



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Disability Confident Scheme

Findings from a survey of participating employers

May 2022

A report carried out by Ipsos on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.

Crown copyright 2023.

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/> or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk.

This document/publication is also available on our website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/communications-and-customer-insight-research>

First published September 2023.

ISBN 978-1-78659-556-0

Views expressed in this report are not necessarily those of the Department for Work and Pensions or any other government department.

Voluntary statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

The Code of Practice for Statistics (the Code) is built around 3 main concepts, or pillars, trustworthiness, quality and value:

- trustworthiness – is about having confidence in the people and organisations that publish statistics
- quality – is about using data and methods that produce assured statistics
- value – is about publishing statistics that support society's needs for information

The following explains how we have applied the pillars of the Code in a proportionate way.

Trustworthiness

This research was conducted, delivered and analysed impartially by Ipsos.

Quality

The survey was carried out using established statistical methods. The research has been quality assured using Ipsos' internal quality checking processes, which have been shared with the Department for Work and Pensions. The report has been checked thoroughly and quality assured by analysts at the Department for Work and Pensions to ensure it meets the highest standards of analysis and drafting.

Value

This research provides insight into how employers feel about their membership of the Disability Confident Scheme.

Executive summary

This report presents findings from research into members of the Disability Confident employer scheme, conducted by Ipsos.

The research involved a mixed mode survey (telephone and online) with 1,233 members of the Disability Confident scheme. Survey findings were weighted to be representative of the Disability Confident membership in terms of size of employer and Disability Confident Level.

Overall, employers were positive about employing disabled people or people who have long-term health conditions. Around seven in ten (71%) employers agreed that the recruitment or retention of an employee who is or has become disabled has a positive impact on staff morale. More than four in five (83%) employers did not view employing disabled people or those with a long-term health condition as an impediment to their organisation's productivity. Employers signed up to Level 3 of the scheme and large employers (250 or more employees) had more favourable views.

More than four in five (86%) employers were aware of at least one of the benefits available to them through the Disability Confident scheme. Of those aware, eight in ten (79%) had used these benefits. The most used benefits were the email updates (52%), the Disability Confident scheme gov.uk website (46%) and the Disability Confident newsletters (45%). The least used benefit was the LinkedIn members group, used by 4 per cent of those aware of any benefits.

The majority of employers had disability recruitment and retention practices in place before joining the Disability Confident scheme. The most common recruitment activities, both pre and post signing up to the scheme, were making adjustments for disabled people during the recruitment process (70% and 84% respectively) and ensuring staff involved in the recruitment process had appropriate disability training (65% and 81% respectively).

Around two thirds (63%) of employers reported recruiting a disabled employee or employee with a long-term health condition since joining the Disability Confident scheme. Large employers were the most likely to have done so (81%).

Around two thirds of employers promoted their Disability Confident credentials internally, through their intranet or internal communications to staff (70%) and/or externally, through their website, on applications or through vacancies by using the Disability Confident badge (65%).

The majority of members were planning on renewing their membership, with a quarter (25%) intending to move up a level and nearly three in five (57%) planning to stay at the same level. Very few did not intend to renew (2%).

[Since the 2018 survey](#), satisfaction with the information and support offered by Jobcentre Plus and DWP through the Disability Confident scheme has declined. This appears to be largely due to more employers having a neutral attitude rather than being dissatisfied with the information and/or support provided.

The Disability Confident scheme was generally seen as having a positive impact. Two thirds (67%) of employers agreed that joining the Disability Confident scheme had a positive impact on their organisation. When asked whether joining the Disability Confident scheme had any effect on disabled employees disclosing and/or sharing information about their disability, around a third (36%) of employers reported that disabled employees were now more likely to disclose and/or share information about their disability, although many employers (49%) reported that joining the scheme had made no difference to this. In addition, around a quarter (22%) said that in the absence of the scheme they would not have made changes to their disability employment practices.

Around three in five (62%) employers collected information on whether employees were disabled or had a long-term health condition. Around two in five (39%) employers at Level 3 of the scheme reported on disability mental health and wellbeing by using the Voluntary Reporting Framework.

Glossary

Size definitions

Employers are referred to by size (number of employees) throughout the report. These definitions are as follows:

Micro employers ‘Micro’ employers are those with 1 to 9 employees. However, only employers with at least 2 employees were included in the research. Throughout the report, we report on ‘small employers’ (combining those with 2 to 49 employees) but draw out findings relating to micro employers (2 to 9) included in the research where their behaviours are substantially different to small employers (with 10 to 49 employees).

Small employers ‘Small’ employers are those with 10 to 49 employees. As noted above, we have combined micro and small employers together for reporting purposes, unless the experiences of micro employers are notably different.

Medium employers Employers that have 50 to 249 employees.

Large employers Employers that have 250 employees or more.

Contents

- Voluntary statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics 3
- Trustworthiness 3
- Quality 3
- Value 3

- Executive summary 4
- Glossary 6

- 1. Introduction 9
 - 1.1. Research objectives and methodology 9

- 2. Attitudes towards employing disabled people and people who have long-term health conditions..... 11

- 3. Joining the Disability Confident Scheme and its benefits..... 14
 - 3.1. Parties involved in joining the Disability Confident scheme 14
 - 3.2. Reasons for signing up to the Disability Confident scheme 16
 - 3.3. Benefits provided by the Disability Confident Scheme..... 18

- 4. Recruitment and retention practices before and after joining the scheme 22
 - 4.1. Recruitment practices before signing up to the scheme 22
 - 4.2. Current recruitment practices 22
 - 4.3. Retention practices before signing up to the scheme 24
 - 4.4. Current retention practices 24
 - 4.5. Recruitment 25

- 5. Promoting membership and progression to the next level 29
 - 5.1. Promoting membership of the scheme 29
 - 5.2. Progression to the next level 30
 - 5.3. Membership renewal 31

- 6. Experience of the scheme 33
 - 6.1. Experience versus expectations 33
 - 6.2. Information and support provided 33
 - 6.3. Scheme impact..... 36

- 7. Information collected and reported on..... 41
 - 7.1. Collect information about disability and long-term health conditions . 41
 - 7.2. Use of the Voluntary Reporting Framework..... 42

Appendix..... 43
 Methodology..... 43
 The sample..... 43
 Interpreting the findings..... 44

1. Introduction

The Disability Confident scheme was launched in November 2016 by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It aims to give employers the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to attract, recruit, retain and develop disabled people and people who have long-term health conditions. There are three levels of the scheme, and employers can choose to progress through each level at their own pace. On attaining each level employers receive a certificate in recognition, and a badge to use on their website, valid for three years, as well as other materials:

- **Level 1 'Committed'**: Employers sign up to the scheme via gov.uk where they agree to five Disability Confident commitments and to carrying out at least one activity from a list of nine that will make a difference to disabled people.
- **Level 2 'Employer'**: Organisations at this level complete an action-focused self-assessment covering two themes and agree to take all of the 'core actions' and at least one 'activity' specified by DWP against each theme.
- **Level 3 'Leader'**: To achieve this level, employers are required to have their self-assessment validated by a third party. Level 3 employers also agree to act as a champion for disability employment within local and business communities and report on the actions they are taking to support disability, mental health, and wellbeing in the workplace using the Voluntary Reporting Framework.

1.1. Research objectives and methodology

The objective of this research was to understand from an employer perspective the impact that signing up to the Disability Confident scheme has had on their recruitment and retention attitudes and practices with regards to disabled people. In addition, the research aimed to understand what motivates employers to sign-up to the scheme and what support those employers need to promote the scheme both within and outside of their organisation. The research also looked at intentions to remain within the scheme and likelihood of recommending the scheme.

The research follows on from a [similar survey published in 2018](#). This report includes some of the results from the 2018 research to examine changes over time.

The 2022 Disability Confident research consisted of a mixed mode survey (telephone and online) carried out between 1st February and 11th March 2022 with a sample of 1,233 employers who had signed up to Disability Confident scheme. A booster of Level 3 employers was contained within the sampling strategy to enable sub-group analysis by membership level. Further details regarding the methodology, including the sample design, can be found in the Appendix.

This report only comments on sub-group differences that are statistically significant at the 95% level of confidence. This is also the case where differences are noted between the 2022 and 2018 survey data. Where percentages do not sum up to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of 'don't know/not applicable' categories, or the question may have been one where respondents could provide more than one answer.

2. Attitudes towards employing disabled people and people who have long-term health conditions

This chapter explores the attitudes of employers on the Disability Confident scheme towards employing disabled people and people with long-term health conditions. It looks in detail at how these perceptions vary by different types of employer.

Overall, the majority of the employers had positive attitudes towards employing disabled people and/or people with long-term health conditions. Around seven in ten (71%) employers agreed that the recruitment or retention of an employee who is or has become disabled has a positive impact on staff morale. This rose to around four in five among large employers (80%) and employers at Level 3 of the scheme (85%). In addition, employers who were generally more engaged with the scheme tended to show higher levels of agreement with this statement. For example, those who collect information on disability or long-term health conditions, and those employers who are planning on moving up a Disability Confident level (76% and 79% respectively) were more likely to agree that employing a disabled person would have a positive impact on staff morale, than employers who were not collecting information or were planning on staying at the same Disability Confident level (63% and 69% respectively).

The majority of employers on the scheme held positive views on the perceived impact of employing someone with a disability or long-term health condition on the productivity of the organisation. Overall, only six per cent of employers had the view that employing disabled people or those with a long-term health condition would be an impediment to their organisation's productivity. These views have remained stable over time and reflect the findings in the 2018 Disability Confident survey.

Employers at Level 3 of the Disability Confident scheme and large employers were least likely to think that employing a disabled person or person who has a long-term health condition would make their organisation less productive. The overwhelming majority disagreed that their organisation would become less productive (98% and 92% respectively).

Private sector employers were more likely than either public sector or charity/voluntary sector employers to think that employing disabled people or those

with a long-term health condition would be a barrier to productivity (8% versus 0% and 4% respectively).

Table 2.1: Attitudes towards employing disabled people or those with a long-term health condition

	The recruitment or retention of an employee who is or has become disabled has a positive impact on staff morale			Employing disabled people or people who have long-term health conditions would make my organisation less productive		
	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Agree	Neither	Disagree
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total 2018	77	15	6	3	8	88
Total 2022	71	18	7	6	10	83
2022						
Scheme level						
Level 1	70	20	7	7	11	81
Level 2	76	12	8	2	9	87
Level 3*	85	8	3	-	-	98
Employer size						
Micro (<10 employees)	70	18	9	6	12	79
Small (10-49 employees)	68	21	8	7	11	81
Medium (50-249 employees)	71	17	9	6	8	85
Large (250+ employees)	80	13	4	1	6	92

2018 Base= 600; 2022 Base=1,233. Level 1 = 879, Level 2 = 242, Level 3 = 105; Micro=401, Small=394, Medium=220, Large=208. *Caution low base size.

Although employers on the scheme had positive attitudes towards employing disabled people or those with long-term health conditions, just over half (52%) of employers agreed that there were particular challenges in recruiting or retaining disabled people or those with a long-term health condition. Micro employers were more likely than medium and large employers to agree with this statement (57% versus 46% medium and 47% large organisations).

Private sector employers and charity/voluntary sector employers were more likely than employers in the public sector to agree that there were challenges involved in recruiting or retaining disabled people or people who have a long-term health condition (53% and 55% versus 42%).

Table 2.2: Extent of agreement and disagreement with the statement that there are particular challenges involved in recruiting or retaining disabled people or people who have a long-term health condition

	There are particular challenges involved in recruiting or retaining disabled people or people who have long-term health conditions		
	Agree	Neither	Disagree
	%	%	%
Total 2018	52	16	31
Total 2022	52	20	25
2022			
Scheme level			
Level 1	55	19	23
Level 2	43	24	31
Level 3*	51	10	38
Employer size			
Micro (<10 employees)	57	18	21
Small (10-49 employees)	53	20	26
Medium (50-249 employees)	46	21	31
Large (250+ employees)	47	23	29

2018 Unweighted base= 600; 2022 Unweighted base=1,233. Level 3 = 105 Level 2 = 242, Level 1 = 879; Micro=401, Small=394, Medium=220, Large=208. *Caution low base size.

3. Joining the Disability Confident Scheme and its benefits

This chapter looks at who was involved in the decision to sign up to the Disability Confident scheme and their reasons for joining. It also looks at awareness of the benefits offered to Disability Confident scheme members and their usage.

3.1. Parties involved in joining the Disability Confident scheme

In more than four in five cases (86%) the respondent who completed the survey had been involved in the final decision to sign up to the Disability Confident scheme. More than a quarter (28%) of respondents had been solely responsible for making the final decision, whilst nearly three in five (58%) had made the decision with others. Just twelve per cent of respondents reported that they had not been involved in the decision to join the scheme. This pattern of response was similar to responses provided to the 2018 survey.

Whether the decision to join the scheme rested solely with one person or was a joint decision differed across employer size bands. Among large employers, the majority (89%) said that the decision had been made with others. In contrast, more than two in five (44%) micro employers said that the final decision had been theirs alone. In addition to the size of the organisation, decision style differed across sectors with those in the private sector more likely than either public sector or charity/voluntary sector employers to report they had been solely responsible for the decision to join the scheme (36% versus 10% and 22% respectively).

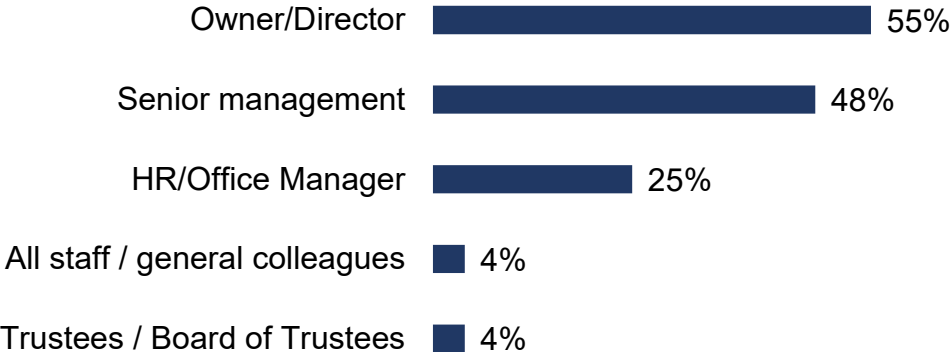
Table 3.1: Responsibility for making the decision to join the Disability Confident scheme

	Who was involved in the final decision to sign up to the Disability Confident Scheme?		
	Just you	You and others	Just others
	%	%	%
Total 2018	32	56	12
Total 2022	28	58	12
2022			
Size			
Micro (<10 employees)	44	47	7
Small (10-49 employees)	26	60	13
Medium (50-249 employees)	21	60	16
Large (250+ employees)	8	72	17
Sector			
Private	36	52	11
Public	10	65	11
Charity/Voluntary	22	63	11

2018 Unweighted base= 600; 2022 Unweighted base=1,233. Micro=401, Small=394, Medium=220, Large=208; Private=588, Public=120, Charity/Voluntary=435. *Caution low base size.

Among employers whose decision to join the Disability Confident scheme had involved other employees, the job roles most commonly involved in this decision-making process were the owner or directors of the firm (55%), followed by senior management (48%) and the HR/Office manager (25%).

Chart 3.1: Who else was involved in the decision to join the Disability Confident scheme

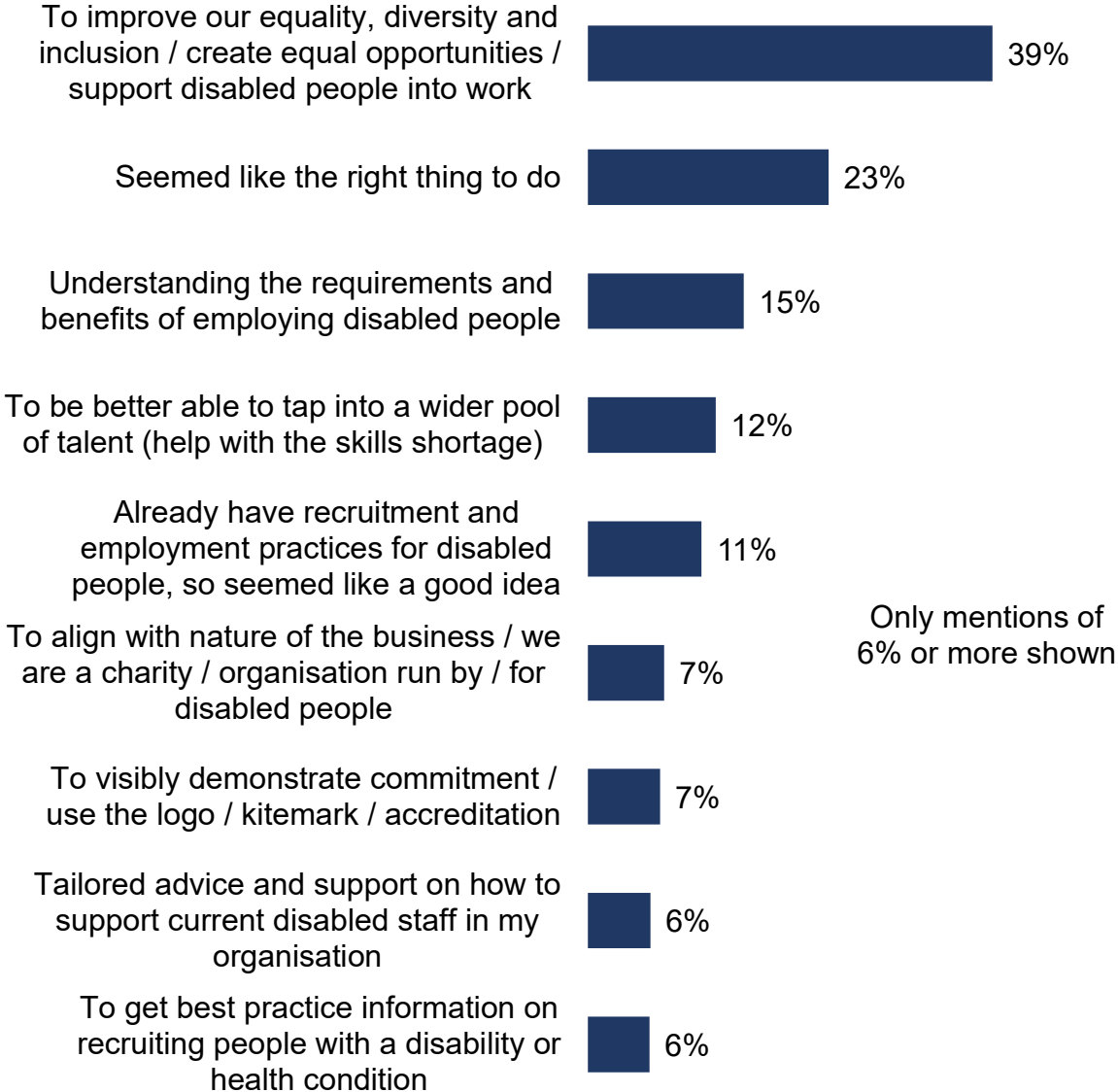


Unweighted base=875. All participants where the final decision to sign up to Disability Confident involved other people.

3.2. Reasons for signing up to the Disability Confident scheme

A range of reasons were given as to why employers had signed up to the Disability Confident scheme. Employers most commonly mentioned signing up to improve equality, diversity and inclusion, create equal opportunities and support disabled people into work (39%), and that it seemed like the right thing to do (23%).

Chart 3.2: Reasons for signing up to the Disability Confident scheme



Unweighted base=1,233. All participants.

Large employers were more likely than employers with fewer than 250 employees to mention the following reasons for signing up to the scheme:

- to improve equality, diversity and inclusion, create equal opportunities and support disabled people into work (52% versus 36%),
- to be better able to tap into a wider pool of talent (17% versus 11%),
- to visibly demonstrate commitment (16% versus 5%),
- to be able to use the logo, kitemark, accreditation (16% versus 5%),

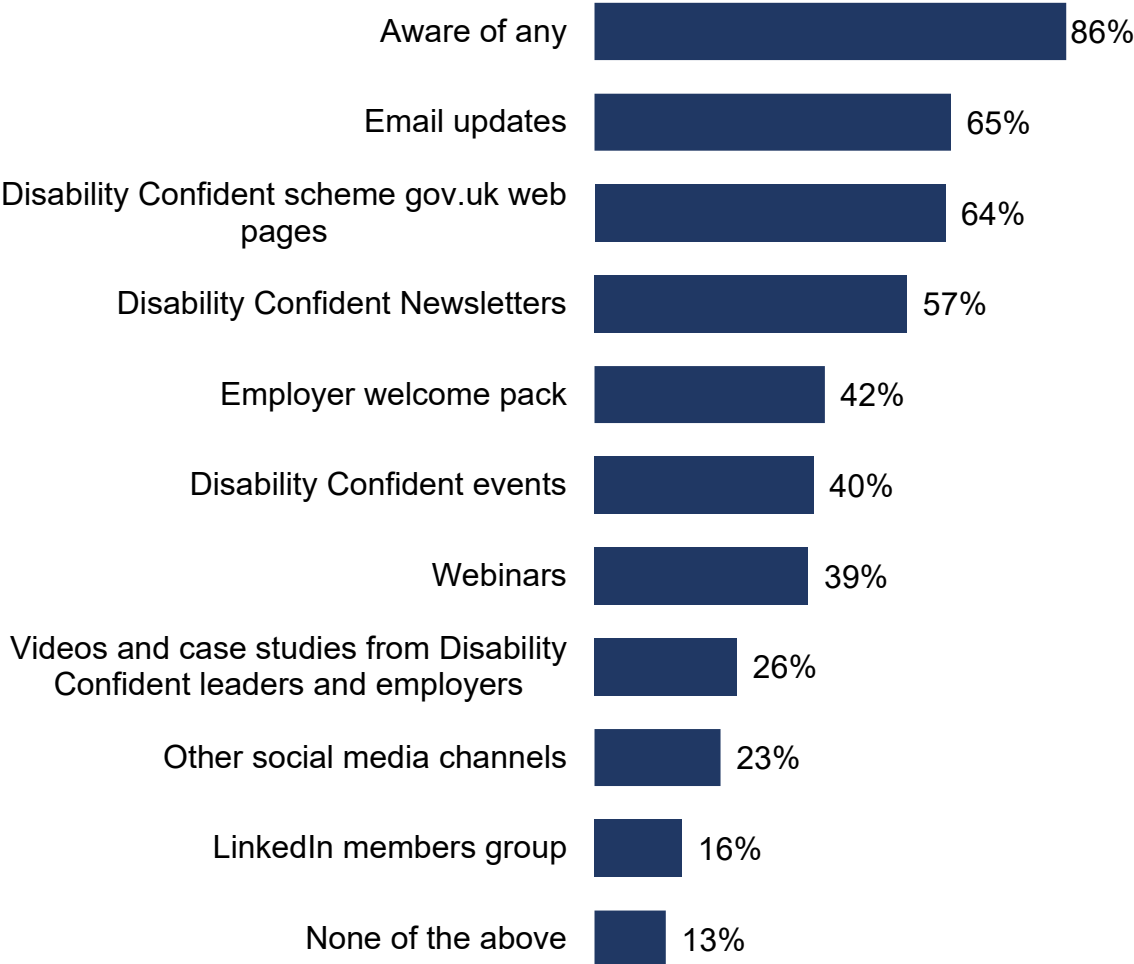
- it is a good or useful framework to follow (4% versus 0.5%).

3.3. Benefits provided by the Disability Confident Scheme

3.3.1. Awareness of benefits

Members of the Disability Confident scheme have access to several benefits. Overall, more than four in five (86%) employers were aware of at least one of the benefits available to them. Levels of awareness were highest for the email updates employers receive through the scheme (65%), the Disability Confident scheme gov.uk web pages (64%) and the Disability Confident Newsletter (57%). Members were least likely to be aware of the LinkedIn members group (16%).

Chart 3.3: Awareness of benefits available through the Disability Confident scheme



Unweighted base=1,233. All participants.

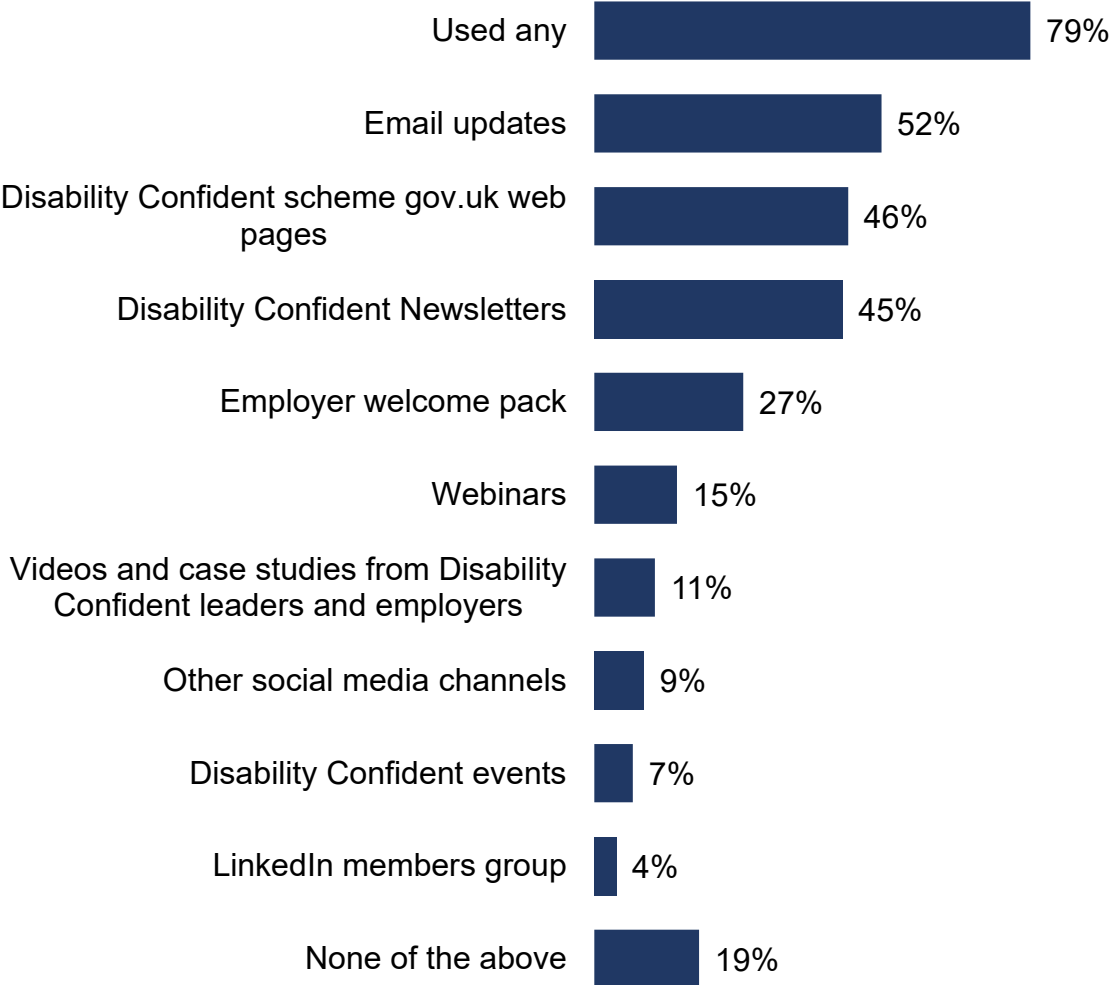
Employers at Level 2 (94%) or Level 3 (96%) of the scheme, large employers (93%) and public sector (96%) employers were the most likely to be aware of at least one of the benefits offered through the scheme.

In addition, employers who had experience recruiting disabled people or people with long-term health conditions, either before or after joining the scheme, were particularly likely to be aware of the benefits of the scheme (88% for both respectively).

3.3.2. Usage of benefits

Among the employers who were aware of at least one of the benefits offered through the Disability Confident scheme, nearly four in five (79%) had used at least one of the benefits. This means that, among all employers on the scheme, around two thirds (68%) had used at least one of the benefits. The most used benefits were the email updates (52%), the Disability Confident Scheme gov.uk website (46%) and the Disability Confident Newsletters (45%). The least used benefit was the LinkedIn members group (4%).

Chart 3.4: Usage of benefits available through the Disability Confident scheme



Unweighted base: 1,068. All participants who were aware of the benefits they received as part of the Disability Confident Scheme.

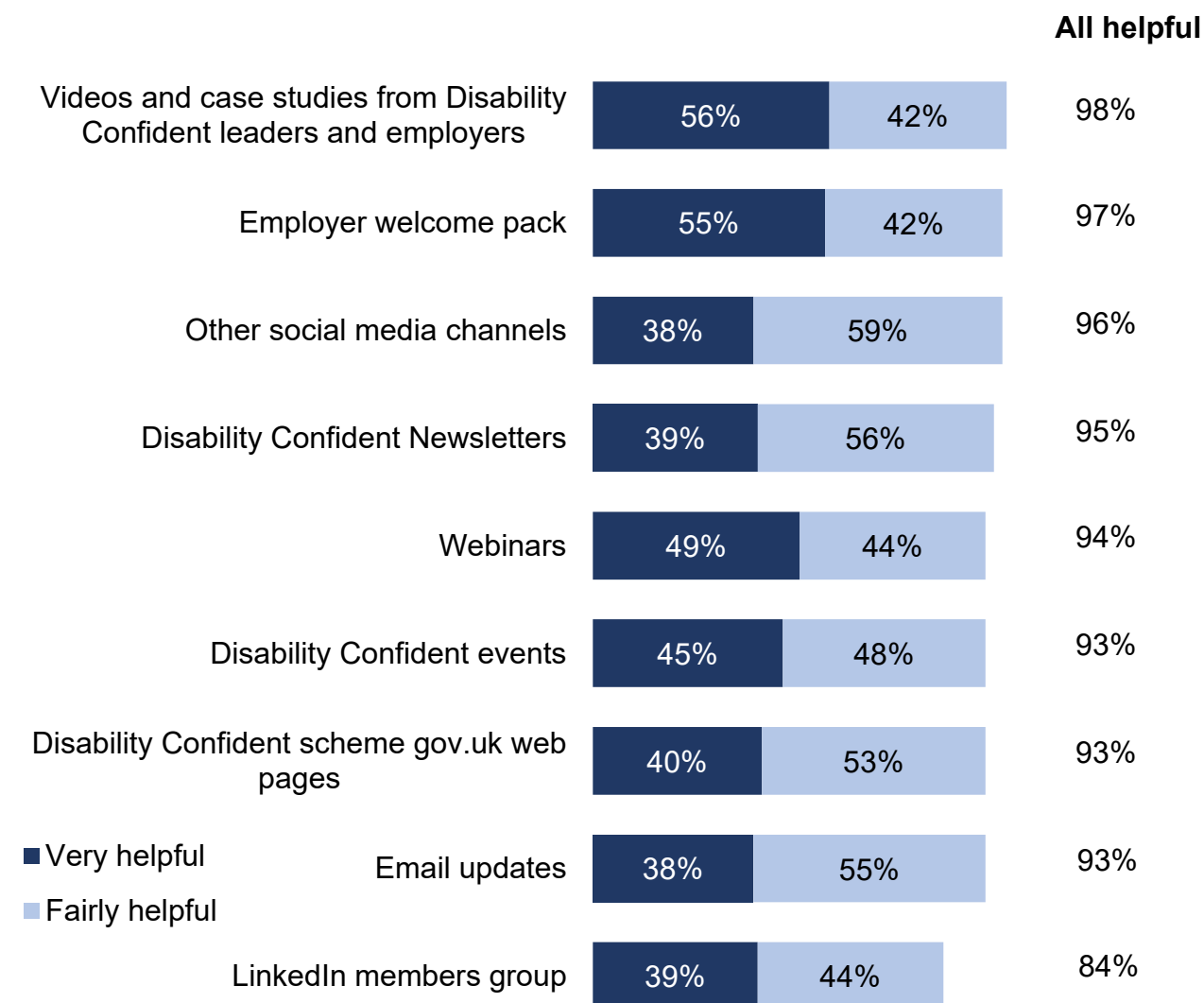
Scheme level, the size of employer and sector were all factors in whether an employer had used any of the benefits. Among those who were aware of the benefits, Level 3 scheme members (95%), large employers (88%) and public sector (90%) employers were the most likely to have used at least one of them.

Among those who were aware of the benefits, organisations in the public sector were more likely than those in either the private sector or charities/voluntary sector to have used:

- Disability Confident scheme gov.uk web pages (62% versus 41% and 46% respectively)
- Disability Confident newsletters (56% versus 42% and 44% respectively),
- Webinars (25% versus 14% and 15% respectively)
- Videos and case studies from Disability Confident leaders and employers (18% versus 10% both)
- Disability Confident events (17% versus 6% and 8% respectively)

Among those who had used the benefits, the vast majority considered them to be helpful. The LinkedIn members group had the lowest proportion of users saying that it was helpful but even then, more than four in five (84%) of those who used it said it was helpful (this figure should, however, be treated with caution due to a low base size (59)).

Chart 3.5: Helpfulness of the benefits available through the Disability Confident scheme



Unweighted base: All who used the benefit – videos and case studies from Disability Confident leaders and employers: 134; employer welcome pack: 295; other social media channels: 116; Disability Confident newsletters: 496; webinars: 190; Disability Confident events: 101; Disability Confident scheme gov.uk web pages: 502; email updates: 565; LinkedIn members group: 59.

4. Recruitment and retention practices before and after joining the scheme

This chapter looks at what employers were doing in relation to recruitment practices before they signed up to the Disability Confident scheme, as well as what employers were doing at the time of the survey. Employers were also asked whether they had undertaken particular activities related to disability retention before and after joining the scheme. It should be noted that the measures reported here are self-reported outcomes with no counterfactual (i.e., there is no way of knowing whether any changes to recruitment and retention would have occurred anyway, without the intervention of the Disability Confident scheme).

4.1. Recruitment practices before signing up to the scheme

Employers were asked whether they were doing any of the actions from a list of possible recruitment activities before signing up to the Disability Confident scheme. Overall, more than four in five (83%) employers had at least one of the recruitment practices in place before they signed up to the Disability Confident scheme and this rose to nearly all (96%) of those at Level 3 of the scheme.

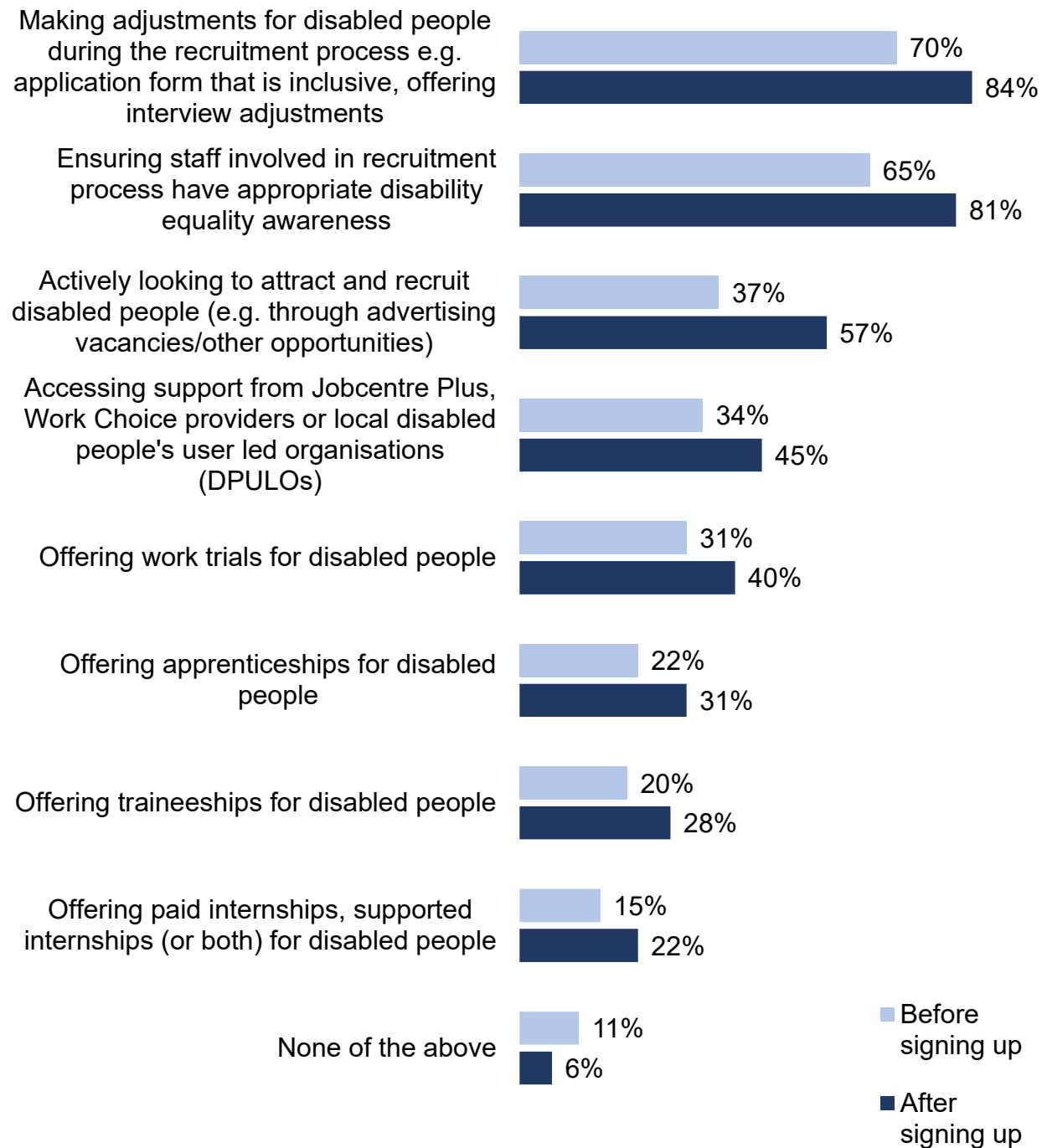
The most common activities, prior to joining the scheme, were making adjustments for disabled people during the recruitment process (70%) and ensuring staff involved in the recruitment process had appropriate disability training (65%). Employers at Level 3 of the Disability Confident scheme were more likely than those at Level 1 or Level 2 to report having been doing both of these recruitment actions, prior to joining the scheme.

4.2. Current recruitment practices

When asked about their current approach to recruitment, the vast majority of employers (93%) had disability recruitment practices in place, with the most common activities being making adjustments for disabled people during the recruitment process (84%) and ensuring staff involved in the recruitment process had appropriate disability training (81%). These were also the two most common actions that employers took before joining the Disability Confident scheme.

Again, employers at Level 3 of the Disability Confident scheme were more likely than those at Levels 1 or 2 to report doing each of the disability recruitment practices since joining the scheme.

Chart 4.1: Disability recruitment activities taken before and since signing up to the Disability Confident scheme



Unweighted base: 1,233. All participants

4.3. Retention practices before signing up to the scheme

Before signing up to the Disability Confident scheme, the majority of employers were taking actions to support their disabled employees or employees with long-term health conditions, with more than four in five employers taking at least one action. The two most common actions taken before signing up to the scheme were offering workplace adjustments (76%) and encouraging open discussions about disabilities and health conditions (68%).

Before joining the scheme, employers at Level 3 of the Disability Confident scheme were more likely than those at Level 1 or Level 2 to have been taking each of the actions to support their disabled employees or employees with long-term health conditions.

Large employers were particularly likely to have been providing occupational health services or employee assistance lines for disability concerns or issues (80% reported this in comparison to 23% micro, 45% small and 62% medium employers).

4.4. Current retention practices

Most employers also reported taking actions to support existing disabled employees or employees with long-term health conditions since joining the Disability Confident scheme. More than four in five reported that they were currently offering workplace adjustments (85%) or encouraging open discussions about disabilities and health conditions (85%).

Employers at Level 3 of the Disability Confident scheme were more likely than those at Levels 1 or 2 to be taking each of the actions to support their disabled employees or employees with long-term health conditions.

Again, large employers were more likely than all other employers to be providing occupational health services or employee assistance lines for disability concerns or issues (90% versus 36% micro, 61% small and 73% medium). Large employers were also more likely to be taking nearly all the actions they were asked about compared to the smallest employers, with the exception of providing mentoring, coaching, buddying or other support networks for disabled employees, and identifying/sharing good practices for recruiting and retaining disabled people with other organisations.

Chart 4.2: Approaches to supporting disabled people or people who have a long-term health condition, before and since joining the Disability Confident scheme

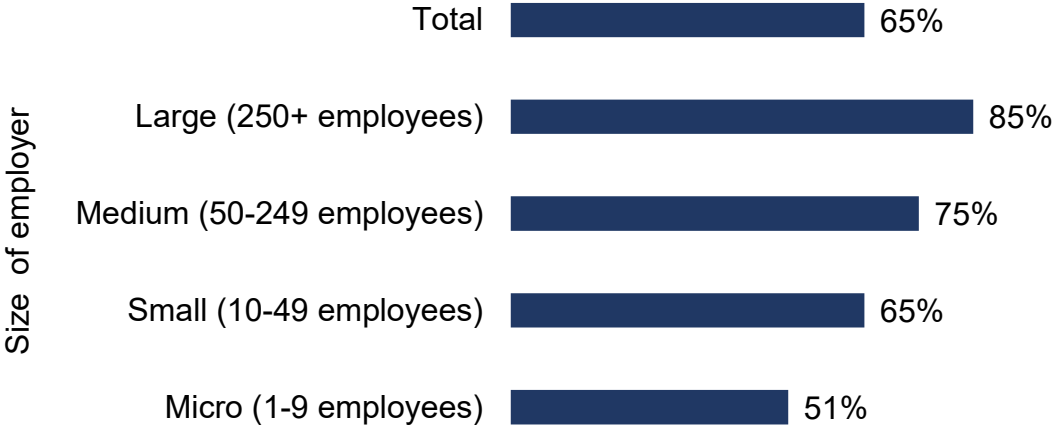


Unweighted base: 1,233. All participants

4.5. Recruitment

Around twelve months before signing-up to the Disability Confident scheme, two thirds (65%) of employers had employed someone with a disability or long-term health condition, including a mental health condition. Large employers were more likely to have employed someone with a disability or long-term health condition than employers in all other size bands (85%). Nevertheless, half of the smallest employers, with fewer than 10 employees, had employed someone with a disability or long-term health condition before joining the scheme (51%).

Chart 4.3: Proportion of employers who had employed someone with a disability or long-term health condition, before joining the Disability Confident scheme

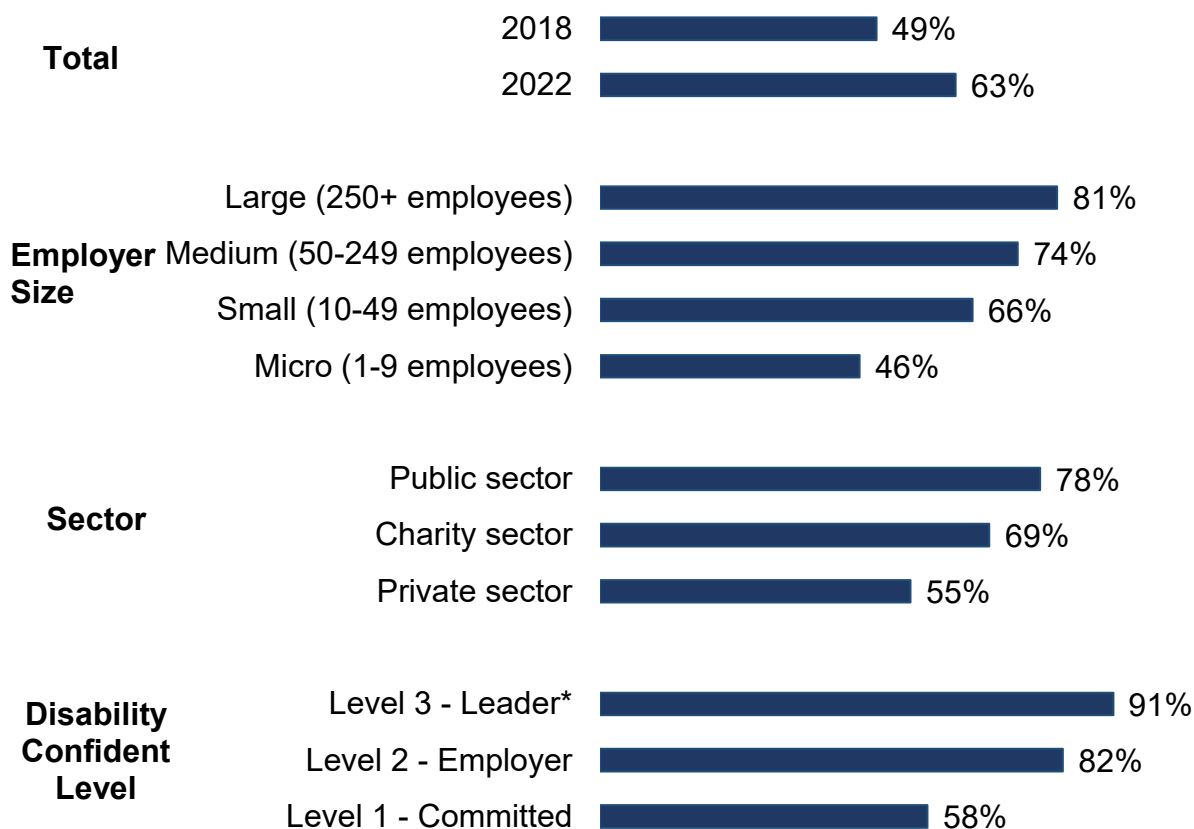


Unweighted base=1,233. All participants. Large=208, Medium=220, Small=394, Micro=401.

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of employers reported that they had recruited at least one disabled employee or an employee who had a long-term health condition, including a mental health condition since joining the Disability Confident scheme. This was an increase from the 2018 survey where around a half (49%) of the employers had recruited a disabled employee or employee with a long-term health condition, after joining the scheme.

As in 2018, size of employer, sector and membership level were all factors in whether an employer had recruited a disabled employee or employee with a long-term health condition since joining the scheme. Large employers (81%), public sector employers (78%) and those on Level 3 of the scheme (91%) were among those most likely to have recruited disabled employees or employees with long-term health conditions, including a mental health condition, since joining the scheme.

Chart 4.4: Proportion of employers who had recruited a disabled employee or employee with a long-term health condition, since joining the Disability Confident scheme



2018 Unweighted base= 600; 2022 Unweighted base=1,233. All participants. Large=208, Medium=220, Small=394, Micro=401; Public=120, Charity=435, Private=588; Level 3=105, Level 2=242, Level 1=879. *Caution low base size

Among the employers who had recruited a disabled employee or employee with a long-term health condition since joining the scheme, nearly three in five (58%) had recruited fewer than 5 disabled employees or employees with a long-term health condition. This was similar to findings from the 2018 survey (54%).

As might be expected, the size of the employer and membership level were linked to the number of employees recruited with a disability or long-term health condition. Around a third of large employers (33%) and those on Level 3 of the Disability Confident scheme (39%) reported that they had recruited 11 or more employees who had disability or long-term health condition since joining the scheme.

Table 4.1: Number of disabled employees or employees with a long-term health condition recruited since joining the Disability Confident scheme

Base: All who have offered a position to or recruited either disabled employees or employees with a long-term health condition	Number of employees recruited				
	Less than 5	5 to 10	11 or more	Don't know/ prefer not to say	Do not collect information
	%	%	%	%	%
Total 2018	54	15	11	12	6
Total 2022	58	14	12	10	5
2022					
Scheme level					
Level 1	68	14	7	8	4
Level 2	35	15	21	18	10
Level 3*	22	20	39	12	7
Size					
Micro (<10 employees)	87	8	2	2	1
Small (10-49 employees)	75	15	3	4	3
Medium (50-249 employees)	48	24	13	12	4
Large (250+ employees)	13	12	33	27	16

2018 Base= 600; 2022 Base=1,233. Level 1 = 879, Level 2 = 242, Level 3 = 105; Micro=401, Small=394, Medium=220, Large=208. *Caution low base size

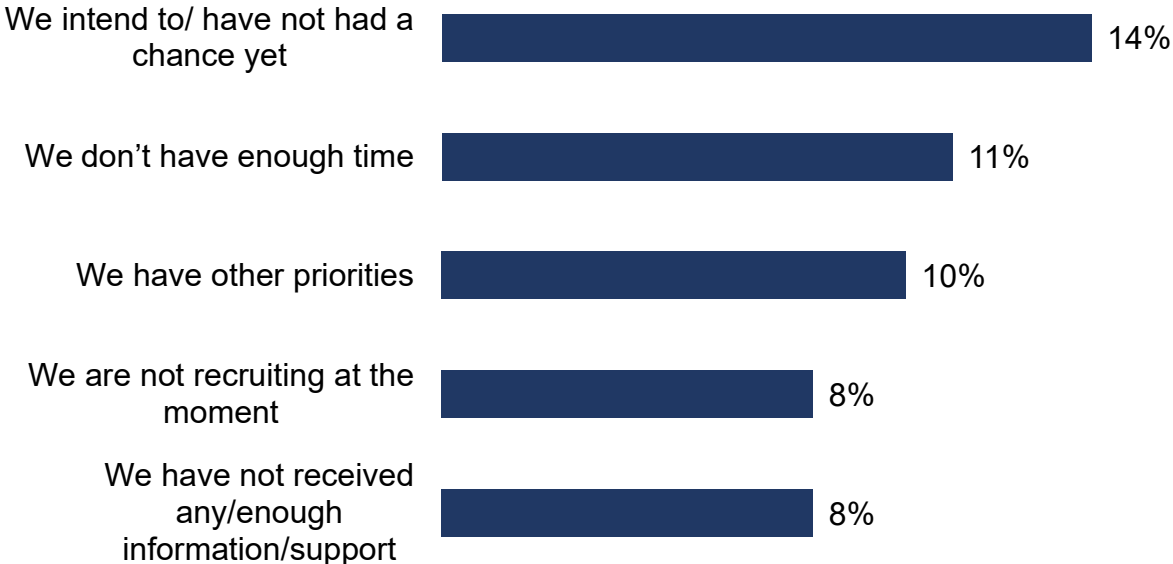
5. Promoting membership and progression to the next level

This chapter explores to what extent employers promote their membership of the Disability Confident scheme and the reasons behind why they may not be taking action to promote the scheme. This section also looks at employers’ plans to stay on the Disability Confident scheme and progress to the next level.

5.1. Promoting membership of the scheme

Around two thirds of employers said they were promoting their Disability Confident status externally through their website, on applications or through vacancies by using the badge (65%), and internally through their internal communications to staff (70%). Among the employers who were not promoting their Disability Confident credentials, the main reasons mentioned for not doing so were that they have not had a chance to yet (14%) and not having enough time (11%).

Chart 5.1: Top 5 reasons for not promoting membership of Disability Confident

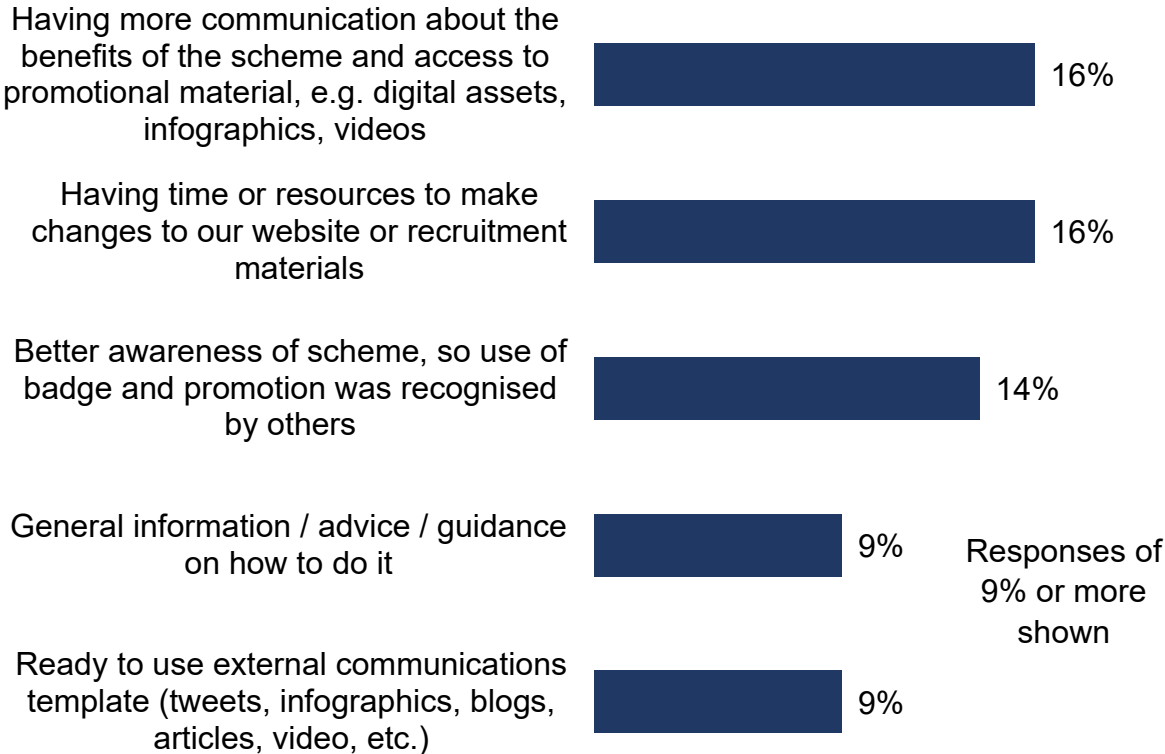


Unweighted base=243. All those not currently promoting Disability Confident internally or externally.

Employers who were not promoting their Disability Confident credentials were asked what would help them to start promoting their membership of the scheme. A wide

range of responses were given but most commonly mentioned were better communication of the benefits of the scheme and access to promotional materials (16%), having the time or resources to make changes to their website or recruitment materials (16%), and a better awareness of the scheme among other organisations (14%).

Chart 5.2: What would encourage you to promote your membership?

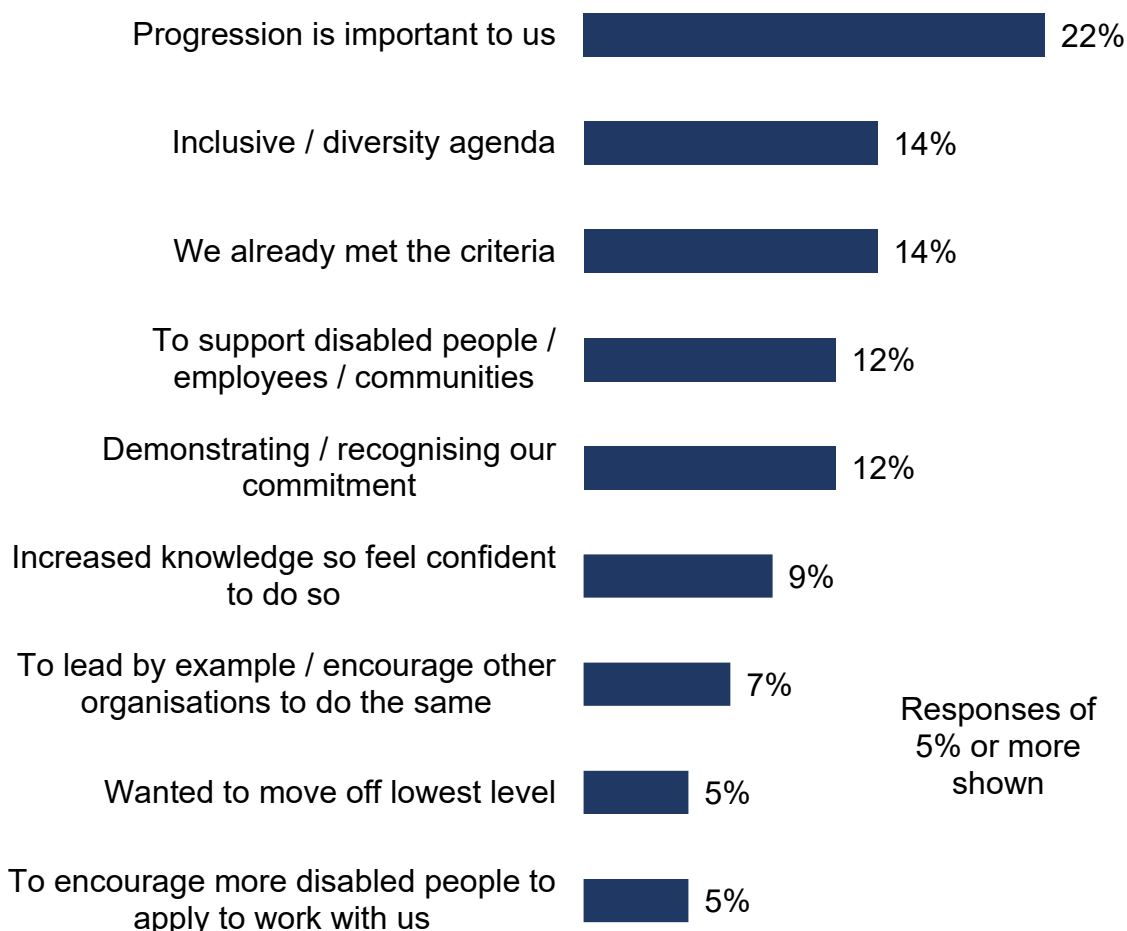


Unweighted base=243: All those not currently promoting Disability Confident internally or externally.

5.2. Progression to the next level

Employers at Level 2 or 3 of the Disability Confident scheme were asked their reasons for progressing to their current level. A wide range of responses were given but the most common reasons were that progression was important to them (22%), their inclusivity/diversity agenda (14%) and that they were already meeting the criteria for the next level (14%).

Chart 5.3: Reasons for progressing beyond Level 1



Unweighted base=347. At scheme Level 2 or 3 only.

Nearly two thirds (63%) of those who were either at Level 2 or Level 3 of the Disability Confident scheme reported that they had found it easy (either very or fairly easy) to progress to their current level. The main reason cited by employers as to why it had been easy to progress was because they were already doing or taking the actions required (72%).

Fewer than one in ten (6%) employers at Level 2 or Level 3 had found moving to their current level of the scheme difficult. The reasons cited for these difficulties included being uncertain about the requirements of the next level, lack of resources and the process being time consuming¹.

5.3. Membership renewal

When asked about their plans to renew their membership, around four in five were planning on renewing their membership, with a quarter (25%) intending to move up a

¹ The base size for this group is very small (28) and therefore percentages have been omitted.

level and nearly three in five (57%) planning to stay at the same level. Only two per cent said that they did not intend to renew.

Large employers were more likely to be planning on moving up a level compared to firms in all other size bands (39% versus 22% micro employers, 23% small employers and 21% medium employers).

Table 5.1: Plans to renew membership

			2022			
	Total		Employer Size			
	2018	2022	Micro	Small	Medium	Large
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Stay at the same level as now	49	57	57	57	61	51
Move up a level	32	25	22	23	21	39
Do not intend to renew	1	2	3	2	-	1
Don't know	18	17	18	19	17	9

2018 Base= 600; 2022 Base=1,233. Micro=401, Small=394, Medium=220, Large=208.

6. Experience of the scheme

This chapter explores employers' experiences of the scheme, with particular focus on whether their expectations were met, and their level of satisfaction with the information and support offered by Jobcentre Plus (JCP) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The chapter also looks at employers' perceived impact of the scheme on their organisation.

6.1. Experience versus expectations

Employers were asked how their experience of the scheme compared with their initial expectations. Around a half (48%) said that they had not had any prior expectations about joining the scheme, more than a quarter (28%) said the scheme was as they had expected and fifteen per cent said it was better than expected. Just five per cent said the experience was worse than they had expected.

There were very few differences between groups in their expectations, however, employers with fewer than 50 employees tended to be more likely to have no expectations about the scheme compared to large employers with 250 or more employees (51% versus 37% reported this respectively).

6.2. Information and support provided

Satisfaction with the information offered through the Disability Confident scheme has declined since the last survey in 2018 (55% in 2022 versus 69% in 2018). However, there has not been a large increase in the share of employers dissatisfied with the information, instead the share of employers who said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied has increased (29% in 2022 versus 20% in 2018). In 2022, levels of satisfaction were highest among medium and large organisations (62% and 62% respectively).

Table 6.1: Satisfaction with the information Jobcentre Plus and DWP have provided through the Disability Confident scheme

			2022			
	Total		Employer Size			
	2018	2022	Micro	Small	Medium	Large
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very satisfied	25	18	19	20	15	18
Fairly satisfied	44	36	32	31	46	44
Neither/nor	20	29	30	34	27	21
Fairly dissatisfied	9	7	8	6	6	6
Very dissatisfied	2	4	6	4	1	2
Don't know	1	6	5	5	4	8
All satisfied	69	55	51	51	62	62
All dissatisfied	10	11	14	10	7	8

2018 Base= 600; 2022 Base=1,233. Micro=401, Small=394, Medium=220, Large=208.

Satisfaction with the support provided by Jobcentre Plus and DWP through the Disability Confident scheme (43%) was at a lower level than reported satisfaction with information provided (55%), and this had also declined since the 2018 survey (56%). Again, in 2022, levels of satisfaction were highest among medium and large organisations (50% and 51% respectively).

Table 6.2: Satisfaction with the support Jobcentre Plus and DWP have provided through the Disability Confident scheme

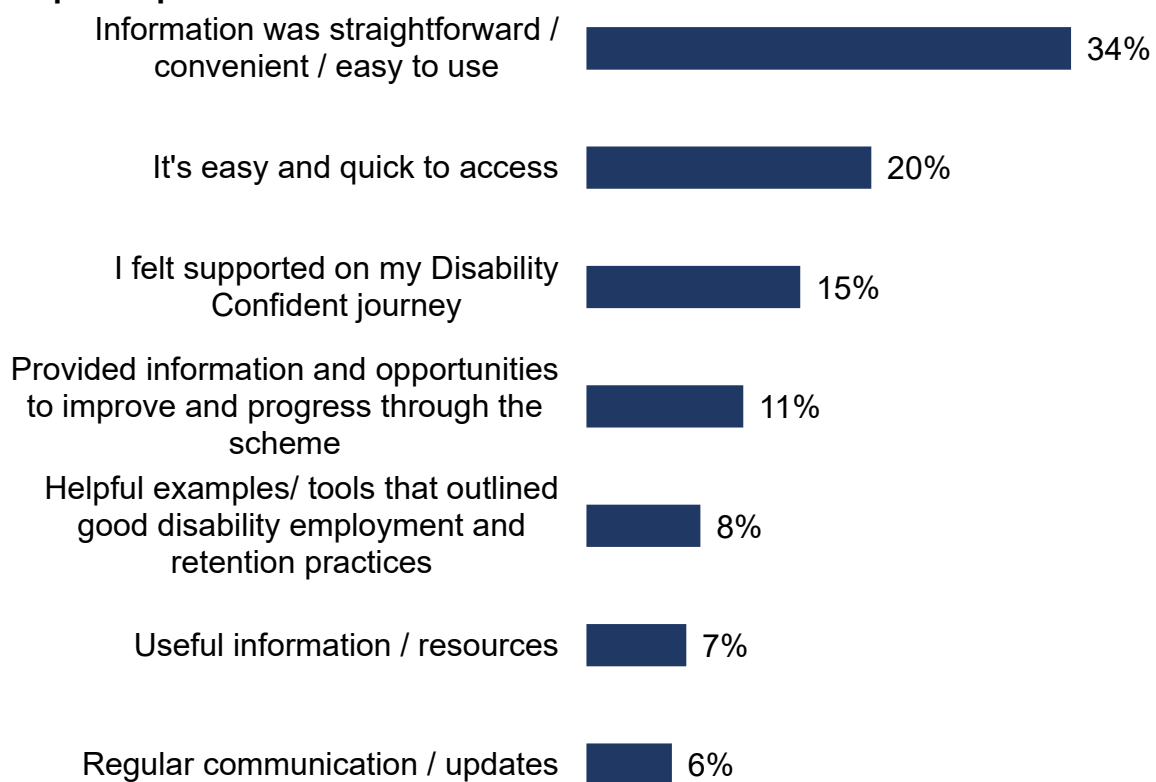
			2022			
	Total		Employer Size			
	2018	2022	Micro	Small	Medium	Large
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very satisfied	20	14	14	17	9	16
Fairly satisfied	36	29	25	23	41	36
Neither/nor	23	34	36	39	28	28
Fairly dissatisfied	9	9	11	8	11	6
Very dissatisfied	2	4	6	5	2	2
Don't know	9	9	8	7	8	11
All satisfied	56	43	39	40	50	51
All dissatisfied	12	14	16	13	13	9

2018 Base= 600; 2022 Base=1,233. Micro=401, Small=394, Medium=220, Large=208.

A range of reasons were given as to why employers were satisfied with the information and/or support they received from Jobcentre Plus and DWP through the Disability Confident scheme. As shown in Chart 6.3, the most commonly mentioned reasons were related to the information or support being straightforward and easy to use (34%), as well as being easy and quick to access (20%). Another frequently mentioned reason was employers feeling supported on their Disability Confident journey (15%).

Chart 6.3: Main reasons for satisfaction with the information and/or support provided by Jobcentre Plus and DWP through the Disability Confident scheme

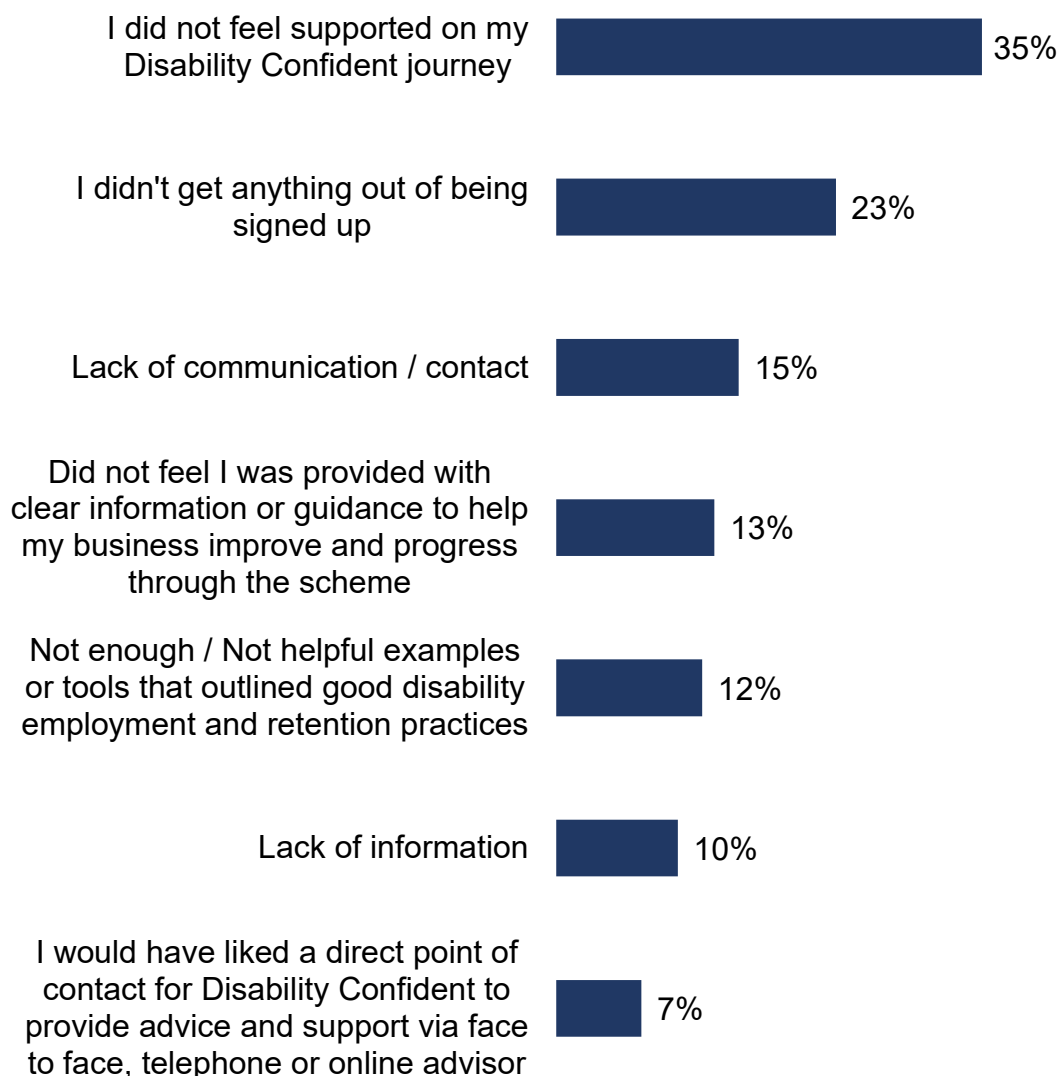
Top 7 responses



Unweighted base=720. All satisfied with support/information provided by Jobcentre Plus and DWP through the Disability Confident Scheme.

Of those employers who were dissatisfied with the information and/or support they received, a range of reasons for their dissatisfaction were provided. Most frequently, employers said that they did not feel supported on their Disability Confident journey (35%), and they didn't get anything out of being signed up to the scheme (23%).

Chart 6.4: Main reasons for dissatisfaction with the support and/or information provided by Jobcentre Plus and DWP through the Disability Confident scheme (responses of 7% or more)



Unweighted base = 188. All who were dissatisfied with the support and/or information provided.

6.3. Scheme impact

6.3.1. Willingness of employees to disclose information

When asked whether joining the Disability Confident scheme had any effect on disabled employees disclosing and/or sharing information about their disability, around a third (36%) of employers reported that disabled employees were now more likely to disclose and/or share information about their disability. Nearly half (49%) reported it had made no difference, while 14% said they didn't know whether it had.

Only one per cent said that joining the scheme had made it less likely for disabled employees to share this information.

Employers who were particularly likely to think that joining the scheme has increased their employees' willingness to share information about their disability included those at Level 3 of the scheme (64%), large employers (44%), employers in the public sector (48%), employers who had recruited a disabled employee or employee with a long-term health condition since joining the scheme (40%), and employers who collect information about disability and long-term health conditions (41%).

Table 6.3: Impact of the Disability Confident scheme on employees' willingness to disclose information about their disability

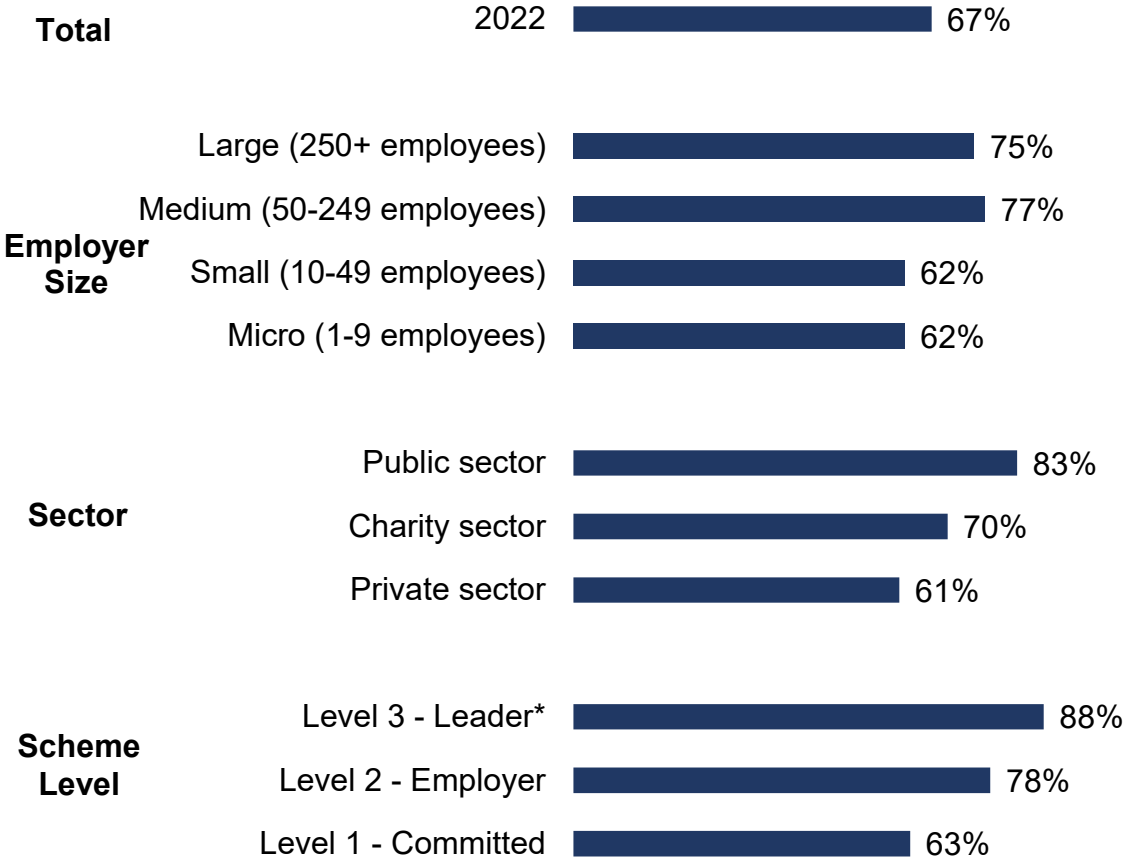
	In your opinion, has joining the Disability Confident Scheme had any effect on disabled employees disclosing and/or sharing information about their disability?		
	More likely to disclose and/or share	No difference	Less likely to disclose and/or share
	%	%	%
Total 2022	36	49	1
Scheme level			
Level 1	34	52	1
Level 2	43	38	*
Level 3*	64	26	-
Employer Size			
Micro (<10 employees)	34	53	1
Small (10-49 employees)	35	52	1
Medium (50-249 employees)	36	48	1
Large (250+ employees)	44	36	-
Sector			
Private	36	50	1
Public	48	33	-
Charity/Voluntary	35	51	*
Recruited disabled employees/long-term health conditions since joining the scheme			
Yes	40	47	1
No	29	57	1
Collects information on disability/long-term health conditions			
Yes	41	45	1
No	28	57	1

2022 Unweighted base=1,233. Level 1=879, Level 2=242, Level 3=105; Micro=401, Small=394, Medium=220, Large=208, Recruited employee who was disabled or had a long-term health condition=803, Have not recruited an employee who was disabled or had a long-term health condition=269; Collects information=793, Does not collect information =371. *Caution low base size

6.3.2. Overall impact of scheme on member’s organisation

Two thirds (67%) of employers agreed that joining the Disability Confident scheme had a positive impact on their organisation. Although agreement was high among all groups, the highest levels of agreement were seen among medium and large employers (77% and 75% respectively), the public sector (83%) and those at level 3 (88%) of the Disability Confident scheme.

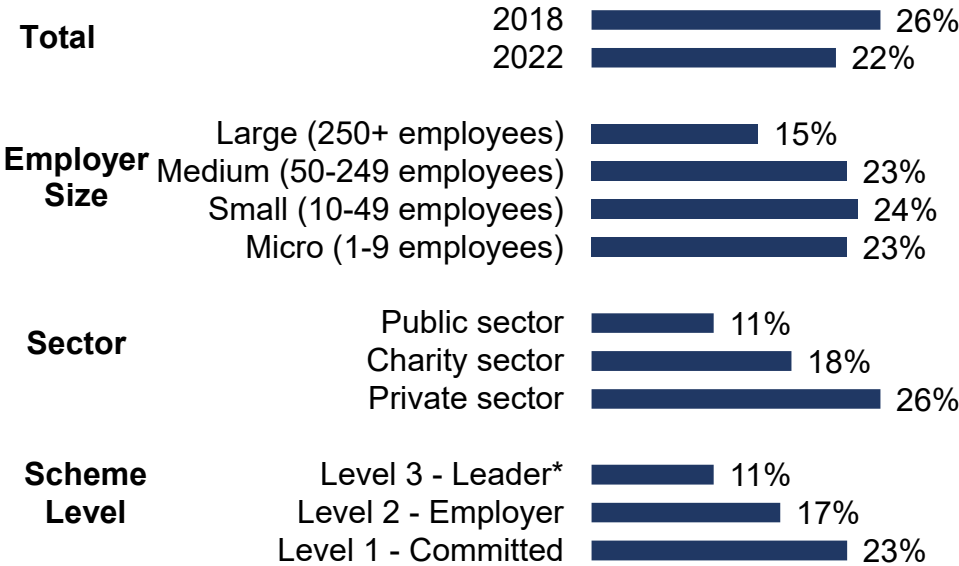
Chart 6.5: Proportion of employers who agree that the scheme has had a positive impact on their organisation



Unweighted base=1,233. All participants. Large=208, Medium=220, Small=394, Micro=401; Public=120, Charity=435, Private=588; Level 3=105, Level 2=242, Level 1=879. *Caution low base size

Just over one in five employers (22%) thought they would not have made changes to their disability employment practices in the absence of the scheme. Firms with fewer than 250 employees (23%), the private sector (26%) and those at Level 1 of the Disability Confident scheme (23%) were the most likely to say that, without the Disability Confident scheme, it was unlikely they would have made changes to their disability employment practices.

Chart 6.6: Proportion of respondents who would not have made changes to their disability employment practices in the absence of the Disability Confident scheme



2018 Unweighted base= 600. 2022 Unweighted base=1,233. All participants. Large=208, Medium=220, Small=394, Micro=401; Public=120, Charity=435, Private=588; Level 3=105, Level 2=242, Level 1=879. *Caution low base size

Seven in ten employers (70%) said they would have likely made changes to their disability employment practices, even without the Disability Confident scheme. Most employers (90%) would, however, still recommend the Disability Confident scheme to another employer, although the share of employers who would definitely recommend joining has declined since the 2018 survey (55% in 2022 versus 68% in 2018).

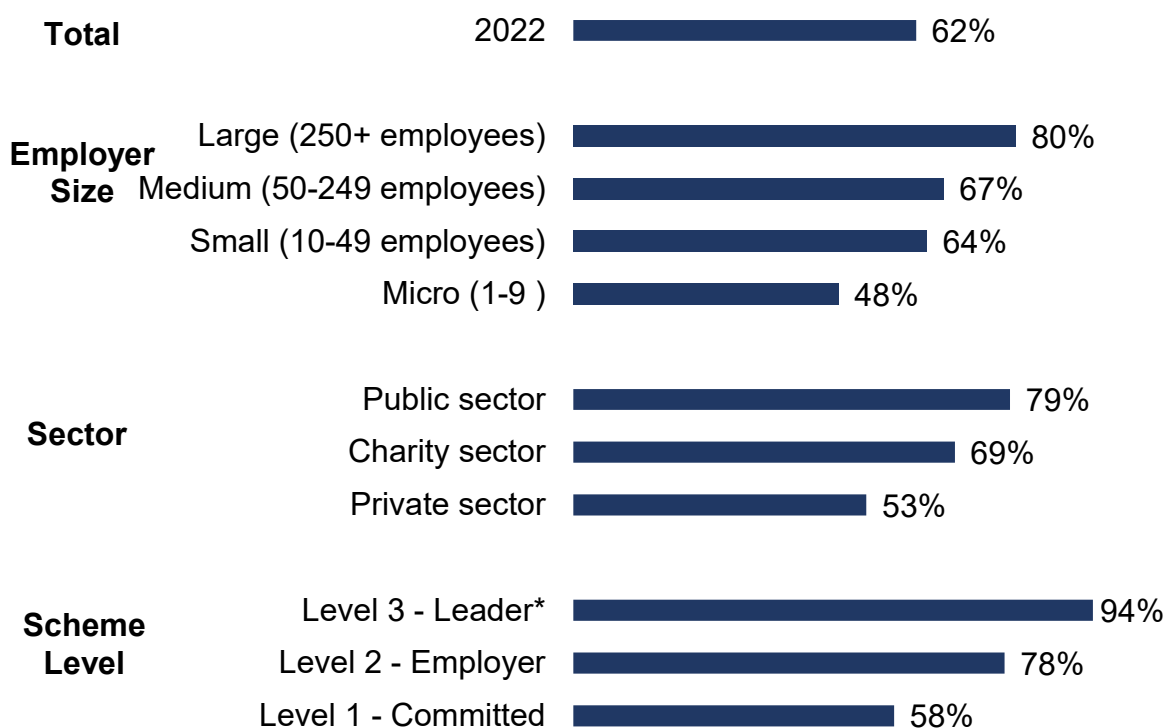
Perhaps unsurprisingly, those who were more engaged with the scheme were more likely to recommend the scheme to other employers. For example, the overwhelming majority (93%) of employers who had used the benefits offered through the scheme said they would recommend the scheme, compared with more than four in five (85%) of those who had not used any benefits.

7. Information collected and reported on

7.1. Collect information about disability and long-term health conditions

Around three in five (62%) employers collected information on whether employees were disabled or had a long-term health condition. Large employers (80%), the public sector (79%) and those at Level 3 of the scheme (94%) had the highest share of organisations collecting this information.

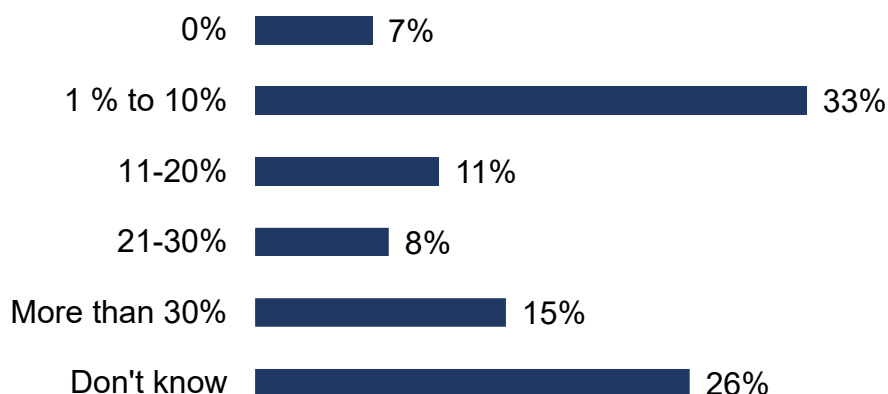
Chart 7.1: Proportion of firms who collected information on whether their employees were disabled or had a long-term health condition



Unweighted base=1,233. All participants. Large=208, Medium=220, Small=394, Micro=401; Public=120, Charity=435, Private=588; Level 3=105, Level 2=242, Level 1=879. *Caution low base size

Among the employers that collected information on whether their employees had a disability or long-term health condition, a quarter (26%) did not know how many there were within their organisation at the time of interview, while a third (33%) said that between 1% to 10% had a disability or long-term health condition.

Chart 7.2: Proportion of employees who have a disability or long-term health condition



Unweighted base=793. Organisations which collect information on whether employees are disabled or have a long-term health condition.

7.2. Use of the Voluntary Reporting Framework

In 2018, the Government worked with large employers and expert partners, including leading disability charities, to develop a Voluntary Reporting Framework (VRF) to support organisations to record and voluntarily report information on disability, mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. The framework is aimed at large employers with over 250 employees, but can also be used to support smaller employers who are keen to drive greater transparency in their organisation or industry. In November 2019, DWP introduced a requirement that new and renewing Disability Confident Leaders (Level 3) would report on disability, mental health and wellbeing using the VRF. Membership is for 3 years, therefore some Level 3 employers who were not yet due to renew did not need to meet this requirement when the survey was completed. This requirement does not extend to Level 1 or Level 2 members of the scheme.

Overall, less than one in ten (7%) Disability Confident organisations reported on disability, mental health and wellbeing by using the Voluntary Reporting Framework. Among employers at Level 3 of the scheme, nearly two in five (39%) reported using the framework. Employers who were at Level 1 (6%) and Level 2 (8%) of the Disability Confident scheme, and employers with fewer than 250 employees (6%) were the least likely to be using the Voluntary Reporting Framework.

A range of reasons were given as to why employers did not use the Voluntary Reporting Framework. Nearly a third (30%) mentioned they did not know about the Voluntary Reporting Framework or didn't know they needed to. This was followed by 13 per cent of employers who said that the size of their company is too small. Other less common reasons included using a different reporting method (4%) and doing it internally (5%), as well as not needing to use it (4%) or not having any disabled employees/nothing to report (3%).

Appendix

Methodology

A mixed mode methodology was utilised for the 2022 Disability Confident scheme, combining both telephone and online survey. In total 1,233 interviews were conducted (776 telephone interviews and 457 online surveys) with members of the Disability Confident Scheme from a sample of approximately 19,000 employers provided by DWP. The fieldwork for the survey was conducted between 1st February and 11th March 2022. Survey interviews were undertaken with the most senior person responsible for staffing arrangements at the organisation which may have been the HR Director/Manager, managing director/owner or other senior decision maker. The average survey interview length was 25 minutes, and a 10% response rate was achieved.

The sample

A sample of 1,233 employers was considered appropriate for robust analysis at the overall level, and to ensure that analysis could be carried out for different groups of employers, including by membership level and, size of organisation.

Quotas were set on membership level and employer size. Membership Level 3 was boosted to provide enough responses for sub-group analysis. A breakdown of the completed interviews by scheme level and length of membership is in Table 8.1 below, along with the overall sample population for comparison. Weighting was applied to the data to take into account the boosted number of Level 3 respondents.

Table 8.1: Sample and interview profile

Profile		Sample profile	Proportion of total	Interviews completed	Proportion of total
Scheme level	Level 1	15,370	80%	879	71%
	Level 2	3,528	18%	242	20%
	Level 3	3,94	2%	105	9%
Employer size	Micro (1-9 employees)	6,646	35%	401	33%
	Small (10-49 employees)	5,849	30%	394	32%
	Medium (50-249 employees)	3,423	18%	220	18%
	Large (250+ employees)	3,374	18%	208	17%
Total		19,292	100%	1,233	100%

Most of the employers included in the survey were Level 1 employers (71%), one fifth (20%) were Level 2 employers and the remaining nine per cent were Level 3 employers.

Interpreting the findings

Due to the fact that surveys typically represent the views of a sample population, sampling error must be considered when interpreting the findings. This is measured by the confidence level and interval of the data. Most commonly, market research studies require a 95% confidence level, indicating that we can be 95% confident that the findings are accurate within a margin of error. A sample size of 1,233 means that if 50% of the sample agreed with a statement in the questionnaire, findings are accurate to within $\pm 2.7\%$ percentage points at the 95% confidence level. For example, this survey shows that 54% of employers who responded were satisfied with information received. This indicates that we can be 95% confident that the real figure (the 'true' figure if the whole population were surveyed) lies somewhere between 51.3% and 56.7%.

The following table shows the confidence intervals for those findings that centre around 10% or 90%, 30% or 70% and 50% given the total study sample size of 1,233 (these assume a 95% confidence level).

Table 8.2: Confidence intervals

Confidence intervals			
Sample size	Split on question		
1,233	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±1.62	±2.4	±2.7

A two tailed t-test was used to determine significant differences in the data tables. The t-test was applied by the data processing package Quantum, which uses the effective sample base in its calculations. Where the columns are tested against the total the samples overlap, in which case the statistical test accounts for the correlation between testing variables.