



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE 4 Nations Inter-Ministerial Group on Work and Pensions

DATE 05 February 2026

BY Jane Hutt MS, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip and Jack Sargeant MS, Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

On 19 January, the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip, Jane Hutt MS, and the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership, Jack Sargeant MS, hosted the Four Nations Inter-Ministerial Group on Work and Pensions. The meeting brought together Ministers from the Northern Ireland Executive, Scottish Government, UK Government and Welsh Government to discuss shared priorities on employment support for disabled people and young people.

Chairing the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip outlined Wales's cross-government approach to employability support for disabled people, highlighting the recently published Disabled People's Rights Plan for Wales, which aims to strengthen disabled people's rights and opportunities across all areas of life, including employment. The Cabinet Secretary emphasised that the social model of disability is the central principle underpinning all Welsh Government support for disabled people.

The Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership highlighted the importance of the Welsh Government's support to employers including Business Wales and the Disabled People's Employment Champions, who draw on lived experience to help employers remove barriers using the social model of disability. The Minister welcomed the joint work on Wales's Economic Inactivity Trailblazers, particularly the effectiveness of their person-centred, multi-agency approach, but noted concerns about the two-year funding period and requested UK Government to share early learning and any plans for wider rollout of the Trailblazers as soon as it is available.

The Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership underlined the importance of evidence-based approaches, monitoring employment outcomes and addressing pay gaps, and welcomed the continued commitment to collaboration across the four nations. On youth employment, the Minister highlighted the success of Wales's Young Person's Guarantee, which has supported 64,000 young people into work since 2021. With a focus on implications for pilot programmes in Wales the Minister stressed the importance of early

engagement with devolved governments on the development of the UK Youth Guarantee. This engagement will also ensure consistency and alignment in provision across devolved governments and maximise impact.

The practical barriers to employment faced by both young people and disabled people were noted, including access to education, transport and training. Wales was recognised for its good practice in mitigating barriers, for example, through maintaining and increasing Education Maintenance Allowance and introducing affordable bus fares for young people.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to continued information-sharing and enhance collaboration across the four nations to prevent duplication of efforts.

A [communiqué](#) will be published on the UK Government's website in the near future.

The Terms of Reference are available on the dedicated [Intergovernmental Relations page](#) of the UK Government website.