

Youth Employment Group consider Government's Autumn Statement

Members of the Youth Employment Group (YEG) debriefed on the Government's Autumn Statement and reflected on what this could mean for the youth labour market at the latest YEG meeting in November.

The November meeting included a summary of the latest labour market stats, and a debrief on the Government's Autumn Statement with a forecast of what this could mean for the future of the labour market. The session also included a presentation on the Ethnic Disparities Subgroup Rapid Youth Voice Survey findings, an update on the Institute for Employment Studies Commission on the Future of Employment Support and YEG sub-group updates.

Labour market statistics analysis – Tony Wilson (Director, Institute for Employment Studies)

You can find the link to the IES briefing [here](#) and the ONS briefing [here](#).

- The main headline was that employment is below pre-pandemic levels – 300,000 lower than pre-pandemic levels – but unemployment remains very low.
- The reason for low unemployment is that economic inactivity remains very high at 600,000 higher than pre-pandemic for ages 16-64. Growing long-term economic inactivity is largely explained due to long-term ill health, up by 500,000 compared to 2019. This increase is largely explained by those people already out of work, staying out of work – rather than more people leaving work due to ill health.
- It remains the case that the number of young people outside of employment or full-time education is close to the lowest it has ever been. A growing proportion of those out of work are in the economically inactive group.

Government's Autumn Statement – Richard Rigby (Head of Policy and Public Affairs, The Prince's Trust)

- The Autumn Statement was accompanied by forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) about what will happen to growth and the labour market over the next few years.
- The OBR forecast that unemployment would rise quite gradually and then peak in 2024. By that point, there will be 500,000 more unemployed people compared to current numbers. The OBR forecast unemployment will then fall gradually, but still not getting as low as now, until the end of the forecast period in 2027.
- The peak expected in 2024 was stated as 4.9%, a more optimistic forecast than the Bank of England's 6.5% statistic 2 weeks prior.

- The review of skills reforms, led by Sir Michael Barber, is also one to watch if YEG members have an interest in skills.
- All youth and apprenticeship national living wage rates went up proportionally by 9.7%.

Ethnic Disparities Subgroup Rapid Youth Voice Survey Findings – Andrea Barry (Analysis Manager, Youth Futures Foundation)

The survey's findings were launched at an event in the House of Lords (see Youth Futures' [Narrowing the gap booklet](#)).

Report findings

- Discrimination due to ethnicity: at least **seven in ten young people from ethnic minority backgrounds have experienced some form of discrimination in the workplace due to ethnicity**. They were most likely to experience discrimination when engaging with clients and external partners and customers. The Youth Futures Foundation Ethnic Disparities Youth Reference Group consulted and fed into the research and suggested that discrimination can also come in the form of work cultures being exclusionary due to things like attitudes to drinking alcohol.
- Ethnicity as a barrier: For young people from a racialised ethnic group, **ethnicity is rated as the most significant barrier to their personal work goals and ambitions**. Despite showing similar levels of experience and concern about discrimination in general, young people from racialised ethnic groups are much more likely to see ethnicity as one of the top barriers to achieving their goals for work/employment.

The Commission on the Future of Employment Support – Tony Wilson (Director, Institute for Employment Studies)

Tony Wilson presented on the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) launch of the [Commission on the Future of Employment Support](#).

- The Commission will run for around eighteen months, hosted by the IES with funding and support from the abrdn Financial Fairness Trust.
- The Commission offers a good opportunity to look at how employment support and services are run and delivered.

Call for Evidence

- The IES want to hear from YEG members on being involved in the work of the Commission in 2023. The call for evidence closes on 30 Jan 2023 (please read the call to evidence [here](#) and find out more about the work of the Commission [here](#)).

Finally, members of the YEG shared their updates, opportunities, and activities within the youth employment sector.

The next YEG meeting will be held on **Wednesday 14 December, 3-4pm**.

Read the full Youth Employment Group minutes [here](#).

If you do not have the YEG meetings in your diary, please contact [Angel](#).