

Consensus Statement: The need for NETER as a measure of national progress

We support the adoption of the **NETER (Not in Employment, Training, Education or Retired)** measure as an important indicator of the labour market status of people aged 50 to state pension age (SPA).

Across the UK, 2.9 million people aged 50 to SPA are NETERs. This group includes people facing a range of barriers to participation, including ill health, disability and caring responsibilities. Yet their experiences are often hidden within existing labour market measures, making it difficult to understand whether existing policies and support services are reaching them. **NETER helps bring this group into clearer view, challenging assumptions that non-participation among older working-age people reflects financial security or a choice not to work.**

By bringing greater visibility to older working-age people who are not working or learning and are not retired, the NETER measure helps reveal the scale of untapped potential in the labour market and shows where action is needed most. It also highlights regional inequalities and disparities associated with gender, ethnicity and health.

As the Government seeks to increase employment, support economic growth and improve living standards, NETER offers a valuable way to track whether these improvements are reaching people aged 50 to SPA. Used alongside existing labour market indicators, it can help policymakers, employers, local leaders and service providers better understand barriers to participation and target support more effectively.

We therefore support calls for the Government to:

1. **Use the NETER measure to drive a new strategy for longer working lives.** Government should use the insights generated by NETER to develop a dedicated strategy for longer working lives, bringing together employment, skills, health, care and pensions policy.
2. **Adopt NETER as a national measure of progress.** Government should adopt NETER as a headline indicator for people aged 50 to SPA alongside the employment rate and publish it regularly. It should also be used as an intermediate outcome measure within Get Britain Working, helping national and local leaders track progress and identify inequalities.
3. **Use NETER to support good growth in every postcode.** As employment and skills powers become increasingly devolved, NETER data should be used by local and national leaders to identify where barriers are greatest, target resources effectively and monitor the impact of interventions.

What governments choose to measure influences what they prioritise. We believe NETER can become a key indicator of labour market participation, economic inclusion and opportunity for older working-age people. We therefore support its adoption as a national measure of progress and urge Government to embed it within its approach to employment and economic growth.

Supported by:

