

Factsheet

Building
Great
Communities

For a fairer NSW

Youth Action – the peak body for young people and youth services in NSW. We represent 1.4 million young people and the services that support them. We work towards a society where all young people are valued, engaged and supported.

Policy area

Change the Story on Youth Unemployment.

Introduction

Clear pathways into sustained employment are necessary for young people to attain financial security, independence, wellbeing, a sense of belonging and skill development. All young people should be able to access meaningful, long-term employment so they can contribute to the Australian economy and community.

Problem/Issue

However, youth unemployment rates have remained stagnant, underemployment is increasing and finding work is increasingly difficult for all young people.

- Half of Australia's 25-year-olds are unable to secure full-time employment, despite 60% holding post-school qualifications.¹
- 1 in 3 young people are unemployed or underemployed.² The youth unemployment rate is more than double the national average. Having so many young people out of the workforce costs our economy 790 million lost hours of work each year, equating up to \$15.9 billion in lost GDP to the Australian economy annually.³
- Around 25% of young people in NSW are currently

neither engaged in full – time work nor full – time education.⁴

- Out of 1,355, 513 jobs advertised online in the past year, only 6,311 jobs were advertised with 'no experience required.' That is, 0.5% of available positions were entry – level.⁵

Solution

The NSW Government can:

- Develop a government plan to tackle youth unemployment in the first 100 days of government. This plan should be created with young people and the services that support young people to ensure it is relevant to their experiences, including those young people who are at risk of disadvantage.
- Take steps to broaden the minimum target of government youth workforces, ensuring 8% of total project workforces is aged 25 and under, as in the Infrastructure Skills Legacy Program. This could take place across the work of government, including councils, departments, ministerial offices and large-scale contracts.
- Provide additional support to young people who need it, so they can gain and keep employment. Smart, Skilled and Hired should be evaluated, including with young people and, if found to be effective, expanded.
- Ensure tailored employment support is given to young people experiencing disadvantage by improving cultural competency, addressing language skills and provide networking opportunities through mentoring within the community.
- Reduce the cost barriers to young people finding work, such as by providing free transport to young jobseekers.

1. Youth Action, 2018, 'A NSW for Young People: Beyond 2019', Youth Action, Sydney, accessed via <http://www.youthaction.org.au/change_the_story_on_youth_unemployment>

2. Davidson H, 2017, 'Third of Australian youth have no job or are underemployed, report finds', The Guardian, 27 March 2017, accessed via: <<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/mar/27/third-of-australian-youth-have-no-job-or-are-underemployed-report-finds>>

3. O'Niell P, 2017, Youth Unemployment in Western Sydney, Centre for Western Sydney, accessed via: <http://www.youthaction.org.au/western_sydney_unemployment>

4. Foundation for Young Australians (FYA), 2018, Report reveals full-time work by 25 no longer a reality for 50% of young Australians, media release, FYA, Melbourne, 14 June 2018, accessed via: <<https://www.fya.org.au/2018/06/14/media-release-report-reveals-full-time-work-by-25-no-longer-a-reality-for-50-of-young-australians/>>

5. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015, Education and Work, Australia, May 2015, cat. no. 6227.0, ABS, Canberra accessed via: <<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6227.0Main+Features1May%202015>>

For additional information – key contact:

Join us to make NSW a better place for young people.
www.youthaction.org.au/nsw_election_2019

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