain how it planned to get more disabled people into work. Martin Atkinson, the chief

executive, said: "The government must take rapid and real action to stop this manifesto pledge becoming nothing more than another broken promise to disabled people. It is vital that the government sets out a comprehensive plan on how it intends to get one million more disabled people into work."

Mencap, the learning disabilities charity, accused the government of "overlooking" disabled people when the policy was left out of the Queen's Speech.

A spokeswoman for the Department for Work and Pensions said: "Almost 600,000 disabled people have entered work in the last four years which is great news, but we know there's more to do to ensure disabled people are able to enjoy the benefits good work can bring.

"That's why we consulted on these concerns through our work and health green paper, and our Disability Confident scheme is working directly with employers to help transform attitudes and ensure the labour market benefits from this untapped pool of talent."

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