

**Media Release**

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Disabled people want work

Nick Ruane is a disabled person and he says in spite of having a Masters Degree with honours in political science, a commerce degree and a teaching qualification his employment history has been sporadic.

His experience is backed up by a report recently released from Statistics New Zealand [*Disability and the Labour Market*](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/health/disabilities/disability-and-labour-market.aspx)that says the unemployment rate of disabled people is double that of non-disabled people,

Nick says, “The conversation about employment has come up again and I would like to contribute a disabled persons perspective.”

“I put my experience down to the tendency of employers to hire people who look, or seem like them. If you are a bit different it implies risk. It could raise questions for employers like: Is this person going to cost me money? Will this person create health and safety concerns in the workplace?

“There is a lot of research saying it doesn’t, but I still think these are common concerns.

“Of course for some disabled people they are facing other employment obstacles as well. They can’t get into the building where a business is situated, or they can’t read information in the formats that are commonly used, or they need slightly more flexibility in the workplace.

“I think employers need more information about employing a person with a disability The *Disability and Labour Market* report found that most disabled workers do not require special modifications or equipment in their workplaces.

“Disabled people report that employers are often unwilling to give opportunities to them and are unaware they can use government funding for disability employment costs.”

Nick says “I’m looking for work at the moment so if anyone out there has any suggestions leave me a message at [gen@dpa.org.nz](mailto:gen@dpa.org.nz) and I will get back to you.

ENDS

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**(The Disabled Persons Assembly NZ Inc. (DPA) is the national collective voice of disabled New Zealanders.)**