

**Media Release**

Disabled people miss out on jobs

A report released last week from Statistics New Zealand says the unemployment rate of disabled people is double that of non-disabled people.

The report, called *Disability and the Labour Market*, says nine percent of disabled people are unemployed, compared to five percent of non-disabled people.

“This is disappointing,” said Disabled Persons Chief Executive, Rachel Noble. “Disabled people are an untapped resource. Investing in getting disabled people into work makes good economic sense for the well-being of New Zealand.

“The unemployment rate of disabled people has not changed in twelve years, since 2001. Twenty four percent of New Zealanders have a disability or long-term health condition. This is 1.1 million people.”

“The report includes a focus on disabled people’s personal limitations. Instead it should have highlighted more of the limitations imposed on disabled people, like access to buildings, inaccessible information and ingrained public attitudes that prevent them from getting employment,” Ms Noble concluded.

The report found that most disabled workers do not require special modifications or equipment in their workplaces, with only 17 percent of disabled workers saying they need workplace modifications.

Disabled people have also reported that employers are often unwilling to give opportunities to them and have incorrect assumptions, such as exaggerated health and safety concerns, and are unaware of government funding for disability employment costs.

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

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