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**Department for Work and Pensions**

**Research Report No 343**

# **The public sector and equality for disabled people**

**Centre for Research in Social Policy:**

**Dr. Simon Roberts, Dr. Antonia Ivaldi, Dr. Monica Magadi, Viet-Hai Phung  
and Dr. Bruce Stafford**

**British Market Research Bureau:**

**Graham Kelly and Ben Savage**

A report of research carried out by the Centre for Research in Social Policy and the British Market Research Bureau on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions

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# The Authors

## Centre for Research in Social Policy

**Dr Simon Roberts** is Assistant Director at CRSP. His recent research experience includes disability and employment and the provision of services to disabled people; UK, European and international social security; social assistance and minimum income standards; and free movement and social security in the European Union. He led the DWP funded evaluation of employers' and service providers' responses to the DDA in 2003 and preparation for the 2004 changes.

**Dr Antonia Ivaldi** is a Research Associate at CRSP who has conducted both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Since joining CRSP, she has worked on an ESRC-funded project titled Navigating the E-society: The Dynamics of Participation and Exclusion and has led a Department for Transport-funded project, titled Evidence –Based Review on Mobility – Choices and Barriers for Different Social Groups.

**Dr Monica Magadi** is a Research Fellow at CRSP. Dr Magadi has a background in Statistics and Demography and is responsible for quantitative resources and training within CRSP. She has 15 years' experience in designing and implementing social science research. Her recent research experience includes evaluation of the New Deal for Disabled People; and poverty and reproductive health, particularly child poverty, adolescence and maternal health.

**Viet-Hai Phung** is a Research Associate at CRSP who specialises in quantitative analysis. Since he joined CRSP, he has worked in a quantitative capacity on a number of projects which include: Needs and Resources in Later Life; The Evaluation of the New Deal for Disabled People – National Extension; and The Evaluation of Local Housing Allowance Pathfinders.

**Dr Bruce Stafford** is a Director of CRSP, and has over 20 years' experience of applied social research in Universities and local government and has both quantitative and qualitative research skills. He managed the consortium of five organisations evaluating the New Deal for Disabled People Personal Adviser Service pilot and the consortium led by CRSP evaluating the New Deal for Disabled People national extension. Dr Stafford is now Professor of Public Policy at the University of Nottingham.

## British Market Research Bureau

**Graham Kelly** (Director) has 21 years' experience in research, analysis and marketing. Since joining BMRB in 1995, Graham has worked on a wide variety of projects, including two years in charge of the BT Customer Opinion Survey, which was part funded by Cellnet. Along with his co-authors, Graham won the Best Application of Research award, 2001, for the (NSPCC-sponsored) paper on The Prevalence of Child Maltreatment in the UK. Outside work, Graham is involved in disability issues through the voluntary sector, having been Chairman of the Thalidomide Society and served on the management committee of the Hammersmith and Fulham Disability and Employment Project. BMRB runs a programme of training seminars for clients called the Centre for Excellence programme, in which Graham convenes the sessions on Researching Sensitive Issues.

**Ben Savage** (Senior Research Executive) joined BMRB Social Research in 2004 from NOP Social and Political. His research experience includes running large-scale quantitative studies for Government clients including HMRC, COI, DWP, DfES and the Learning and Skills Council. He has extensive experience of CATI, CAPI, self-completion, and qualitative methodologies, together with experience of conducting cognitive pilots to test questionnaires. His published work includes 'Research and Development Tax Credits' for HMRC and 'Progression from Adult and Community Learning' for the DfES.



# Summary

## Introduction

This report presents findings of a study of public bodies' approach to implementing the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) and provides evidence for a baseline against which to assess the extent to which the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (the 2005 Act) prompts authorities to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

One of the key elements of the 2005 Act is the introduction of a positive duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people – the Disability Equality Duty, which takes effect from December 2006. Specifically, the Act requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under this Act;
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to the need to promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- take steps to take account of the needs of a disabled person, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

The research objectives were to:

- test the extent to which public authorities are already taking steps to avoid discrimination against disabled people and promote equality of opportunity in the provision of their services; and
- assess the extent to which public authorities understand the impact of their activities on disability equality, and build in disability equality concerns in the way they conduct their activities.



In particular, it looks at the extent to which disability is seen in relation to:

- business planning and performance management;
- employment policies and practices;
- service delivery;
- accessibility of information;
- policies for customers and service users; and
- buildings strategy.

## Key findings

- The DDA was a major factor that influenced the changes made by organisations in terms of employment and service provision, accessibility of information and buildings strategy. It was also the main reason given by organisations for integrating disability issues into their mainstream plans.
- The vast majority of organisations had adapted their work environment, implemented flexible working time and flexible work organisation to help disabled employees. Larger organisations were more likely to have implemented these disability-friendly policies than their smaller counterparts.
- A large number of organisations had a Disability Equality Scheme in place. Amongst these organisations, less than one-half had involved disabled employees in drafting it. A minority of organisations had involved disabled service users in the same process.
- A majority of organisations had conducted Disability Equality Impact Assessment. The organisations that had conducted a Disability Equality Impact Assessment were then asked whether they had changed their employment or service provision policies and practices as a result. A majority of organisations that had conducted a Disability Equality Impact Assessment had changed their employment policies and practices. This was also the case in relation to their service provision policies and practices.
- A large number of organisations recorded employment or service delivery complaints where they were related specifically to disability or health, separately.
- Almost all organisations felt they were committed to improving the experience of their disabled employees, while most organisations felt they were currently meeting the needs of their disabled employees. In contrast, fewer organisations felt they were meeting the needs of their disabled service users.
- The vast majority of organisations had acted to improve access to premises for disabled people, but few had engaged with disability organisations to review the extent to which the services met the needs of disabled people.

- Most organisations had a strategy for promoting or widening the participation of disabled service users.
- Organisations were unlikely to provide information in specialist formats for disabled employees and service users as part of their standard procedures, although they were much more likely to provide it on request.
- A majority of organisations had an action plan to meet the needs of disabled employees and service users.
- A small, but notable, number of organisations publish additional disability-related performance indicators in addition to the ones they are already required to publish. Those that had developed such indicators were more likely to have directed additional funding to services for disabled people.
- While the vast majority of organisations place a high priority on meeting the needs of disabled people in relation to employment, service provision, accessibility of information and buildings strategy, a considerable minority did not attach a high priority to the needs of disabled people in their business plan. Those organisations that did address the needs of disabled people in their business plan were more likely to have taken steps to make their services more accessible.
- While local authorities were the most likely to fulfil a majority of the elements of the regulations, educational organisations were the most likely to fulfil at least three elements, with most organisations in this sector fulfilling at least three of the seven elements analysed.

## Implications

- The picture is mixed when it comes to organisations meeting the indicators of best practice. Public bodies that are performing less well could benefit from greater information sharing with better performing organisations.
- Many authorities need to have a greater focus on the needs and experiences of disabled service users, in addition to those of disabled employees.
- In terms of accessibility of information, organisations need to be more proactive and not reactive in meeting the needs of disabled people, for example, providing information in a variety of formats as a matter of course rather than on request, which is what often happens now.
- They also need to be more proactive in developing their own performance indicators to monitor the outcomes for disabled people that arise from the changes they make.
- While a high proportion of organisations had improved access to their premises for disabled people, there is still a need for organisations to liaise with disability organisations to ensure that the services they provide and the way they provide them are sensitive to the needs of disabled people.

## Survey design and analysis

A range of organisations from five different sectors (health, education, local government, emergency services and central government/other) participated in the survey.

The method used for this research was an internet survey. A 25 per cent response rate was achieved which is in line with other internet surveys. The respondents profile was broadly similar to the population from which it was drawn. It is, however, important to note that this research explores the baseline in a good range of public bodies. It does not provide findings which allow us to estimate their applicability to the general population of public bodies. Thus, the findings should be taken to refer to the respondents of the survey not the broader population. The figures in the report are not statistically significant. The findings may indicate the issues that are relevant to the population of public bodies. However, the extent to which this is the case cannot be quantified.

In particular, caution should be used to interpret findings on the education sector where the number of organisations who participated was particularly small. The sample used for this research is not proportionately representative of the universe of public bodies in Great Britain.

## Profile of the organisations

The report explores both size and type of organisation surveyed, with the research concentrating mainly on which organisations had equality schemes, in particular a Disability Equality Scheme. Around two-thirds of organisations had a Disability Equality Scheme. Some respondents said that it had been developed by extending their Race Equality Scheme but this was not the case for a large proportion. Almost all participant organisations had a Race Equality Scheme, which is to be expected given the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. This Act places a legal duty on public sector organisations to have a Race Equality Scheme. Of the organisations failing to meet this existing duty, most came from the health sector, while central government/other organisations counted for most of the remaining organisations.

Nearly one-half of those respondents who said their organisations had a Disability Equality Scheme said that disabled employees were involved in drafting it. Larger organisations were much more likely to involve disabled employees in drafting their Disability Equality Scheme. There was a relationship between organisations who had involved disabled employees in drafting the Disability Equality Scheme and their responses in relation to recruitment, service accessibility and information accessibility but not in relation to estates.

Over half of all respondents said that their organisation had conducted a Disability Equality Impact Assessment, while a similar proportion of the larger organisations had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment. However, this was not as prevalent amongst the smaller organisations.

There was a notable association between whether or not an organisation had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment and,

- whether they had implemented workplace adjustments for disabled employees,
- whether they had reviewed their employment policies and practices for the impact on disabled employees,
- whether they have performance indicators regarding equal outcomes for disabled and non-disabled employees; and
- whether they monitor the effectiveness of the adjustments they make on disabled service users.

A majority of organisations that had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment had changed their employment practices as a result of it, while a slightly lower percentage had changed their service provision policies towards disabled people. Around one-fifth said that their organisation had directed more funding to services for disabled people as a result of the Equality Impact Assessment.

## Employment policies and practices

Almost all larger organisations (those employing at least 500 staff) had employed a person with long-term health problems that affect their daily activities. However, this was not as common amongst the smaller public bodies. Local government, health and emergency services sectors were most likely to have employed at least one disabled employee.

Nearly all organisations provided equal opportunities or diversity training for their staff, and this was almost universal in local government. Almost all larger organisations had provided equal opportunities or diversity training for their staff compared to over four-fifths of smaller organisations. Few organisations had not provided equal opportunities or diversity training in the last two years.

Somewhat surprisingly – given other research findings – smaller-sized public bodies were more likely to have a higher proportion of staff who had received equal opportunities or diversity training. For example, almost one-half of smaller organisations had provided more than three-quarters of their employees with equal opportunities or diversity training, compared to one-quarter of larger organisations.

Most organisations strongly agreed that their organisation was committed to improving the experience of their disabled employees and service users, with around one-quarter of public bodies consulting their disabled employees on an ongoing basis when making changes to their policies and practices.

The three most common reasons given for changing employment policies and practices for employees were:

- to meet the requirements of the DDA, which was mentioned by nine-tenths of organisations;

- four-fifths mentioned good practice; and
- two-thirds said that the changes were seen as integral to good service delivery.

Staff disability networks were not common amongst public sector organisations, but where they were operational, in the vast majority of cases, the staff disability network operated internally.

## Customer and service users

The proportion of disabled service users of public sector organisations were mainly reported to be up to 25 per cent, with a small minority stating that more than this were disabled service users. Larger organisations and those spending more time on disability issues were more likely to report a higher proportion of disabled service users. Perhaps not surprisingly, the proportion of disabled service users was lowest amongst educational organisations, and highest amongst health organisations.

The research showed that more organisations reported having a strategy for promoting or widening participation of disabled people than those who reported that they did not have such a strategy.

Nearly all organisations had taken action to improve access to premises for disabled users, but few had engaged with consultants or disability organisations to review the extent to which services met the needs of disabled people. Local authorities showed the 'best' performance with respect to actions currently taken to enable disabled customers and service users to access or use services. Organisations where a dedicated officer or group spent more time on disability issues, performed better in taking actions to ensure that disabled people have access to services than where less time was spent on disability issues.

The effectiveness of the adjustments made to enable disabled people to access their services was monitored by around a half of the respondents, more than those who did not. Educational organisations were the most likely to monitor effectiveness of adjustments made to enable disabled users access to services, while emergency services and central government/other organisations were the least likely.

Local authorities were the most likely to regularly consult disabled users, while educational organisations (and to some extent health) were the most likely to regularly review the impact of service provision, or monitor the impact of changes to service provision on disabled service users.

Almost one-half of the organisations reported that they had set up partnerships to deliver services for disabled people. Around two-thirds had set up focus groups or user/customer panels, while about one-third had a disabled users' network to address disability issues. Local authorities were the most likely to set up partnerships to deliver services for disabled people or have a disabled users' network to address disability issues, while educational organisations were the most likely to have set up a focus group or user/customer panel.

Public sector organisations most commonly used public meetings and in some cases neighbourhood forums to ensure participation by disabled people. Local authorities were the most likely to always or often ensure participation of disabled people in public meetings, focus groups, surveys, written consultations, council meetings in public and in neighbourhood forums, compared to other types of organisations.

Larger organisations were more likely to have taken specific actions to address the needs of disabled people than smaller organisations. This was also demonstrated in organisations where diversity staff spent more time on disability issues.

The majority of respondents agreed with the statement that there was a lack of targeted marketing to disabled people, while only a few agreed that their organisation did not meet the needs of disabled people.

DDA legislation was a motivating factor for change to improve service delivery amongst almost all public sector organisations. Changes being seen as integral to good service delivery or good practice in the sector were also cited by a large majority of the organisations. The legislation/DDA was more likely to be cited as a motivating factor in larger organisations, or in organisations where more time was spent on disability issues.

## Accessibility of information

Local authorities used many more formats when providing information than any other type of organisation. Larger organisations were more likely to use a greater number of formats than smaller organisations. Organisations with staff spending at least one-quarter of their time on disability issues were twice as likely to score highly in terms of information accessibility compared to organisations with staff spending less than one-quarter of their time.

Larger organisations and those with staff with responsibility for diversity issues spending at least one-quarter of their time on disability issues were more likely to have completed a website audit. This was also true of central government/other organisations and local authorities.

Larger organisations and those with officers spending at least one-quarter of their time on disability issues were more likely to have consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing the website. Those in local government were the most likely to have consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing the website.

## Estates/buildings strategy

The majority of organisations' buildings strategy included an action plan to meet the needs of disabled employees, while a similar proportion had an action plan to meet the needs of disabled service users. Almost one-half said that they had a non-specific

action plan to meet the needs of disabled people. Local authorities were most likely to consult disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up the buildings strategy. When it came to improving the buildings strategy for disabled people, nine-tenths of organisations were motivated as a result of legislation/DDA.

## Promoting best practice

The vast majority of organisations reported that they give high priority to the needs of disabled people when thinking about employment, service users, estates strategy and information access, but there were still some organisations who reported not giving high priority to the needs of disabled people in their business plan.

There were strong links between the priority given to specific dimensions of practice and the corresponding best practice indices, with organisations giving high priority to disabled people having better indices. However, despite the general positive associations between best practice indices, some organisations performed relatively well in specific areas, but not necessarily as well in the other areas. Organisations giving high priority to disabled people in their business plan were more likely to score highly, particularly for service accessibility and access to public information.

## Preparedness for the Disability Equality Duty

The majority of organisations in the survey have a Disability Equality Scheme, but only a small proportion confirmed having involved disabled employees or service users in drafting the scheme. There were notable differences between sectors. Local government organisations were the most likely to involve disabled people in producing a Disability Equality Scheme and to gather information on employees or service users, while educational organisations were the most likely to have a Disability Equality Scheme. While local authorities were the most likely to fulfil at least more than one-half of the elements of the regulations, educational organisations were the most likely to fulfil at least three elements, with most organisations in this sector fulfilling at least three of the seven elements analysed.

## Conclusions

There was a clear commitment amongst the surveyed organisations to meeting the needs of disabled employees and customers. While almost three-quarters said they were currently meeting the needs of their disabled employees, almost all organisations said they were committed to improving the experience of their disabled employees and service users. However, one-fifth of organisations acknowledged that they were not meeting the needs of disabled people.

Encouragingly, the majority of organisations in the survey have a Disability Equality Scheme in place well ahead of the deadline, although only a small proportion had involved disabled employees or service users in drafting the scheme. However, this finding should be interpreted with caution, taking into account the data limitations.

The DDA was identified as being the main driver of developments and was the main reason given by organisations for integrating disability issues into their mainstream plans. The Act was most commonly cited as a reason both for changing employment policies and practices and making changes to improve service delivery for disabled service users. The majority of organisations said that good practice in the sector was a motivating factor, and also that it was seen as essential to good service delivery. Similarly, the DDA was the main motivator for changing the buildings strategy.

There were strong linkages between the priority given to specific dimensions of practice and the corresponding best practice indices, with organisations giving high priority to disabled people having better indices. However, despite the general positive associations between best practice indices, some organisations performed relatively well in specific areas, but not necessarily as well in the other areas.

Previous research on the Disability Discrimination Act shows that larger-sized (public and private sector) organisations perform better when it comes to disability issues than smaller organisations. However, this study reveals a more nuanced association between size of organisation and adoption of best practice on disability issues, at least in the public sector.

In advance of this study, it could be expected that organisations devoting more staff time to disability issues would score higher on each of the indices, because they have more dedicated staff resources. Again, however, the research reveals a more complex picture, with some organisations performing well in some of the indices but not so well in others.

The results suggest that adoption of good practice by organisations is variable, and that there is considerable scope for intra-organisational learning. That is, for the greater transfer of ideas within organisations, and for people with different responsibilities to improve their communication of methods of good practice across their respective organisations.





# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Research aims

This report presents findings of a study of public bodies' approach to implementing the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) and provides a baseline against which to assess the extent to which the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (the 2005 Act) prompts authorities to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. One key element of the 2005 Act is the introduction of a positive duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people – the Disability Equality Duty, which takes effect from December 2006.

The research objectives were to:

- test the extent to which public authorities are already taking steps to avoid discrimination against disabled people as employees, service users and others with an interest in the way the authority operates; and
- assess the extent to which public authorities understand the impact of their activities on disability equality, and build in disability equality concerns in the way they conduct their activities.

The study examines the extent to which organisations view disability as relevant to aspects of their organisation and the motivation for taking action. In particular, it looks at the extent to which disability is seen in relation to:

- business planning and performance management;
- employment policies and practices;
- service delivery;
- accessibility of information;
- policies for customers and service users; and
- buildings strategy.

## 1.2 Background

The first provisions of the DDA came into force on 2 December 1996. Following amendments in recent years, it outlaws disability discrimination against disabled people for reasons related to disability in areas including: employment; access to goods, facilities and services; the management, buying or renting of land or property; and education. It also allows the Secretary of State to set standards for public transport vehicles.

Disability discrimination is generally defined as less favourable treatment of a disabled person for a reason related to their disability or a failure to make reasonable adjustments, for example, to practices, policies and procedures (such as their recruitment arrangements) or premises.

One of the key elements of the 2005 Act is the introduction of a positive duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people – the Disability Equality Duty. This duty is framed similarly to Section 71 of the Race Relations Act, which imposes a duty on public authorities to promote racial equality. Specifically, the Act requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to:

- the need to eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under this Act;
- the need to eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to the need to promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- the need to promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- the need to take steps to take account of the needs of a disabled person, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people;
- the need to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- the need to encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

The duty applies to any person certain of whose functions are functions of a public nature. Major public authorities (including local and central government, police forces, NHS trusts and schools) will be required to publish a 'Disability Equality Scheme', by 4 December 2006. This will set out how the authority will implement the Disability Equality Duty and will include:

- a statement of the way that disabled people have been involved in developing the Scheme;
- an action plan for implementing the Disability Equality Duty;
- details of the evidence the authority will gather, for example, in relation to the recruitment, retention and development of employees.

Authorities will be under an explicit legal duty to implement their Disability Equality Schemes.

Bodies are required to report on their progress annually and are to review their Disability Equality Scheme within three years of its publication.

References to 'disabled people' in this report should be taken as references to people who meet the definition of a disabled person in the DDA: people who have, or have had, a long-term physical or mental impairment that has a substantial effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### **1.2.1 Changes to the legislation**

The 2005 Act also:

- extends the definition of disability to include people with HIV, multiple sclerosis, or cancer from the point of diagnosis;
- clarifies that the current exemption for transport services applies only to the vehicles themselves, and allows for the exemption to be abolished for different vehicles at different times;
- extends duties on landlords and managers of premises to include a duty to make reasonable adjustments to enable a disabled person to rent and enjoy property and premises; and
- extends the Act to clubs with 25 or more members and prohibits discrimination by public authorities.

### **1.2.2 The Office for Disability Issues**

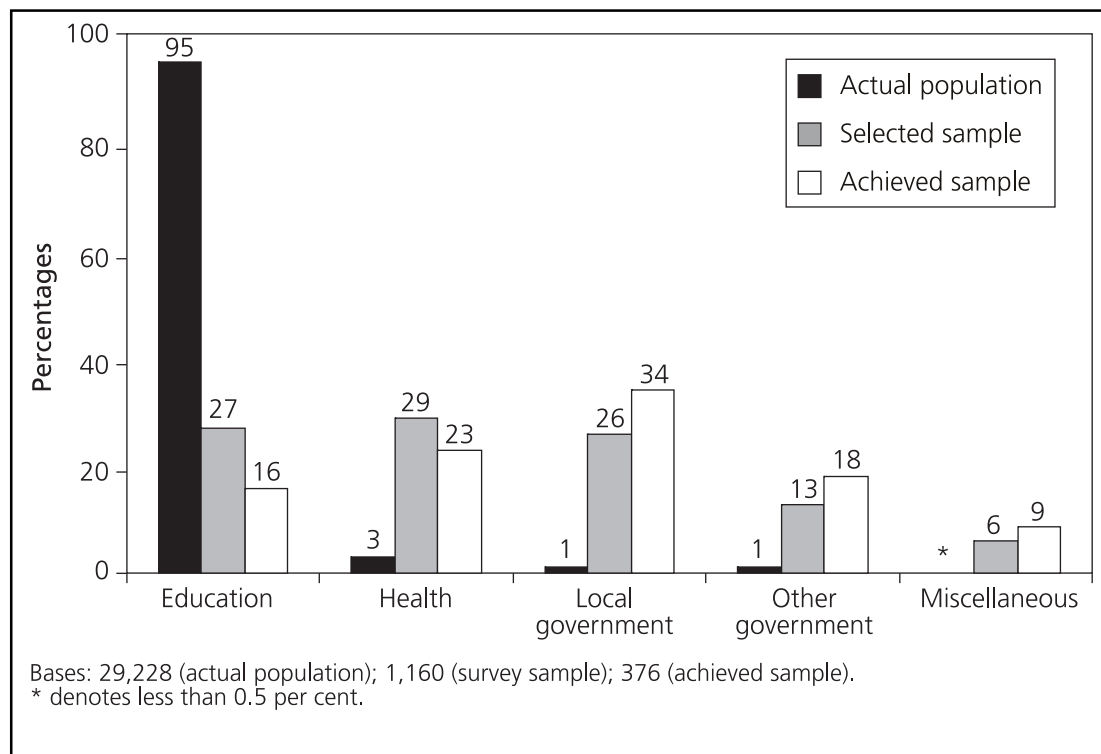
On 1 December 2005, the Government launched the Office for Disability Issues. This new cross-government unit is responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report *Improving the life chances of disabled people*, and will report annually on progress towards equality for disabled people. It also has policy responsibility for the Disability Equality Duty in Government.

## **1.3 Survey design and analysis**

### **1.3.1 Profile of population and survey sample**

As can be seen from Figure 1.1, the universe of public bodies is dominated by the education sector, due to the large number of schools. Our sample selected for the survey purposively sought to achieve a more even distribution across sectors, and thus, contained similar numbers of educational institutions to health and local government organisations. A lower response rate amongst educational institutions in the survey itself then resulted in the education sector being further under-represented in the achieved sample. Primary schools are particularly under-represented.

**Figure 1.1 Breakdown of public bodies universe, selected sample and achieved sample**



An examination of the composition of each sector shows that:

- within the education universe, primary schools dominate, making up nearly eight in ten educational institutions. Within our achieved sample, further education and higher education institutions (including universities) dominate, making up around three quarters of the achieved sample;
- health is mainly Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Acute Hospital Trusts in both the universe and the achieved sample;
- district councils form the largest proportion of both the local government universe and the local government achieved sample; and
- fire and police services make up the largest proportions of both the other government universe and the other government achieved sample.

It is difficult to establish accurately which type of organisations tend to be larger in size as organisation size was not available for the universe. However, schools and further education colleges will tend to have fewer than 500 employees, while most other organisations in the sample will have 500 plus. The miscellaneous category contains a variety of organisations, from very large central government departments to quite small government agencies, some which contain less than 500 employees.

As there is very little information collected on the wider population of public sector bodies, it is not possible to make comparisons and very difficult to make rigorous assertions about the representativeness of the organisations in this survey. There are few information sources that can be used to provide even an indication of how the

profile of this survey may compare to a wider population. One such source, though, is the data collected on the Investors in People status of public sector bodies. Data provided by Investors in People UK states that 20,935 public sector bodies have achieved Investors in People recognition out of a survey universe of 29,228 public bodies. In our survey, 50 per cent of organisations reported being accredited Investors in People with a further 16 per cent saying parts of their organisations were Investors in People. Thus, a total of 66 per cent of the survey sample could claim to be Investors in People, compared with 72 per cent of public bodies overall. While this implies that the profile of organisations is similar to a wider population, the main point is that those organisations included within the research study broadly represent a range of public bodies and therefore, the survey findings of this report can only be treated as indicative.

### 1.3.2 Response rates

The selected sample included 1,160 organisations, broken down as follows:

**Table 1.1 Breakdown of sample**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Number</b>
Education	317
Health	332
Local government	296
Miscellaneous (executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies)	95
Fire services	51
Police forces	48
Central government departments	21

The study used a web-based questionnaire supported by an option to complete the questionnaire on paper. Organisations that had not completed the survey online were contacted by telephone.

The final response totals and response rates for the survey were as follows:

**Table 1.2 Response rates**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Total (Selected sample)</b>	<b>Overall (Achieved sample)</b>	<b>Online</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Health	317	86 (27%)	65 (21%)	21 (7%)
Education	332	61 (18%)	36 (11%)	25 (8%)
Local government	296	129 (44%)	100 (34%)	29 (10%)
Police force	51	30 (59%)	26 (51%)	4 (8%)
Fire service	48	23 (48%)	21 (44%)	2 (4%)
Central government department	21	15 (71%)	14 (67%)	1 (5%)
Executive agency/non-departmental public body	95	32 (34%)	25 (26%)	7 (7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>376 (32%)</b>	<b>287 (25%)</b>	<b>89 (8%)</b>

The web survey achieved a final overall response rate of 25 per cent. As it was clear early on in the fieldwork that the response rate was lower than expected, the initial plan to conduct a telephone chase-up survey was expanded to include a set of Key Questions to be asked of organisations who said that they were not planning to respond to the main web survey. The telephone follow-up survey established whether organisations who had not yet responded to the web survey had received the survey materials, found out whether organisations were willing to respond and, for those organisations that said they were not planning to respond, asked respondents a set of Key Questions. An additional eight per cent of the survey sample responded to the Key Questions, giving an overall response rate of 32 per cent for the Key Questions.

Given the length of the questionnaire, and the fact that we do not know whether there is an individual who co-ordinates this wide range of disability issues within many public bodies, a response rate of 25 per cent (plus the supplementary eight per cent answering the Key Questions in the telephone survey) is in line with many other surveys of businesses conducted through self-completion questionnaires. The evidence presented above about the proportion with Investor in People recognition supports this view, since our findings are closely in line with a much larger survey on that subject.

This research was designed to be a baseline exploration of public bodies with respect to their treatment of disability. As the research area was an unknown, it was difficult to make an accurate judgment at the time about what the response rate to the web-based survey would be. However, the low response rate of some of the sectors means that we should be cautious about applying the analysis to the wider population of public bodies. We have no way of knowing how representative the organisations which participated are. As a result, the findings should be taken as indicative.

It is, however, important to note that this research was designed to explore the baseline situation in a good range of public bodies, not to obtain findings of the

general population of public bodies. The findings should be taken to refer to the respondents of the survey not to the broader population. The findings may indicate issues that are applicable to the population of public bodies, but the extent to which this is the case cannot be quantified.

### **1.3.3 Analysis**

The analyses presented in the following chapters are based on simple frequencies, and where appropriate, cross tabulations, breaking down key variables of interest by type of organisation, size of organisation, and time spent on disability issues. In addition, five composite indices were derived in order to give an indication of best practice in specific areas of interest, namely, recruitment, service accessibility, information access, estates/buildings strategy, and consultation with disabled people. The indicators of best practice were derived from responses to sets of related questions on specific issues (see Table A.2 in the appendix). For questions with non-ordinal response categories, the responses were first dichotomised, assigning a score of one if a desired condition was met and zero otherwise, before being summarised into composite indices. These indicators have been used in the respective chapters to provide a general picture of variations across different types of organisation in practices relating to specific key areas. Furthermore, creating composite scores is a useful way of looking at the relationship between different factors relating to public bodies response to Disability Equality Duty, and allows us to see whether there are links between areas at an aggregate level.





## 2 Profile of the organisations

This chapter profiles the organisations that participated in the survey. In particular, the chapter focuses on: the types of organisation and their size (Section 2.1); progress on establishing equality schemes (Section 2.3); who was involved in establishing the equality scheme (Section 2.4); Equality Impact Assessments (Section 2.6); and who has responsibility for disability issues within organisations (Section 2.9). The analysis focuses on differences between: types of organisation; size of organisation; and the amount of time spent dealing with disability issues by the person or people responsible for them.

### 2.1 Size and type of organisation

Organisations from five different sectors (health, education, local government, emergency services and central government/other) participated in the survey.<sup>1</sup> Table 2.1 shows that local government accounted for the largest share of respondents, with one-third coming from this sector. Around one-quarter of respondents represented the health sector, while around one-sixth came from the education sector, followed by the emergency services and central government/other which accounted for around one-seventh of all respondents each.

The sample for the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) public bodies is not proportionately representative of the universe of public bodies in Great Britain. This is because the education sector makes up about 95 per cent of all public bodies, with schools making up 98 per cent of educational organisations. Using a representative sample would have heavily over-sampled schools, skewing responses given and not exploring the breadth of public service organisation type fully. Instead, it was decided to sample set numbers of organisations from each sector within the universe of public bodies. So the intention was for education to comprise about a quarter of the total sample.

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<sup>1</sup> The health sector includes health authorities, health board, NHS Trust, Primary Care Trusts, Care Trusts and Ambulance Trusts. Educational organisations include primary and secondary schools, further education and higher educational institutions. The emergency services sector has been formed by merging organisations from the Police and Fire services. Central government combines central government departments and non-departmental public bodies.

The final response rate from the education sector was also disappointing and we have little firm evidence as to why this was low. However, the answers given by organisations responding to the telephone survey who had said that they were not intending to complete the web survey, do give us an indication of the reasons for non-response. The most commonly cited reason for not responding to the web survey, given by those organisations not intending to respond (of whom the majority were educational organisations), was 'lack of time/too busy'.

**Table 2.1 The distribution of respondents, by organisational type**

Sector	Number	Per cent
Health	86	23
Education	61	16
Local government	129	34
Emergency services	53	14
Central government/Other	47	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100</b>

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The sample of respondents comprises mainly larger-sized organisations, where size is measured in terms of the number of employees. For the purposes of the analysis, the organisations have been grouped into those that had fewer than 500 staff and those that had at least 500 staff. Three-quarters of respondents came from organisations with at least 500 staff. This is not especially surprising, since by their very nature, many public bodies, particularly local authorities and health organisations, are large organisations. Almost all emergency services organisations were larger organisations. However, the number of cases in this category is very small, and the findings should be treated with caution.

**Table 2.2 The breakdown of the size of organisations, by organisational type**

*Column per cent*

	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Under 500 staff	20	[72]	22	[4]	[39]	27
At least 500 staff	80	[28]	78	[96]	[61]	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>282</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] represents where the base is less than 50 unweighted cases.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

## 2.2 Staff time spent on dealing with disability issues

Three-quarters of organisations said that the person or people who dealt with disability issues spent up to one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues, while one-quarter said at least one-quarter of staff time was spent dealing with disability issues. This varied between different types of organisations. Table 2.3 shows that less than one-tenth of health respondents said that more than one-quarter of staff time was spent dealing with disability issues. This rose to around one-third in the education and local government sectors, although the number of educational organisations was very small. The small number of cases suggests that the differences between the sectors are significant but, as such, should be treated with caution.

**Table 2.3 The breakdown of the time spent dealing with disability issues, by organisational type**

*Column per cent*

	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
25% or less	92	[67]	67	[83]	[69]	76
Over 25%	8	[33]	33	[17]	[31]	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>287</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] represents where the base is less than 50 unweighted cases.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Two factors – size of organisation and whether or not diversity staff spend more than one-quarter of their time on disability issues – were the most likely to show differences across a range of employment issues. Larger organisations were more likely to have staff spending more time on disability issues than their counterparts but this relationship did not seem strong, suggesting that the two factors stated were not dependent on each other.

### 2.3 Equality schemes

The current legislation regarding the Disability Equality Duty and the requirement for some public bodies to have Disability Equality Schemes is outlined in Section 1.2. Public authorities may have one or more of the equality schemes listed in Table 2.4. Table 2.4 shows that only one out of the 376 respondents did not have any of the equality schemes. Almost all the participant organisations had a Race Equality Scheme. Of the 14 organisations that did not have a Race Equality Scheme, almost half (six) came from the health sector, while almost one-third (four) came from central government or other organisations. It should be noted that such authorities are failing to meet their existing legal obligations. Most organisations (two-thirds) had a Disability Equality Scheme, while three-fifths had a Gender Equality Scheme. Just over one-half of the organisations said they had equality schemes relating to religious belief and sexual orientation while just under one-half had an Age Equality Scheme.

Almost two-fifths of respondents said that their Disability Equality Scheme had been developed by extending their Race Equality Scheme, while over one-half had not, and eight per cent did not know. Organisations who had not yet established a Disability Equality Scheme were asked whether they had any plans to do so. In response to this question, almost all organisations had plans to establish one within the next two years.

**Table 2.4 Which equality schemes do organisations have?**

<i>Multiple response</i>	
	<b>Organisational type</b>
	<b>All %</b>
Race	96
Disability	64
Gender	60
Sexual orientation	54
Religious belief	54
Age	47
None	1
Don't know	1
No answer	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

### 2.3.1 Differences by type of organisation

Further analysis revealed that the likelihood of organisations having an Equality Scheme varied by the type of organisation:

- three-quarters of local authorities had a gender equality scheme while only one-half of health organisations had such a scheme;
- almost three-quarters of educational organisations said they had a Gender Equality Scheme compared to two-fifths of central government/other bodies;
- two-thirds of educational organisations had a sexual orientation equality scheme compared to just over two-fifths (43 per cent) of central government/other and emergency services respondents;
- again, educational bodies were most likely to have a sexual orientation equality scheme, with around three-fifths having one, while one-third of emergency services had such a scheme, which made them the sector least likely to have such a scheme; and
- more than four-fifths of educational establishments had a sexual orientation equality scheme compared to around one-half of emergency services.

### 2.3.2 Differences by size of organisation

Smaller organisations were more likely to have each of the equality schemes. In summary:

- over two-thirds of smaller organisations had a gender equality scheme compared to less than one-half of larger organisations;
- almost two-thirds of smaller organisations had such a sexual orientation equality scheme compared to just over two-fifths of larger organisations;
- the same pattern occurred with respect to religious equality schemes;
- over one-half of smaller organisations had an age equality scheme compared to less than two-fifths of larger organisations; and
- almost three-quarters of smaller organisations had a Disability Equality Scheme compared to one-half of larger organisations.

In this respect, size and type of organisation could be said to influence the likelihood of whether an organisation has an equality scheme or not. Educational organisations were most likely to have each of the equality schemes. In addition, these organisations were also most likely to have less than 500 staff. Smaller organisations were more likely to have each of the equality schemes.

### 2.3.3 Differences by time spent dealing with disability issues

In one-half of organisations, the person responsible for dealing with disability issues spent less than one-quarter of their time doing so compared to just over one-third of organisations where the person responsible spent more than one-quarter of their

time dealing with such issues. Otherwise, no other factors seemed to influence the amount of time spent by the person responsible for dealing with disability issues.

In addition, all organisations who had a dedicated Disability Officer had a Race Equality Scheme already in place. Organisations with centralised staffing arrangements for dealing with disability issues, in some cases, were more likely than those with decentralised arrangements to have any of the equality schemes outlined in Table 2.4, but this was not demonstrated strongly.

## 2.4 Who was involved in establishing the Disability Equality Scheme?

### 2.4.1 Disabled employees

Organisations that had established a Disability Equality Scheme were then asked whether disabled employees were involved in drafting it. Over two-fifths of those respondents who said their organisations had a Disability Equality Scheme said that disabled employees were involved in drafting it. Almost two-thirds of health organisations involved disabled employees in drafting their Disability Equality Scheme, which was much more likely than in any other sector. However, it has to be noted that the numbers involved in this analysis are very small. Table 2.5 shows that larger organisations were also more likely to involve disabled employees in drafting their Disability Equality Scheme. Nearly three-fifths of organisations employing at least 500 staff, involved disabled employees in this process, which was more than twice as likely as smaller organisations, where the corresponding figure was one-quarter.

There was a relationship between organisations who had involved disabled employees in drafting the Disability Equality Scheme and their performance in relation to recruitment, service accessibility and information accessibility but not in relation to estates. The best practice indicators for recruitment, service accessibility, information accessibility, buildings strategy and consultation are set out in Table A.2.

Organisations who had not involved disabled employees in drafting their Disability Equality Scheme generally had lower scores with respect to recruitment. Conversely, organisations who had involved disabled employees generally had the higher scores for recruitment. Organisations that had not involved disabled employees in drafting their Disability Equality Scheme generally had lower scores in relation to service accessibility. For information accessibility, organisations that had not involved their employees in drafting the Disability Equality Schemes generally had the lowest scores.

**Table 2.5 Were disabled employees involved in drafting the Disability Equality Scheme?**

	<i>Column per cent</i>		
	<b>Size of organisation</b>		
	<b>Under 500 staff %</b>	<b>At least 500 staff %</b>	<b>All %</b>
Yes	24	57	44
No	39	21	28
No disabled employees	19	2	9
Don't know	19	21	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>142</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey, who had a Disability Equality Scheme (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

#### **2.4.2 Disabled service users**

These respondents were also asked whether disabled service users were involved in the drafting of the Disability Equality Scheme. Two-fifths of organisations involved disabled service users in the drafting of their Disability Equality Scheme. Over one-half of local authorities who had a Disability Equality Scheme said that disabled service users were involved in drafting it, which was higher than the corresponding figures in every other sector, although in most cases the numbers involved were very small. Table 2.6 shows that almost one-half of larger organisations involved disabled service users in drafting their Disability Equality Scheme, which made them more likely to do so than their smaller counterparts, where only one-third of organisations involved disabled service users.

There was also a link between whether organisations involved disabled employees or service users in drafting their Disability Equality Scheme and whether or not these organisations published disability-related performance indicators. Most organisations (seven-tenths) that published disability-related performance indicators involved disabled employees in drafting their Disability Equality Scheme, while almost two-thirds had involved disabled service users.



**Table 2.6 Were disabled service users involved in drafting the Disability Equality Scheme?**

	<i>Column per cent</i>		
	<b>Size of organisation</b>		
	<b>Under 500 staff %</b>	<b>At least 500 staff %</b>	<b>All %</b>
Yes	34	45	41
No	32	27	29
No disabled service users	11	1	5
Don't know	23	27	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>142</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey, who had a Disability Equality Scheme (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

## 2.5 Plans for introducing a Disability Equality Scheme

Of course, the two-thirds of organisations who had Disability Equality Schemes means that one-third of organisation had not yet introduced one. These organisations were asked if they had any plans to do so and, if so, when they would be likely to introduce it. Over four-fifths of these organisations had plans to introduce a Disability Equality Scheme, with almost all saying that they planned to do so within the next two years.

All organisations were asked about whether they had business plans, local development plans, service delivery plans, or similar. A similar proportion of organisations said that they had a business plan. Table 2.7 shows the groups that were involved in drawing up the business plan. Four-fifths of organisations said that they involved employees when drawing up their business plan, which made them the most commonly involved group by a considerable margin. Between one-half and three-fifths of organisations involved staff network groups, the trades unions or the general public, while less than two-fifths said that disabled people or disability organisations were involved in this process.

**Table 2.7 Groups involved in drawing up the business plan**

	<i>Multiple response</i>
	<b>All %</b>
Employees	79
Trades unions	58
Staff network groups	56
The general public	49
Disabled people	39
Disability organisations	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>232</b>

Base: All respondents who had a business plan, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

All organisations were then asked about how they were integrating disability issues into their mainstream plans. Table 2.8 shows the ways in which organisations did this. Overall, over four-fifths of organisations included some reference to disability in their main plans. Around one-sixth of organisations did not include any reference to disability in their mainstream plans. By contrast, over one-third of organisations intended to integrate disability into their mainstream plans by setting out explicit objectives to promote disability equality, while over one-quarter said they would provide a statement of how they will consult people and one-fifth would include a chapter or section on disability issues.

**Table 2.8 How disability issues are integrated into mainstream plans**

	<i>Multiple response</i>
	<b>All %</b>
Explicit objectives to promote disability equality	36
Statement on how we will consult people	28
Chapter or section on disability issues	21
No reference to disability	15
Part of wider diversity action plan	9
Mainstreamed into general policies or objectives where relevant	2
Other	3
Don't know	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Organisations that intended to include references to disability in their plans were then asked about why they were planning to do so. Table 2.9 sets out the most common reasons given. The DDA was the most common reason given and was cited by two-thirds of organisations. Almost three-fifths of organisations said they included disability issues in their plans because it was seen as good practice within their sector and also that it was seen as integral to good service delivery. Less than one-tenth of these organisations mentioned public pressure or threatened legal action as reasons for including these issues in organisational plans.

Around three-fifths of organisations had changed their employment policies and practices as a result of their Disability Equality Impact Assessment. Organisations that had included references to disability in their main plan were slightly more likely to do so than those that did not. By contrast, organisations that had included references to disability in their main plans (three-fifths) were almost twice as likely to have changed their service provision policies and practices as a result of a Disability Equality Impact Assessment than those that did not include such references in their plans (one-third).

**Table 2.9 Reasons for including disability issues in plans**

	<i>Multiple response</i>
	<b>All %</b>
Legislation/DDA	65
Good practice in the sector	57
Seen as integral to good service delivery	57
Disabled service users' representatives	31
Disability organisations	26
Senior officer or elected member	19
Employees (general)	17
Other	13
Trades unions	10
Public pressure	7
Threatened or actual legal action	2
Don't know	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>

Base: All respondents whose organisations have plans that contain references to disability issues, on-line (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Of the one-sixth of organisations that had no reference to disability in their organisational plans, a majority planned to include it in their plans within the next two years.

## 2.6 Equality Impact Assessments

Respondents were asked whether their organisation had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment to identify any policies and practices that could potentially have an adverse impact on disabled people. They were then asked to identify what their organisation had done as a result of the Equality Impact Assessments. Nearly three-fifths of all respondents said that their organisation had conducted a Disability Equality Impact Assessment. Table 2.10 shows that three-fifths of larger organisations had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment compared to less than one-half of smaller organisations.

**Table 2.10 Has the organisation examined if its policies and services serve disabled people fairly?\***

	<i>Column per cent</i>		
	<b>Size of organisation</b>		
	<b>Under 500 staff %</b>	<b>At least 500 staff %</b>	<b>All %</b>
Yes	44	61	57
No	53	34	40
Don't know	1	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>279</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

\* The wording in the questionnaire added that this might be called an Equality Impact Assessment.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Amongst organisations that had carried out an Equality Impact Assessment, around two-thirds had most or all of their employment practices checked for potentially adverse impacts on disabled people. No differences could be found by type of organisation, size of organisation, or the amount of staff time spent dealing with disability issues in the proportion of employment policies and practices that had been checked for potentially adverse impacts on disabled people.

By contrast, one-half of organisations that had conducted a disability Equality Assessment Impact said that most or all of their service provision practices had been checked. Although there were significant differences between the types of organisations, the numbers within each category were too small to draw any meaningful conclusions. Table 2.11 shows that one-quarter of smaller organisations had had all of their service provision practices checked, compared to around one-sixth of larger organisations. Conversely, one-third of larger organisations had checked most of their service provision policies for potentially adverse impacts on disabled people compared to one-quarter of smaller organisations. Overall, just over one-half of smaller organisations had checked most or all of their service provision practices compared to slightly less than one-half of larger organisations.

There were strong associations between whether or not an organisation had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment and whether it:

- had implemented workplace adjustments for disabled employees;
- had reviewed its employment policies and practices for the impact on disabled employees;
- had performance indicators regarding equal outcomes for disabled and non-disabled employees; and
- monitored the effectiveness of the adjustments it made on disabled service users.

Over nine-tenths of organisations that had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment had made changes to working practices for disabled employees, compared to over four-fifths of organisations that had not conducted such an assessment. Seven-tenths of organisations that had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment were currently undertaking or had completed their review of employment policies and practices, compared to around one-third of organisations that had not conducted one. Over four-fifths of organisations that had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment had performance indicators to monitor whether disabled employees were experiencing equal outcomes compared to non-disabled employees, compared to one-half of those that had not undertaken such an assessment. Almost one-half of organisations that had undertaken such an assessment, monitor the effectiveness of the adjustments they make to improve accessibility to service users compared to around one-third of organisations who had not undertaken such an assessment.

**Table 2.11 The proportion of the organisation's service provision policies that have been checked for potentially adverse impacts on disabled people**

	<i>Column per cent</i>		
	<b>Size of organisation</b>		
	<b>Under 500 staff</b>	<b>At least 500 staff</b>	<b>All</b>
	%	%	%
All	[27]	15	17
Most	[24]	34	32
Some	[24]	48	43
None	[0]	2	1
Don't know	[24]	2	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>155</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey, whose organisation has completed an Equality Impact Assessment (excluding missing values).

[ ] represents cases where the unweighted base is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Three-fifths of organisations that had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment had changed their employment practices as a result of it, while a slightly lower percentage had changed their service provision policies towards disabled people. One-fifth of organisations had directed more funding to services for disabled people as a result of the Equality Impact Assessment.

There were differences by types of organisation in the percentage of respondents who said their organisation had changed employment policies and procedures as a result of conducting the Disability Equality Impact Assessment. However, the numbers within each category make it difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions beyond this. Besides this, there seemed to be no differences between the sizes of public sector organisations when asked if their organisation had changed its employment policies and practices as a result of conducting a Disability Equality Impact Assessment. The same was also true of the amount of staff time spent dealing with disability issues by the person or people responsible for them. The same pattern was repeated when respondents were asked whether their organisation had changed its service provision procedures after conducting a Disability Equality Impact Assessment. There were also no differences by type, size or amount of time spent dealing with disability issues in the percentage of respondents who said their organisation had directed more funding to services for disabled people as a result of conducting its Disability Equality Impact Assessment.

Organisations who had conducted a Disability Equality Impact Assessment were then asked whether they had undertaken the same process with regards to other areas of equality policy. Table 2.12 shows that less than one-tenth of organisations who had undertaken a Disability Equality Impact Assessment had not applied the same process to other areas of equality policy. Four-fifths of organisations that had undertaken a Disability Equality Impact Assessment had conducted the same process with regards to race, while two-thirds had done so for gender. Around one-half of these organisations had conducted an Equality Impact Assessment for age, religious belief and sexual orientation as well as disability.

**Table 2.12 Have organisations conducted Equality Impact Assessments in other areas?**

	<i>Multiple response</i>
	<b>All %</b>
Race	79
Gender	66
Age	51
Religious belief	49
Sexual orientation	48
None of the above	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>

Base: All respondents who had conducted a Disability Equality Impact Assessment, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

## 2.7 Measuring outcomes for disabled people

This section focuses on whether there was an association between the likelihood that they measure outcomes for disabled people and whether or not a public body has developed disability-related performance indicators in addition to the ones they are required to publish. Over one-thirds of organisations had developed their own disability-related performance indicators in addition to the ones they are already required to publish, while over one-half had not.

Most organisations (almost three-quarters) that had developed additional disability-related performance indicators, had conducted a Disability Equality Impact Assessment, compared to less than one-half of organisations that had not developed their own disability-related performance indicators. However, no association could be found between these two types of organisations in the proportion of their employment or service provision practices that have been checked for potentially adverse impacts on disabled people.

There was one major identifiable difference in what these organisations had done as a result of their Disability Equality Impact Assessment. Even though only a small proportion of organisations (one-third) that had developed their own disability-related performance indicators over and above what they are required to publish had directed more funding to services for disabled people, this was still three times higher than the corresponding figure amongst organisations that had not developed their own disability-related performance indicators additional to what they are already required to publish.

## 2.8 Complaints procedures

Organisations were then asked about the nature of the complaints that they had received over the past year from disabled people relating to their health condition or disability. One-fifth of organisations had received employment-related complaints, while around one-quarter had received service delivery-related complaints. Around two-fifths of the organisations had not received complaints from disabled people relating to their health condition or disability, while a fairly high proportion (over one-fifth) did not know whether they had or not.

Of those organisations that received employment-related complaints, around three-fifths record these complaints separately if they are made purely on the grounds of their health condition or disability, while almost two-fifths did not. With respect to service delivery-related complaints, one-half of organisations record these complaints separately if they are made purely on the grounds of a health condition or disability, while one-third did not. Almost one-half of organisations had assessed their complaints procedure to make sure that it met the needs of disabled people, while less than one-third had not yet done so. Again, a high proportion (over one-fifth) did not know whether their complaints procedure had been assessed or not for this purpose.

Organisations that had developed their own disability-related performance indicators in addition to the ones they are required to publish were not more likely than those that had not done so to have received employment-related complaints from disabled people in relation to their health condition or disability. However, over one-third of the former group had received service delivery-related complaints from disabled people relating to their health condition or disability. The corresponding figure amongst the latter group was one-fifth. There were no identifiable relationship between the two groups in terms of whether or not they record employment or service-delivery-related complaints separately if they are made purely on the grounds of health condition or disability. However, organisations that had developed their own performance indicators in addition to the ones they are already required to publish, were more likely to assess their complaints procedures to ensure it meets the needs of disabled people than those that had not yet done so. Almost three-fifths of the former group had assessed their complaints procedure, compared to two-fifths of the latter group.

## 2.9 Responsibility for disability issues

For the purposes of the analysis, the arrangements that organisations have for managing disability issues were grouped into three categories: centralised; decentralised; and no arrangement. The centralised arrangements included: having a central inclusion/equality/diversity/equal opportunities team; a dedicated officer to deal with each equality strand; a dedicated officer who is responsible for all equality strands; and an individual who deals with equality strands as part of their wider job description. Organisations with decentralised arrangements were defined as those that have specific individuals who are responsible for equality on behalf of their specific parts of the organisation. Three-quarters of organisations had a centralised arrangement of some description, while one-fifth had a decentralised arrangement, with the rest not having an arrangement for dealing specifically with disability issues. Table 2.13 shows that nine-tenths of emergency services organisations and central government/other bodies had centralised arrangements for dealing specifically with disability issues.



**Table 2.13 The breakdown of the arrangements for dealing specifically with disability issues, by type of organisation**

	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Centralised arrangement	66	[72]	71	[89]	[87]	75
Decentralised arrangement	23	[22]	26	[11]	[10]	20
No arrangement	11	[6]	3	[0]	[3]	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>286</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey, (excluding missing values).

[ ] represents where the base is less than 50 unweighted cases.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The type of arrangement for dealing with disability issues varies by the amount of time spent by the person or people responsible for diversity issues. Table 2.14 shows that all organisations where the person or people who deal with diversity issues spend at least one-quarter of their time on disability issues, had centralised arrangements for dealing with disability issues. By contrast, two-thirds of organisations whose diversity staff spent less than one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues had decentralised arrangements. This could suggest that centralised arrangements are more likely to lead to the person or people responsible for disability issues spending more time dealing with them. Having a centralised arrangement may provide a focal point for diversity staff to deal with disability issues which, in turn, could lead to them spending more time on them.

**Table 2.14 The breakdown of the arrangements for dealing specifically with disability issues by time spent dealing with disability issues**

	Time spent dealing with disability issues		
	25% or less %	Over 25% %	All %
Centralised arrangement	67	100	75
Decentralised arrangement	27	0	20
No arrangement	6	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>286</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

In terms of how organisations deal with disability, less than one-tenth treated it as an issue in its own right. Seven-tenths of organisations dealt with disability as part of a wider equality strategy, while one-fifth deal with disability as part of their normal processes. Table 2.15 shows that one-fifth of educational organisations treated disability as an issue in its own right, which was considerably higher than organisations from any other sector. They were also notably less likely to deal with the issue as part of a broader equality strategy and more likely to deal with it as part of their normal processes. However, it has to be noted that the numbers within the education sector are very small, so the results must be interpreted with caution.

**Table 2.15 How organisations deal with disability issues, by type of organisation**

	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Deals with issue separately	3	[19]	4	[9]	[15]	8
As part of broader equality strategy	74	[42]	74	[85]	[67]	71
As part of normal processes	18	[36]	20	[6]	[18]	19
Don't know	5	[3]	2			2
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>287</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] unweighted base is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

## 2.10 Summary

- Local authorities accounted for one-third of the sample, which was more than any other sector.
- Larger organisations that employed at least 500 staff accounted for around three-quarters.
- Organisations from the health and emergency services sector were least likely to have dedicated staff spending over one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues.
- A small minority of the participating organisations did not have a Race Equality Scheme in place, and these authorities were, therefore, failing to meet their existing legal obligations.

- Smaller organisations were the most likely to have each of the equality schemes set out in Table 2.4.
- The majority of public sector organisations had a Disability Equality Scheme.
- Larger organisations were more likely to involve disabled employees and service users in drafting their Disability Equality Scheme. The same was true of organisations that developed their own disability-related performance indicators in addition to the ones they are already required to publish.
- Disabled people and disability organisations were each involved in the drafting of business plans in over one-third of organisations.
- The DDA was the main reason given by organisations for integrating disability issues into their mainstream plans.
- Most organisations that had conducted Equality Impact Assessments had checked for potentially adverse impacts on disabled people.
- Organisations that had conducted a Disability Equality Impact Assessment had most commonly also undertaken the same process in relation to race.
- Organisations that had developed their own disability-related performance indicators were more likely to have conducted a Disability Equality Impact Assessment.
- A majority of organisations that had received disability-related employment or service-related complaints recorded them separately from other complaints.
- Organisations with centralised arrangements for dealing with disability issues (see Section 2.9) were more likely to have dedicated officers who spend more time on dealing with disability issues.

## 3 Employment policies and practices

Part 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act makes it unlawful for public and private bodies to discriminate against disabled employees or job applicants for reasons related to disability. From December 2006 public sector bodies will be bound by the Disability Equality Duty set out in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (the 2005 Act). The Disability Equality Duty will require all authorities to examine the outcomes they are delivering for disabled employees, and to take steps to tackle discrimination and inequality.

This chapter focuses on the employment policies and practices that organisations have and how responsive they are to the needs of disabled employees. In particular, it focuses on: the number of disabled employees (Section 3.1); the extent of disability awareness training (Section 3.2); how regularly disability-related recruitment policies are monitored (Section 3.4); the policies that help disabled employees (Section 3.4); what organisations do when changing their policies and practices (Section 3.5); the extent to which respondents think their organisation is committed to disability issues (Section 3.7); and organisations' motivations for change (Section 3.8).

### 3.1 Employment of disabled people

Nearly all organisations had employed people with a long-term health condition that affects their day-to-day activities (the DDA definition) in the last ten years. The percentage of public bodies that had employed a disabled person in the last ten years was similarly high across all organisational types, except for education where the corresponding figure was slightly lower. However, it must be noted that in most cases, the numbers involved were very small, so while there is a suggestion that the differences are significant, the results must be interpreted with caution. As expected, almost all larger organisations had employed a disabled person in the last

ten years, compared to just over four-fifths of smaller organisations.<sup>2</sup> This is consistent with findings from Roberts *et al.*, (2004) which showed that almost nine-tenths of organisations, with at least 100 staff had a disabled employee, compared to just one-sixth of organisations that employed up to six staff. All emergency services organisations and almost all health organisations and local authorities had employed a disabled person in the last ten years. These were found to be the sectors where organisations were most likely to employ at least 500 staff (Section 2.1). This is consistent with findings from Hirst *et al.*, (2004) which showed that in 2003 over four-fifths of disabled public sector employees worked in these sectors.

Organisations that had employed disabled people in the last ten years were then asked what percentage of their workforce is currently disabled. Those who did not know the exact percentage were asked to provide an estimate. Table 3.1 shows that very few organisations did not have any disabled employees in their current workforce, the large majority had up to five per cent of disabled employees. Nearly all local authorities had disabled people making up between one to five per cent of their employees, compared to two-thirds of health organisations.

**Table 3.1 Disabled employees as a percentage of the workforce, by organisational type**

*Column per cent*

	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
0%	4	26	1	[2]	[9]	7
1-2%	43	32	45	[44]	[21]	39
3-5%	23	30	41	[27]	[41]	33
6-9%	6	8	5	[13]	[11]	8
10-25%	4	0	5	[4]	[11]	5
26% or more	1	0	0	[2]	[0]	1
Don't know	19	4	3	[8]	[7]	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>341</b>

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] unweighted base is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

<sup>2</sup> In this (and other chapters) smaller-sized organisations are defined as those with less than 500 employees and larger-sized organisations are defined as those with 500 or more employees.

Organisations that knew the percentage of their workforce who were disabled were then asked how they found this out. Three-quarters of these organisations said they found out through equal opportunities questionnaires that were issued when employees joined the organisation. This method may underestimate the number of disabled employees, as figures may be out of date and not every disabled person may want to identify themselves as such to their employer.

## 3.2 Training

### 3.2.1 Equal opportunities or diversity training

More than nine-tenths of organisations provided equal opportunities or diversity training for their staff. Equal opportunities training provision was almost universal in local government. Almost all larger organisations provided equal opportunities or diversity training for their staff compared to over four-fifths of smaller organisations. Only 16 of the 285 organisations that gave information on whether they provide equal opportunities or diversity training for staff said that they did not provide such training.

In more than one-third of organisations, between one and 25 per cent of staff had received equal opportunities or diversity training in the last two years. While in one-eighth of organisations, all staff within their organisation had received such training within the same period. Health organisations were considerably more likely to have had a lower percentage of staff who had received equal opportunities or diversity training in the last two years than local government organisations. Over one-half of health organisations had between one and 25 per cent of staff who had received equal opportunities or diversity training in the last two years, compared to two-fifths of local authorities. While one-quarter of local authorities had at least three-quarters of staff who had received such training in the last two years, compared to less than one-tenth amongst health organisations.

Table 3.2 shows that size of organisation was also associated with the level of provision of equal opportunities or diversity training. Somewhat surprisingly – given other research findings – smaller-sized public bodies were more likely to have a higher proportion of staff who had received equal opportunities or diversity training. For example, almost one-half of smaller organisations had provided more than three-quarters of their employees with equal opportunities or diversity training compared to around one-quarter of larger organisations. However, this is consistent with the findings in Section 2.3.2, which showed that almost three-quarters of smaller organisations had a Disability Equality Scheme compared to one-half of larger organisations. The reasons for this are unclear, but might include lower staff turnover in smaller public bodies and consequently, the training does not have to be repeated as often for new entrants, or the respondents in larger organisations may not have been fully aware of the extent of the equal opportunities or diversity training delivered across the wider organisation.

It also appears to be the case that organisations that mainly deal with customers face-to-face were more likely to have provided equal opportunities or diversity training to staff, had done so in the past two years, and made disability awareness training mandatory for every percentage grouping of staff. However, it appeared not to be a strong relationship. There were also no association between organisations who had developed their own disability-related performance indicators in addition to the ones they already have to publish and those who had not developed such indicators.

**Table 3.2 Percentage of employees who had received equal opportunities or diversity training in the last two years, by size of organisation**

Per cent receiving training	Size of organisation		
	Under 500 staff	At least 500 staff	All
	%	%	%
0%	2	2	2
1-25%	20	41	35
26-50%	9	15	14
51-75%	22	11	14
76-99%	31	11	16
100%	15	12	13
Don't know	2	9	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>260</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

### 3.2.2 Disability awareness training

Disability awareness training was mandatory for a varying proportion of employees across organisations. Over one-third of organisations said that disability awareness training was not mandatory for any staff, while just under one-third said that it was mandatory for all staff. The remaining third said that disability awareness training was only mandatory for some staff. This ranged from the around one-eighth of organisations where disability awareness training was mandatory for up to one-quarter of staff, to one-twentieth of organisations where it was mandatory for between 75 to 99 per cent of staff.

Respondents who said that disability awareness training was not mandatory for any staff were then asked about the proportions of staff who had received such training in the last two years. In less than one-tenth of organisations, none of their employees had received such training in the last two years, while in less than one twentieth of

organisations, all staff had received such training during the same period. This compared to over two-fifths of organisations where up to one-quarter of staff in their organisation had received disability awareness training in the last two years.

In three-fifths of health and central government/other organisations, up to one-quarter of staff had received disability awareness training, which was higher than amongst any other type of organisation. One-half of larger organisations had the same percentage of staff in their organisation who had received disability awareness training in the last two years, compared to one-quarter who said the same amongst smaller organisations. Table 3.3 shows that one-half of organisations where the person or people responsible for diversity issues spent less than one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues, had up to one-quarter of their staff who had received disability awareness training in the last two years, compared to less than one-third of organisations where the relevant staff spent over one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues.

There was also an association between the extent of disability awareness training delivered within an organisation and the presence of dedicated disability staff. The latter was measured by the amount of time spent by individuals or teams with responsibility for diversity and equal opportunities matters on disability issues. Organisations where diversity and equal opportunities staff spent a lower percentage of their time dealing with disability issues had a lower percentage of staff who had received disability awareness training. One interpretation of this finding is that having dedicated disability staff leads to higher levels of disability awareness training in organisations. However, the direction of causation is unknown, or whether there are other intervening factors affecting the observed association. Hence, it is also possible that it is the provision of disability awareness training (or some other factor) that leads to the establishment of a post where someone spends more than one-quarter of their time dealing with disability matters. As with diversity training (see Section 3.2.1), there were, however, no notable differences found between organisations that had developed their own disability-related performance indicators, in addition to the ones they are required to publish and those that had not yet done so in the proportion of employees for whom disability awareness training is mandatory, nor the proportion who had actually undertaken such training in the last two years.



**Table 3.3 Percentage of employees who had disability awareness training in the last two years, by the amount of time spent dealing with disability issues**

Per cent receiving training	Time spent dealing with disability issues		
	25% or less	Over 25%	All
	%	%	%
0%	8	6	7
1-25%	49	29	44
26-50%	10	21	13
51-75%	8	18	10
76-99%	9	15	11
100%	5	2	4
Don't know	12	10	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>259</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

### 3.3 Recruitment policies

Respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 'regularity', ranging from always to never, how often their organisation implemented a series of disability-friendly recruitment policies. The statements respondents considered are listed in Table 3.4. The most commonly cited policy always implemented was to state that the organisation had an equal opportunities policy in job advertisements. This was cited by almost nine-tenths of organisations. Over four-fifths of larger organisations always included an equal opportunities policy statement in job advertisements compared to less than four-fifths of smaller organisations (Table 3.4).

Seven-tenths of organisations used the Disability Symbol (two ticks) in job advertisements. The Disability Two Ticks symbol is an accreditation given by Jobcentre Plus to employers who have agreed to take action to meet five commitments regarding the employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees. Almost four-fifths of local authorities and health service organisations always used the Two Ticks symbol in job advertisements, which was higher than other sectors. Seven-tenths of larger organisations always used the disability symbol compared to one-half of smaller organisations. Almost nine-tenths of health organisations and local authorities always or often used the disability symbol in their job advertisements, which was higher than organisations from other sectors.

By contrast with the actions outlined above, organisations were not proactive in attracting disabled employees. This was reflected in the relatively low percentage who regularly work with educational organisations to encourage disabled people to

apply, advertise in websites aimed at disabled people, work with disability organisations to encourage more disabled applicants, and identify barriers that prevent disabled people from applying.

Nine-tenths of local authorities always, or often, monitored the disability status of applicants, which was higher than in any other sector. Around one-sixth of larger organisations always, or often, advertised in websites aimed at disabled people compared to one-twentieth of smaller organisations, while one-fifth work with disability organisations compared to around one-eighth of smaller organisations. Around one-sixth of larger organisations identify barriers that prevent disabled people from applying compared to less than one-tenth amongst smaller organisations, while just over two-thirds of them consider modifying job specifications to help disabled applicants, compared to slightly less than two-thirds of smaller organisations.

One-quarter of organisations where the person responsible for diversity spent more than one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues worked with educational establishments to encourage disabled learners to apply, compared to around one-eighth of organisations where the relevant person spent less time dealing with these issues. One-fifth of organisations where the relevant person or people spent more than one-quarter of their time dealing with such issues identified barriers that prevent disabled learners from applying, compared to just over one-tenth of organisations where they spent less time dealing with such issues. Surprisingly, over two-thirds of organisations where the person responsible for diversity issues spent less than one-quarter of their time doing so, always or often modified job specifications to help disabled applicants compared to three-fifths of organisations where the relevant staff spent less time dealing with such issues.

Nine-tenths of organisations in the sample mentioned their equal opportunities policy while seven-tenths always, or sometimes, displayed the Disability Symbol in job advertisements. This rose to almost nine-tenths amongst health organisations.

**Table 3.4 The regularity with which organisations implement the following disability-related recruitment policies**

	<i>Row per cent</i>			
	<b>How regularly organisations implement disability-related recruitment policies</b>			
	<b>Always/ Often (1-2) %</b>	<b>Sometimes (3-4) %</b>	<b>Rarely or never (5-7) %</b>	<b>Don't know %</b>
State an equal opportunities policy in job advertisements	87	3	9	1
Monitor the disability status of employees	84	8	7	1
Use the Disability Symbol (Two Ticks)	70	2	22	6
Make changes to job or person specification to encourage more disabled applicants	66	21	9	4
Monitor impact of changes made to encourage disabled people to apply	28	26	41	6
Work with educational organisations to encourage disabled learners to apply	15	22	52	10
Work with disability organisations to encourage more disabled applicants to apply	17	29	46	8
Identify any potential barriers that prevent potential employees applying	13	28	51	8
Advertise in publications or websites aimed at disabled people	12	18	59	10
<b>Total</b>				<b>280 respondents</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

### 3.3.1 Best practice in recruitment policies

Organisations in the sample were ranked into quartiles in relation to achieving best practice in their recruitment policies towards disabled people. The actual indicators of best practice in relation to recruitment, along with service accessibility, information accessibility, buildings strategy and consultation are set out in Table A.2. The classification is based on responses to the regularity with which organisations implemented the disability-friendly recruitment policies set out in Table 3.4. A high score means the recruitment policies were implemented more regularly (and vice-versa) and implies that an organisation's performance in recruitment was better than those with a lower score.

Table 3.5 shows smaller organisations generally had the lowest scores for recruitment compared to one-fifth of larger organisations. Larger organisations generally had the highest recruitment scores compared to just one-sixth of smaller organisations.

**Table 3.5 How organisations performed in terms of their recruitment policies**

	<i>Column per cent</i>	
	<b>Size of organisation</b>	
	<b>Under 500 staff %</b>	<b>At least 500 staff %</b>
Top quartile	16	28
Third quartile	23	26
Second quartile	23	26
Bottom quartile	38	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>202</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

### 3.4 Policies to assist disabled employees

Overall, a majority of organisations had each of the policies listed in Table 3.6, to help disabled employees, already in place. These ranged from three-fifths that already allowed working from home for disabled employees, through to nine-tenths who had adapted their work environment to help disabled employees. As expected, almost all organisations with at least 500 staff had a work environment that was adapted to help disabled employees compared to around four-fifths of smaller organisations.

Table 3.6 shows that around two-thirds of organisations already helped disabled employees by transferring people or jobs to other premises. Four-fifths of health organisations already had this policy in place compared to two-thirds of all organisations. Over three-quarters of larger organisations had this policy in place compared to two-fifths of smaller organisations.

Nine-tenths of organisations already had flexible work organisation to help disabled employees. Over nine-tenths of larger organisations had flexible work organisation compared to around four-fifths of smaller organisations. Nine-tenths of organisations had flexible working hours to help disabled employees. Again, there was a dichotomy by size, with over nine-tenths of larger organisations already having this in place compared to just over four-fifths of smaller organisations. In reporting these findings, it needs to be recognised that it is not always possible to have flexible working hours in all types of public bodies. For instance, it would be very difficult to envisage teachers having flexible working hours.

Just under three-quarters of organisations provided appropriate physical assistance to disabled employees. Four-fifths of larger organisations had such arrangements in place compared to just over one-half of smaller organisations. Almost nine-tenths of organisations whose diversity staff spent more of their time on disability issues were also more likely to say that their organisation had such arrangements in place compared to around two-thirds of those where disability staff spent less than one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues.

**Table 3.6 Policies that organisations currently have in place to help disabled employees**

	<i>Row per cent</i>			
	<b>Policies in place or planned</b>			
	<b>In place</b>	<b>Planned</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
	%	%	%	%
Adapted work environment to help disabled employees	92	2	4	3
Flexible working time	91	2	6	1
Flexible work organisation	90	2	5	3
Providing car parking spaces for disabled employees	89	2	6	3
Providing appropriate physical assistance	73	6	13	7
Transferring people or jobs to other premises	67	4	19	10
Allowing working from home	60	9	21	9
<b>Total</b>				<b>287 respondents</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Over two-thirds of local authorities had already implemented policies to allow working from home for disabled employees compared to three-fifths of health organisations. Around two-thirds of larger organisations had already implemented this policy compared to just over two-fifths of smaller organisations. And, as might be expected, almost all respondents from larger organisations provided parking spaces for disabled employees compared to three-quarters of smaller organisations. This could be because larger organisations are more likely to be based at larger premises, which may give them more space with which to provide more disabled car parking bays.

### 3.5 When organisations change policies or practices

Respondents were asked about whether their organisation had reviewed its employment policies and procedures and the processes their organisation undergo when they change these policies and procedures. Table 3.7 shows that around three-fifths of organisations had at least started to review their employment policies and practices for their potential impact on disabled employees. Of these, around one-quarter had completed the process. This rose to almost one-half amongst education respondents. Perhaps surprisingly, one-quarter of smaller organisations had completed this process compared to around one-sixth of their larger counterparts. Less than one in 20 had no plans to do so.

**Table 3.7 Whether organisation has reviewed all its employment policies and practices for the impact on disabled employees**

	Per cent
Yes, completed	26
Yes, underway	33
Planned within the next year	23
Planned but not within the next year	9
No plans to do so	4
Don't know	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>370</b>

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Respondents were then asked about how regularly their organisation undertook a series of policies. Table 3.8 shows that around two-fifths of organisations were monitoring changes to employment policy and practice and monitoring the impact of changes made to meet the requirements of the DDA on an ongoing basis. Respondents were polarised when they were asked about whether their organisation reviewed the impact on disabled employees, monitored changes to policy and practice and monitored the impact of changes made to meet the requirements of the DDA. In each of these cases, the proportion of organisations who undertook each of the above actions on an ongoing basis or as the need arose accounted for around three-quarters of the total.

Over two-fifths of larger organisations monitored the impact of changes to employment policy and practice on an ongoing basis compared to less than one-third of smaller organisations. Two-thirds of health organisations explored satisfaction levels amongst disabled employees through satisfaction surveys annually. Almost one-half of these organisations surveyed disabled staff annually to find out if they were happy with the changes being made to comply with the DDA. One-fifth of

organisations where the person responsible for diversity issues spent at least one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues, explored satisfaction levels on an ongoing basis compared to around one-twentieth of organisations, where the relevant person or people spent less time dealing with disability issues.

**Table 3.8 When reviewing or changing employment policies and practices, how regularly do organisations do the following?**

	<i>Row per cent</i>					
	Ongoing %	Annually or biannually %	Every 5 years %	As the need arises %	Never %	Don't know %
Consult disabled employees	27	9	1	42	10	10
Review impact on disabled employees	37	13	0*	35	8	6
Monitor changes to policy and practice	42	16	0*	31	7	5
Explore satisfaction levels	12	38	1	24	17	8
Conduct staff surveys to find out if disabled staff are happy with changes being made	10	27	1	28	26	8
Monitor impact of changes made to meet DDA	42	11	0*	31	7	5
<b>Total</b>						<b>367 respondents</b>

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

## 3.6 Encouraging participation of disabled people

### 3.6.1 Staff networks

Just under one-third of organisations said they had a staff disability network. Nine-tenths of these organisations said they had one internally, while a very small minority said they had established one through linking to other staff disability networks in similar organisations. Over three-quarters of staff disability networks were invited to give advice on human resources processes, while just under two-thirds were invited to do so in relation to customer service procedures. One-half were invited to give advice on organisational design and performance measures. Around three-fifths of the staff disability networks were organised by management. A similar proportion of staff disability networks were organised by staff, while more than one-quarter were organised by an Equality Team/Officer or Committee.

### 3.7 Views about the level of organisational commitment to disability issues

Respondents were asked the extent of their agreement with the four statements set out in Table 3.9 regarding the commitment of their organisation to disability issues. Almost all agreed that their organisation was committed to improving the experience of disabled service users, while nearly three-quarters agreed that they currently meet the needs of disabled employees.

Around two-fifths of larger organisations were more likely to agree that there are currently barriers to disabled employees compared to one-third of their smaller counterparts. Two-thirds of health organisations agreed that there was a lack of targeted information to employees regarding disability. Over one-half of organisations where the person or people responsible for diversity issues spent less time dealing with disability issues agreed with the same statement compared to just one-third of organisations where the relevant staff spent less time dealing with disability issues.

**Table 3.9 The extent to which respondents agree with statements regarding disabled employees and their organisation**

	<i>Row per cent</i>			
	<b>Per cent of respondents agreeing with the following statements</b>			
	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
	%	%	%	%
We currently meet the needs of employees	72	16	10	3
There are currently barriers to disabled employees	39	15	42	4
There is a lack of targeted information to employees regarding disability	47	17	34	2
The organisation is committed to improving the experience of employees and service users	96	2	1	1
<b>Total</b>				<b>287 respondents</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

### 3.8 Motivation for change

Respondents were asked about what they thought motivated their organisation's improvements to their employment policies and practices for disabled people. Table 3.10 shows that the most common reason that respondents cited for these changes



was the need to respond positively to the DDA legislation, which was cited by nine-tenths of organisations. Following good practice in the organisation's sector was cited by four-fifths of respondents, and two-thirds said that the changes were essential to good service delivery.

Over one-quarter of local authorities said that pressure from elected members motivated a change to employment policies and practices for employees. One-seventh of larger organisations compared to one-twentieth of smaller organisations. Elected members are unique to local authorities and these organisations are typically larger than other public bodies, which may explain why these respondents are more likely to cite this as a factor for changing employment policies and practices.

Larger organisations were also more likely to say that changing employment policies and practices were integral to good service delivery. Nearly three-quarters of respondents from organisations with at least 500 staff cited this as a reason compared to less than three-fifths of respondents from organisations with less than 500 staff. Almost all larger organisations said that the DDA was responsible for their employment policies and practices changing compared to over four-fifths of smaller organisations. One-quarter of respondents from larger organisations with at least 500 staff mentioned trades unions as a factor, which was around twice the corresponding figure for smaller organisations. This could be because trades unions in larger organisations may have more influence than those in smaller organisations or because there may not be trades union representation in smaller organisations.

One-half of larger organisations said that disabled employees were at least partly responsible for a change in employment policies and practices compared to one-third of smaller organisations. This is consistent with findings in Section 3.2, which show that larger organisations were more likely to have employed a disabled person in the last ten years. Almost two-fifths of larger organisations said that disabled employees at least partly influenced the change compared to one-fifth of smaller organisations.

Respondents who cited more than one factor were also asked to identify what they thought the main reason for such a change to be. The three most commonly cited main reasons for change were: the DDA, which was cited by almost one-half of organisations; good practice, which was mentioned by over one-fifth of organisations; while a similar proportion said that change was due to employment policies and practices being seen as integral to good service delivery. There were no relationships found in the type or size of organisation that said their main reason for change was the DDA. The likelihood of citing the DDA as the main reason did not vary by the time spent dealing with disability issues by diversity staff either.

**Table 3.10 What motivated organisations to make changes to improve employment policies and practices for employees**

Motivating factor	Per cent of organisations reporting factor	
	All	Main
	%	%
Legislation/DDA	90	46
Good practice in the sector	79	22
Seen as integral to good service delivery	67	19
Disabled employees	45	4
Senior Officer	34	3
Disabled service users	33	1
Employees generally	24	2
Campaigns materials and advertising from Government	22	
Disabled service users' representatives/parents/carers	22	
Trades unions	22	
Campaigns materials and advertising from disability organisations	19	
Elected Member	11	0*
Pressure from regulator or inspection body	8	1
Public pressure	7	
Threatened or actual legal action	4	0*
Don't know	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>263</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values for the second column) for the first column.<sup>3</sup>

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There appeared to be a relationship between organisations that had a disability network and their best practice scores. Organisations that had internal staff disability networks generally had higher scores for recruitment.

<sup>3</sup> Respondents were asked to identify all the factors that contributed to a change in employment policies and practices. Thus, the total for this column is over 100 per cent since it is multiple response. For the second column, only those respondents that cited more than one factor were asked. Again, this excludes all those who did not give an answer. This column adds up to 100 per cent because these respondents were only asked for the main factor.

### 3.9 Summary

- Nearly all organisations had employed disabled people or people with long-term health conditions over the past ten years.
- The large majority of public sector organisations had up to five per cent of disabled employees in their workforce
- Larger organisations were more likely to have provided equal opportunities or diversity training to a greater proportion of their workforce.
- Almost one-half of organisations employing fewer than 500 staff had provided such training to at least three-quarters of their staff compared to less than one-quarter of larger organisations.
- Organisations where diversity and equal opportunities staff spent a lower percentage of their time dealing with disability issues had a lower percentage of staff who had received disability awareness training.
- There were no notable differences between organisations that had developed their own disability-related performance indicators and those that had not yet done so with respect to their provision of diversity or disability training.
- With respect to recruitment, the most common policy that organisations always, or often, implemented was to state an equal opportunities policy in job advertisements, which was cited by almost the vast majority of organisations. This was more common amongst larger organisations than their smaller counterparts.
- Nearly all organisations had adapted their work environment to help disabled employees, implemented flexible working time and flexible work organisation. Larger organisations were more likely to have implemented these disability-friendly policies than their smaller counterparts.
- Almost all organisations felt they were committed to improving the experience of their disabled employees and service users, while the majority (almost three-quarters) said they were currently meeting the needs of their disabled employees.
- The DDA was most commonly cited as a reason for changing employment policies and practices, and was cited by all but a few organisations, with larger organisations being more likely to say so than their smaller counterparts.

# 4 Customer and service users

## 4.1 Introduction

From December 2006, public sector organisations will be bound by the Disability Equality Duty set out in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (the 2005 Act). In addition, they are also subject to the service provision regulations set out in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA), namely that the Act prohibits discrimination in the provision of goods, services, facilities and premises by service providers. Part 3 of the the DDA, makes it unlawful for public and private sector bodies to discriminate against disabled people in providing services. This chapter examines the extent to which public authorities are taking a strategic, proactive approach to meeting their responsibilities. The issues addressed here include:

- the proportion of service users who were disabled, and how organisations obtained this information (Section 4.2);
- accessibility of services, with particular reference to actions being taken by organisations to enable disabled people to access or use their services (Section 4.3);
- how regularly organisations reviewed and monitored service provision (Section 4.4);
- specific actions being taken by organisations to meet the needs of disabled people, and how well the organisations were performing (Section 4.5);
- the extent to which organisations ensured that disabled people or disability organisations could participate in various activities set up (Section 4.6); and
- what motivated organisations to make changes to improve service delivery for disabled users (Section 4.7).

Throughout the chapter, comparisons are made based on three key variables, namely, type of organisation, size of organisation, and proportion of time diversity staff devoted to disability issues. The categories of these key variables used in the analyses presented in this chapter are similar to those described in Section 3.1.

## 4.2 Proportion of service users who are disabled

It is important to know what proportion of service users are disabled and how this proportion compares with that of the general population. Eighty-eight out of the 369 organisations surveyed who gave a positive answer, were able to provide precise figures of the proportion of their service users who were disabled, while another 129 provided estimates. Amongst those who provided actual figures, the most common way of obtaining the information was through equal opportunities assessments, either through questionnaires administered when service users first accessed the organisation's services, or surveys conducted on all service users. Estimates of the proportion of service users who were disabled were made mainly using the Census or other national or local government statistics. The proportion of service users who were disabled, based on actual or estimated figures, are given in Table 4.1, by type of organisation.

**Table 4.1 Proportion of service users who were disabled, by type of organisation**

<i>Column per cent</i>						
Proportion disabled	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
0-9%	6	53	9	8	[16]	16
10-25%	21	29	48	45	[27]	36
26% or more	24	5	2	0	[4]	7
Don't know	49	14	42	47	[53]	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>369</b>

Base: All respondents including telephone survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Overall, one-sixth of the surveyed organisations included in the survey reported that less than ten per cent of their service users were disabled, over one-third reported that 10-25 per cent of their service users were disabled, while less than one-tenth reported that more than one-quarter of their service users were disabled. These estimates seem generally lower than for the adult population in Great Britain, estimated at 22 per cent, based on the DDA definition (Bakejal *et al.*, 2004). However, it is important to point out that a sizeable proportion of the organisations included in the survey (about two-fifths) did not know the proportion of their service users who were disabled, or provided no answer.

The reported proportions varied considerably by type of organisation. Educational organisations had the lowest proportion of their service users disabled, with about

one-half reporting that less than ten per cent of their service users were disabled, and only one in 20 reporting more than one-quarter of their service users being disabled. As disability generally begins during life and not at birth, it is not surprising to have lower prevalence in the education sector whose service users predominantly comprise young people. Existing statistics suggest that less than ten per cent of young people aged 16-24 or 25-34 years in the UK are disabled (Bajekal *et al.*, 2004). On the other hand, health organisations had the highest proportion of disabled service users, with one-quarter reporting that more than one-quarter of their service users were disabled people. Again, this result is not surprising since the definition of a disabled person includes those with long standing limiting illnesses.

The proportion of service users who were disabled also varied by the size of organisation (Tables 4.2). The larger organisations were more likely to report a higher proportion of disabled service users. For instance, about one-tenth of organisations with at least 500 employees reported that more than one-quarter of their service users were disabled, compared to about one in 20 organisations with less than 500 employees. Correspondingly, slightly less than one-tenth of large organisations with at least 500 employees reported having less than ten per cent of service users being disabled, compared to over one-quarter of smaller organisations with less than 500 employees.

**Table 4.2 Proportion of service users who were disabled, by size of organisation**

Proportion disabled	Size of organisation		
	Under 500 staff	At least 500 staff	All
	%	%	%
0-9%	28	8	14
10-25%	36	48	45
26% or more	4	9	8
Don't know	32	35	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>275</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: Respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Table 4.3 shows the variations in proportion of service users who were disabled by time spent on disability issues. Around two-thirds of organisations where a responsible officer or group spent more than one-quarter of their time on disability issues, reported that 10-25 per cent of their service users were disabled, compared to slightly over one-third of organisations where no more than one-quarter of time was spent on disability issues. However, it is worth noting that the proportion of time devoted to disability issues by diversity staff was associated with whether or not the

organisations were able to provide information on the proportion of their service users who were disabled. Those spending less time on disability issues being less likely to know or estimate the proportion of their service users who were disabled.

**Table 4.3 Proportion of service users who were disabled, by time spent on disability issues**

Proportion disabled	Time spent dealing with disability issues		
	25% or less	Over 25%	All
	%	%	%
0-9%	13	13	13
10-25%	37	64	44
26% or more	10	4	8
Don't know	40	19	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>280</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: Respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

## 4.3 Accessibility of services

The main ways in which people accessed organisations' services were by face-to-face contacts or telephone which were cited by one-half and one-quarter of organisations respectively. The post, e-mail, website and conferences were rarely cited.

### 4.3.1 Service accessibility best practice

The Act requires that service providers should make reasonable adjustments to practices, policies or procedures, or to physical features of premises, in order to avoid disabled people finding it impossible or unreasonably difficult to access services. Respondents were asked if their organisation had taken specific actions to enable disabled people to use or gain access to their services, ranging from improving access to premises, to engaging consultants to review the extent to which services meet the needs of disabled people. The responses on the various actions are presented in the appendix. Overall, the vast majority of organisations (nine in ten) had taken action to improve access to premises for disabled people, but less than one-third had engaged consultants or disability organisations to review the extent to which services met the needs of disabled people.

A composite summary index of service accessibility best practice was derived, based on actions currently being taken by organisations to enable disabled people to access their services. The composite index was used to classify the organisations into quartiles, with the top quartile corresponding to organisations that had taken the

most actions to enable disabled people to access their services. The service accessibility best practice score varies considerably by type of organisation (Table 4.4). Local authorities had generally higher scores with respect to actions currently taken to enable disabled customers and service users access or use services, compared to education, emergency services and central government/other organisations. However, these results should be interpreted with caution given the small number of organisations in education, emergency services, and central government/other sectors.

**Table 4.4 Service accessibility best practice score, by type of organisation**

<i>Column per cent</i>					
Best practice quartile	Organisational type				
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %
Top quartile	25	[19]	34	[19]	[15]
Third quartile	22	[36]	28	[26]	[13]
Second quartile	28	[11]	20	[30]	[41]
Bottom quartile	26	[33]	18	[26]	[31]
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>

Base: Respondents, on-line survey (n=287).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There was also some indication that larger organisations had undertaken more actions to enable disabled people access their services (see Table 4.5). A sizeable proportion of smaller organisations with less than 500 employees had relatively low scores, compared to a much smaller proportion of larger organisations with at least 500 employees.



**Table 4.5 Service accessibility best practice score, by size of organisation**

Best practice quartile	Size of organisation	
	Under 500 staff	At least 500 staff
	%	%
Top quartile	20	27
Third quartile	20	27
Second quartile	26	25
Bottom quartile	35	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>205</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: Respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The results in Table 4.6 show an apparent association between service accessibility, best practice and the proportion of time diversity staff spent on disability issues, with organisations spending less time on disability issues having relatively low scores. A much lower proportion of organisations with a dedicated officer or group spending more than one-quarter of their time on disability issues had low scores, compared to organisations where no more than one-quarter of time was spent on disability issues.

**Table 4.6 Service accessibility best practice score, by time spent on disability issues**

Best practice quartile	Per cent of time spent on disability issues	
	25% or less	Over 25%
	%	%
Top quartile	22	36
Third quartile	22	36
Second quartile	26	23
Bottom quartile	31	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>70</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: Respondents, on-line survey (n=287).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

### 4.3.2 Monitoring service accessibility

It is important to monitor the effectiveness of adjustments made to improve service accessibility to assess whether the needs of disabled service users are, indeed, being met. Overall, one-half of organisations reported that they monitor effectiveness of adjustments they made to enable disabled people access their services, over one-quarter reported that they did not monitor the effectiveness of adjustments made, while the remaining quarter did not know, or provided no answer. There were notable differences between types of organisations (Table 4.7).

**Table 4.7 Whether monitor the effectiveness of the adjustments made to enable disabled people access services, by type of organisation**

Whether monitor effectiveness	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Yes	44	73	51	31	[35]	49
No	25	18	27	41	[42]	29
Don't know	31	8	22	28	[23]	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>365</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Educational organisations were the most likely to monitor the effectiveness of adjustments made to enable disabled users to access services, while emergency services and central government/other organisations were the least likely. Almost three-quarters of educational organisations monitored the effectiveness of adjustments they made to enable disabled users to access services, compared to only three-tenths of emergency service organisations. Also, it is worth noting that a relatively high proportion (about one-third) of health, local government, emergency services and central government/other organisations did not know whether their organisations monitored effectiveness of adjustments they made to enable disabled people to access their services.

There was no difference by size of organisation or by time spent on disability issues, although there was some indication that organisations who spent less time on disability issues were less likely to monitor changes and respondents more likely not to know whether their organisations monitored effectiveness of adjustments they made, compared to those spending more time on disability issues.

Respondents who monitored the effectiveness of the adjustments they made were asked about the ways in which they did so. Table 4.8 shows that three-fifths of organisations did this through user or staff surveys and feedback, while internal/external disability access audit or assessments were used to a lesser extent (about one-fifth).

**Table 4.8 How organisations monitored effectiveness of adjustments they made to enable disabled people to access services**

<i>Multiple response</i>	
<b>Ways of monitoring effectiveness of adjustments</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
User/staff survey/feedback	57
Manager or supervisor/disabled worker consultation	17
Monitoring complaints	15
Consultation group/forum	14
General consultation	14
Internal disability access audit/assessment	10
External disability access audit/assessment	8
Service use/take up	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey, who monitored effectiveness of adjustments, and provided information on how they did so (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

#### 4.4 Reviewing and monitoring service provision

Organisations were asked to provide information on how regularly they took specific actions when reviewing or changing service provision (Table 4.9). About seven in ten consulted disabled users, either on an ongoing basis or as need arose when reviewing or changing service provision. Reviewing the impact of service provision on disabled service users, monitoring the impact of changes to service provision on disabled service users, and monitoring the impacts of changes to meet the requirements of DDA were also often carried (at least three-fifths) on either an ongoing basis or as need arose.

**Table 4.9 How regularly organisations take specific actions when reviewing or changing service provision**

Action	<i>Row per cent</i>					
	Ongoing %	Annually or biannually %	Every 5 years %	As the need arises %	Don't Never %	know %
Consult disabled users	35	7	0	36	5	18
Review the impact of service provision on disabled service users	34	12	1	31	4	18
Monitor the impact of changes to service provision on disabled service users	30	9	0	33	7	20
Explore satisfaction levels amongst disabled people when conducting surveys of service users	22	17	0	27	10	23
Conduct surveys of disabled users to find out if disabled people are happy with changes to meet requirements of DDA	18	13	0	30	16	24
Monitor the impacts of any changes to meet the requirements of DDA	36	10	0	29	8	16

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey (excluding missing values) (n=365).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

An examination of the proportion of organisations who 'regularly' (i.e. on an ongoing basis, biannually or annually) took specific actions when reviewing or changing service provision by type of organisation shows that local authorities were the most likely to regularly consult disabled users (Table 4.10). On the other hand, educational organisations (and to some extent health) were the most likely to regularly review the impact of service provision, or monitor the impact of changes to service provision on disabled service users. Central government/other organisations were, in particular, highly unlikely to regularly explore satisfaction levels amongst disabled people when conducting surveys of service users.

**Table 4.10 Proportion who 'regularly' take specific actions when reviewing or changing service provision, by type of organisation**

Action	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Consult disabled users	42	47	48	31	[26]	41
Review the impact of service provision on disabled service users	51	58	48	26	[35]	46
Monitor the impact of changes to service provision on disabled service users	42	52	42	29	[21]	40
Explore satisfaction levels amongst disabled people when conducting surveys of service users	31	27	33	31	[9]	29
Conduct surveys of disabled users to find out if disabled people are happy with changes to meet requirements of DDA	24	18	16	24	[14]	19
Monitor the impacts of any changes to meet the requirements of DDA	28	33	31	37	[35]	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>365</b>

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The proportion who regularly took specific actions when reviewing service provision did not vary much by size of organisation. The only exception was exploring satisfaction levels amongst disabled people when conducting surveys of service users, where larger organisations with at least 500 employees were more likely regularly to take this action than smaller organisations.

The results presented in Table 4.11 show variations in organisations regularly taking specific actions when reviewing or changing service provision by time spent on disability issues. Without exception, organisations where an officer or group spent more time (i.e. more than one-quarter of their time) on disability issues were considerably more likely regularly to take specific actions to address disability when reviewing or changing their service provision than were other organisations.

**Table 4.11 Proportion who 'regularly' take specific actions when reviewing or changing service provision by time spent on disability issues**

Action	Time spent dealing with disability issues		
	25% or less	Over 25%	All
	%	%	%
Consult disabled users	38	54	42
Review the impact of service provision on disabled service users	36	60	42
Monitor the impact of changes to service provision on disabled service users	30	47	34
Explore satisfaction levels amongst disabled people when conducting surveys of service users	33	51	38
Conduct surveys of disabled users to find out if disabled people are happy with changes to meet requirements of the DDA	20	40	25
Monitor the impacts of any changes to meet the requirements of the DDA	38	56	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>276</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Amongst the organisations who had developed disability-related performance indicators in addition to those that are required to publish them (n=92), about three in ten confirmed that they had performance indicators to track whether disabled people were experiencing equal outcomes to those experienced by non-disabled people as service users. Nearly one-half reported that they did not have such performance indicators, while the remaining one-quarter did not know whether or not their organisations had such indicators. Of those who had developed disability related performance indicators (n=28), 13 had targets relating to service user disability-related performance indicators. Of these 13 organisations, five were working towards the target while the performance for the remaining eight organisations varied by target or area.

## 4.5 Meeting the needs of disabled people

### 4.5.1 Actions taken to address the needs of disabled people

Overall, almost one-half of the respondents reported that their organisation had set up partnerships to deliver services for disabled people, about two-thirds had set up a focus group or user/customer panel, while about one-third had a disabled users' network to address disability issues (Table 4.12).

**Table 4.12 Whether organisations have taken specific actions to address the needs of disabled people**

Action taken	Per cent of organisations		
	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
Set up partnerships to deliver services for disabled people	47	31	22
Has a focus group or user/customer panel	66	25	9
Have a disabled users' network to address disability issues	33	51	16

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values) (n=278).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Amongst those who had set up partnerships to deliver services to disabled people, these partnerships often involved voluntary organisation, disability organisations, and other public bodies. For those who had set up a focus group or user/customer panel, the majority (seven in ten) reported that disabled people were currently represented on the panel, and most of these organisations had actively sought to recruit disabled people to the panel. Over one-fifth of the respondents did not know whether or not disabled people were represented, and less than one-tenth reported not having disabled people represented on the panel.

The proportion of organisations who had taken specific actions to address the needs of disabled people varied considerably by type of organisation (Table 4.13). Local authorities were the most likely to set up partnerships to deliver services for disabled people or have a disabled users' network to address disability issues, while educational organisations were the most likely to have set up a focus group or user/customer panel. On the other hand, central government/other organisations were the least likely to have set up partnerships, focus groups or disabled users' networks. For instance, only one in ten of central government/other organisations had disabled users' networks, compared to one-half of local authorities.

**Table 4.13 Organisations who have taken specific actions to address the needs of disabled people, by type of organisation**

<i>Per cent of organisations</i>						
Action taken	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Set up partnerships to deliver services for disabled people	49	[46]	56	[44]	[25]	47
Has a focus group or user/customer panel	84	[57]	75	[52]	[36]	66
Have a disabled users' network to address disability issues	33	[20]	52	[22]	[11]	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>276</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values) (n=276).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Larger organisations with at least 500 employees were more likely to have taken specific actions to address the needs of disabled people than smaller organisations with less than 500 employees (Table 4.14). About one-half of the larger organisations had set up partnerships to deliver services for disabled people, compared to three in ten of smaller organisations. Similar patterns were observed for having a focus group of users/customer panel, and for having a disabled network to address disability issues.

**Table 4.14 Organisations who have taken specific actions to address the needs of disabled people, by size of organisation**

<i>Column per cent</i>			
Action taken	Size of organisation		
	Under 500 staff %	At least 500 staff %	All %
Set up partnerships to deliver services for disabled people	32	53	47
Has a focus group or user/ customer panel	55	71	66
Has a disabled users' network to address disability issues	21	37	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>282</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.



Consistent with previous findings related to time spent on disability issues, organisations where diversity staff spent more than one-quarter of their time on disability issues were more likely to take specific actions to address the needs of disabled people (Table 4.15). One-half of the organisations where diversity staff spent more than one-quarter of their time on disability issues had a disabled users' network, compared to just over one-quarter of organisations where less than one-quarter of staff time was spent on disability issues.

**Table 4.15 Per cent of organisations who have taken specific actions to address the needs of disabled people, by time spent on disability issues**

Action taken	Time spent dealing with disability issues		
	25% or less	Over 25%	All
	%	%	%
Set up partnerships to deliver services for disabled people	43	59	47
Has a focus group or user/customer panel	63	77	66
Has a disabled users network to address disability issues	28	51	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>278</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There was evidence of a strong link between having set up partnerships, focus groups or networks for disabled people and the service accessibility best practice index. For instance, a much smaller proportion of the organisations who had a disabled users' network had low service accessibility scores, compared to those who did not have such networks. Similar relationships were observed with respect to setting up partnerships to deliver services to disabled people and having a focus group or user/customer panel.

Overall four-fifths of the respondents reported that their organisations gave high priority to the needs of disabled people when thinking about service users. There were, in general, no major differences by type or size of organisation. However, almost nine-tenths of organisations with diversity staff spending more time on disability issues reported that they gave high priority to the needs of disabled people when thinking about service users, compared to just over three-quarters of organisations where the relevant staff spent less time on disability.

### 4.5.2 Respondents' views

The respondents were asked to indicate on a scale from one (strongly agree) to seven (strongly disagree) the extent to which they agreed with various statements regarding whether or not their organisations were meeting the needs of disabled people (Table 4.16). Overall, few respondents strongly agreed with the statements that their organisations did not meet the needs of disabled people or that there were barriers to disabled people accessing the organisation's services. However, around one in eight strongly agreed that there was lack of targeted marketing to disabled people. In fact, one-half of the respondents agreed to some extent (score of 1 – 3) with the statement that there was lack of targeted marketing to disabled people, while only one-fifth agreed that their organisations did not meet the needs of disabled people.

**Table 4.16 Respondents views on whether their organisations are meeting the needs of disabled people**

Statement	Extent to which respondent agrees or disagrees with statement			
	Agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Disagree %	Don't know %
Organisation does not currently meet the needs of disabled people	19	15	61	5
There are currently barriers to disabled people accessing the organisation's services	37	18	41	4
There is lack of targeted marketing to disabled people	54	15	24	6

Base: Respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values) (n=277).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There was, generally, little variation in the proportion of respondents agreeing with the given statements by type or size of organisation, or by time spent on disability issues. The only exception was with respect to barriers to disabled people accessing services. Respondents from larger organisations, or in organisations where more time was spent on disability issues were more likely to agree that there were barriers to disabled people accessing the organisation's services. For example, only one-third of respondents from organisations where diversity staff spent more than one-quarter of their time on disability issues agreed that there were barriers, compared to one-half of their counterparts from organisations spending less time on disability issues. With respect to size of organisation, over one-quarter of the respondents from smaller organisations with less than 500 employees agreed with the statement, compared to two-fifths of those from larger organisations.

An examination of the relationship between how an organisation perceives its performance and best practice score provided little evidence of an association, with the exception of having targeted marketing for disabled people. Organisations agreeing with the statement that there was a lack of targeted marketing to disabled people were less likely to have higher service accessibility scores.

When these results are compared with those in Table 3.9, this highlights that respondents appear to have greater confidence in their organisation's performance in respect of disabled employees than disabled service users. A larger proportion of organisations felt that they failed to meet the needs of disabled service users than the needs of disabled employees, also about half felt that employees lacked information about disability, but the figure was higher still for those that felt that there was little marketing of services to disabled people.

## 4.6 Encouraging participation of disabled people

### 4.6.1 Whether organisations had a strategy for promoting participation

Two-thirds of the organisations included in the survey had a strategy for promoting or widening participation of disabled people. Over one-quarter reported that they did not have such a strategy, while the remaining respondents (less than one-tenth) did not know whether their organisations had such a strategy or not.

There was no variation in the proportion who had a strategy for promoting or widening participation by type or size of organisation. However, having diversity staff who spend more time on disability issues was associated with increased likelihood of having such a strategy. Around four in five of organisations where an officer or a group spent more than one-quarter of their time on disability issues, reported having a strategy for promoting and widening participation of disabled people, compared to three-fifths of organisations where less time was spent on disability issues.

### 4.6.2 Ensuring disabled people can participate in activities

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which their organisations ensured that disabled people participated in various activities, on a scale from one (for always) to seven (for never). Table 4.17 presents the reported scales re-grouped into four broad categories for always/often, sometimes, and rarely/never and don't know. Three-fifths of the organisations ensured that disabled people or disability organisations could participate in public meetings, but only three-tenths always, or often, ensured they could participate in neighbourhood forums.

**Table 4.17 Extent to which organisations ensure that disabled people/disability organisations can participate in various activities when they are set up by the organisation**

Activity	<i>Column per cent</i>			
	Always/ often (Score of 1-2) %	Sometimes (Score of 3-4) %	Rarely/ never (Score of 5-7) %	Don't know/not applicable %
Public meetings	59	18	7	17
Focus groups	49	23	6	22
Surveys	49	24	8	20
Written consultation	43	20	9	28
Council meetings in public	42	11	4	43
Neighbourhood forums	33	14	6	46

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values) (n=275).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There were some variations amongst the different types of organisations on the extent to which they ensured participation of disabled people (Table 4.18). Local authorities out-performed other organisations in ensuring participation of disabled people in all the activities listed. However, it is important to point out that the variations observed by type of organisation are partly due to the fact that some of the activities are mainly applicable to some types of organisations. For instance, less than one-tenth of educational organisations often, or always, ensured that disabled people could participate in council meetings in public, compared to almost three-quarters of local authorities. This is most likely to be a reflection of the fact that council meetings mainly apply to local authorities, rather than educational organisations.

**Table 4.18 Organisations who always or often ensured that disabled people/disability organisations could participate in various activities when they were set up, by type of organisation**

*Column per cent*

Activity	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Public meetings	70	[43]	73	[36]	[46]	59
Focus groups	50	[37]	65	[42]	[24]	49
Surveys	50	[40]	67	[33]	[27]	49
Written consultation	50	[18]	57	[40]	[24]	43
Council meetings in public	39	[6]	72	[24]	[26]	43
Neighbourhood forums	21	[14]	56	[29]	[14]	33

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values) (n=275).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There were also some variations by size of organisation on the extent to which organisations ensured participation of disabled people (Table 4.19), but no variations were observed by time spent by diversity staff on disability issues. Larger organisations with at least 500 employees were more likely to always or often ensure that disabled people could participate in various activities set up by the organisation (except for public meetings) compared to smaller organisations with less than 500 employees.

**Table 4.19 Organisations who always or often ensured that disabled people/disability organisations could participate in various activities when they were set up, by size of organisation**

*Column per cent*

Activity	Size of organisation		
	Under 500 staff %	At least 500 staff %	All %
Public meetings	58	58	58
Focus groups	39	52	49
Surveys	42	51	49
Written consultation	32	48	43
Council meetings in public	35	45	42
Neighbourhood forums	25	37	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>271</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values) (n=271).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

## 4.7 Motivations for change

Overall, legislation, namely the DDA, was a motivating factor for change to improve service delivery for disabled people for over four-fifths of organisations (Table 4.20). Other important motivating factors for the majority of the organisations were that the changes were being seen as good practice in the sector, or as integral to good service delivery. Both factors were cited by around three-quarters of organisations. Amongst organisations reporting more than one motivating factor, two-fifths reported that the main motivating factor was the DDA, while one-third said that the change was seen as integral to good service delivery and around one-sixth mentioned good practice in the sector as a motivating factor.

**Table 4.20 What motivated organisations to make changes to improve service delivery for disabled service users**

Motivating factor	Per cent of organisations reporting factor	
	All %	The main factor <sup>1</sup> %
Legislation (DDA)	84	39
Good practice in the sector	74	15
Seen as integral to good service delivery	73	31
Disabled service users	43	3
Senior officer	38	5
Disabled service users' representatives /parents /carers	31	2
Disabled employees	30	0
Employees (in general)	19	0
Campaign materials /advertising from disability organisations (e.g. DRC, SCOPE)	18	0
Elected member	16	1
Public pressure	16	0
Campaign materials /advertising from Government (e.g. DWP, local authorities)	15	0
Pressure from regulator or inspection body	13	2
Trades unions	13	0
Threatened or actual legal action	2	0
Don't know	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>247</b>

<sup>1</sup> For organisations reporting more than one motivating factor (excluding respondents who did not give an answer).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There were some variations in factors motivating change by type of organisation. Table 4.21 shows the motivating factors which were different across types of organisation. Local authorities were the most likely to report that they were motivated by disabled service users, a senior officer or an elected member to make changes to improve service delivery for service users. In particular, four in ten local authorities were motivated by an elected member, compared to less than one-tenth of the other types of organisations.

**Table 4.21 Differences in motivating factors for change, by type of organisation**

*Multiple response*

Motivating factor	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Disabled service users	43	[50]	53	[30]	[28]	43
Senior officer	26	[42]	49	[34]	[31]	38
Disabled service users' representatives/ parents /carers	40	[31]	37	[15]	[23]	31
Elected member	2	[8]	39	[4]	[3]	16
Pressure from regulator or inspection body	9	[22]	19	[6]	[5]	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>287</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (n=287).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The motivating factors that were observed to be different by size of organisation were: changes being seen as integral to good service delivery; the legislation/DDA; disabled employees; disabled service users; and campaign materials or advertising from disability organisations (Table 4.22). Larger organisations were more likely to report that these factors motivated the changes they made to improve service delivery for disabled service users than smaller organisations.



**Table 4.22 Differences in motivating factors for change, by size of organisation**

Motivating factor	Size of organisation		
	Under 500 staff	At least 500 staff	All
	%	%	%
Legislation (DDA)	78	88	85
Seen as integral to good service delivery	60	78	73
Disabled service users	30	49	44
Disabled employees	21	33	30
Campaign materials /advertising from disability organisations (e.g. DRC, SCOPE)	12	17	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>282</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The differences in motivating factors by staff time spent on disability issues suggest that organisations who spent more time on disability issues were more likely to report that they were motivated to make changes to improve service delivery for disabled people by the legislation/DDA, the changes being seen as good practice in the sector or integral to good service delivery, and disabled service users (Table 4.23). Six-tenths of organisations where an officer or group spent more than a quarter of their time on disability issues reported having been motivated by disabled service users, compared to less than four-tenths organisations where less time was spent on disability issues.

**Table 4.23 Differences in motivating factors for change, by time spent on disability issues**

Motivating factor	Time spent dealing with disability issues		
	25% or less	Over 25%	All
	%	%	%
Legislation /DDA	81	94	84
Senior officer	34	50	38
Good practice in the sector	71	84	74
Seen as integral to good service delivery	70	83	73
Disabled service users	37	63	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>287</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (n=287).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

## 4.8 Summary

- Two-fifths of organisations did not know what proportion of their service users were disabled.
- Larger organisations were more likely to report a higher proportion of disabled service users.
- Organisations where the relevant staff spent a greater proportion of their time dealing with disability issues, were more likely to know how many of their service users were disabled, and also more likely to report a higher proportion of disabled service users.
- Overall, the vast majority of organisations (nine-tenths) had acted to improve access to premises for disabled people, but less than one-third had engaged with disability organisations to review the extent to which services met the needs of disabled people.
- Local authorities performed best in terms of actions currently taken to improve accessibility for disabled customers and service users. Larger organisations performed better in terms of improving accessibility than their smaller counterparts.
- One-half of organisations monitor the effectiveness of the adjustments they make to improve accessibility for disabled people. This rose to around three-quarters amongst educational organisations.
- Organisations most often used user/staff surveys or feedback to monitor the effectiveness of any changes they make to improve accessibility for disabled people.
- The majority of organisations had set up: focus groups or customer panels to address the needs of disabled people; almost half had set up partnerships to deliver services to disabled people; and one-third had disabled users' networks.
- One-fifth of organisations thought they were not meeting the needs of disabled people; respondents appeared to have greater confidence in their organisation's performance for disabled employees than for disabled service users.
- The majority of organisations had a strategy for promoting or widening the participation of disabled service users.
- Organisations were most likely to encourage the participation of disabled service users through public meetings and were least likely to do so through neighbourhood forums.
- When asked about what motivated them to make changes to improve service delivery for disabled service users, the DDA was cited by nine-tenths of organisations. Three-quarters of organisations said that good practice in the sector was a motivating factor, while a similar proportion said that it was seen as essential to good service delivery.



## 5 Accessibility of information

This chapter focuses on how organisations distribute information to employees and the general public. Specifically, it focuses on: the formats used when providing official publications or information (Section 5.1); and website audits to assess accessibility for disabled users (Section 5.2).

### 5.1 Formats used when providing official publications or information

To improve disabled people's access to official publications and information, public authorities can use the following formats: clear standard print; audio tape; Braille; video with audio description; video with subtitles; video with British Sign Language (BSL); large font and clear type face; text with pictures; Makaton or other symbol system; by phone; face-to-face; on disk; on CD-ROM; by e-mail; and on a website. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 show the formats that were most commonly provided by organisations for their employees and service users. Table 5.1 shows that, with respect to employees, providing information for employees in specialist formats, such as Braille, BSL or Makaton, is rarely done as standard. However, what it also shows is that information is much more likely to be provided in these formats if requested. For example, only one per cent of organisations said that they provided information in Braille as standard. However, almost two-thirds of organisations provided information in this format if it was requested.

**Table 5.1 The formats in which information is most commonly provided to employees, by organisations**

Format	Provided for employees as standard	Provided for employees on request
	%	%
Clear standard print	19	6
Audio tape	1	58
Braille	1	64
On video with audio description	3	30
On video with subtitles	1	30
On video with BSL	2	29
Large font and clear type face	21	67
Text with pictures	7	32
Makaton	1	30
Telephone	23	51
Face-to-face	43	46
Disk	9	60
CD ROM	9	55
E-mail	59	36
Website	80	14

*Multiple response*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

A similar pattern emerged with respect to provision for service users. Information was much more commonly provided in specialist formats on request rather than being as standard. Table 5.2 shows that the one notable difference amongst the specialist formats was with respect to Clear Standard Print. Seven-tenths of organisations provided information as standard for service users, compared to just one-fifth of organisations who provided Clear Standard Print as standard for their employees (Table 5.1). Around one-quarter of organisations provided Clear Standard Print on request to their service users, compared to less than one-tenth who did the same for their employees.

**Table 5.2 The formats in which information is most commonly provided to service users, by organisations**

Format	Provided for service users as standard	Provided for service users on request
	%	%
Clear standard print	71	23
Audio tape	4	57
Braille	3	68
On video with audio description	2	28
On video with subtitles	1	26
On video with BSL	2	28
Large font and clear type face	25	61
Text with pictures	9	35
Makaton	2	32
Telephone	30	50
Face-to-face	41	45
Disk	7	60
CD ROM	9	54
E-mail	34	58
Website	79	15

*Multiple response*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

A summary index was derived from these possible 15 formats and then classified into quartiles, with the bottom quartile representing the least number of formats used by the organisation, through to the top quartile representing the most number of formats used by the organisation. The assumption underpinning the index is that the more formats an organisation provides, the 'better' its performance at making information accessible to disabled people. While this assumption may hold in most cases, it is conceivable that there are organisations scoring well on the metric but whose disabled employees or customers cannot access information because of the quality of the publication, or being able to actually obtain a copy of the information in the desired format is too difficult. Similarly, an organisation may only provide a few formats, but any publications or information are produced to a high standard and/or obtaining copies is relatively easy. Accordingly, the index should be interpreted with some caution, although classifying the organisation by quartiles may mean that organisations performing at a similar level have been grouped together.

Tables 5.3 to 5.4 presents the summary index by type of organisation, size of organisation, and time spent on disability issues respectively, for employees and service users and/or the general public.

There was a difference between the type of organisation and the number of formats used by the organisation when providing information. Local authorities used more formats when providing information than the other types of organisations (Table 5.3). Local authorities were generally unlikely to have low scores. About four-tenths of local authorities had high scores, compared to no more than one-fifth of health, educational and central government organisations.

**Table 5.3 Summary index for formats used when providing official publications or information, by type of organisation**

Information formats quartile	Organisational type				
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %
Top quartile	14	[17]	38	[26]	[18]
Third quartile	34	[19]	31	[13]	[15]
Second quartile	28	[25]	20	[23]	[36]
Bottom quartile	25	[39]	11	[38]	[31]
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey.

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The results indicated difference between the size of organisation and the number of formats used by the organisation when providing information. Larger organisations were more likely to use a greater number of formats than smaller organisations. Organisations with under 500 members of staff were in the two lowest scoring groups, while organisations with over 500 members of staff were in the two highest scoring groups (Table 5.4).

**Table 5.4 Summary index for formats used when providing official publications or information, by size of organisation**

<i>Column per cent</i>		
Information formats quartile	Size of organisation	
	Under 500 staff	At least 500 staff
	%	%
Top quartile	17	28
Third quartile	22	26
Second quartile	25	26
Bottom quartile	36	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>205</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The results in Table 5.5 indicate a link between time staff with responsibility for dealing with diversity matters spend on disability issues and the number of formats used by the organisation when providing information. Organisations with staff spending at least one-quarter of their time on disability issues were twice as likely to have the higher scores, compared to organisations with staff spending less than one-quarter of their time. Organisations with staff spending less than one-quarter of their time on disability issues were most likely to have low scores, while organisations dedicating at least one-quarter of relevant staff time to disability issues were most likely to have high scores.

**Table 5.5 Summary index for formats used when providing official publications or information, by staff time spent on disability issues**

<i>Column per cent</i>		
Information formats quartile	Time spent dealing with disability issues	
	25% or less	Over 25%
	%	%
Top quartile	19	43
Third quartile	26	21
Second quartile	26	21
Bottom quartile	28	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>70</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.



Respondents were asked if a disabled person has requested information in a particular format that their organisation did not provide as standard, how likely was it that they would send all letters and other information in that format in the future? Around one-third of organisations said that they were fairly likely to send letters and other information in the requested format in the future, compared to around one-quarter of organisations stating that they were fairly unlikely, one-fifth very likely, and around one-eighth not at all likely to send information in the requested format in the future. Around one-eighth of organisations did not know the likelihood of sending information in an alternate format when requested in the future.

## 5.2 Website audits to assess accessibility for disabled users

Organisations that had their own website were asked whether or not they had done a website audit to assess the accessibility for disabled users. Tables 5.4 to 5.6 illustrate the responses by type of organisation, size of organisation, and by staff time spent dedicated to disability issues respectively.

The results indicated a link between the type of organisation and whether or not the organisation had undergone a website audit. Central government/other and local authorities were the most likely to have completed the audit, while education and health organisations were the least likely to have conducted a website audit (Table 5.6). Local government and health organisations were the most likely not to know whether their website had undergone an audit.

**Table 5.6 Websites that have undergone an audit, by type of organisation**

Websites undergone audit	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Yes - done	16	[26]	42	[28]	[44]	32
Yes - underway	8	[20]	17	[23]	[26]	18
Yes - planning in the next year	13	[3]	13	[17]	[10]	12
No	44	[46]	9	[19]	[5]	23
Don't know	19	[6]	20	[13]	[15]	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>279</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Table 5.7 indicates a notable difference between the size of organisation and whether or not the organisation had undergone a website audit. Organisations with over 500 members of staff were more likely to have completed a website audit compared to organisations of under 500 members of staff. Organisations of less than 500 members of staff were the least likely to know whether their organisation had undergone a website audit.

**Table 5.7 Websites that have undergone an audit, by size of organisation**

Websites undergone audit	Size of organisation		
	Under 500 staff	At least 500 staff	All
	%	%	%
Yes - done	19	37	32
Yes - underway	20	17	18
Yes - planning in the next year	7	14	12
No	33	19	23
Don't know	21	14	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>275</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Variations were found between staff time spent on disability issues and whether or not the organisation had undergone a website audit. Organisations with staff with responsibility for diversity issues spending at least one-quarter of their time on disability issues were more likely to have completed a website audit, compared to organisations with officials spending less than one-quarter of their time dedicated to disability issues. Organisations with staff spending less than one-quarter of their time on disability issues were also more likely not to know whether or not their organisation had undergone a website audit, compared to those dedicating at least one-quarter of their time to disability issues.

**Table 5.8 Websites that have undergone an audit, by time spent on disability issues**

Websites undergone audit	Time spent dealing with disability issues		
	25% or less	Over 25%	All
	%	%	%
Yes - done	28	43	32
Yes - underway	16	21	18
Yes - planning in the next year	12	10	12
No	25	14	23
Don't know	18	11	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>279</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The See It Right Standard logo is awarded to websites that have successfully undergone an accessibility audit conducted by the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB). The See It Right Standard has three different levels. Level A standard is reached when all Priority One checkpoints are satisfied. Web developers **must** satisfy Priority One checkpoints as it is a basic requirement for some groups to use the web documents, otherwise at least one group would find it impossible to access information in the document. Level AA standard means that Priority One and Two checkpoints are satisfied. Web developers **should** satisfy these checkpoints otherwise at least one group would find it difficult to access information in the document. Meeting Level AA would help to remove significant barriers to accessing web-based documents. Meeting Level AAA means that Priority One, Two and Three are addressed. Web developers **may** address this otherwise at least one group may find it a little difficult to access the information in a web-based format. Meeting this standard would help to improve access to web-based documents

For organisations that had undergone a website audit, over one-fifth did not know of the outcome, less than one-fifth of organisations were awarded Level A, a similar proportion were awarded Level AA, one-tenth Level AAA and less than one-tenth See It Right Standard. However, less than one-tenth of public authorities failed to meet the Level A/See It Right Standard and a similar proportion of the organisations' outcomes did not fall into one of these categories. For organisations that had failed to meet Level A/See it Right Standard, six organisations had made or were planning to make changes to the website in order to meet the required standard.

### 5.2.1 Consulting disabled people and website design

Tables 5.9 to 5.11 illustrate whether or not public authorities consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing their website, by type of organisation, size of organisation, and staff time spent on disability issues respectively.

In their investigation of website accessibility, the Disability Rights Commission found that of the 1,000 websites they looked at, most were not accessible to disabled people. Consultation with disability groups may help to improve the accessibility of websites. However, it was difficult to establish any meaningful links between whether or not organisations had consulted with disability user groups and what level of accessibility their website had reached because the numbers involved were very small and the differences were not significant.

There was a link between the type of organisation and whether or not they had consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing the website. Local authorities were the most likely to have consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing the website, followed by the emergency services, educational organisations, central government/other organisations, and health organisations (Table 5.9). Central government/other organisations were the least likely, while educational organisations were the most likely to know whether or not their organisation had consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing the website.

**Table 5.9 Organisations consulting disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing website, by type of organisation**

*Column per cent*

Organisations consulting disabled people/disability organisations	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/Other %	
Yes	22	[38]	43	[39]	[36]	36
No	48	[50]	26	[27]	[21]	34
Don't know	30	[13]	31	[34]	[42]	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>233</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There was a link between the size of organisation and whether or not they had consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing the website. Two-fifths of larger organisations consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing their websites, compared to around one-fifth of their smaller counterparts (Table 5.10).

**Table 5.10 Organisations consulting disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing website, by size of organisation**

Organisations consulting disabled people/ disability organisations	Size of organisation		
	Under 500 staff %	At least 500 staff %	All %
	Yes	22	41
No	48	28	33
Don't know	29	31	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>230</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The results indicate a relationship between time staff with responsibility for diversity spent on disability issues and whether or not the organisation had consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing the website. Around one-half of organisations with officers spending at least one-quarter of their time on disability issues consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing the website compared to around one-third of organisations with staff spending less than one-quarter of their time on disability issues. Organisations with officials spending less than one-quarter of their time on disability issues were also less likely to know whether or not their organisation had consulted disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing the website compared to organisations with staff spending more than one-quarter of their time on disability issues.

**Table 5.11 Organisations consulting disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing website, by time spent on disability issues**

Organisations consulting disabled people/ disability organisations	Time spent dealing with disability issues		
	25% or less %	Over 25% %	All %
Yes	32	48	36
No	37	24	34
Don't know	32	27	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>233</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

### 5.3 Summary

- Organisations were unlikely to provide information in specialist formats for disabled employees and service users as part of their standard procedure, but were much more likely to provide it on request.
- In terms of best practice regarding the format in which organisations publish information, local authorities, larger organisations and organisations where the relevant staff spend at least one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues, were the most likely to perform well.
- Some of the organisations surveyed (one-third) had completed their website audits, there were also some organisations that had already started this process.
- Over one-third of organisations had consulted disabled people or disability rights organisations when designing their website. Local authorities, larger organisations and organisations where the relevant staff spend at least one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues were most likely to have consulted over their website design. A similar proportion did not know whether they had consulted with these groups over the design of their website.



## 6 Estates/buildings strategy

Public authorities are required to make reasonable adjustments to premises both for employees and for citizens coming into contact with the authority. This chapter examines the extent to which these adjustments are delivered as a core element of organisations' buildings strategies.

This chapter focuses on how organisations' buildings are accessible to disabled people in general, and not just those with mobility problems. Specifically, it focuses on: the organisation's buildings strategy (Section 6.1); and organisations based in one or more building (Section 6.1.7). The buildings strategy refers to whether or not an organisation has a plan for managing the buildings it uses.

### 6.1 Organisation's buildings strategy

#### **6.1.1 Presence of a buildings strategy**

Respondents were asked whether or not their organisation had a buildings strategy. Table 6.1 illustrates the responses by type of organisation.



**Table 6.1 Organisations having a buildings strategy**

Does the organisation have a buildings strategy?	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Yes	86	[84]	89	[89]	[92]	88
Yes, but is managed by a higher organisation (e.g., an LEA for schools)	2	[6]	3	[4]	[3]	3
No	7		3	[4]	[3]	3
Don't know	7	[11]	6	[2]	[3]	6
Total	62	36	97	46	39	280

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

No major differences were found between type of organisation and whether or not they had a buildings strategy. However, the percentages suggest that the majority of organisations (over four-fifths) do have a buildings strategy, and that central government/other organisations were more likely to have a buildings strategy, with health organisations the least likely.

### 6.1.2 Whether the buildings strategy mentions disability issues

Organisations with a buildings strategy were asked whether the strategy mentioned accessibility issues for disabled people. Table 6.2 shows the responses by type of organisation.

**Table 6.2 Organisations referring to accessibility issues for disabled people in buildings strategy**

*Column per cent*

Does the buildings strategy refer to accessibility issues?	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Yes	75	88	85	[86]	[76]	82
No	1	2	2	[2]	[4]	2
Don't know	24	11	14	[12]	[20]	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>344</b>

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There were no major differences between type of organisation and whether or not the organisations referred to accessibility issues for disabled people in the buildings strategy. However, the percentages (over three-quarters) indicate that the majority of organisations' strategy mentioned accessibility issues for disabled people, with educational organisations likely to refer to accessibility issues the most, and health organisations the least.

### 6.1.3 Aims of buildings strategy

Organisations that answered 'yes' to mentioning accessibility issues for disabled people in their buildings strategy were asked to state whether or not the strategy included aims relating to meeting the needs of disabled employees and of disabled service users. Tables 6.3 to 6.5 indicate the responses by type of organisation, size of organisation, and staff time spent on disability issues respectively.

Although no major differences were found, the percentages suggest that in nine-tenths of organisations, strategies include aims that meet the needs of disabled employees and disabled service users. Those in educational organisations were more likely to include these aims in their buildings strategy, while emergency services were least likely (Table 6.3).

**Table 6.3 Organisations including aims relating to meeting the needs of disabled employees and disabled service users in the buildings strategy by type of organisation**

*Column per cent*

Does the buildings strategy include aims relating to the needs of disabled people employees?	Organisational type					
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	All %
Yes	[91]	[96]	97	[87]	[89]	93
No	[2]	[4]	3	[3]	[7]	3
Don't know	[7]			[11]	[4]	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>213</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

No major differences were found between small and large organisations with a buildings strategy, including aims to meeting the needs of disabled employees and disabled service users (Table 6.4). However, the percentages indicate a small difference only between small and large organisations, with nine-tenths including these aims in their strategy.

**Table 6.4 Organisations including aims relating to meeting the needs of disabled employees and disabled service users in the buildings strategy, by size of organisation**

*Column per cent*

Does the buildings strategy include aims relating to the needs of disabled people/employees?	Size of organisation		
	Under 500 staff %	At least 500 staff %	All %
Yes	90	94	93
No	6	3	3
Don't know	4	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>210</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Similarly, no major differences were found between staff with responsibility for diversity matters, time spent on disability, and organisations with a buildings

strategy that includes aims for meeting the needs of disabled employees and disabled service users. Although organisations spending at least one-quarter of their time on disability issues were more likely to include aims relating to meeting the needs of disabled employees and disabled service users in their estate strategy (Table 6.5).

**Table 6.5 Organisations including aims relating to meeting the needs of disabled employees and disabled service users in the buildings strategy, by time spent on disability issues**

Does the buildings strategy include aims relating to the needs of disabled people/employees?	Time spent dealing with disability issues		
	25% or less %	Over 25% %	All %
Yes	91	98	93
No	4	2	3
Don't know	5		4
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>213</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

#### 6.1.4 Estate action plans

Organisations were asked whether or not their buildings strategy included an action plan with steps to be taken to meet the needs of disabled employees and of disabled service users. Table 6.6 reveals the percentages for organisations.

**Table 6.6 Organisations with actions plans to meet the needs of disabled employees and service users**

Does the buildings strategy include an action plan with steps to meet the needs of disabled employees and disabled service users?	Per cent <sup>1</sup>
Yes – Employees	60
Yes – Service users	57
Yes – disabled people (non-specific)	48
No	4
Don't know	8

*Multiple response*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

<sup>1</sup> Note – percentages sum up to more than 100 due to multiple response

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Results suggest that the majority of organisations' buildings strategy includes an action plan to meet the needs of disabled employees, followed by disabled users. Less than one-twentieth of organisations stated that their buildings strategy did not include an action plan to meet the needs of disabled people.

### 6.1.5 Consultations on formulating the buildings strategy

Respondents were asked to state whether or not their organisation involved or consulted with disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up the buildings strategy. Tables 6.7 to 6.9 show the responses by type of organisation, size of organisation, and staff time spent on disability issues respectively.

A relationship was found between whether or not the organisation had involved disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up the buildings strategy and type of organisation. Local authorities were most likely to consult disabled people/disability organisations, followed by central government/other organisations. Emergency services were least likely to consult disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up the buildings strategy (Table 6.7).

**Table 6.7 Organisations involving disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up the buildings strategy, by type of organisation**

<i>Column per cent</i>						
Consulted disabled people/disability organisations	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
Yes	46	[53]	69	[42]	[63]	57
No	20	[27]	10	[28]	[16]	18
Don't know	34	[20]	21	[31]	[22]	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>254</b>

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The size of organisation was not related to whether or not the organisation had consulted disabled people/disability organisations. However, the percentages suggest that the majority of large organisations (over 500 members of staff) were the most likely to consult disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up the buildings strategy, compared to organisations of less than 500 members of staff (Table 6.8).

**Table 6.8 Organisations involving disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up the buildings strategy, by size of organisation**

Consulted disabled people/ disability organisations	Size of organisation		
	Under 500 staff %	At least 500 staff %	All %
	Yes	[46]	57
No	[22]	20	20
Don't know	[32]	23	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>182</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Similarly, no major differences were found between whether or not the organisation had consulted disabled people/disability organisations and time spent on disability issues (Table 6.9).

**Table 6.9 Organisations involving disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up the buildings strategy, by time spent on disability issues**

Consulted disabled people/ disability organisations	Time spent dealing with disability issues		
	25% or less %	Over 25% %	All %
	Yes	54	[58]
No	20	[21]	20
Don't know	26	[21]	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>185</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, including telephone survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

### 6.1.6 Motivations for changing estate strategies

Organisations were asked what or who had been the motivators for their organisation to make any changes to improve their buildings strategy for disabled users. Table 6.10 indicates the responses.

Nine-tenths of organisations were motivated as a result of legislation/DDA, while seven-tenths were motivated by good practice in the sector, and wanting to be seen as integral to good service delivery.

**Table 6.10 Buildings strategy motivators for improving buildings/  
buildings strategy of public bodies**

<b>Motivators for improving buildings strategy</b>	<i>Multiple response</i> <b>Per cent<sup>1</sup></b>
Legislation/DDA	89
Good practice in the sector	71
Seen as integral to good service delivery (etc)	69
Disabled service users	42
Senior Officer	40
Disabled employees	37
Disabled service users' representatives/parents/carers	28
Employees (in general)	22
Public pressure	16
Elected member	15
Pressure from regulator or inspection body	15
Trades unions	15
Campaign materials/advertising from disability organisations (e.g. DRC, SCOPE)	13
Campaign materials/advertising from Government (e.g. DWP, local authorities)	11
Threatened or actual legal action	3
Don't know	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>255</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

<sup>1</sup> Note – percentages sum up to more than 100 due to multiple response.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

### **6.1.7 Organisations based in one building/multi-buildings**

Organisations were asked to state whether or not their organisation was based in one building or more than one building. Less than one-tenth of organisations were based in one building, while over nine-tenths of organisations were based in two or more buildings.

Organisations were then asked about the availability of specific facilities in their building(s) designed to improve accessibility for 1) disabled employees and 2) disabled users. A summary index was derived from the following nine accessibility features: accessible parking; ramp at entrance; hand rails inside and outside buildings; extra space for wheelchairs in rooms; contrasting colours/tones using in external and internal decoration; accessible toilets; drop counters in reception; signage; and hearing loops. This index was then classified into quartiles, with the

bottom quartile representing the least number of accessibility features adopted by the organisations, through to the top quartile representing the most number of accessibility features adopted by the organisations. Tables 6.11 to 6.13 presents the summary index by type of organisation, size of organisation, and staff time spent on disability issues respectively, for both employees and service users.

No major differences were found between the number of accessibility features adopted by organisations and the type of organisations. However, the percentages suggest that health organisations adopted the highest number of accessibility features, followed by local government. Educational organisations adopted the least number of accessibility features.

**Table 6.11 Summary index for accessibility features adopted by organisations, by type of organisation**

<i>Column per cent</i>					
Accessibility features quartile	Organisational type				
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %
Top quartile	37	[19]	26	[21]	[16]
Third quartile	20	[22]	27	[26]	[32]
Second quartile	24	[22]	26	[23]	[27]
Bottom quartile	19	[38]	21	[30]	[24]
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>37</b>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

[ ] where the number of unweighted cases is less than 50.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Again, no major differences were found between the number of accessibility features adopted by organisations and the size of organisation. However, large organisations (over 500 members of staff) appear to have adopted a higher number of accessibility features than smaller organisations.



**Table 6.12 Summary index for accessibility features adopted by organisations, by size of organisation**

Accessibility features quartile	Size of organisation	
	Under 500 staff	Over 500 staff
	%	%
Top quartile	18	28
Third quartile	29	24
Second quartile	24	25
Bottom quartile	30	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>189</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

As might be expected, no major differences were found between the number of accessibility features adopted by organisations and staff time spent on disability issues. However, the percentages suggest that organisations with staff spending at least one-quarter of their time on disability issues adopted the highest number of accessibility features than other organisations.

**Table 6.13 Summary index for accessibility features adopted by organisations, by time spent on disability issues**

Accessibility features quartile	Time spent dealing with disability issues	
	25% or less	Over 25%
	%	%
Top quartile	24	30
Third quartile	24	31
Second quartile	26	20
Bottom quartile	27	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>64</b>

*Column per cent*

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing values).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

Nine-tenths of the best performing quartile of organisations had service users who regularly used their buildings, compared to seven-tenths of those in the worst performing quartile of organisations.

One-half of the organisations that already had hearing loops in meeting rooms had a budget dedicated to DDA-related adjustments compared to less than one-third of organisations who did not already have hearing loops in meeting rooms. Consequently, three-fifths of organisations that did not already have hearing loops in meeting rooms dealt with their DDA obligations through a general budget compared to just over two-fifths of organisations that already had such measures in place.

Two-fifths of organisations that cited the DDA as a motivating factor for improving their buildings strategy for service users had a dedicated budget to deal with their DDA-related obligations, compared to less than one-third of organisations who did not cite the DDA as a reason. Almost one-half of organisations that mentioned disabled service users as a reason for improving their buildings strategy were also more likely to have a dedicated budget to deal with their DDA-related obligations, compared to just over one-third of those that did not cite this as a reason.

Over two-fifths of organisations that already had a ramp at the entrance to their buildings cited pressure from a senior officer as a reason for improving their buildings strategy compared to one-quarter of those that had not already done so. Just under one-fifth of these organisations cited public pressure as a reason for improving their buildings strategy for service users, compared to less than one-twentieth who did not cite this as a reason. Almost one-half of organisations that already had drop counters in reception cited pressure from senior officers as a reason for improving their buildings strategy, compared to one-third who had not done so already. Three-quarters of organisations that already had handrails inside and outside buildings said that good practice within the sector was a motivation for improving their buildings strategy, compared to three-fifths of organisations that did not use this as a motivating factor. Over three-quarters of organisations that already had drop counters in reception cited good practice as a reason compared to less than two-thirds of organisations that did not already have them. Three-quarters of those that already had accessible parking said that it was seen as integral to good service delivery, compared to one-half of those that did not already have it. This was also the case with those who had: a ramp at the entrance to their buildings (three-quarters compared to less than one-half); hand-rails inside and outside their buildings (three-quarters compared to less than three-fifths); extra space for wheelchairs (over three-quarters compared to less than three-fifths); contrasting colours (three-quarters compared to less than two-thirds); accessible toilets (three-quarters compared to one-half); drop counters in reception (three-quarters compared to three-fifths); and signage (three-quarters compared to three-fifths).

## 6.2 Summary

- The vast majority of organisations had a buildings strategy. Most (four-fifths) of those who had a buildings strategy said that the strategy referred to meeting the needs of disabled employees and service users.
- A majority of organisations had an action plan to meet the needs of disabled employees and service users.
- A majority of organisations involved disabled people or disability rights organisations when drawing up their buildings strategy, with local authorities, larger organisations and those where the relevant staff spend at least one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues being the most likely to do so.
- As with service delivery, the main motivators for changing the buildings strategy were the DDA, good practice in the sector and that change was seen as integral to good service delivery.
- Health organisations, larger organisations and those where the relevant staff spent at least one-quarter of their time dealing with disability issues were most likely to perform well in terms of best practice for accessibility.
- Nearly all the best performing organisations had service users who used their buildings regularly.
- There were some relationships between the type of accessibility features that organisations had in place and the motivations for improving their buildings strategy.

## 7 Dimensions of best practice

This chapter examines the different dimensions of best practice in promoting equal opportunities for disabled people. It links key aspects of practice addressed in the preceding chapters, including employment, service users, information access, and estates strategy. During the survey, respondents provided information on the level of priority their organisations gave to the needs of disabled people when thinking about employment, service users, estates strategy, accessibility of public information and business or corporate plan. The first four aspects relate to the indicators of best practice, whose linkages form the focus of this chapter. Hence, the chapter starts by examining the level of priority given by organisations to the needs of disabled people on these dimensions of practice, before assessing the extent to which the level of priority given relates to the corresponding best practice indices. This is followed with an examination of the relationships between different best practice indices. The concluding section examines the association between priority given to the needs of disabled people in organisations' business plan and the different dimensions of best practice.

### 7.1 Priority given to the needs of disabled people

Table 7.1 presents information on the level of priority organisations gave to the needs of disabled people on employment, service users, estates strategy, accessibility of public information, and business or corporate plan.

**Table 7.1 Level of priority organisations gave to disabled people, by various dimensions of practice**

<i>Column per cent</i>					
Level of priority	Dimension of practice				
	Employment	Service users	Estates strategy	Information access	Business plan
	%	%	%	%	%
Extremely high	15	19	11	13	6
Very high	36	36	31	26	25
Fairly high	28	25	31	32	28
Neither high nor low	14	11	12	18	27
Fairly low	3	1	1	3	4
Very low	0	0	1	0	1
Extremely low	0	*	*	1	2
Don't know	2	4	9	4	4
No answer	3	4	5	3	4
<i>Unweighted cases</i>	<i>287</i>	<i>287</i>	<i>287</i>	<i>287</i>	<i>287</i>

Base: All respondents, on-line survey.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

The vast majority of organisations reported that they gave extremely high, very high, or fairly high priority to various dimensions of the needs of disabled people, especially employment and service users. However, a sizeable proportion of the organisations (about one-third) indicated that they did not give high priority to the needs of disabled people when thinking about their business or corporate plan. An examination of linkages between the level of priority given to disabled people on different dimensions of practice, suggest strong positive associations, with those giving high (i.e. extremely high, very high and fairly high) priority to the needs of disabled people when thinking about one dimension of practice also giving high priority when thinking about the other dimensions. For instance, about nine in ten of those giving high priority to the needs of disabled people in employment, gave high priority to disabled people when thinking about service users, compared to less than four in ten of those not giving high priority to disabled people in employment.

## 7.2 Link between level of priority and best practice indices

Earlier chapters in this report have included analyses using the following five summary indices of best practice:

- recruitment practices;
- service accessibility;

- information access;
- estates/buildings strategy; and
- consultation of disabled people.

The indices comprise the variables listed in Table A.2. The distribution of recruitment, service accessibility, information access and estates strategy best practice scores by whether or not organisations gave high priority to relevant aspects of practice is given in Table 7.2.

**Table 7.2 Best practice quartiles, by whether or not disability is given high priority in various dimensions of practice**

		<i>Row per cent</i>				
Dimension of practice	Level of priority	Best practice quartile				Number of cases
		Bottom	Second	Third	Top	
Employment	High	21	23	27	30	226
	Not high	43	31	18	8	61
Service users	High	19	25	26	30	229
	Not high	48	24	22	5	58
Public information	High	17	27	27	30	203
	Not high	44	20	21	14	84
Estates strategy	High	19	25	27	29	195
	Not high	43	23	22	12	60

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing cases).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There were strong links between best practice indices and the level of priority given by organisations to disabled people when thinking about relevant aspects of best practice. For instance: organisations giving high priority to disabled people when thinking about employment had higher recruitment scores compared to those not giving high priority; those giving high priority to service users had higher service accessibility scores than those not giving high priority; those giving high priority to disabled people when thinking about public information had higher information access scores than those who did not give high priority; and those giving high priority to disabled people in estates strategy had higher estates strategy scores than those who did not give high priority.

## 7.3 Relationships between various dimensions of best practice

An examination of the associations between different pairs of best practice indices suggest strong associations between the indices, with organisations scoring highly in one index also scoring highly in the others. However, it is also clear that while some organisations may be performing relatively well in one area, they are not necessarily performing as well in the other areas. The following sub-sections examine the associations between specific pairs of indices<sup>4</sup> to establish the extent to which organisations performing well in specific areas also do as well in the other areas. These include relationships between: recruitment practice and service accessibility; information access and estates/buildings strategy; information access and consultation of disabled people; and estates/buildings strategy and consultation of disabled people.

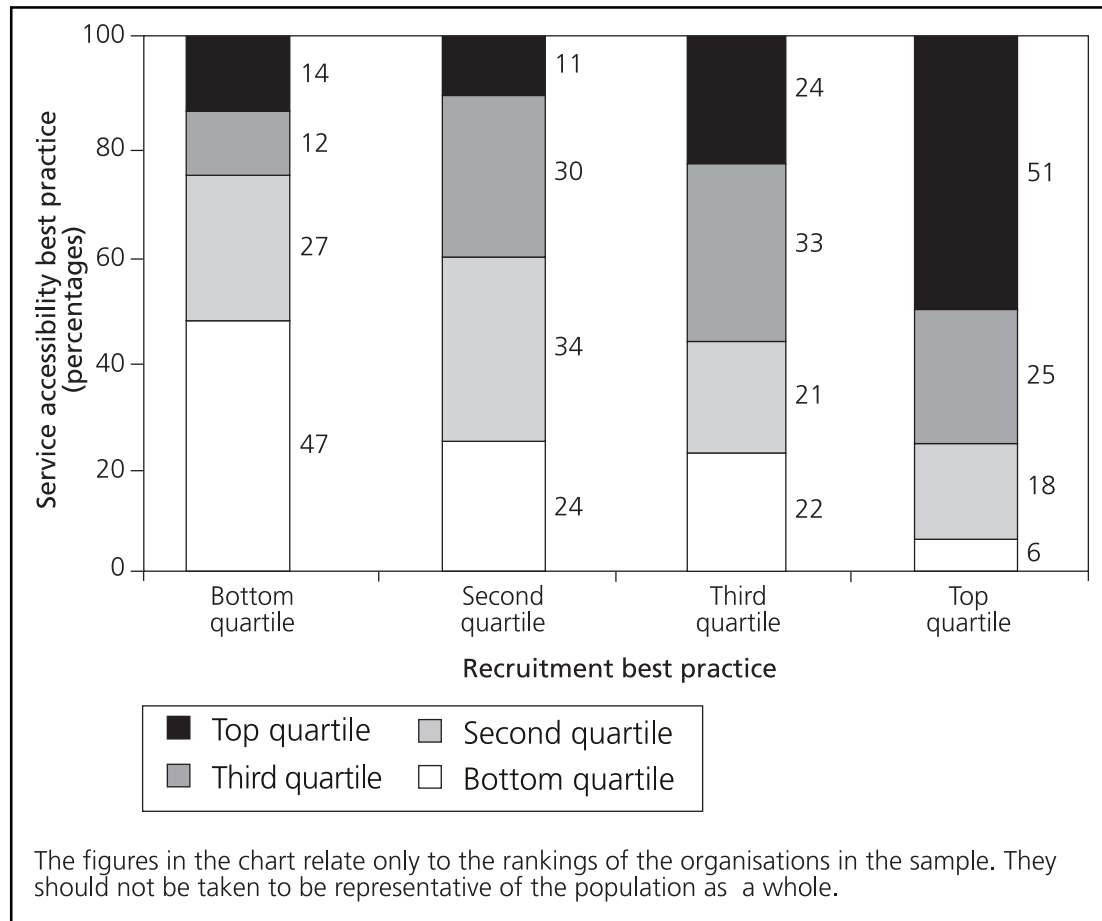
### 7.3.1 Recruitment practice and service accessibility

The results in Figure 7.1 suggest a strong relationship between recruitment and service accessibility best practice scores. Organisations stating that they regularly implemented disability-related recruitment policies, were more likely to indicate that they had taken more actions to enable disabled people use or gain access to their services, than those who implemented such policies less regularly. However, some of the organisations with high scores on recruitment practices did not have equally high scores on service accessibility actions, and vice versa.

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<sup>4</sup> The pairs of indices included in the analysis comprise associations considered to be of substantive interest, and at the same time meaningful, based on the set of variables used to construct the best practice indices. For instance, although the association between service accessibility and consultation best practice indices may be of substantive interest, it is not included because the two indices share a set of three common variables regarding whether or not disabled service users, staff, and organisations were consulted when taking actions to enable disabled service users to gain access to an organisation's services.

**Figure 7.1 Relationship between service accessibility and recruitment best practice indices**

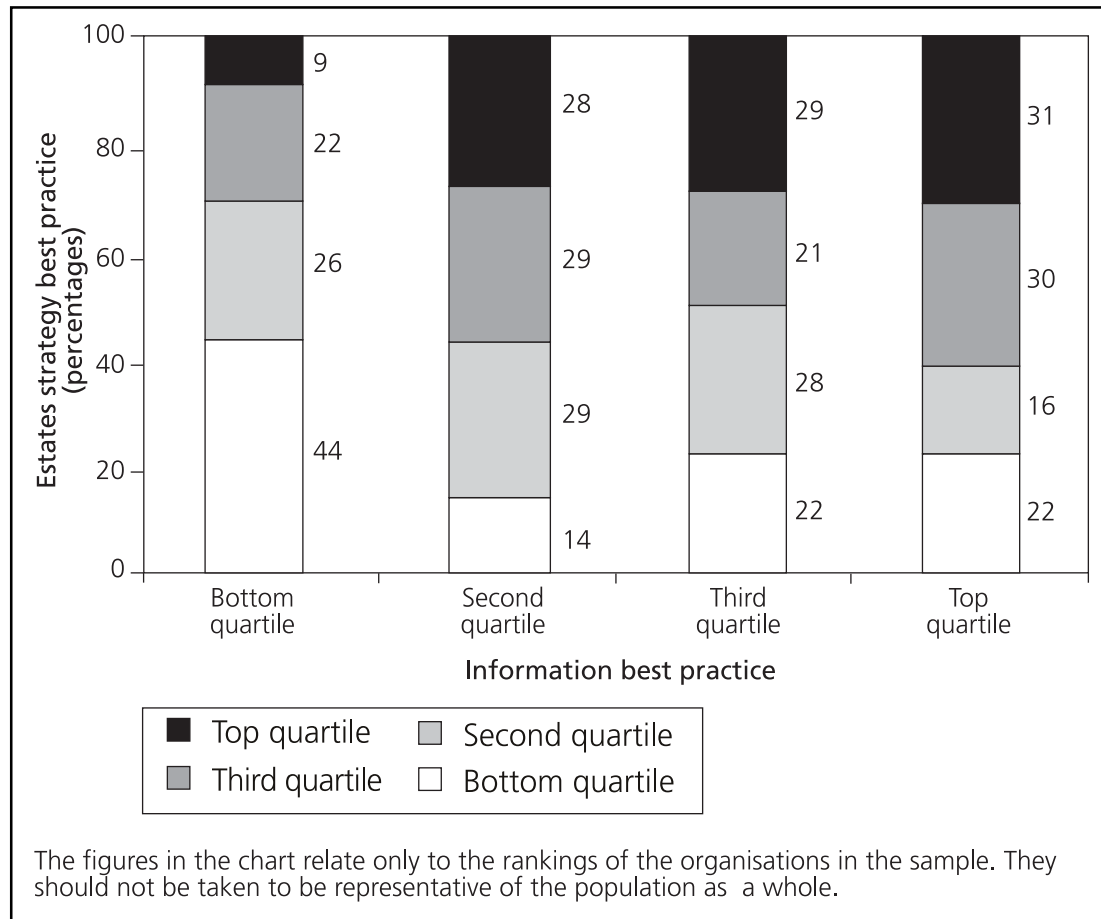


### 7.3.2 Information access and estates strategy

Although the general association pattern as in recruitment and service accessibility holds, with organisations with high scores on information access also having high scores on estates strategy, the relationship is weaker. In general, organisations stating that they provided official information for employees or the public on a wide range of formats indicated that they had undertaken more desired actions on their estates/buildings to cater for the needs of disabled people, than those providing information on fewer formats. However, a sizeable proportion of those with high scores on information access had relatively low scores on estates/buildings strategy. This weak association may be partly attributable to the fact that some organisations where people access services mainly by means other than face-to-face may have less need for making specific building provisions but have more need for increasing information access.



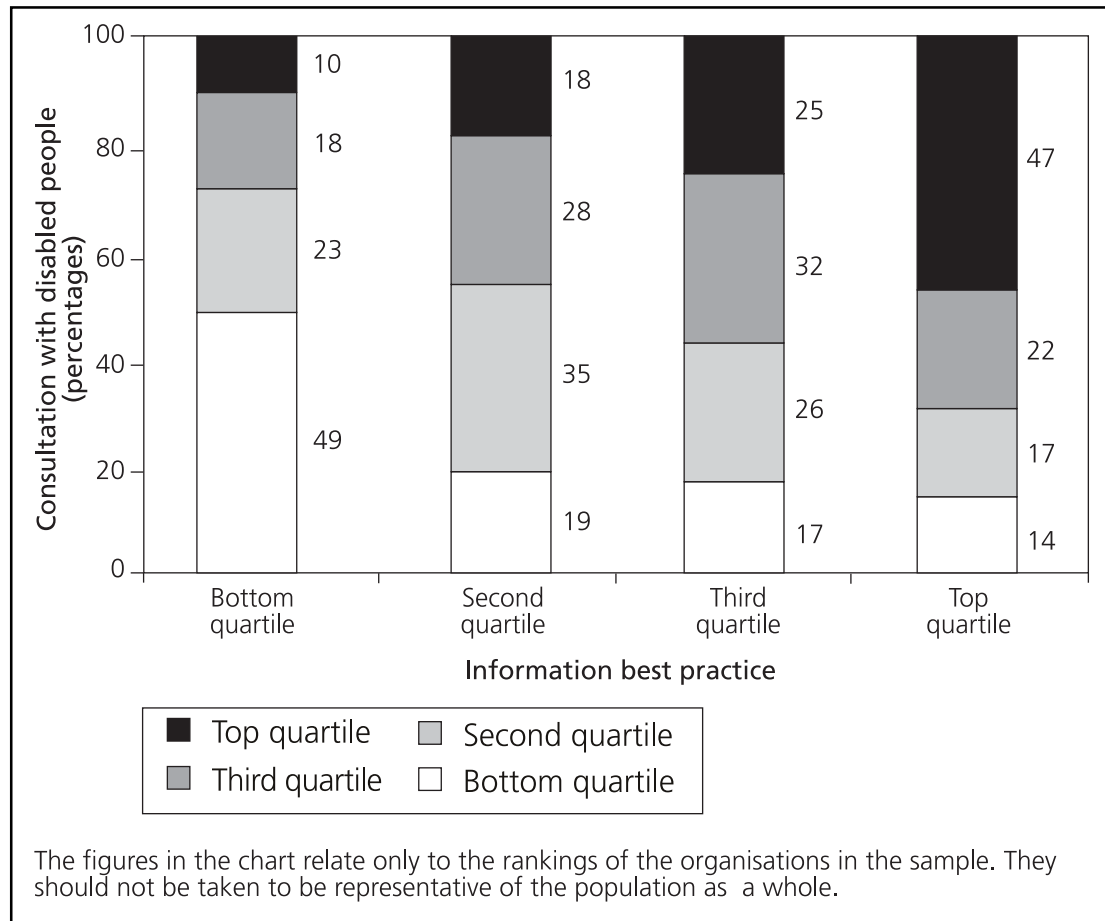
**Figure 7.2 Relationship between information access and estates strategy best practice indices**



### 7.3.3 Information access and consultation of disabled people

Once again, the general pattern holds, suggesting that organisations with high scores in the area of information access, also having high scores with respect to consultation with disabled people. About half of the organisations with low scores on information access also had low scores with respect to consultation of disabled people. Similarly, about one-half of those with high information access scores also had relatively high scores with respect to consultation. Nevertheless, there is a considerable proportion of organisations who rank among the top in information access being among the bottom with respect to consultation with disabled people and vice versa. It is possible that those organisations already using a wide range of formats may not have the need to consult disabled people/organisations, hence, weakening the observed association between these two indices.

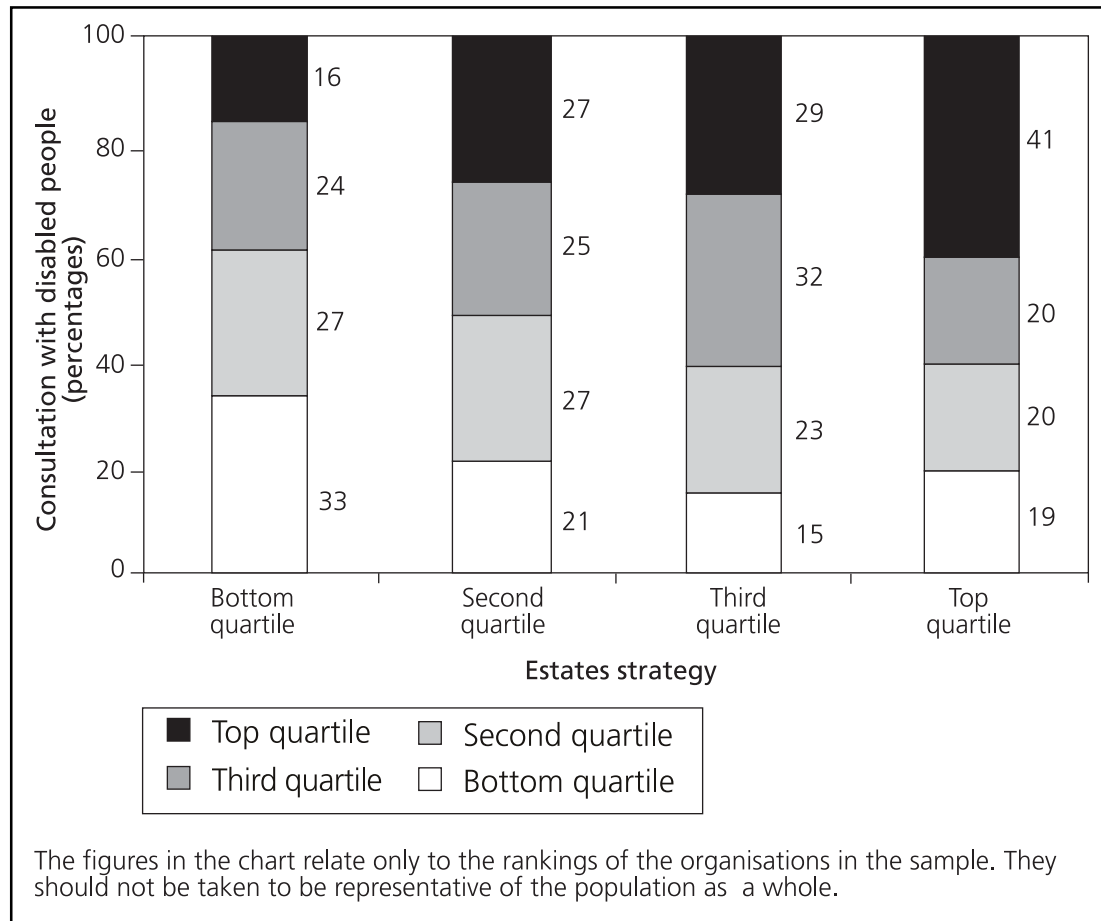
**Figure 7.3 Relationship between information access and consultation best practice indices**



#### 7.3.4 Estates strategy and consultation of disabled people

The data presented in Figure 7.4 conforms to the earlier observed patterns, suggesting that although organisations with high scores in estates strategy generally have high scores with respect to consultation of disabled people. Nevertheless, a sizeable proportion of organisations with relatively low scores on estates strategy had fairly high scores on consultation, while some with high scores on estates had relatively low scores on consultation.

**Figure 7.4 Relationship between estates and consultation best practice indices**



Overall, the results in this section suggest that despite the general positive associations between best practice indices, many organisations may be doing well in one area, but not necessarily in another. By implication, there could be some scope for lessons to be learnt on best practice across each of these organisations. The lack of consistency in best performance across different indices might be because different groups or sections within an organisation responsible for these areas are not co-ordinating their best practices, rather there are 'pockets' of good practice that could be shared and built upon by the organisations concerned.

## 7.4 Relationship between business plan and best practice indices

Finally, this chapter examines the association between priority given to disabled people in the organisations' business plan and best practice indices relating to various aspects of practice.

**Table 7.3 Best practice quartiles, by whether or not disability is given high priority in business or corporate plan**

		<i>Row per cent</i>				
Aspect of practice	Level of priority	Best practice quartile				Number of cases
		Bottom	Second	Third	Top	
Recruitment	High	20	19	33	29	169
	Not high	34	32	14	20	118
Service accessibility	High	16	24	24	36	169
	Not high	37	26	26	10	118
Information access	High	18	24	27	31	169
	Not high	35	26	22	17	118
Estates strategy	High	23	22	27	29	158
	Not high	28	30	23	20	97

Base: All respondents, on-line survey (excluding missing cases).

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There were apparent associations between the level of priority given to disabled people in the business plan and best practice indices for all aspects of practice, except buildings strategy. The relationship was particularly strong for service accessibility. Organisations giving high priority to disabled people when thinking about their business plan were considerably more likely to have high scores and less likely to have low scores on service accessibility, compared to those not giving high priority to disabled people in their business plan.

## 7.5 Summary

- The vast majority of organisations reported that they give high priority to the needs of disabled people when thinking about employment, service users, estates strategy and information access, but a sizeable proportion (about three in ten) did not give high priority to the needs of disabled people in their business plan.
- There were strong links between priority given to specific dimensions of practice and the corresponding best practice indices, with organisations giving high priority to disabled people having better indices.
- Despite the general positive associations between best practice indices, some organisations scored relatively highly in specific areas, but not necessarily as high in the other areas.
- Organisations giving high priority to disabled people in their business plan were more likely to have high scores on the best practice indices, particularly for service accessibility and access of public information.



# 8 Preparedness for the Disability Equality Duty

## 8.1 Introduction

This final analysis chapter examines the extent to which public sector bodies are fulfilling various elements of Part 2 of the Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) Regulations 2005, relating to *Preparation and publication of Disability Equality Scheme*. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, public authorities that can have a significant impact on equality for disabled people will be required to produce a Disability Equality Scheme, which outlines how the body aims to comply with their Disability Equality Duty. The Disability Equality Duty is modelled on the duty to promote race equality introduced by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. All public bodies, apart from primary schools in England and all schools in Wales, are required to publish their Disability Equality Scheme by 4 December 2006 (DRC, 2006). These schemes must outline how the bodies:

- have involved disabled people in developing the Disability Equality Scheme;
- will assess the impact of their activities on equality for disabled people;
- will improve outcomes for disabled people;
- will monitor whether outcomes are improving for disabled people; and
- will use the results of their monitoring.

Authorities will be under an explicit legal duty to implement their Disability Equality Schemes. These bodies are expected to report on their progress annually and are also expected to revise their Disability Equality Scheme within three years of its publication (Department for Work and Pensions, 2004).

The analysis presented here addresses two main issues: the extent to which organisations are fulfilling specific aspects of the legislation; and the number of elements from the regulations organisations are fulfilling. The data analysed were

not specifically collected for this purpose but have been adapted to best meet the requirements of the elements of the regulations. These data should be interpreted with caution due to the following limitations: First, the information used from the survey sometimes did not precisely match the regulations conditions. Secondly, some of the questions used were not applicable to some of the organisations in the survey, implying that these organisations would not be able to demonstrate the specific elements of the regulations. Thirdly, for some elements of the regulations, such as gathering information on disabled pupils (i.e. 2(3)(d)(ii)), no information was available from the survey, even for use as a proxy. Hence, only elements for which it was possible to get some indication of compliance from the survey data have been included, while those for which no data were available have been discarded. Specific caveats which should be taken into account when interpreting the data are shown in Table A.3.

## 8.2 To what extent are organisations fulfilling specific elements of the regulations?

The analysis covered a total of seven elements of the regulations. Table 8.1 gives the proportion of the organisations fulfilling specific elements of the regulations, classified by type of organisation. Of particular interest are elements relating to: having a Disability Equality Scheme; involving disabled people in producing a Disability Equality Scheme; and collecting information on disabled people and employees. Overall, the majority of organisations had a Disability Equality Scheme, but only a small proportion involved disabled employees or service users in producing a Disability Equality Scheme. Slightly more than half of the organisations in the survey gathered information on employees or service users. There were notable differences between sectors with respect to publishing a Disability Equality Scheme, involving disabled people in producing a Disability Equality Scheme, and gathering information on employees or service users. While local government organisations were the most likely to involve disabled people in producing a Disability Equality Scheme and to gather information on disabled employees and service users, educational organisations were the most likely to have a Disability Equality Scheme.

**Table 8.1** Percent of organisations fulfilling various elements of the regulations, by type of organisation

Regulations	Item	Health	Education	Local govt	Emergency services	Central		All
						govt/ Other	Other	
2(1)	Publish a Disability Equality Scheme	59	82	68	49	51	51	64
2(2) and 2(3)(a)	Involve disabled people in producing a Disability Equality Scheme	23	15	28	23	9	9	22
2(3)(b)	Publish impact assessment methodology <sup>Φ</sup>	40	53	65	64	51	51	56
2(3)(c)	Action plan	88	90	94	98	96	96	93
2(3)(d)	Gather information on disabled people	45	46	67	60	62	62	57
2(3)(e)	Make use of information	58	80	71	59	49	49	65
2(4)(b)	Revise schemes within three years	22	25	22	8	30	30	21
Number of organisations		86	61	129	53	47	47	376

Note:  $\Phi$  – total n=287.

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.



Each of the specific elements of the regulations are examined below to provide further insights on the extent to which organisations are fulfilling various aspects of the legislation, with particular focus on the three key elements relating to publication of a Disability Equality Scheme, involvement of disabled people and gathering information on disabled people.

### **8.2.1 Publish a Disability Equality Scheme**

Organisations which had a Disability Equality Scheme were taken to have published it for the purpose of this exercise. The majority of organisations surveyed have a Disability Equality Scheme and there were notable differences between organisations fulfilling this aspect of the legislation. Educational organisations were considerably more likely to have a Disability Equality Scheme, especially in comparison with organisations in emergency services or central government sectors.

### **8.2.2 Involve disabled people in producing a Disability Equality Scheme**

Information on whether organisations involved disabled people in producing a Disability Equality Scheme was derived from responses to the questions relating to whether disabled employees or service users were involved in drafting a Disability Equality Scheme. Organisations who involved either employees or service users were considered to have fulfilled this element of the regulations. Overall, most of the organisations surveyed did not fulfil this aspect of the legislation. Local government organisations were the most likely, while central government/other organisations were the least likely to demonstrate this. The seemingly low proportions classified as fulfilling this aspect of the legislation were partly due to the fact that those organisations without a Disability Equality Scheme or disabled employees or service users could not demonstrate involving disabled people in producing a Disability Equality Scheme. Among organisations with a Disability Equality Scheme (n=239), about one-third involved disabled employees or service users in drafting it, while the remainder comprised not only those who did not involve the disabled, but also those who did not know whether the disabled were involved, or did not have disabled employees/service users, or provided no answer.

### **8.2.3 Gather information on disabled people**

Whether information was gathered on disabled people was based on questions relating to information gathered on employees and service users. An assessment of whether organisations gathered information on the effect of their policies and practices on disabled employees included a number of indicators, relating to recording of information about employee-related complaints, use of surveys or related approaches to determine proportion of employees disabled, and recording disability information about job applicants, of whom, some will progress to be employees. Similarly, an assessment of whether they gathered information on service users was based on: whether they recorded service-related complaints from disabled people for reasons specifically related to their health/disability condition

separately; or found out what proportion of its service users were disabled through surveys, EO questionnaires, census, or other Government statistics; or conducted research to identify barriers to potential disabled users and difficulties experienced; or measured if disabled service users experienced equal outcomes as non-disabled service users. An organisation was considered to fulfil this element of the regulations if they gathered information on employees or service users. Overall, more than half of the organisations in the survey demonstrated this element of the regulations, satisfying at least one of the above conditions. There were prominent differences between sectors, with the local government organisations being the most likely, while organisations in health and education sectors the least likely to fulfil this aspect of the legislation.

The other elements of the regulations included in the analysis related to: publishing impact assessment methodology, having an action plan; making use of information; and revising schemes within three years. Although precise information on whether organisations published impact assessment methodology was not available, the survey sought information on whether organisations had examined if policies and services served disabled people fairly that is Equality Impact Assessment, which was used to demonstrate this element of the regulations. Slightly more than half of organisations interviewed fulfilled this element of the legislation. Among those demonstrating this element, almost all confirmed that at least some of the organisations' employment practices or service provision practices had been checked.

With respect to having an action plan, organisations were considered to fulfil this aspect of the legislation if: they stated that they had developed an action plan as a result of Disability Equality Impact Assessment; or had reviewed (or planned to review) all its employment policies and practices for the impact of disabled employees; or had an estates strategy that included an action plan. Almost all organisations fulfilled this element of the legislation based on this indicator. Further examinations of other indicators of an 'action plan' based on actions taken by organisations to enable disabled people access or use their services, or policies and practices currently in place or planned to assist disabled employees confirmed that the majority of organisations are fulfilling the conditions (See Tables A.1 and 3.6).

Whether organisations made use of information gathered was assessed based on what they had done as a result of Equality Impact Assessment and whether they monitored the effectiveness of adjustments made to enable disabled people access services. An organisation was considered to fulfil this aspect of the legislation if they had done something as a result of the Equality Impact Assessment, or monitored the effectiveness of the adjustments made to enable disabled people access services. The majority of the organisations surveyed fulfilled this aspect of the legislation, with educational organisations being the most likely to do so.

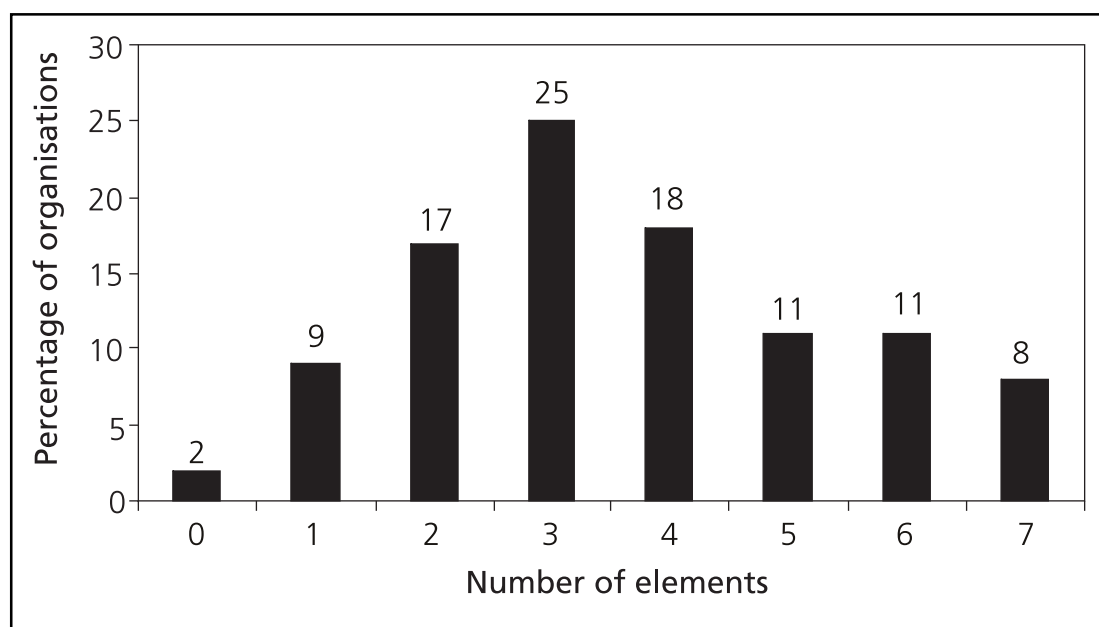
Finally, information on when organisations last reviewed their Disability Equality Scheme was used to assess whether they revised their schemes within three years, as stated in the regulations. Organisations who last reviewed their Disability Equality

Scheme within the two years preceding the survey, were considered to have fulfilled this element of the regulations. Only a small proportion of the organisations reported that they reviewed their Disability Equality Scheme within the last two years preceding the survey, hence, considered as demonstrating this element of the regulations. The low proportion is partly due to the fact that those organisations who created their first Disability Equality Scheme within the 12 months preceding the survey, could not demonstrate 'revising schemes within two years', since they were not asked when they last reviewed the Disability Equality Scheme.

### 8.3 How many elements of the regulations are organisations fulfilling?

Based on the seven elements of the regulations discussed in the preceding subsection, the number of elements fulfilled by the organisations surveyed ranges from zero to seven, with the highest proportion of organisations fulfilling three out the seven elements considered (Figure 8.1). Overall, only a few organisations fulfilled all the seven elements of the regulations included in the analysis.

**Figure 8.1** Number of elements of the regulations organisations are demonstrating



The distribution of the number of elements of the regulations fulfilled by different sectors shows little variation by sector, although local government organisations, on average, seem to fulfil relatively more elements of the regulations than the other sectors (Table 8.2).

**Table 8.2** Number of elements of the regulations fulfilled by different organisation sectors

*Column per cent*

Number of elements demonstrated	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
None	7	2	1	0	[0]	2
1	13	3	6	15	[9]	9
2	16	8	16	17	[28]	17
3	27	46	22	15	[17]	25
4	11	18	16	28	[23]	18
5	11	7	14	8	[11]	11
6	7	8	16	11	[13]	11
7	9	8	10	6	[0]	8
Mean score	3.3	3.7	4.0	3.5	3.4	3.6
Cases	86	61	129	53	47	376

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

An examination of organisations demonstrating 'at least x' number of elements of the regulations provides some insights of overall extent of preparedness. This might also be useful for target setting. Overall, almost one-quarter of the organisations demonstrated at least six, about half demonstrated at least four, while three-quarters demonstrated at least three of the eight elements considered (Table 8.3).

**Table 8.3** Proportion of organisations demonstrating 'at least x' elements of the regulations

*Column per cent*

Demonstrated 'at least x' elements	Organisational type					All %
	Health %	Education %	Local govt %	Emergency services %	Central govt/ Other %	
1	93	98	99	100	100	98
2	80	95	93	85	92	89
3	64	87	77	68	63	73
4	37	41	55	53	47	47
5	27	23	40	25	23	30
6	16	16	26	17	13	19
7	9	8	10	6	0	8
Cases	86	61	129	53	47	376

All percentage figures in the table are **only** of the sample population and should not be inferred as representative of the population as a whole.

There were notable differences between different sectors. For example, although the local government sector had the highest proportion of organisations fulfilling at least more than half of the elements considered, the education sector had the highest proportion of organisations fulfilling at least two or three of the seven elements, with most organisations fulfilling at least three elements.

## 8.4 Summary

This chapter has attempted to assess the extent to which public sector organisations are fulfilling various elements of Part 2 of the Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) Regulations 2005. It provides some insights into the extent to which organisations are fulfilling the specific elements of the regulations and general impressions of the extent of preparedness. The results indicate that:

- the majority of organisations in the survey have a Disability Equality Scheme, but only a small proportion confirmed having involved disabled employees or service users in drafting the scheme;
- local government organisations were the most likely to involve disabled people in producing their Disability Equality Scheme and to gather information on employees or service users, while educational organisations were the most likely to have a Disability Equality Scheme;
- overall, the highest proportion of organisations (about one-quarter) fulfilled three out of the seven elements of the regulations considered;
- while local government organisations were the most likely to fulfil at least more than half of the elements of the regulations, educational organisations were the most likely to fulfil at least two or three elements, with most organisations in this sector fulfilling at least three of the seven elements analysed;
- very few organisations appeared to have anticipated all the requirements of the regulations.

Overall, the results presented in this chapter provide important indications of preparedness of public sector organisations towards the 2005 regulations. The fact that the majority of the organisations in the survey had already developed a Disability Equality Scheme, well ahead of the deadline is encouraging. However, these results should be interpreted with great caution, taking into account the data limitations highlighted earlier in Section 8.1, as well as overall limitations of the study relating to representativeness of the survey sample, discussed in Chapter 1. These limitations should be borne in mind, especially in any attempts to use the current analysis as a baseline for future reference.

## 9 Conclusions

On 1 December 2005, the Government launched the Office for Disability Issues. This new cross-government unit is responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report *Improving the life chances of disabled people*, and will report annually on progress towards equality for disabled people. It also has policy responsibility for the Disability Equality Duty in Government.

This research shows that there is a clear commitment amongst the surveyed organisations to meet the needs of disabled employees and customers. While most organisations (almost three-quarters) reported that they were currently meeting the needs of their disabled employees, almost all stated they were committed to improving the experience of their disabled employees and service users. However, a small proportion (one-fifth) of organisations did acknowledge that they were not meeting the needs of disabled people.

In operational terms, a large majority (over nine-tenths) of organisations had adapted their work environment to help disabled employees, implemented flexible working time and flexible work organisation, while two-thirds had a strategy for promoting or widening the participation of disabled service users and a large majority of organisations (nine tenths) had acted to improve access to premises for disabled people. The majority of organisations had set up focus groups or customer panels to address the needs of disabled people; almost one-half had set up partnerships to deliver services to disabled people; and one-third had disabled users' networks. However, less than one-third had engaged with disability organisations to review the extent to which services met the needs of disabled people.

Encouragingly, the majority of organisations in the survey have a Disability Equality Scheme in place well ahead of the deadline, although only a small proportion had involved disabled employees or service users in drafting the scheme. However, this finding should be interpreted with caution, taking into account the data limitations.

## 9.1 Motivations for change

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) was identified as being the main driver of these developments. It was also the main reason given by organisations for integrating disability issues into their mainstream plans. The Act was most commonly cited as a reason both for changing employment policies and practices and making changes to improve service delivery for disabled service users being cited in both cases by nearly all organisations; while a further large proportion (three-quarters) of organisations said that good practice in the sector was a motivating factor, and a similar proportion said that it was seen as essential to good service delivery. Similarly, the DDA was the main motivator for changing the buildings strategy.

## 9.2 Good practice

There were strong links between the priority given to specific dimensions of practice and the corresponding best practice indices, with organisations giving high priority to disabled people having better indices. Organisations giving high priority to disabled people in their business plan were more likely to have the highest scores and less likely to have the lowest scores in terms of the best practice indices, particularly for service accessibility and access of public information.

Despite the generally positive associations between best practice indices, some organisations performed relatively well in specific areas, but not necessarily as well in the other areas.

### 9.2.1 Size of organisation

Previous research on the DDA shows that larger-sized (public and private sector) organisations perform better when it comes to disability issues than smaller organisations. However, this study reveals a more nuanced association between size of organisation and adoption of best practice on disability issues, at least in the public sector. For example, larger organisations (those with at least 500 staff) had a lower percentage of staff who had undertaken equal opportunities or diversity training in the last two years, compared to their counterparts in organisations with less than 500 staff. In addition, there were three variables where no differences were found for size of organisation. These were: whether or not the organisation had a buildings strategy including aims for meeting the needs of disabled employees and disabled service users; whether or not the organisation had consulted disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up the buildings strategy; and the number of accessibility features adopted by organisations.

When looking at size of organisation in relation to the 'recruitment', 'actions', 'information', and 'estates' indices, results suggest that larger organisations were more likely to have: higher scores for adopting appropriate recruitment strategies; taking actions to enable disabled people to access their services; and were more likely to use more formats when providing information. There was no major

difference between size of organisation and the number of accessibility features adopted by the organisation. So, in summary, larger organisations are more likely to score higher on the five indices, but smaller organisations can do better than their larger counterparts on specific aspects of promoting equal opportunities for disabled people.

### **9.2.2 Time spent on disability issues**

In advance of this study, it could be expected that organisations devoting more staff time to disability issues would score higher on each of the indices, because they have a more dedicated staff resource. Again, however, the research reveals a more complex picture, as no differences were found between staff time spent on disability and either organisations with a buildings strategy that includes aims for meeting the needs of disabled employees and disabled service users, or whether or not the organisation had consulted disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up the buildings strategy. Similarly, there were no differences between staff time spent on disability issues and quartile rankings when it came to using appropriate recruitment strategies, and adopting a great number of accessibility features.

However, when looking at staff time spent on disability issues in relation to the 'recruitment', 'actions', 'information', and 'estates' indices, results suggest that organisations with staff spending more than one-quarter of their time on disability issues were more likely to take actions to enable disabled people to access their services, and were more likely to provide information in a greater number of formats.

### **9.2.3 Scope for intra-organisational learning**

These findings might be an artefact of the survey's small sample size. Nonetheless, this study's findings do imply that allocating more resources (such as staff time) to promote equal opportunities for disabled people may have mixed results, because other factors, such as organisational culture and intra-organisational relations that were not captured in this study, may be influential. The findings reported here do suggest that further research is required to identify factors that encourage and hinder the spread of good practice within public bodies. The results also suggest that adoption of good practice by organisations is variable, and that there is considerable scope for intra-organisational learning. That is, for the greater transfer of ideas within organisations, and for people with different responsibilities to improve their communication of methods of good practice across their respective organisations.





## Appendix

Actions organisations are taking to enable disabled people to use or gain access to their services

**Table A.1 Actions organisations are taking to enable disabled people to use or to gain access to their services**

Action	Currently doing %	Plan to do within 2 years %	No plans to do so %	Don't know %
Improving access to premises for disabled users	91	5	2	2
Improving access to information for disabled users	81	9	5	6
Arranging transport for disabled service users	45	3	30	22
Conducting research to identify barriers to potential disabled users	47	25	12	17
Conducting research to identify difficulties experienced by existing disabled users	41	24	15	20
Including disability issues in customer surveys	47	25	9	20
Monitoring the impacts of any changes made to improve access for disabled users	50	31	7	13
Providing disability awareness and/or etiquette training for all staff who have contact with the public	66	22	7	6
Raising awareness amongst other users to prevent discrimination against service users with disabilities	45	20	15	20
Producing specific procedures to tackle discrimination by individuals against users with disabilities when it occurs	59	17	9	15
Forming partnerships with disability organisations to encourage disabled people to use the services	62	18	10	11
Training staff to understand the organisations' disability policy, legal obligations and reasonable adjustment	73	21	2	3
Consulting with disabled customers	61	20	8	11
Consulting with disabled staff	55	24	9	12
Consulting with disabled organisations	69	16	8	7
Assessing impact of current policies	55	33	4	8
Assessing potential impact of new policies and procedures on disabled people	54	32	6	8
Paying disability organisations to review extent to which services meet needs of disabled people	23	8	48	22
Engaging other consultants to review extent to which services meet the needs of disabled people	30	11	39	20

Base: All respondents who participated in on-line survey (excluding respondents who did not give an answer) (n=279).

**Table A.2 Composition of the five best practice indices**

<b>Recruitment (Questions 61-63)</b>	<b>Service accessibility (Questions 85-89)</b>	<b>Information access (Questions 107-108)</b>	<b>Estates strategy (Questions 120-125)</b>	<b>Consultations (Questions 20, 21, 29, 72-73, 87-89, 92-93, 113, 126)</b>
<p>Always state the equal opportunities policy in job adverts;</p> <p>Use the disability ('Two Ticks') symbol in job adverts;</p> <p>Advertise in publications or on websites aimed at disabled people;</p> <p>Work with disability organisations to encourage more disabled applicants;</p> <p>Work with schools/colleges/higher educational institutions/work-based learning providers/adult learning providers to encourage disabled learners to apply;</p> <p>Conduct research to identify any barriers to potential employees applying;</p> <p>Monitor the disability status of applicants;</p> <p>Monitor the impacts of any changes made to encourage disabled people to apply;</p> <p>Consider the elements of the job descriptions/personal specifications to ensure these are not unnecessarily discouraging applications from disabled people</p>	<p>Improving access to premises for disabled users;</p> <p>Improving access to information for disabled users; arranging transport for disabled service users;</p> <p>Conducting research to identify barriers to potential disabled users; conducting research to identify difficulties experienced by existing disabled users;</p> <p>Including disability issues in customer surveys;</p> <p>Monitoring the impacts of any changes made to improve access for disabled users;</p> <p>Providing disability awareness and/or etiquette training for all staff who have contact with the public;</p> <p>Raising awareness amongst other users to prevent discrimination against service users with disabilities;</p>	<p>Use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear standard print;</li> <li>audio tape;</li> <li>Braille;</li> <li>video with audio description;</li> <li>video with subtitles;</li> <li>video with British Sign Language;</li> <li>large font and clear type face;</li> <li>text with pictures;</li> <li>Makaton or other symbol system;</li> <li>phone, face-to-face; on disk;</li> <li>CD-ROM;</li> <li>e-mail; and</li> <li>a website.</li> </ul>	<p>Provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accessible parking;</li> <li>ramp at entrance;</li> <li>hand rails inside and outside buildings;</li> <li>extra space for wheelchairs in rooms;</li> <li>contrasting colours/tones using in external and internal decoration;</li> <li>accessible toilets;</li> <li>drop counters in reception;</li> <li>signage; and</li> <li>hearing loops.</li> </ul>	<p>Whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>disabled employees involved in or consulted about drafting the Disability Equality Scheme;</li> <li>disabled service users involved in or consulted about drafting the Disability Equality Scheme;</li> <li>the organisation involved disability groups/organisations when drawing up most the recent business plan.</li> <li>When reviewing or changing employment policies and practices, how regularly does the organisation consult disabled employees?</li> <li>Has the organisation consulted disabled customers, disability organisations and/or staff about enabling disabled people to use or gain access to services?</li> </ul>

Continued

Table A.2 Continued

Recruitment (Questions 61-63)	Service accessibility (Questions 85-89)	Information access (Questions 107-108)	Estates strategy (Questions 120-125)	Consultations (Questions 20, 21, 29, 72-73, 87-89, 92-93, 113, 126)
<p>Producing specific procedures to tackle discrimination by individuals against users with disabilities when it occurs;</p> <p>Forming partnerships with disability organisations to encourage disabled people to use the services;</p> <p>Training staff to understand the organisation's disability policy, legal obligations and reasonable adjustment;</p> <p>Consulting with disabled customers; consulting with disabled staff; consulting with disabled organisations;</p> <p>Assessing impact of current policies;</p> <p>Assessing potential impact of new policies and procedures on disabled people;</p> <p>Paying disability organisations to review extent to which services meet needs of disabled people; and</p> <p>Engaging other consultants to review extent to which services meet the needs of disabled people.</p>	<p>When reviewing or changing service provision, how regularly does the organisation consult disabled users?</p> <p>Did the organisation involve or consult with disabled people/disability rights organisations when designing its website? And</p> <p>Did the organisation involve or consult with disabled people/disability organisations when drawing up its estates strategy?</p>			

**Table A.3 Information used to demonstrate compliance with specific elements of regulations**

Regulations	Condition used to demonstrate compliance	Caveat
2(1)	Organisation has a Disability Equality Scheme.	Data only available on whether Disability Equality Scheme exists, not published.
2(2) and 2(3)(a)	Involved disabled people (employees or service users) in producing Disability Equality Scheme.	This could not be demonstrated by organisations without a Disability Equality Scheme, disabled employees or service users.
2(3)(b)	Organisation has examined if policies and services serve disabled people fairly – i.e Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).	Data available only on whether examined if policies and services serve disabled people fairly, not whether this is published.
2(3)(c)	Organisation has developed an action plan as a result of disability EIA; or has reviewed (or plans to review) all its employment policies and practices for the impact of disabled employees; or has estates strategy that includes an action plan .	Planned activities assumed to demonstrate ‘action plan’, hence reported proportion demonstrating compliance may be elevated.
2(3)(d)(i)	Record separately employment-related complaints from disabled people that are made for reasons specifically related to their health condition; or found out what proportion of its employees are disabled through surveys, EO questionnaires, application process, employee data audit or other staff survey; or measures if disabled applicants are as likely to be selected for jobs as non-disabled applicants.	Information on performance indicators relate to job applicants, some of whom do not become employees.
2(3)(d)(ii)	No information available – disregarded as an indicator of complying with regulations.	
2(3)(d)(iii)	Record service-related complaints from disabled people for reasons specifically related to their health/disability condition separately; or found out what proportion of its service users are disabled through surveys, EO questionnaires, census, or other govt statistics; or conducts research to identify barriers to potential disabled users and difficulties experienced; or measures if disabled service users experience equal outcomes as non-disabled service users.	Does not indicate extent of detail in information kept and information may not relate to specific individuals.
2(3)(e)	Has done something as a result of the Disability Equality Impact Assessment; or monitors the effectiveness of the adjustments made to enable disabled people to access services.	Any action taken as a result of disability EIA or when reviewing or changing service assumed to imply making use of information.
2(4)(b)	Organisation last reviewed their Disability Equality Scheme within last two years.	The requirement is three years, but data refers to within two years, not three. Furthermore, having last reviewed Disability Equality Scheme x years ago does not necessarily imply that reviews are conducted within x years.
4(1)	No data available – disregarded as an indicator.	



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