

Research Bulletin

Issue 17, August 2016

Welcome to the August 2016 edition of Elevation Networks Research Bulletin.

EMPLOYMENT

- Overall unemployment fell by 52,000 to 1.64 million between April and June. The unemployment rate is now 4.9%.
- The number of people classed as 'economically inactive' also fell by 58,000 to 8.84 million. The economic inactivity rate is now 21.6%, the lowest on record.
- The number of people in work increased by 172,000 to 31.75 million.

Youth Employment

Despite a fall in overall unemployment youth unemployment increased by 0.2% to 13.7%. There are now 626,000 young people aged 16-24 who are unemployed. Around 843,000 young people are classed as 'NEET' (not in employment, education or training).

→ ONS Statistics:
<http://ow.ly/tzOK303jI9b>

EQUALITY

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds have less chance of securing jobs compared to their peers, according to research published by the Prince's Trust.

The report found that 20% of young people secure work experience through the help of their parents, however this was just 10% for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The report highlights a disparity between income and opportunity, with young people from poorer backgrounds also less likely to

receive family support with homework, extra-curricular activities or finding work experience.

The research found that 71% of young people from affluent backgrounds had high career aspirations compared to 59% from poorer backgrounds. One in ten young people felt that their family "held them back".

→ Prince's Trust Report:
<http://ow.ly/i6I9302JjsI>

Muslim Women 'Most Disadvantaged'

Muslim women have been termed as the most economically disadvantaged group in British society. According to this article they are three times more likely to be unemployed than women in general.

Although progress has been made by 45% more Muslim women being in work than in 2011, the proposed reasons for this issue such as Recruitment Discrimination and looking after the home, suggests a stagnant process. However, the Women and Equalities Committee are introducing plans to tackle these inequalities before the end of the year.

→ <http://ow.ly/2Vkl303v0OG>

EDUCATION

A Level and GCSE Results

The proportion of top A* and A grades fell by 0.1% to 25.8%, whilst the overall pass rate remained unchanged from last year at 98.1%.

The university admissions service UCAS confirmed that the number of university offers on results day increased by 3% to 424,000.

Meanwhile the GCSE overall GCSE pass rate saw its biggest decline since 2008. The proportion of A*-C entries fell from 69% to 66.9%, whilst the proportion of top A* grades fell from 6.6% to 6.5%.

→ A Levels: <http://ow.ly/UaMh303v2bq>
→ GCSE: <http://ow.ly/6Jri303zSRE>

Student Grants Replaced by Loans

From 1st August students from low-income families enrolling on university courses in England will no longer be able to apply for grants towards living costs.

Previously, students with family incomes of less than £25,000 per year were eligible to claim up to £3,387 in annual maintenance grants.

The grants have now been replaced by student maintenance loans of up to £6,904 per academic year for students living at home or £8,200 living away from home outside London.

→ Student Finance:
<http://ow.ly/PoBG302NBMA>

Students studying in the UK Post-Brexit

The 'Brexit' votes aftermath sees students withdraw their applications from British universities. It has been recorded to have taken a hard hit on Aberystwyth University.

About a half of EU students' applicants (more than 100) for Aberystwyth University withdrew their applications the day the results were announced.

This article discusses the challenge posed for the 120,000 European students at British universities. A spokesman for Aberystwyth University told the BBC that "unfortunately, news reports abroad have led to articles disseminating the message that EU citizens are no longer welcome in the UK".

→ <http://ow.ly/cWLZ3038ek2>

The Grammar School 'Challenge'

The new Education Secretary has been told to put social mobility at the centre of education

policy. However, with the national controversy of whether grammar schools should be banned, this implies a "strange signal" in the United Kingdom considering our new grammar school educated Prime Minister.

In looking at the proportion of ethnic minorities in grammar schools there seems to be a "disproportionately high proportion" of pupils. Daily Mail attributes this to the high aspirations of many ethnic minority families.

More than one in four grammar pupils are from an ethnic minority background. This shows the increased number of ethnic minorities in grammar schools, thus improving attainment gaps. Nonetheless, an elite of 167,000 grammar school pupils will still receive the best of learning.

→ House of Commons Statistics:
<http://ow.ly/5Vsk3038eIU>
→ BBC News: <http://ow.ly/em5o3038eQR>
→ Daily Mail: <http://ow.ly/qBHL3038fiL>

'Student Debts Wipe Out Most Graduate Pay Premiums' – IF Report

The Government has broken a promise by increasing the student loan repayments threshold along with the increase of average earnings from April 2017. This is despite ex-Chancellor, George Osborne's announcement, in November 2015, that the student loan threshold would be frozen at £21,000.

Obvious statements such as 'higher education boosts employability and earnings' have become justifications for this increase. This has pushed Intergenerational Foundation Co-Founder, Angus Hanton, to comment that *'the current system is fuelling a self-perpetuating debt-generating machine which short changes young people'*.

→ Report: <http://ow.ly/WyuW303v0AZ>