

Summary Research Report

Introduction & Background

Young Lives Leeds, Bradford, and Wakefield, with support from Kirklees Job Fund, led and co-ordinated a research and consultation project that aimed to engage with young people (16-24) to share their experiences of Not being in Employment Education or Training (NEET). All three of the Young Lives organisations are third sector infrastructure support bodies and worked in partnership with their member organisations and other partners to carry out this research and consultation.

An important objective of this research was to enable young people to share their views on the barriers faced by NEET young people in finding employment or appropriate training/education, how being NEET can impact on their personal lives and their opinions on what is the best type of support to enable NEET young people to find employment, education or training.

Objectives & Methodology

1. To profile 16-24 year olds in West Yorkshire who are not in education, employment or training.
2. To understand the barriers to work, education and training that they face.
3. To enable young people to share the impact of their situation as a “NEET” on their personal lives.
4. To enable young people to share their ideas, views and experiences of what is the best type of support and initiatives that can help them find employment, education or training.
5. To use the information from this research to inform: providers of support/activities for NEET young people, funders, the community and young people themselves.

315 young people from West Yorkshire, aged 16-24, with current or recent experience of Not being in Education, Employment or Training took part in this research from October – December 2013.

The following is a breakdown of where those taking part live in West Yorkshire:

Area	Sample (n)	As %
Leeds	205	65%
Wakefield	45	14%
Kirklees	32	10%
Bradford	20	6%
Other areas of West Yorkshire	12	4%

In carrying out this research a questionnaire was used that was adapted from a survey that was undertaken by ComRes June-July 2013 and [commissioned by University and College Union](#).

The questionnaire for this research was available on-line and also via a paper based version. As well as a questionnaire NEET workshops and focus groups with young people took place across the sub-region.

The Research Cohort

The data for this research was not weighted and the following is a breakdown of the research cohort.

Research Cohort	Sample (n)	As %
Female	174	55%
Male	139	44%
Transgender	2	1%
Aged 16 - 18	125	40%
Aged 19 -24	185	60%
Young People identifying themselves from a BME background ¹ <small>Those taking part in this survey were asked to self identify their ethnicity. Of the 315 people that took part 93% (293) identified their ethnicity, of this 24% (69) were identified as being from a BME background</small>	70	24%

Young People's current living situation

- 61% of young people said they were living with their parent(s)/carers, 17% living in rented accommodation, 11% living in social housing and 7% of young people said they were homeless.
- The number of young people that said they live with their parents(s)/carers reflects the national picture. The Office for National Statistics said that in 2012 an estimated 64% of 16-24 year old 1 lived in their parental home.²

How did young people describe their current situation?

- 61% said they were looking for work.
- 22% said they were looking for a college or training place
- 11% said they were currently volunteering.

How many of the young people taking part in the survey were currently NEET?

- When planning this research it was felt important not to exclude young people who had recent experience of being NEET but had recently secured themselves a training place or employment. Also it was felt useful to compare the responses of young people currently in work, education or training with those currently NEET. In addition a control group of young people currently in work or on a job guarantee programme (Kirklees Future Jobs Programme) took part in this survey to act as a comparison with those young people identifying themselves as being NEET.
- In Leeds only 3% of young people taking part in this survey said they were working 30 hours or more and overall 67% of those taking part said they were currently looking for employment and/or a college or training place.

Comparisons with the ComRes survey

- The design and analysis of this research study were informed by a previous study conducted by the research agency ComRes for the University and College Union (UCU). We should stress, however, that ComRes played no role in the fieldwork or analysis of this current study. [The ComRes research](#) was carried out by participants completing a questionnaire on-line while in this research only about 5% of young people completed their questionnaire on-line.
- Most young people taking part in this survey were engaged with a Third Sector or other support organisation which is unlikely to have been the case with the ComRes survey. As a result of this it is possible that participants in this survey may have been more positive in their responses.

Summary of Research Findings

- Overall 65% of young people said they would like to see themselves working 12 months from now; this is very similar to the 68% that said the same in the national ComRes research.
- **Overall 57% of young people thought they would be working 12 months from now; this compares to only 41% saying the same in the national ComRes research.**
- While 62% of young people NEET for 1 year or more said they wanted to be working 12 months from now, only 47% thought that they would be working 12 months from now.
- **Overall young people are most likely to say their "lack of experience" (58%) is the main barrier or obstacle preventing them moving into education, employment or training. "My skills and qualifications aren't good enough" (40%) and "I lack confidence" (35%) were also seen as significant obstacles.**
- Young people said "advice about applying for jobs" (44%), "better English, maths or computer skills" (39%) and "boosting my self-confidence" (39%) are the three best ways to help them get into work, education or training.

- ***“Stress and anxiety” (42%) and “depression” (29%) were the most commonly mentioned negative consequences on well-being as a result of not being in work, education or training. Other consequences mentioned included “rarely leaving the house” (25%), “smoking too much” (25%) and “eating unhealthily” (22%).***
- More than two thirds of young people (68%) agreed that *“no matter what politicians do, there will always be lots of young people not in employment, education or training”*. Although more than seven in ten (73%) agree that *“given the right support, I could contribute a lot more to this country”*. More than seven in ten (71%) said they felt *“my full potential is not being used”* and more than a third (35%) feel they have *“little chance of ever getting a job”*.
- **More than half of young people (52%) who have been NEET for a year or more felt they have *“little chance of ever getting a job”* and more than four in ten (42%) agreed that *“I feel I’m not part of society”*.**
- Nearly half (46%) of young people working full time said they planned to vote at the next General Election, which compares to just over one in five (22%) of young people who have been NEET for a year or more.
- **Nearly half of young people (48%) felt that a job or training guarantee was the best way of helping young people into work or training; this was followed by financial support to get to college or work (16%)**
- Young people thought the best two ways of letting young people know about the support and training available in helping them into employment, education and training was by advertising on Facebook (52%) and through Job Centre Advisors (52%).

Key Actions Resulting from the Research

- One of the main aims of this research was to provide an opportunity for young people to share their experiences of being NEET and to give their opinions on the best type of support to enable young people to move into employment, education or training. To make sure as many people as possible hear young people’s opinions and views, this report will be widely distributed and to different audiences.
- **Jenny Dobson, Funding Officer from Big Lottery, has said about this research: *“Through this piece of research Young Lives Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield have given young people across West Yorkshire a voice. Young Lives have set out a hard hitting partnership approach giving young people the opportunity to see themselves as influencers – working with those voluntary groups and local businesses to help address barriers faced by NEET young people across West Yorkshire.”***
- This research has highlighted additional needs/challenges/barriers/obstacles faced by NEET young people, particularly those that have been NEET for a year or more. From April 2014 Talent Match, a £6.7 million Big Lottery programme for young people NEET for a year or more, will begin delivery across West Yorkshire. As part of the development of this programme three meetings for perspective providers of services for Talent Match has taken place across West Yorkshire and a presentation on this research was given to potential providers at these meetings. Wendy Green, Assistant Chief Executive (Programmes) from Your Consortium, who is managing the Talent Match programme, said:
“The results of this survey, and previous mapping exercises, have fed into the design and launch of the project ensuring this is very much young people led. Given the results of this survey and the

implications on health, social interaction and aspiration once a young person reaches 12 months of unemployment, it is vital that the Leeds City Region Key Workers are fully versed in provision such as health, social issues etc. in order to address central barriers and move young people closer to the job market better equipped and more resilient to deal with the issues they face.”

- **Some of the issues highlighted in this research are complex, for example why is the number of young people identifying a need for “better English, maths or computer skills” more than three times higher than the numbers identifying it in a recent national research? Also finding solutions to some of the issues raised in this research will be complex and require a diverse range of partners. Conversations around ways of doing this have begun in the different areas of West Yorkshire, for example this report will be discussed at Leeds City Council 11-19 (25) Learning & Support Partnership and in Bradford at the Bradford NEET Providers Network.**
- Young Lives Leeds, Bradford & Wakefield will ensure that conversations and discussions around this report happen at both a strategic and operational level. An update to this report and an update on progress made in responding to this report will be published and distributed May 2014.

Acknowledgements

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Third Sector organisations that took part in this research

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Aspire 2 be.
Barca- Leeds.
Bradford Youth Development Partnership.
Brathay Trust.
Brick House Youth Club.
Carers Resource, Shipley.
First Floor.
FLAGSHIP.
Igen.
Learning Partnerships.
Leeds Gate.

Next Generation.
Princes Trust.
Renew..
Ryecroft Youth Club.
Saint Georges.
Sandale / Fagley Community Centre, Bradford.
St Giles Trust.
The Cardigan Centre.
The Market Place.
Womens Health Matters.
Youth Work Company.
Mencap, Inspire Me.

Full Report

You can download a copy of the full report by going to: The [Doing Good Leeds Website](#)

Copies of the full report are also available on request from:

- Young Lives Leeds - Gary Blake – gary.blake@val.org.uk telephone: 0113 213 2599
- Young Lives Bradford - younglivesbradford@bradfordcvs.org.uk telephone: 01274 722772
- Wakefield Young Lives - Emily Castle – Emily@ylc.org.uk telephone: 01924 364 198

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