

State of Social Enterprise

Working Conditions

Fact sheet

Social enterprises are significant employers – and employ from across society

- Social enterprises employ **2.3 million** people across the UK
- Social enterprises have a diverse workforce:
 - 58%** of social enterprise employers report at least half their workforce are women
 - 10%** of social enterprise employers report at least half their staff are from an ethnic minority background
- **27%** of social enterprises create employment opportunities as one of their core social objectives
- **55%** of social enterprises recruit people from disadvantaged, marginalised or vulnerable groups including those furthest from the labour market including ex-offenders, refugees and those with a history of substance abuse. Of those recruiting people from disadvantaged groups:
 - 33%** recruit people with mental health problems
 - 27%** recruit people with a learning disability
 - 24%** recruit people with a physical disability
 - 22%** recruit people who have experienced long-term unemployment

Social enterprises pay fairly

- **84%** of social enterprises report paying the real Living Wage, that's **8 in 10** social enterprises compared to an estimated 1 in 9 employers across the wider economy
 - 54%** of real Living Wage social enterprise employers expect to grow staff numbers over the next year, compared to 33% of social enterprises that are not real Living Wage employers
 - Over **90%** of social enterprises providing financial services, employment services, environmental services and business support reported paying the real Living Wage

Social enterprises train staff and provide flexible, inclusive workplaces

- **77%** of social enterprises reported providing some form of formal or informal training opportunities in the workplace, compared to just **60%** of other businesses¹
- **95%** of social enterprises reported offering some form of flexible working arrangement in 2023 - an increase from 83% in 2021
- **38%** of social enterprises include employees as a member of their board

Social enterprises adapt and support staff through crises

- **56%** of social enterprises have reported taking actions to cope with the impact of inflation and energy cost increases on their workforce:
 - 15%** provided facilities for remote working
 - 8%** asked staff members to take on more tasks
 - 8%** provided additional training to upskill staff
 - 7%** reduced staff working hours
 - 3%** made staff redundancies



¹ <https://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/app/uploads/2023/12/Mission-Critical-State-of-Social-Enterprise-2023.pdf>