



The IARS
International Institute

Community-led solutions for a fairer society

Early School Leavers in the UK: Challenges and Reccomendations

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Situation of ESLs in the UK

- Compulsory Education
 - In the UK, young people aged 5-16 are required to maintain their education
 - Post-16 young people must pursue further education, vocational training, or an apprenticeship until the age of 18.
- Decrease in educational involvement
 - Since 2014, the number of young people removed from mainstream schools for behavioural issues has increased by 32.8%
 - The number of NEET young people between 16-18 has decreased yearly → currently standing at 11.4%
 - Permanent primary school exclusions (ages 5-11) have increased despite falling pupil numbers
 - Permanent exclusions in secondary schools have followed the same trends

Areas particularly impacted by ESLs:

- Those from low-income families
 - Can be due to inability to afford to be in school, social barriers, or attitude of parents
- Larger, more remote rural countries such as Norfolk and Lancashire
 - Infrastructure to get to school is often inadequate
 - Lack of schools in such areas means overpopulated schools
- Areas in which traditional industries (agricultural/industrial work) are more prominent.
 - Family farms → young people less likely to complete schooling if they can easily continue family business of agriculture
 - Pressure from families to leave early to build up experience in industrial work

Challenges of ESLs in the UK

- Mental Health and/or Behavioural Issues
 - Access to mental health services (CAMHS) is restricted
 - Those with behavioural issues face societal exclusion through repeated school exclusions
- Socioeconomic barriers
 - Lack of confidence in networking
- Caring responsibilities
 - Many ESL's drop out due to pregnancy → Main earners (mum and dad) cannot provide childcare, thus leaving the ESL in duty
 - Lack of support in the UK for teenage parents to re-engage with education

Challenges of ESLs in the UK

- Restricted movement due to gang involvement
 - Often young people involved in gangs are hyper-conscious of security due to gang 'turf wars'
- Barriers to breaking into employment or entrepreneurship
 - Can only access a bank account at 18 → many ESL's do not have a supportive adult to open for them
 - Lack of access to capital to start up own business
- Stigma surrounding ESLs
 - Many companies put off hiring ESL's due to reputation of being lazy and with poor management.
 - Online applications mean that applications instantly filter out those without X level of education

Combatting Marginalization of ESLs in the UK

- Offering training on basic business skills
 - Answering Phones
 - Sending E-mails
 - Professional Language
- Incentives from Youth Trainers
 - Offering food and activities in return for engagement
 - Supplementing travel fees to increase access and encourage engagement
 - Bringing training into the home to support those unable to leave (those with caring duties)
- Condensed training, ensuring youths fulfil the whole course
 - Instant gratification of a quick completion as opposed to long-run rewarding

Combatting Marginalization of ESLs in the UK

- Proving commitment to the programme through willingness to commit
 - Also makes the young person feel more engaged and as if they have responsibility to engage with the programme.
- E-Learning and Face-to-Face learning
 - E-Learning can be isolating, so combine this with f-t-f contact
 - Use of WhatsApp for communication rather than email to reach a larger audience
 - Creation of LinkedIn Accounts
- Mentorship
 - Offering support to those with unsupportive families
- Accreditation for courses
 - Offering some form of 'formal qualification' encourages further engagement due to the self-awareness of barriers to having no qualifications.

Employment Support for ESLs in the UK

- The Prospects Group
 - Works with vulnerable young people who are NEET in keeping them safe, reducing risks and increasing employability and life chances.
 - Focuses on 3 key areas → Employment & Skills, Care & Support, and Education & Learning
- National Careers Service / Job Centre Plus
 - Support in finding funding for skills training
 - Assists in CV writing
 - Job hunting and identifying programmes for ESL's.
- The Prince's Trust
 - Offers employment, entrepreneurship advice and access to funding for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds
 - Free access to employability skills training, mentoring programmes and employment support.
 - Advice and support on setting up own business with access to grants and loans with no collateral.

Employment Support for ESLs in the UK

- NGOs
 - Bizzie Bodies
 - Social enterprise teaching young people languages through informal education methods.
 - Tower Hamlets EBP
 - Delivering a broad range of programmes in schools, improving employability of disadvantaged youth.
 - Momentum World Europeers
 - Inspiring young people to develop their employability, increase understanding of global issues, and their access to international projects.
 - Tree Shepherd
 - Working in deprived communities, creating new opportunities and supporting businesses under pressure of change

GIVING EVERYONE A CHANCE TO FORGE A SAFER, FAIRER AND MORE INCLUSIVE SOCIETY



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