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ADAPT

# Layers of vulnerability

- those who have experienced a lengthy period of unemployment;
- those with low levels of qualifications and educational achievement;
- those facing health problems and disabilities;
- those from particular minority ethnic groups

# Unemployment

ILO 40 per cent are between 15 and 24 years of age; actual unemployment rate for was around 13 per cent in 2009.

EU 20.3 per cent in April 2011.

UK 17 per cent in mid 2011;  
Males = 19.9 per cent.  
Females = 14.4 per cent.

# Precarious working

Self-employment, part-time work, temporary work, fixed-term contract work, zero hours contract employment, seasonal work, (annual hours, shift work, flexitime, overtime or compressed working weeks), home working, teleworking, term time only working, Sunday working and job sharing.

# Employment in Europe 2010

Labour market segmentation affects predominately young and low-skilled workers, particularly during economic downturns. The high incidence of temporary work for these two groups can put them in a relatively precarious situation, not only in terms of employment security, but also in terms of income security, because of the limited access of temporary workers to social security benefits in general, and unemployment insurance in particular.

# Distribution of employment by age (EU) (%)

	Elementary	Manual	Skilled manual	Skilled non-manual
15-24	12.5	38.7	28.8	20
25-29	8.1	27.6	25.6	38.7
30-54	9.3	22.8	27.3	40.6

# Reasons for having a part time job (%) (EU)

	Education or training	Could not find ft job	Other
15-24	62.0	23.6	14.5
25-29	21.2	33.6	45.2

# Reasons for having temporary work by age (%) (EU)

	Ct covering training	Could not find perm. job	Did not want perm.
15-24	40.3	37.1	14.4
25-29	15.2	65.1	10.0



# Professional status of young unemployed people by age (%)

	Employee	Family worker	Self-emp
15-24	93.3	2.7	4.0
25-29	89.8	1.6	8.7

# Further vulnerability - ethnicity

- In the current recession in the UK, young black, Black British and mixed race people have suffered from the biggest increases in unemployment. Black or Black British people between the ages of 16 and 24 have the highest rates of unemployment at over 48 per cent. This was an increase of 12.8 per cent since the start of the recession. Mixed race groups have seen the biggest increases in unemployment, from 21 per cent in March 2008 to over 35 per cent in November 2009. For white people in the same age group unemployment rose from 12.4 per cent to 20.4 per cent. The lowest increase was amongst Asian and Asian British, but the unemployment figure of 31.2 per cent is still much higher than for white people.

# Further vulnerability - education

- Unemployment is highest for those with no qualifications at 43.2 per cent. This was an 11.04 per cent increase between March 2008 and November 2009. Even the most educated have suffered though. In November 2009 over 17 per cent of graduates were unemployed.

# Further vulnerability - gender

- Overall young men have done less well than young women. The unemployment rate for male graduates, for example, was 22.16 per cent in November 2009, compared to 13.47 per cent amongst female graduates. The worst affected group was, however, young females with no qualifications. Unemployment amongst this group was 46 per cent. This was a rise of almost 18 per cent during the period.

# Age: the unrecognised vulnerability

‘18 to 24 year olds are disadvantaged by relative lack of work experience and work-related skills compared to older people; however, rising qualifications levels more generally mean that young people without qualifications now face even greater barriers to employment’.

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# Employer perceptions

....when asked about basic work discipline, some 76 per cent of those who employed young people thought it was good or reasonable as against some 35 per cent of those who did not employ young people.

# Employer perceptions

- There is some evidence of differing employer requirements, depending on the age of candidates applying for roles, and these have often evolved from stereotypes. Employers perceived positive contributions that young people make to the workforce as: helping to maintain a balanced workforce age profile; receptiveness to learning and training; flexibility; and their costs (they can often be paid less than older people).

# Employer perceptions

- Less favourable views of the young include the perception that young people have less life-experience; that they may not be able to handle certain types of jobs and that they may be more expensive in terms of training and the level of staff supervision they require.



# Age discrimination

the most common ages for women to encounter ageism at work are 21 years and 40 years; for men the ages are 18 years and 50 years.

# Age discrimination

just over half of respondents who felt that they had experienced ageism said that it was because they were seen as too young. The report 'reveals that one in four UK employees had been discriminated against at work because of their age – and it is clear that ageism does not discriminate. Young and old, male and female alike are affected'

## Characteristics associated with age groups: % responses from employers

	15-29	30-44	45-59
Computing	66.9	19.9	1.1
Enthusiasm	35.2	28.5	3.3
Creativity	27.8	40.0	3.5
Leadership	0.6	31.3	39.3
Work ethic	1.1	25.4	45.0
Loyalty	0.3	10.7	50.3

# Institutional discrimination

- Our lives are defined by ageing: the ages at which we can learn to drive, vote, have sex, buy a house, or retire, get a pension travel by bus for free. More subtle are the implicit boundaries that curtail our lives: the safe age to have children, the experience needed to fill the boss's role, the physical strength needed for some jobs. Society is continually making judgments about when you are too old for something – and when you are too old.

# Institutional discrimination (1)

Austria

National legislation excluded periods of employment completed before the age of 18 years from being taken into account when determining the remuneration of contractual public servants

# Institutional discrimination (2)

France

The Contrat Première Embauche allowed for a two year period at its beginning when the contract could be terminated without justification by the employer and without any specific procedures to be followed by the employer

# Institutional discrimination (3)

## Germany

Paragraph 622 of the German Civil Code provided, amongst other matters, that 'in calculating the length of employment, periods prior to the completion of the employee's 25<sup>th</sup> year of age are not taken into account'.

# Institutional discrimination (4)

United Kingdom

The full rate of the national minimum wage in the UK is not paid until a worker reaches the age of 21 years



# RSA survey

one in seven young workers (14 per cent) under the age of 25 years felt discriminated against in the workplace due to their age. This, according to the RSA summary, compared to one in ten (12 per cent) workers over 45 years of age. The research also found that more males felt discriminated against than females.

# Age Positive study

‘Ageism was reported more frequently by 16-17 year olds, particularly those with fewer qualifications. It also seemed to be more likely in areas of higher unemployment’

# Conclusions

This paper has reviewed some of the evidence and it is difficult not to conclude that young people suffer detriment based on stereotypes related to their age. The fact that employers tend to look at 'soft skills' in the recruitment of young workers suggests that there is plenty of scope for stereotypical assumptions to play a role in the recruitment and selection process. There is still a need for further research, particularly with regard to employer views about younger workers, before there can be final conclusions about the extent of age discrimination against young people.

English

Labour

Programme