

Summary of findings EUYD consultation cycle VII

Rural Youth Forward

When young people are deciding whether they want to move or stay in a rural area, the first thing they consider is the quality jobs and employment opportunities, coming close before the quality of education opportunities. Respondents of our survey largely disagree that there are good employment opportunities in rural areas currently as well as decent transport connections. Public services are either non-existent or hardly accessible, contributing towards the feeling of lack of safety young people experience in these areas. They do not agree that rural areas have a positive image in the UK. Some of the respondents have expressed that only those who want to be self-employed would choose to go to a rural area, while others said that more apprenticeship education and opportunities would attract young people to rural areas. The banning of some rural traditions which are today not seen as ethical have further impacted these communities.

Young people have suggested that more opportunities allowing them to participate in public management of rural areas might mitigate some of the issues mentioned.

In the short term, our respondents have said that transport discounts, better information available on the benefits and opportunities of rural areas, better police presence and security, and better internet connection would make rural areas more attractive.

In the long term they've suggested that more investment in services, stable structures for dialogue and participation among residents, housing reforms and encouragement of business to locate outside of central cities, and boost partnership among rural and urban areas to tackle issues commonly would boost the profile of rural areas further.

Quality Employment for All: The Future of Work

The respondents of our survey have overwhelmingly agreed that young people do not get fair treatment and equal opportunities on the labour market. Large majority also considers that young people do not have access to quality jobs which guarantee them fair working conditions.

Young people through out our focus groups have responded that they feel largely unprepared when applying for jobs, for example by not knowing how to write a CV and a motivation letter properly. They felt that career advisors did not expose them well enough to the variety of jobs nor to the jobs of the future. They've mentioned the negative consequences of high competition in schools and have advised a change to

the national curriculum to make them better equipped for the employment of the future.

Work experiences and internships are absolutely crucial for young people, however they do not feel that the current offer is fully accessible and feel that personal connections play a big role. They've suggested quotas on numerous occasions for young people, with tax incentives to employers.

In terms of social protection, they expressed the fact that young people are one of the most vulnerable groups with regards to exploitation in the workplace. Hence, there was a general consensus that a 'know your rights' scheme should be introduced not only in schools (potentially in PSHE/Citizenship lessons), but also should be made accessible to those in Pupil Referral Units, in care, apprenticeships and other groups. One change young people wanted to see was more support from employers for individuals who had a dependent (child, older relative or relative with severe health needs)

There was a large support of volunteering and encouragement to make volunteering integral within every job.

Young people participating in our consultation who identify belonging in a marginalised/minority group have expressed that young people with disabilities do not have their skills utilised mostly due to accessibility of mainstream education and venue accessibilities.

A part of the respondents mentioned making colour-blind selection compulsory: where names, questions about background etc. aren't part of the application process, was a popular idea.

The groups said that job applications should have sections that take into consideration vulnerable groups specifically for why the person may not meet the educational or extracurricular requirements.