

# Young People's Education and Skills Board

## Raising the Participation Age (RPA) – Post-16 Participation

Item no: 6

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<b>Summary</b>	This paper reports on recently published participation statistics and provides the current position on NEET and activity not known, as an indication of London's preparedness for full participation for 16 and 17 year olds.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>Board members are asked to approve the following work strands and funding to support full participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- commissioning of the London RPA local leader<sup>1</sup> to work with the YPES team to ensure all London local authorities are learning from the DfE supported delivery projects and are implementing the necessary changes to achieve full participation (funding of a maximum £5,000);</li> <li>- design and delivery of a London Region RPA communications toolkit for use by local authorities, education establishments and youth support services (funding of a maximum of £4,000).</li> </ul>

### 1 Background and Introduction

- 1.1 The Education and Skills Act 2008 set out that from 2015 all 16 and 17 year-olds will be required to participate in education or training. This is a significant reform and is the first change to the duration of compulsory education since 1972. The change is happening in two phases: from summer 2013, all young people will be required to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17. From summer 2015, this will rise to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- 1.2 Although young people will be legally required to participate the Government has held back enforcement legislation that would have imposed fines on those young people not participating. Enforcement is still set out in legislation and the need for it will be reviewed by the Secretary of State for education on an annual basis from 2014.
- 1.3 Local authorities in London have been preparing for this change by reviewing in detail the characteristics of the young people who are currently not participating in education, employment or training and assessing the provision available to meet their needs.

<sup>1</sup> Eight RPA local project areas are acting as 'local leaders' for the programme, taking on a greater leadership role and disseminating learning more widely across the country, including Ealing.

## 2 Participation Data

- 2.1 On 3 October the Department for Education (DfE) published participation data. The data shows how local authorities are performing against their duties to support young people to continue in further education and training, highlighting where participation is rising, static or falling.
- 2.2 The published data shows that in June 2012, 89.6% of London young people aged 16 and 17 years old were participating in recognised further learning<sup>2</sup>; this compares to a national figure of 87.3%. Published figures also show that participation in London has increased 1.4% since June 2011 (compared to a 0.8% increase nationally).
- 2.3 The data highlights significant variations in changes in participation since June 2011 across London's boroughs, from -6.1% to 10.4%.
- 2.4 Further breakdowns of participation are provided by age (16 and 17 year olds), gender and ethnicity. London follows the national trends of a higher proportion of 16 year olds participating than 17 year olds and more females participating at both 16 and 17. Ethnicity reporting is based on 2011 census level ethnic codes<sup>3</sup>, which are high level and insufficiently refined for London's diverse population to draw meaningful conclusions.
- 2.5 Data also shows the proportion of young people aged 16 and 17 in each area whose current activity is not known. The London figure 6.1%, which is above the national figure of 4.9%.
- 2.6 A particular issue with the published information is the Department's use of June data. For example, July data shows an improvement in the London position on activity not known in real terms and in comparison to the national figure (5.7% and 7.8% respectively).

## 3 Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

- 3.1 **NEET and 'not known 16-18 year olds**): The latest NEET (July 2012 – latest available from [NCCIS](#)<sup>4</sup>) percentage for London is 4.6% (a 0.1% increase on the previous month), which is below the national average of 6.3%. The current percentage of young people whose participation status is 'not known' is 7.9% which is 3.1% lower than the national average (a reversal of previous performance this year – see Table 1).
- 3.2 The three month average<sup>5</sup> comparison between 2011/12 and 2010/11 shows improved performance for London in relation to both NEET and not known figures. The percentage of 16-18 year olds who are NEET varies significant by borough, ranging from less than 3% to over 8% (excluding the City of London) (see Figure 1).

**Table 1:** Volume and percentage of 16-18 year olds who are participating in education, employment or training (EET), not in education, employment or training (NEET) and 'not known'

Region	Adjusted EET	Adjusted NEET	% NEET	16-18s not known	% 16-18s not known
England	1,531,130	102,391	6.3%	192,326	11.0%
London	215,646	10,288	4.6%	18,527	7.9%

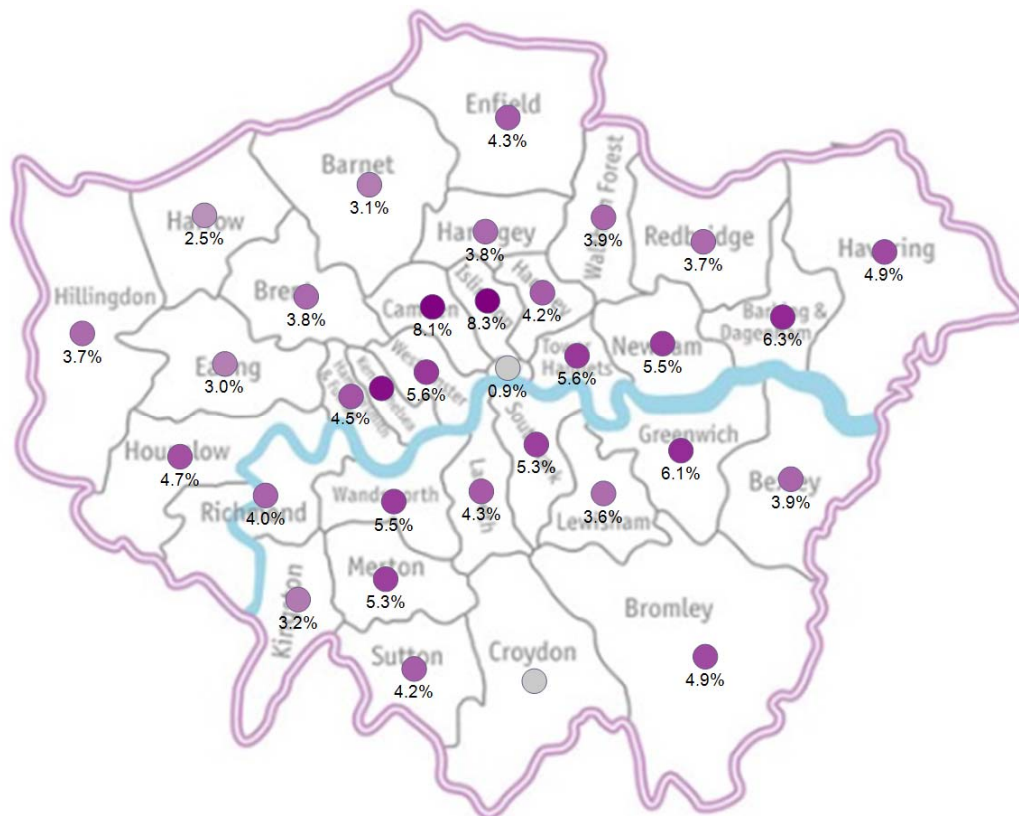
<sup>2</sup> Full time education and training, Apprenticeship, employment with training, Foundation Learning and part-time education.

<sup>3</sup> White, mixed race, black or black British, Asian or Asian British, Chinese, other.

<sup>4</sup> The [National Client Caseload Information System](#) (NCCIS) is a gateway for Local Authorities to access and submit performance data and information to the Department for Education regarding the participation of 16-18 year olds in education, employment and training.

<sup>5</sup> The three month average November to January is the national measure for NEET used by the Department for Education.

**Figure 1:** 16-18 year olds NEET by London Borough<sup>6</sup> July 2012



- 3.3 Despite this improved performance in London and numerous policy imperatives (see *Item 7. Responses to Unemployment*) the volume of young people not engaged age 16-18 remains stubbornly fixed at approximately 10,000.
- 3.4 **NEET 16-24 year olds:** The measure of 16-24 year old NEET is available from the [Department for Education Statistical First Release](#)<sup>7</sup> (August 2012).
- 3.5 Both the volume and percentage of 16-24 year olds who are NEET in Quarter 2 of 2012 in London has continued to fall since Quarter 1 of 2012 and is an improvement on the position in the same quarter last year (see table 2). The London NEET percentage also remains below the national figure (by 2.1%).
- 3.6 The London 16-24 NEET percentage has been historically below the national average since early 2009, and the most recent data indicates a greater divergence developing between NEET levels in London and across the country (see Figure 2).

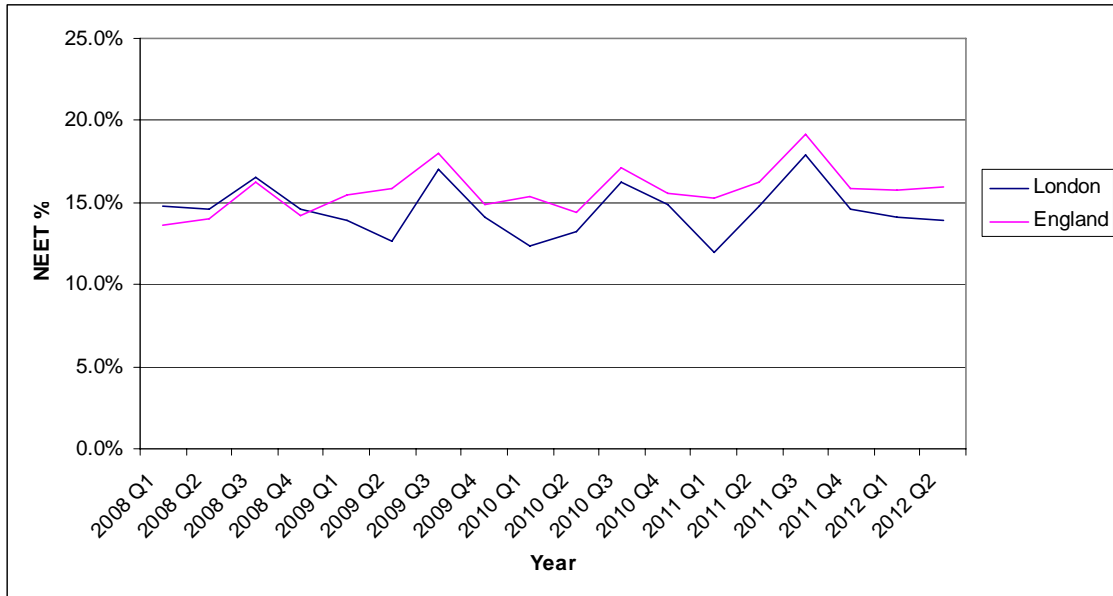
**Table 2:** Number of 16-24 year olds NEET

Region	Year (Quarter 2)							
	2009		2010		2011		2012	
	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%
England	954,000	15.9%	868,000	14.4%	979,000	16.2%	968,000	16.0%
London	112,000	12.6%	114,000	13.2%	128,000	14.8%	123,000	13.9%

<sup>6</sup> Croydon did not provide data in June or July 2012.

<sup>7</sup> The 16-24 Quarterly Brief Summary combines the latest 16-18 NEET statistics with the [Labour Force Survey](#) to create a profile of the NEET 16-24 age group.

**Figure 2: 16-24 NEET time series**



3.7 16-24 NEET is bolstered in London, when compared to national figures, with high 16-18 participation in education and training across the capital. When unemployment<sup>8</sup> figures are disaggregated a different picture emerges. Not only is youth unemployment at very high levels - 1 in 4 on the official measure - but long-term and very long-term youth unemployment have doubled and trebled respectively on the year:

- In the year to March 2012, 1 in 4 young Londoners available for work (16-24 year olds) were not working, or 120,000 people. The official youth unemployment rate in London is 3.5 percentage points above the UK rate at 25.1 per cent.
- Excluding full time students, the youth unemployment rate falls in London to 21.1 per cent, and reduces the percentage point gap with the equivalent UK rate to 1.1 percentage points (four quarter average to March 2012).
- The number of young people aged 18-24 in London who claimed Jobseeker's Allowance was almost 50,000, or 6.8% of the resident population aged 18-24 (July 2012).
- Long-term youth claimant rates (18-24 year olds claiming JSA for six months or more) fell very slightly between April to July this year, to 17,635. However, on the year it has increased by over 7,000 from 10,000. The number of 18-24 year olds claiming JSA for 9 months or more trebled over the year to almost 13,000.

3.8 The London skills and Employment Observatory publishes a quarterly update on London's labour market<sup>9</sup>. Included in the update is an analysis of trends across various geographical sub areas in the capital, including Inner and Outer London, the Thames Gateway and the Olympic host boroughs. This analysis highlights some major differences in employment/unemployment between sub-regions and individual boroughs.

<sup>8</sup> International Labour Organization measure of unemployment: the percentage of economically active people who are either out of work but are actively looking for a job or out of work and are waiting to start a new job in the next two weeks.

<sup>9</sup> [http://lseo.org.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/Labour\\_Market\\_Update\\_August\\_2012.pdf](http://lseo.org.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/Labour_Market_Update_August_2012.pdf)

## **4 Recommendations**

- 4.1 Board members are asked to approve the following work strands and funding to support full participation:
  - 4.1.1 commissioning of the London RPA local leader<sup>10</sup> to work with the YPES team to ensure all London local authorities are learning from the DfE supported delivery projects and are implementing the necessary changes to achieve full participation (funding of a maximum £5,000);
  - 4.1.2 design and delivery of a London Region RPA communications toolkit for use by local authorities, education establishments and youth support services (funding of a maximum of £4,000).

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