

2018 Country Report for The United Kingdom

Key points for EASPD members

I. Employment and Labour Market Policy

- The UK has a high employment rate (20-64) of 78.2% and an unemployment rate of 4.2%. The unemployment is at a record low.
- Matching jobs to the skills profile of the workforce (i.e. addressing mismatches) and to the needs of particular sectors remains an issue.
- A number of policies are either in progress or have been announced in relation to skills challenges.

II. Education Policy

- There are disparities in educational outcomes across the UK.
- A revised National Funding Formula in England alters the distribution of school funding (DfE, 2017). The intention is to move from allocations at local authority level to a system providing more evenly distributed funding per pupil across all schools.
- The shortage of teachers is a continuing challenge for the education sector, particularly in certain subjects and regions.
- Teacher recruitment targets are not being met both in overall numbers and in particular subject or regional needs.

III. Social Policy

- **The disability employment gap in the UK remains large (33.6 pps. vs. the EU average of 25.7 pps., EU-SILC 2015). The UK Government has recently launched a Disability Employment Strategy. The new Work and Health Programme to help disabled people into employment commenced in November 2017.**
- **Overall, access to care is sufficient.**
- The rate of self-reported unmet needs for medical care due to cost, distance and waiting lists (2.8 %) is slightly lower than the EU average (3.2 %).
- Hospitals are working at near-full capacity with low bed numbers, high occupancy rates and short lengths of stay.



- There are also relatively few doctors and falling numbers of nurses. Together with the lack of integration of health and social care, these factors contribute to the long-standing challenges of waiting times for elective and emergency care.
- The healthcare system is currently under financial pressure and projected health care spending challenges the long-term fiscal sustainability of the health care system.
- Health services are predominantly financed from taxation.

IV. Anything else?

- Inactivity and part-time work due to care responsibilities remain high for women.
- The gender pay gap is relatively high.
- There is a gradual decline in the at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate and its components.

Additional Information

- European Commission: 2018 Country Report for the [United Kingdom](#)
- EASPD [Activities on the European Semester](#)

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