

Orientations of Young Men and Women to Citizenship and European Identity
Workpackage No 4, Socio Demographic Profile
Scotland and England, UK
2002

**Demography: 18-24 year olds in the population
UK Socio Demographic Profile of 18-24 year olds**

by

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Much of the change happening over the last 30 years in the UK has impacted on the lives of young adults. Young adults face a more uncertain future than the preceding generation. This uncertainty has followed young people throughout their lives as they have been born and brought up in a climate of growing job insecurity, the decline of public housing, the loss of student grants and with high rates of dissolution in couple relationships associated with changing patterns of parenting. There has been a concerted effort to provide better education opportunities and higher and further education has expanded to provide more of the population with the chance to obtain higher qualifications. The last 30 years has witnessed a growth in the market for service work and other types of employment associated with women workers and an increase in rates of employment among women of childbearing age and the decline of traditional male occupations such as those in the manufacturing sector described as 'heavy industry'. Alongside this is the further abandonment of religiously sanctioned rules of conduct with respect to personal life, for example, which frown on sex, cohabitation and childbirth before marriage.

Examining the lives of young adults in the UK is at times difficult. Surveys do not always capture the variability and change in their lives in the present or over time, as Howarth & Street note, "The transience of many young adults makes them hard to trace and thus to ensure that they are properly represented in the survey data" (2000:12). Some young adults such as those who are homeless or are not working or in training can be absent from figures altogether.

Population

The European continent contains 727.99 million people, 373.81 of whom reside in countries within the European Union (Figures taken from CIA World Fact book 1998 - <http://www.your-nation.com/>). The UK has a population of just fewer than 60 million people. As Table 1 illustrates, there are over 7 million young adults in the UK, the majority of whom, around 83%, live in England (Population Trends 106, Winter 2001).

Table 1 Total population of the UK in 2000

	All adults	18-24 Year olds	18-24yr olds as % of total
Total UK population	59,756,000	7,247,000	12.1%
England	49,997,000	6,006,000	12%
Scotland	5,115,000	641,000	12.5%
Wales	2,946,000	360,000	12.2%
Northern Ireland	1,698,000	240,000	14.1%

Source Office of National Statistics (ONS) Population Trends 106, Winter 2001

Scotland has roughly one tenth of the population of England. The two countries have followed broadly similar demographic trends although until recent years there has been a long history of higher migration from Scotland than England.

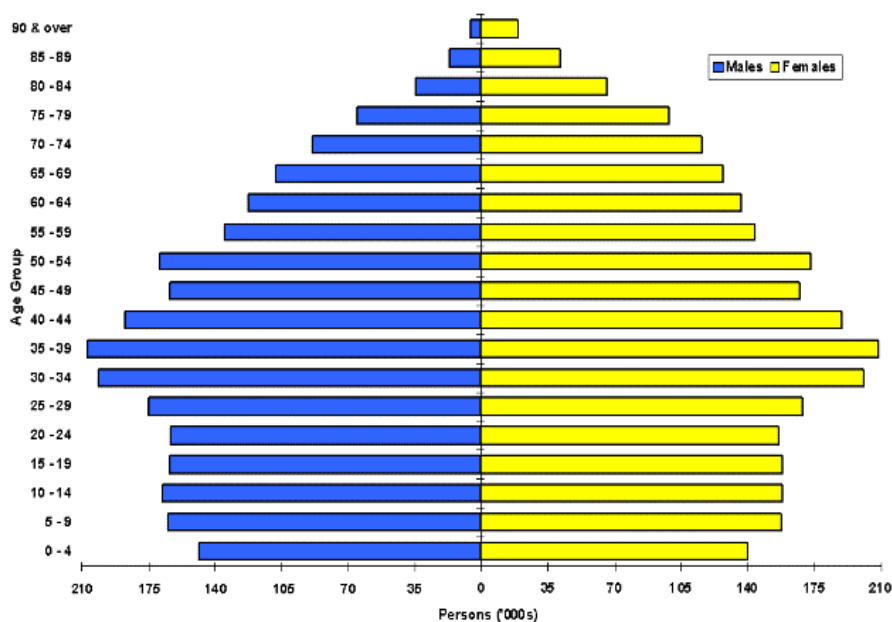
Our two study areas are Greater Manchester, England and Edinburgh, Scotland. Edinburgh is the second largest city in Scotland. Of the four main cities in Scotland: Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen and Edinburgh, Edinburgh is the only city which had an

overall increase in population between 1981-2000 (+1.7). Whilst Edinburgh has been increasing (0.39 per year between 1991-1999), Manchester, one of England's larger cities, has been decreasing losing 0.39% of it's population per year from 1991-1999. <http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/html/about/facts/facts0~3.htm>.

The population of Greater Manchester is 2,585,800 (ONS) 439,549 of whom live in Manchester, the centre of the region (*Registrar General's Mid Year Estimate 2000 ©ONS) In Edinburgh it is estimated that there are 453,430 people (GRO Scotland: www.gro-scotland.gov.uk) In the region of Lothian (made up of the City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, West Lothian, Midlothian) there is a population of 783,600.

The population of the UK is predicted to continue to grow until 2036 although not that of Scotland where births are below the necessary level for population growth (Social Trends 31). There is currently a low population growth rate in the UK as a whole, a continuance of the trend experienced by many western developed nations. In line with many wealthy countries, both England and Scotland have ageing populations and therefore 18-24 years olds make up a smaller proportion of the population than in previous decades. Graph 1 shows that 18-24 year olds are less than 10% of the populations of Scotland and England.

Graph 1 Estimated population by age and sex, Scotland; 30 June 2000



(Source: 2000 Mid Year Population Estimates, Scotland)
<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/grosweb/grosweb.nsf/pages/mpe00>

Life expectancy is high, as one would expect in a Western industrialised nation; on average people live until 77.82 years. Longevity is slightly better for women who live on average 80.66 years in comparison to men's 75.13 years.(From: <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>) However, the age of life expectancy varies depending upon the class background of the person. As the table below shows, men from social class 1 can expect to live 3.8 years longer than their male counterparts

in class V. Similarly, women from class 1 will live 4.1 years longer than those women in class V (Hattersley, 1999).

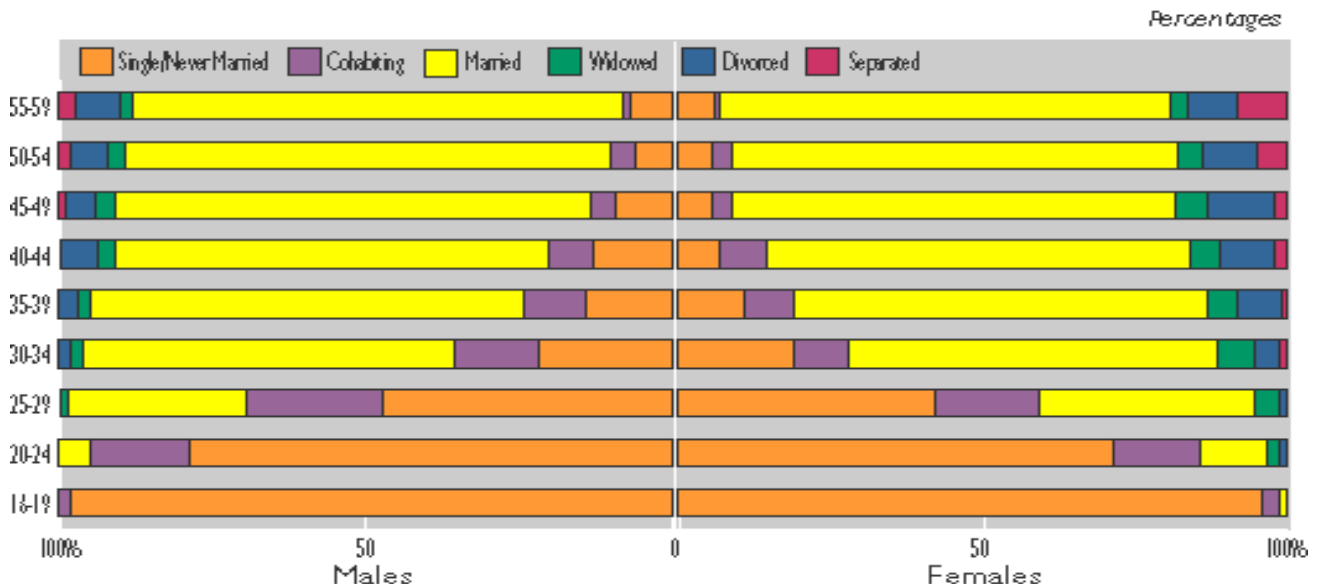
Table 2 Life Expectancy by Social Class in England & Wales, 1999

Social Class	Life expectancy in years	
	Men	Women
I Professional	77.7	83.4
II Managerial	75.8	81.1
IIIN Skilled non-manual	75	80.4
IIIM Skilled manual	73.5	78.8
IV Partly skilled	72.6	77.7
V Unskilled	68.2	77
All	73.0	79.3

Marriage & Cohabitation

The average age of first marriage has risen to just over 30 for men in Scotland and England and to 28 for women in England and nearer 29 for women in Scotland. However, as in most Northern European countries, in both Scotland and England, most young people now live together prior to marriage. The majority of marriages have been preceded by one or two years of cohabitation. Part of the reason for delay in marriage is the higher incidence of cohabitation and the fact that some cohabitation ends in couples splitting up and trying again rather than marrying (Haskey, 2001, 1999).

Graph 2: Marital status by age and gender, Scotland, 1999



Source: Scottish Executive, Scottish Household Survey

As the table below shows, most young adults age 16-24 in Britain are single. About one in ten are cohabiting and one in twenty married (ONS, 2000: (http://www.nationalstatistics.gov.uk/statbase/ssdataset.asp?vlnk=5375&image_x=22&image_y=13)). These figures are similar to findings for 18-24 year olds in Scotland. Here, most people aged 18-24 years old are single (86%) the remained members of the age cohort are cohabiting (9%) or are married (5%) (Scottish Household Survey, Scottish Executive, 1999, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/shs/docs/rep99-v1.pdf>)

Table 3 Marital Status Of 16-24 Young Adults, UK, 2000

Age		Marital status*					
		Married	Cohabiting	Single	Widowed	Divorced	Separated
16-24	%	5	10	84	0	0	1
Total Population of 16 and over	%	53	9	23	8	6	2

(ONS, Statbase)

Separation and Divorce

The rate of separation for women who marry when aged below 20 is now one in four a rise from the 1960s when it was one in ten. As the table highlights, those marrying young are more likely than those who marry when they are older, to separate from their spouse within the first five years of marriage.

Table 4 Percentage of women separating within the first five years of marriage by age at marriage, GB

	Age at marriage: Under 20	Age at marriage: 20-24	Age at marriage: 25-29
1965-1969	11	6	3
1970-1974	13	9	7
1975-1979	18	10	14
1980-1984	14	13	16
1985-1989	24	16	8

(General Household Survey on Statbase, ONS)

Birth-rate

Towards the end of the twentieth century, women began to have less children, provoked by the decline in rigid stereotypes of women's home roles and the increase in the numbers of women working and assisted by new contraception. Thus there has been a tendency for women to have fewer children and to have them at a later age than previous generations. The average age at which women have a child has increased to 29.1 years in 2000 (Population Trends, 108) a rise from 26.4 years in 1977. The average number of children being born in the UK has decreased to just 1.69 in 1999, down from 1.81 in 1981 and 1.82 in 1991 (ONS, GRO: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D4519.xls>). As the table illustrates, a woman now has on

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average in the UK is 1.64, meaning that more young people now grow up as ‘only children’ or with only one sibling.

Table 5 Births in UK 2000

	Estimated resident population at 30 June 2000 (thousands)	Live births - Total	Live births - TFR	Live births - % outside marriage - All	Live births - % outside marriage - % jointly registered, same address ¹	Live births - proportion under 2,500 grams ²
UNITED KINGDOM	59,755.7	679,029	1.64	39.5	61.8	-
ENGLAND AND WALES	52,943.3	604,441	1.66	39.5	62.7	7.6
ENGLAND	49,997.1	572,826	1.65	39.1	62.8	7.6
SCOTLAND ⁴	5,114.6	53,076	1.47	42.6	62.1	

⁴ includes women who have given birth who are not normally resident in Scotland.

Source: ONS, Statbase.

In the 18-24 age group, live births have declined from 107 per 1000 women in 1981 to 104 in 1991 to 72 in 1999. There is evidence that this is a shift to later motherhood as figures rise for births in women over 30 years old (ONS, GRO).

The birth rate has declined more dramatically in Scotland than in England and Wales. While age-specific fertility rates in 1981 resulted in a total fertility rate of 8 more births per thousand women in Scotland than England, by 1991 English women had 7 more births and by 2000 18 more births than Scottish women (ONS, GRO).

Certain areas in the UK tend to have a greater birth rate than other areas and for births to mothers of certain ages to be more common. While the number of live births per thousand women under 20 years of age is 31, in the North East this rises to 39, and in the North-West where our English study is centred, it is 35. In Scotland as in England the figures of live birth rate per thousand women aged under 20 is 30.

Table 6 Live Births By Age and Marital Status of Mother, England and Wales, 1999 (thousands)

	All Mothers	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40 or over
All Births	621.9	48.4	110.7	181.9	185.3	81.3	14.3
Births to Unmarried Mothers	241.9	43	67.5	61.2	45	20.8	4.3

As Table 6 shows, a third of all births occur to mothers who are not married. Births to unmarried mothers are most common amongst those under 20 years of age. The older the mother the more likely she is to be married.

As the following table illustrates, there has been a growth in births registered to unmarried couples. The number of births that are solely registered have slowly increased since the mid 1980's. Of all births in 2000, 7.5% were solely registered. The rate of registration in both parent's names of births to unmarried women have increased from 4.5 % in 1975 to 32.2% in 2000 (Source: ONS, www.nationalstatistics.gov.uk; GRO Scotland).

Table 7 Births outside marriage as a percentage of all live births, GB, percentages.

Year	Jointly registered	Solely registered	All
1975	4.5	4.6	9.1
1980	6.7	5.1	11.8
1985	12.5	6.8	19.2
1990	20.5	7.8	28.3
1995	26.5	7.4	33.9
2000	32.2	7.5	39.7

Source: Office for National Statistics; General; Register Office for Scotland

Welfare provisions and young citizenship

The legal 'age of majority' that is of full legal responsibility and entitlement, for example to vote in local, national and European elections, is 18. There were recent exceptions to the age of 18, for example the age of consent to homosexual intercourse was 21 until being reduced to 18 in 1984, and is now 16, the same age as the age of consent to heterosexual intercourse, following the 1999 Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill.

The law in Scotland and in England varies somewhat in terms of the rights and responsibilities of those under the age of 18. For example, a young person over the age of 16 may marry in either country but in England parental permission is required before the age of 18. It was once more common than now for young people to elope from England to Scotland in order to marry without parental consent. The trend to cohabitation and late marriage has undermined the attractiveness of this possibility.

Ethnicity, Culture and Language

Greater Manchester has an ethnically diverse population in comparison with Edinburgh. Greater Manchester, along with the metropolitan areas of Greater London, West Yorkshire and the West Midlands, contain three-quarters of the minority ethnic populations in the UK. The minority ethnic population of the UK represents 6.1% of the total population. In Manchester this is 17.8% whereas in Edinburgh it is 2.1%. Overall, in Scotland, there is a low percentage of minority ethnic groups at 1.2% (Labour Market Survey).

The UK population as a whole is made up of English 81.5%, Scottish 9.6%, Irish 2.4%, Welsh 1.9%, Ulster 1.8%. The largest groups of ethnic minorities, those from West Indian, Indian, and Pakistani ethnic backgrounds, make up 2.8% of the population (From: <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>).

The official languages spoken are English, Welsh and Gaelic. About a quarter of the people in Wales speak Welsh. In Scotland 65978 people are reported to speak Gaelic although this figure may have declined in the years since the 1991 census.

There are moves by the Scottish Parliament to support the use of Gaelic in Scotland as it is estimated that only 1% of the population speak it. Speakers mainly reside in the North of the country (36.8% in Western Isles, 22.1% in Highlands and Argyll & Bute), with smaller pockets throughout Scotland the largest of which is around the Glasgow/Clydeside area (10,881, 16.5%), then Edinburgh (3231, 4.9%).

(Source <http://www.uoc.es/euromosaic/web/document/gaelic/an/i1/i1.html>).

As the Scottish parliament becomes more established there is the likelihood that more sessions will be conducted in Gaelic. In March 2000 the first bi-lingual debate was conducted in English and Gaelic. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/uk/scotland/newsid_663000/663040.stm.

Welfare systems and legal frameworks in Scotland and England

Scotland and England became one state a century after being ruled by a common king or queen following the Union of Crowns in 1603. It was the Treaty of Union of 1707 that dissolved the separate Scottish parliament and conceded its power to a common parliament in Westminster, England. Despite this union, Scotland retained a separate legal system, a separate educational system and separate set of religious institutions. Scottish specific legislation continued to be passed by the Westminster parliament and a separate civil service was maintained in Scotland. Hence some aspects of welfare and legal systems are not straightforwardly 'British' but at least somewhat specific to component parts of Britain.

The rapid expansion of a welfare system following the Second World War, however, has had British components encompassing Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These included the development of a health service and an expanded array of income support for individuals not earning a wage. Some common possibilities, such as the power of local councils to build and rent out affordable housing, became more developed in Scotland than in England. The majority of the Scottish population lived in 'council housing' until the dismantling of this policy by the Conservative governments of Margaret Thatcher 1979-1990 and John Major 1990-1997. The Scotland Act of 1998 recently established a form of devolved Scottish parliament and a series of powers have been devolved from Westminster to Scotland. The Scottish Parliament has been in operation since 1999. Its powers include responsibility for education, health and housing but not for pensions or other forms of income support that form key parts of the welfare system.

Despite some provisions that were for the benefit of all, such as the National Health Service, Britain was characterised by Esping-Andersen as having a 'liberal' welfare regime. That is the welfare systems can be characterised as largely 'residual', with most welfare measures coming into play to provide short-term rescue for those who have no access to any other solutions, rather than being a general social right. The 'language' of policy under liberal regimes generally celebrates individuals' private responsibility for their own futures and stigmatises those who are dependent upon welfare. A number of feminist authors have elaborated Esping-Andersen's original typology by examining the extent to which welfare regimes reinforce a 'male-

breadwinner' model of family organisation institutionalising women's dependence on men in family-households (O'Connor, Orloff, Shaver, 1999). For example, O'Connor et al note that 'there are significant differences in terms of gender and class consequences depending on which of the two forms of private responsibility, market or family, is supported by public policy' (1999, 223). Britain's welfare system was built on conservative assumptions concerning gender divisions in the home. However, the current Labour government is tending to emphasise responsibilities in the market, in some instances, rather than family, for example by encouraging lone parent mothers into employment as a solution to child poverty.

Employment

As the table below shows, the UK average rate of employment for people of working age stood at 75.4% in the first three months of 2002. Unemployment amongst the 18-24 age group was 5.1%. (these figures are seasonally adjusted) (Labour Market Statistics, May 2002, <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/lmsuk0502.pdf>)

Table 8 Employment And Unemployment, UK

UK Total Employment	28,420,000
Unemployed	1,538,000
Unemployed 18-24 year olds	418,000
Men full time workers	14,180,000
Women full-time workers	7,180,000
Part time Workers	7,050,000
Men part-time workers	1,440,000
Women part-time workers	5,610,000

Source ONS, Labour Force Survey.

The table below highlights the economic activity of our age group in terms of employment and education. 64.7% of the UK population aged 18-24 are employed while 35.3% are either officially registered as unemployed (10.5%) or economically inactive (24.8%) over half of whom (14.4% of the age group) are full-time students. Of the 23.6 per cent of the age group who are full-time students, 8.3% are employed.

Table 9 Percentage of 18-24 year olds by economic and educational status (UK, Spring 1996)

	All persons of whom:	Full time student	Not full time student
All persons of whom:	100.0	23.6	76.4
In employment	64.7	8.3	56.4
Unemployed (registered)	10.5	0.9	9.7
Inactive	24.8	14.4	10.3

Source ONS, Labour Force Survey.

The table below compares unemployment amongst certain ages for 1991,1995 and 1999. Which it shows that the 18-24 year olds have seen a reduction in unemployment overall, unemployed males in the16-17 age group have increased.

Table 10 Percentages of Unemployment at Selected Ages, UK

	1991	1995	1999
Males: 16-17	15.4	18.9	21.6
Males: 18-24	15.7	17.7	12.5
All aged 16 and over	9.2	10.1	6.8
Females: 16-17	14.3	15.6	14.0
Females: 18-24	10.5	11.5	9.3
All aged 16 and over	7.2	6.8	5.1

Source ONS <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/xsdataset.asp?More=Y>

In the North-West of England, of the 3,131,000 (72.2% of working age population) people employed, there were 181,000 officially unemployed (5.5%) during Dec-Feb 2002.

Looking at the 18-24 age group, 418,000 were economically active (74.1% of age group) made up of 223,000 men (77.6%) and 195,000 women (70.4%). 25,300 men were registered unemployed in contrast to 9,900 women.

Table 11 North West of England Labour Statistics

		Rate for age group
North-West Total Employment*	3,131,000	72%
Unemployed**	181,000	5.5%
Employed 18-24 year olds	377,000	66.8%
18-24 Men Employed	197,000	68.8%
18-24 Women Employed	179,000	64.8%

Unemployed 18-24 year olds	35,200
Men unemployed, 18-24	25,300
Women unemployed, 18-24	9,900

*Rates are for those of working age (16-59 for women and 16-64 for men)

**Rate is as a proportion of all economically active over 16

(Labour Market Statistics: North West, May 2002, <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/lmsnwest0502.pdf>)

In Scotland the rate of employment was 2,372,000 (72.9%) while 170,000 (6.7%) were unemployed. In the 18-24 age group, between Dec-Feb 2002, 290,000 (64.9% of age group) were employed (147,000 men [65.5%] and 143,000 women [64.2%])(Labour Force Survey, 2002).

Young adults tend to be those most at risk from unemployment in comparison with the rest of the working population (NPI: <http://www.npi.org.uk/summaries/summ%20>)

[mpse%202000.htm](#)). In January 2002 in Scotland, 28500 people aged 18-24 years old, particularly men (20,900 men compared with 7700 women) were unemployed and receiving Income Support or Job Seeker's Allowance from the state, (Benefits Agency Administrative System given to Labour Market Statistics). Of those unemployed, 18,300 men and 6600 women had been unemployed for less than 6 months. 3400 young adults had been unemployed for between 6-12 months, 200 (0.8%) had been unemployed for over 12 months. Single people who are unemployed can expect to receive at least £42.70 (Couples will receive £84-65) per week in Income Support or Job Seekers allowance. They will also receive assistance with rent (Housing Benefit), Council Tax, and prescription and dental costs.

The Labour Force Survey (ONS) has suggested that in people of working age, those with the fewest qualifications are most likely to be unemployed (Spring 2001) <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D3487.xls>

In 1998, the government launched a 'New Deal' to get 18-24 year olds who have been unemployed for 6 months or more into work or training. They can join the environmental task force where they can work towards a qualification such as a NVQ (National Vocational Qualification), or get a job, which is subsidised by government and employer, work with a voluntary group, or go back into education. People unwilling to choose one of these options will lose their entitlement to benefit.

Earnings

The UK has the widest earnings differential when examining the difference between people who earn the top and bottom 20% wages than any other nation in the developed countries in the western world (Benson & Payne, 1997). In Great Britain as a whole, the average weekly wages before tax are £410.60. British average earnings range from a low of £297.10 in Cornwall in the South-West of England, up to £540.70 in Bracknell, Berkshire, England. Looking at all of the UK, higher wages tend to be received by those living in London capital and just outside in the South-East of England (New Earnings Survey, 2000, ONS). In Scotland average earnings were £380 (Scottish Economic Statistics, Scottish Executive, 2001).

The Equal Pay Act in 1970 aimed to create equal pay for men and women doing work of equal value. While the difference between adult wages for men and women has drawn closer, even after 30 years of the legislation, British women still earn 0.74 per cent of what a man does. (Source New Earnings Survey, ONS - <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/expodata/files/5182601191.csv>).

Young people are the most likely age in the population to earn low pay when they work (NPI <http://www.npi.org.uk/summaries/summ%20mpse%202000.htm>) The minimum wage in the UK is £4.10 for people aged 22 or over, and £3.50 for those people aged 18-21. These amounts are set to rise by £0.10p in October 2002. Young adults often work in temporary or insecure work. They have been dubbed the 'Kleenex Generation' to be discarded, like paper tissues, after one use. They disproportionately make up the staff of fast food restaurants, many working to fund education (Lothian Anti Poverty Alliance, 2001)

As the table below illustrates, people who are better qualified and the older workforce receive higher wages.

Table 12 UK Gross Weekly Earnings By Age and Educational Attainment. Spring 2000

	Pounds Per Week					
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59/64	All
Degree or equivalent	280	470	600	610	560	520
Higher education below degree level	230	370	410	400	460	390
GCE A level or equivalent	180	340	390	360	330	320
GCSE grades A*-C or equivalent	140	270	270	300	270	240
Other (including GCSE below grade C)	180	260	280	260	290	260
No qualifications	100	220	200	210	210	200

Source: Labour Force Survey, ONS - <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D3584.xls>

Education

If we define literacy as those who have reached the age 15 and over and who have completed five or more years of schooling, then the UK has a 99% literacy rate (From: <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>). However this figure masks the numbers of people who leave school with gaps in their knowledge of basic numeracy and literacy. Moser (1999) found that about 1 in 5 adults had problems with reading basic text such as locating things from an alphabetical index such as a telephone directory and 1 in 16 adults were unable to read a simple poster detailing a forthcoming event. He also found problems with numeracy such as 1 in 4 adults being unable to calculate the change received from £2 if they buy bread at 68 pence and two tins of soup costing 45 pence each.

In the UK, schooling is compulsory until 16. At this time people will take exams (See <http://www.qca.org.uk/nq/framework/framework3.asp> for an explanation of the differences between qualifications) which can provide them with the qualifications to go on to study for a General Certificate of Education Advanced Level exams (A'Levels) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland or the Scottish Certificate of Education Higher Grades or 'Highers' in Scotland (normally 16-18 years old) and then from there onto university (18 years old). A'Levels have tended to be taken in 2-4 subjects although it is 3 subjects at A'Level that are generally required for university entrance. In Scotland, people more commonly have taken 4-6 'Highers' gaining an education that is closer to many other European countries in its broader base of knowledge than to the earlier specialisation in just a few subjects in the rest of Britain.

There are also qualifications that are occupationally or vocationally relevant. In England and Wales and Northern Ireland, people can undertake a General National Vocational (GNVQ). In Scotland the equivalent is the Scottish National Vocational Qualification (SNVQ).

As the table below shows, A'levels are roughly equivalent to Advanced GNVQs or Level 3 NVQ.

Table 13 Comparative Qualifications in England and Wales

Qualification	General		Vocationally-related	Occupational
<u>5</u>	<u>Higher-level qualifications</u>			<u>Level 5 NVQ</u>
<u>4</u>				<u>Level 4 NVQ</u>
<u>3</u> <u>advanced level</u>	A level	<u>Free-standing mathematics units level 3</u>	Vocational A level (Advanced GNVQ)	<u>Level 3 NVQ</u>
<u>2</u> <u>intermediate level</u>	<u>GCSE grade A*-C</u>	<u>Free-standing mathematics units level 2</u>	<u>Intermediate GNVQ</u>	<u>Level 2 NVQ</u>
<u>1</u> <u>foundation level</u>	<u>GCSE grade D-G</u>	<u>Free-standing mathematics units level 1</u>	<u>Foundation GNVQ</u>	<u>Level 1 NVQ</u>
<u>Entry level</u>	Certificate of (educational) achievement			

<http://www.qca.org.uk/nq/framework/>

Some of the most vulnerable young adults have no qualifications. 16-18 year olds who do not continue with education or training may not receive state support if they cannot find work and they are very vulnerable if they do not get support from their family. The New Policy Institute estimate that although the numbers of unqualified young people has declined from 417,000 in 1989, there were still around 176,000 young people aged nineteen years old without a qualification (NPI). The number of people with a basic qualification (NVQ2, 5 GCSEs at Grade C or above, GNVQ level two, two AS levels or one A'Level equivalent) was found to have risen from 425,000 in 1989 to 552,000 in 2001. As the table below shows, despite an overall increase in the number of people gaining qualifications, there has been a greater rise in the percentage of women gaining qualifications compared to men over the last ten years.

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Table 14 Achievement at GCE A'Level /Highers from Schools, UK, 1975-1999, Percentages

	Females with 2 or more A'Levels or 3 or more Highers	Females with 1 A'Levels or 1 or 2 highers	Males with 2 or more A'Levels or 3 or more Highers	Males with 1 A'Levels or 1 or 2 highers
1975/76	12.1	4.0	14.5	3.6
1980/81	12.4	3.7	13.5	3.1
1985/86	13.8	4.1	14.2	3.5
1990/91	20.3	4.5	18.2	3.5
1995/96	23.3	5.5	20.3	4.6
1996/97	23.1	5.1	19.6	4.5
1997/98	24.9	5.0	20.8	4.3
1998/99	24.1	4.8	20.1	4.3

Source: UK Department for Education and Employment; National Assembly for Wales; Scottish Executive; Northern Ireland Department of Education

People leaving school in Scotland (n=55,569) in 1999-2000 tended to go into higher education (32%) or employment (26%). Others trained at further education colleges (19%) or undertook other sorts of training (7%), or went to alternative destinations some of which were known (13%) or others, which were not known (3%) (Statistical Bulletin: Edn/B9/2000/4). When looking at these destinations we should be aware of the possible temporariness of some transitions, where people might be underemployed for a time or change, either by choice or necessity, their intended career path.

As the table below illustrates, while university students can be many ages, they are predominantly 16-24 years old. Amongst this age group, the main qualification being studied is GCE A' Level, and then a GCSE or NVQ2. We would expect to find these figures decreased for A' Level and increased for degree and higher education if they were for the 18-24 age group alone.

Table 15 Percentage of people of working age in the UK working towards a qualification: by age, Spring 2001

	Degree or higher	Higher Education	GCE A level SCEHG? NVQ3	GCSE NVQ2	Other	Total working Towards any Qualification
16-24	58	39	79	72	22	52
25-34	21	26	9	11	30	20
35-44	14	23	7	10	26	16
45-54	6	11	4	6	18	9
55-59/64	1	2	1	..	4	2

Source: Dept for Education and Skills from the Labour Force Survey
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D5029.xls>

In comparison with other European countries, until recently in Britain there was a relatively low proportion of the population entering higher education. While there has been a huge opening up of higher education within the last 20 years, much of the gains have been made by young people with parents who work in the professions. However, as the table below shows, growth in young people attaining basic qualifications has been greater amongst young people from families of unskilled working parents than from those with professional working parents.

Table 16 Achievement in 5 or more GCSE Grades A* to C or equivalent by parents socio-economic group, 1989 and 2000, England & Wales

	Percentages	
	1989	2000
Managerial/professional	52	69
Other non-manual	42	61
Skilled manual	21	45
Semi-skilled manual	16	37
Unskilled manual	12	30
Other/not classified	15	27

Other/Not Classified category includes people with neither parent working.
 Source: Youth Cohort Study, Dept of Education.

In Edinburgh there are a range of colleges and universities that young adults can attend. The highest enrolments are at Edinburgh University, followed by Telford College, who offer more vocational training. The more prestigious of these institutions attract young people from a very wide area and the others predominantly recruit local young people.

Table 17 College Attendance In Edinburgh

	Full-time	Part-time	Total Number of Students
Edinburgh College of Art	1563	77	1640
Heriot Watt University	5363	10317	15680
Jewel and Esk Valley College	996	13143	14139
Napier University	8529	2840	11369
Oatridge Agricultural Centre	135	1555	1690
Queen Margaret University College	2851	1051	3902
Stevenson College	1059	12640	13699
Telford College	1640	15106	16746
University of Edinburgh	17910	4500	22410
West Lothian College	653	7583	8236

Source: SFEFC 2000, Universities of Scotland, Facts and Figures

Students in higher education are more likely to be from families with ‘professional’ backgrounds and least likely to come from parent’s whose work was classified as ‘unskilled’. The table below illustrates that while there has been a rise in the number of people from ‘skilled non manual’, ‘partly skilled’ and ‘unskilled’ backgrounds, the real gains in participation in the last 10 years have been made amongst those from ‘professional’ or ‘intermediate’ backgrounds.

Table 18 Participation rates in higher education: by social class, 1991/92-1998/99: UK Percentages.

Social Class	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
Professional	55	71	73	78	79	82	79	72
Intermediate	36	39	42	45	45	47	48	45
Skilled non-manual	22	27	29	31	31	32	31	29
Skilled manual	11	15	17	18	18	18	19	18
Partly skilled	12	14	16	17	17	17	18	17
Unskilled	6	9	11	11	12	13	14	13
All social classes	23	28	30	32	32	33	33	31

Source: Social Trends 30, Department for Education and Skills; Office for National Statistics; Universities and Colleges Admission Service

In Scotland, university students take three years to study for an Ordinary degree and then a fourth year to receive an Honours degree. Scottish degrees are broader than many degrees in the rest of Britain as it specialises more in the third and fourth years rather than as in the rest of Britain where specialisation extends to the whole 3 year degree period.

Of the 225,400 UK graduates who finished in 2000, 66.2% went to work either a permanent job (44.1%) or a temporary job (19.5%) in the UK. A small number of graduates went to work abroad (2.6%). About a fifth of all graduates remained in education or received further training (20.3%). When comparing different parts of the UK, it appears that England employs slightly more graduates than Scotland, but slightly more Scots stay in education following their degree. The percentage of people who have just graduated and who have no work or training to go to stands at 5.3%— a figure that is slightly higher in England, particularly in the North-West, rather than Scotland.

Table 19 Destination Of 2000 Full-Time First Degree Graduates

Country (Number of Graduates)	Employment				Education	Unemployed	Other Destinations
	Permanent	Temporary	Overseas	Total	Continuing Education or training	Believed Unemployed	
UK (225,400)	44.1	19.5	2.6	66.2	20.3	5.3	8.2
Scotland (22,300)	41.3	20.4	3.4	65.1	21.8	4.8	8.3
England (183,700)	45.4	19.4	2.4	67.1	19.4	5.3	8.1
North West of England (25,400)	41.6	22.8	2.3	66.7	19.4	6.3	7.6

(Data taken from ONS Statbase [<http://www.nationalstatistics.gov.uk/statbase/>] Source – Department for Education and Skills, and the Higher Education Statistics Agency. Home and EU students used in all but ‘Other Destinations’.

Training through work

Apprenticeships, once the backbones of non-academic training, particularly for young men, have numerically diminished with the decline of heavy industries in the UK as a result of competition from cheaper markets in other countries, particularly those based in Asia.

In 1995 the Modern Apprenticeship scheme was launched for 16-24 year olds. In 1998-9 there were 134,600 people in England and Wales and 17,000 people in Scotland on such a schemes. As well as on the job training, young people can receive qualifications such as the SVQ and NVQ along with improving basic skills such as numeracy and information technology. Similar schemes which offer training through work include National Traineeships – a scheme launched in 1997 and had a take up of 30,400 young adults in England and Wales in 1998-9 and other training schemes which had 120,500 young adults enrolled during the same period.

The table below shows that these industries are still strongly gender bound. While 94% of apprentice hairdressers are women, 99% of those training in construction are men.

Table 20 Advanced Modern Apprenticeships: by selected subject and gender, 24 June 2001 (England)

	%	%
England		
	Men	Women
Hairdressing	6	94
Health and social care	10	90
Business administration	20	80
Retailing	38	62
Hospitality	50	50
Information technology	79	21
Engineering manufacturing	97	3
Motor industry	98	2
Electrical installation engineering	99	1
Construction	99	1
All	62	38

Source: Department for Education and Employment
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D5049.csv>

Housing

Although there has been an increase in the number of lone households in the last thirty years, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, young adults (18-24) tend to be the least likely age group in the population to live alone.

Table 21 Percentage Living Alone by Age and Sex, GB

	Men	Women	All
16-24	6	4	5
25-44	17	7	12
45-64	16	15	16
65-74	19	37	29
75 and over	33	60	50
All aged 16 and over	16	18	17
All persons*	13	14	14

Source: Results from the 2000 General Household Survey.
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D5334.xls>

As well as living in multi-person households, young people tend to move more frequently than the rest of the population. This reflects the changeability of this age group where low levels of home ownership, cohabiting relationship breakdowns, new work, education or training opportunities, and general economic fragility which may lead to the need to change home.

The Scottish Household Survey found that 22% of 16-24 year olds had changed residence in the previous year. This figure is high in comparison to the residential change in other age groups (The Scotland's People: Results from the 1999 Scottish Household Survey, Volume 1, Annual Report, Scottish Executive <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/shs/docs/rep99-v1.pdf>). It might explain why young adults were found to be the age group who helped neighbours the least, and who attended or helped organisations the least (Krishnamurthy et al, 2001) and who also felt disconnected from civil society (Coulthard et al, 2002). People who have not lived in areas for long as well as people who lived in housing in social sector tend to have fewer friends and relatives living close to them who they can turn to in times of crisis (Coulthard et al, 2002).

Relative to many Southern European countries, high proportions of 18-24 year olds in the UK have left their parental home. However, the proportion remaining at home has increased in recent years – a growth possibly from the later age people get married or because financial constraints limit young adult’s ability to get a home of their own. An English Survey looking into adults living with their parents by gender and age found that the numbers living in their parental home have increased over the last 20 years (Social Trends 30).

Table 22 Percentage of Adults living with their parents by age, England, 1977-99

		1977-78	1991	1998-99
Males	20-24	52	50	56
	25-29	19	19	24
	30-34	9	9	11
Females	20-24	31	32	38
	25-29	9	9	11
	30-34	3	5	4

Source Social Trends 30 <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/xsdataset.asp?More=Y&v1 nk=115&All=Y&B2.x=38&B2.y=9>

A survey of English households in 1999-2000 found that most heads of household who are under 25 tend to live in rented accommodation. As the table below highlights, about a fifth of young adults in this age sector are buying a house with the aid of a mortgage (Survey of English Housing, Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions).

Table 23 Distribution of tenure among heads of households, aged 16-24, and all adults 1999-00 England

	16-24 (%)	all aged 16 and over (%)
Owner-occupied		
Owned outright	1	27
Buying with mortgage	22	42
Rented from social sector		
Council	19	15
Registered Social Landlord	11	6
Rented privately		
Furnished	28	3
Unfurnished	19	7
All tenures	100	100

<http://www.nationalstatistics.gov.uk/statbase/ssdataset.asp?vlnk=3617&image.x=15&image.y=10>

Migration

In 2000, while 300,000 people left the UK, another 480,000 arrived (There has been an increase of in-migration into the UK of young adults aged 15-24 over the last 30 years with 162,000 arriving in 2000 compared with 65,000 in 1971).

Overall, young adults (21-34) make up 63% of applicants for asylum in Britain. Those aged 21-24 account for 19% of applicants and those aged 20 or under, 17% (Matz et al, 2001).

The increase in asylum seekers as well as people being smuggled into the country without going through institutional channels, has prompted debates about the number of people wanting to live in Britain, the validity of asylum applicants, whether and to what degree we can afford to assist people seeking British citizenship, and whether there should be a policy of accepting less people into the country and deterring those who try to arrive in the country illegally. Recent developments, laid out in a parliamentary White Paper, 'Secure Borders, Safe Haven' (2001) have called for an American-style procedure for accepting applicants into the country, as well as applicants learning to speak English, know about British culture and it's social institutions and that people should take an oath to uphold British laws and customs (Oliver, 2002)

In terms of emigration, 64,000 young adults aged 15-24 left the UK in 1971, 74,000 left in 2000 one of the third highest figure in the last 30 years (emigration ranged from 47,000 – 76,000 people) ONS

<http://www.nationalstatistics.gov.uk/statbase/xsdataset.asp?More=Y&vlnk=4529&All=Y&B2.x=126&B2.y=11>

Looking at the flow of people moving into and out of the UK, between 1975 and 1999 there was an overall increase of 404,300 people migrating into the country. England gained 568,200, while Scotland lost 124,400. In the UK, 931,900 British people left

the country while 1,228,100 non-British people arrived to take up residence. During this period, England lost 693,6000 citizens and gained 1,160100 non-British residents. Scotland lost 160,500 of its population through emigration and gained 30,900 non-British migrants. Looking at the data over time suggests that since the mid 1970s while the reduction in Scotland leaving has slowed (from -35,400 in 1975-1979 to -5,600 leaving between 1995-1999), the numbers of English people leaving has grown (from -50,500 in 1975-1979 to +568,200 between 1995-1999) (Dobson & McLaughlin, 2001).

Patterns of Religious Belief

The UK is a mainly Christian nation containing those who would call themselves Anglican (27 million people), Roman Catholic (9 million), Presbyterian (800,000) and Methodist (760,000). There are also 300,000 member of the Jewish religion. Recent in-migrants have widened the variety of religions to include Muslim (1 million), Sikh (400,000), Hindu (350,000), (1991 data from: <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>).

Active membership amongst all religions in the UK is much lower with only 7,910,000 members in 2000. There has been a decline over the last 30 years of about 2,100,000 active members. The reduction in membership has come mainly from the Christian religions. Religions that are not historically British religions, such as Sikhism, Muslim/Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, have seen increases in their memberships. While Judaism was in decline until the 1990s, in the last decade their numbers of active members have risen from 100,000 to 954,000 (Figures from Christian Research; Board of Deputies of British Jews).

Decline in membership of the mainstream churches has been a long-term trend. although membership of some denominations have stabilised or increased slightly in recent years. However, the main Christian religions, the most long-standing organised religions in the country, the decline in membership of young adults is very significant. Older people are much more likely to belong to a religion while most 18-24 year olds (66%) do not belong to a religion (Park: 2001).

Table 24 Belonging to a religion, GB, Percentages.

Great Britain	Percentages	
	1996	2000
Church of England/Anglican	29.3	29.8
Roman Catholic	8.9	9.2
Christian - no denomination	4.7	6.3
Presbyterian/Free-Presbyterian/Church of Scotland	3.8	3.5
Baptist or Methodist	3.0	3.4
Other Protestant/Other Christian	2.2	2.5
United Reform Church	0.8	0.5
Brethren	0.1	-
Islam/Muslim	1.8	2.0
Hindu	0.6	1.0
Jewish	0.3	0.8
Sikh	0.2	0.4
Other non-Christian	0.4	0.4
Buddhist	0.5	0.1
Refusal/Not Answered/Didn't Know	0.8	0.6
None	42.6	39.5

Source: British Social Attitudes, National Centre for Social Research

Scottish religion diverged from that of England in 1603 following the joining of the two monarchies and later in 1707 when the Act of Union, which combined the two parliaments. Scotland maintained and developed, via John Knox, a Presbyterian religion along the lines of Calvinism, which opened religious worship out to all in society and ultimately broke away from treating the monarch as a human God.

In Scotland today, 40.9% of people do not consider themselves to be a member of a religion. Over a third of the population consider themselves to be Presbyterians and worship through the Church of Scotland. 12.4% are Roman Catholic and the remainder come mainly from other Christian groups (Scottish Social Attitudes, 2000).

Environmentalism

Young adults have lived in a period of high concern about the health of the planet. Yet while young people are often identified as the age group most interested in environmental issues, the table below shows that often they were the least likely to undertake some of the actions to help the environment. While they have reacted better than other age groups to environmental threats, their domestic actions and buying actions, apart from unleaded petrol, would tend to disqualify them from being given the status of champions of the environment.

Table 25 Actions done on a regular basis for environmental reasons, England and Wales, 1996-7, percentages

	18-24	25-44	45-64	64 and over	All aged 18 and over
Domestic actions: Made sure that your noise did not disturb others	55	78	81	79	76
Domestic actions: Taken paper to paper-bank or separated paper for recycling	47	46	57	63	51
Domestic actions: Taken glass to a bottle bank or separated glass for recycling	44	44	51	57	48
Domestic actions: Cut down the use of a car for short journeys	29	36	30	31	33
Buying actions: Used unleaded petrol in your car	81	71	75	69	73
Buying actions: Used recycled paper at home	29	41	44	35	39
Buying actions: Used diesel in your car	20	32	32	19	29
Reactions: Reduced sunbathing or taken greater care when in the sun because of increased UV rays	51	61	57	48	57
Reactions: Avoided bathing in rivers and sea because of pollution	48	42	47	31	43

Attitudes to the Environment Survey, Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (1996-7)

Political Patterns

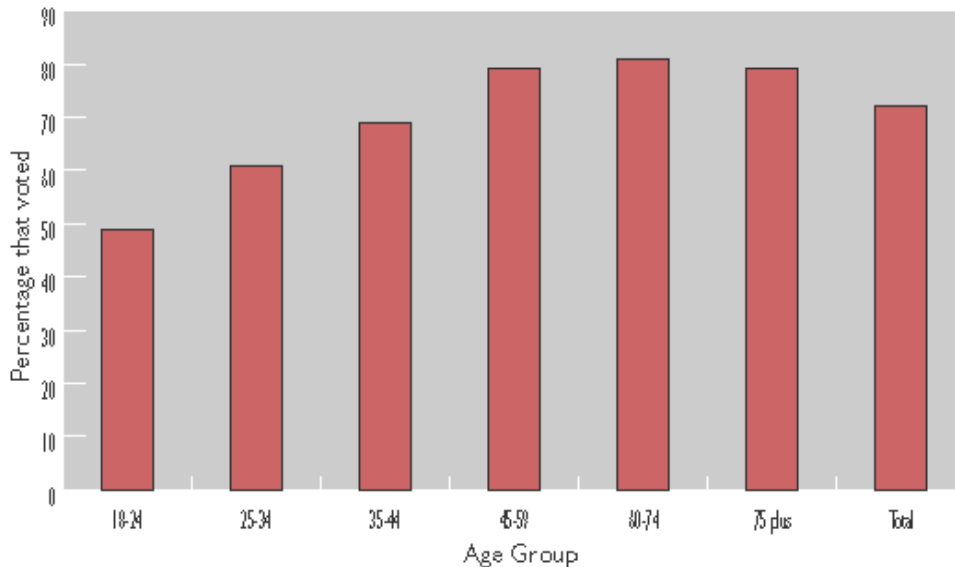
In terms of voting, as the table and the graph below illustrate, those in the 18-24 age group are the least likely to vote. Figures taken from 2001 British General Election show that only 53% of 18-24 year olds voted compared to 25-34 (57.5%), 35-44 (70%), 45-54 (78.5%), 55-64 (80.5%) 65+ (87%) all (72.4%) (Park, 1999). Similarly in the Scottish Election, only about 50% of 18-24 year olds voted. Moreover, as the table below shows, the decline in voting in the 2001 British General Election has been particularly marked by young women.

Table 26 Voter Turnout by age and gender (Percentages) Great Britain

	1970		1983		1997		2001	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
18-24	67	66	74	73	56	64	60	46
25-34	74	77	76	79	67	70	59	56
35-44	81	84	87	88	77	78	66	74
45-54	86	85	88	90	83	86	76	81
55-59	88	86	89	93	90	87	79	82
60-64	79	84	82	90	87	88	80	80
65 and over	93	84	86	82	87	85	87	87

Source: British Election Study, National Centre for Social Research, University of Essex.

Graph 3 Whether voted in Scottish Parliament election in May 1999 by age, Scotland



Source: Scottish Executive Scottish Household Survey (interviews done between July and October 1999)
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/stats/sss/docs/sss10-04.asp>

The low turn out of the age group might also reflect a lack of interest or alienation of youth from the political process. The Scottish Household Survey (2000) found that people in the 16-24 age group were the least likely to know who their local councilor was.

Qualitative research for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation with 194, 14-24 year olds, suggests that it is too simplistic to accuse young people of being apathetic. The study found that many young people are interested in concerns that are political but they do not see them in terms of party politics and elections. Issues relating to education such as funding and achieving qualifications, problems with insecure employment prospects, drug use, personal safety and bullying are issues that were cited by the young adults as of interest to them (White et al, 2002). However they do appear to be alienated by the traditional political process in the UK. Around a third of 18-24 year olds were found to have no loyalty to any particular political party (Park, 1999). Only a third of the age group were likely to believe there to be a moral duty to vote, the majority believed that voting should only be undertaken if you are concerned about who gets elected. About 13% of the age group thought that there was no reason to vote (Park, op cit, 1999). Lack of voting is also in part due to the age group being the least likely to be registered to vote. Only 60% of young adults are registered to vote, compared to 92% of the population as a whole (Pirie & Worcester, 2000).

Leisure and Technology

While young people are often negatively stereotyped as being ‘couch potatoes,’ the graph and table below highlights that they watch significantly less television than older people and more active than any other age group (Scottish Health Survey, 1998).

Table 27 Television viewing and radio listening by age, BBC Scotland Region 1999

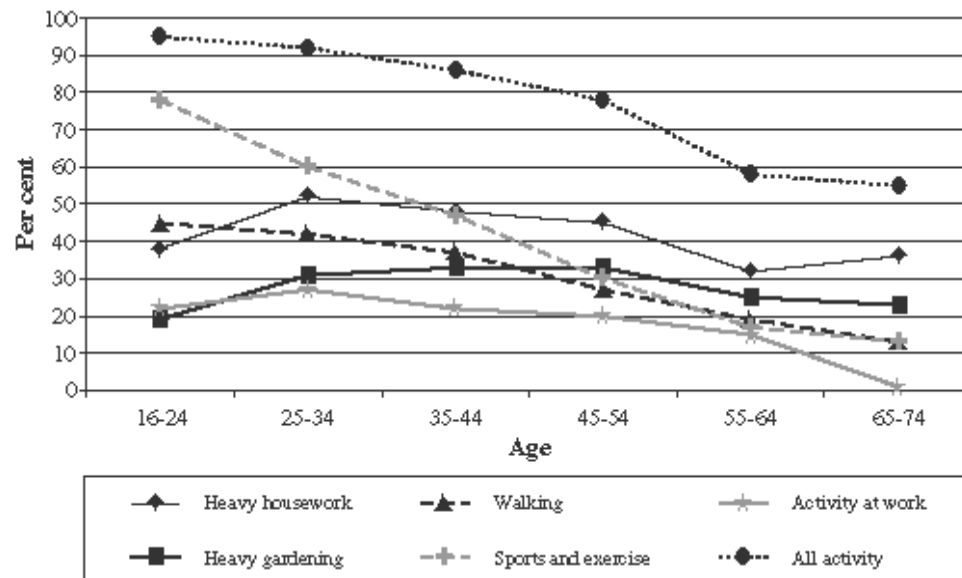
	Hours per person of TV viewing per week	Hours per person of radio listening per week
All (4 and over)	27.9	17.5
4-15	18.5	7.8
16-24	19.2	18.9
25-34	27.1	20.6
35-44	26.2	20.3
45-54	30.9	20.0
55-64	35.1	19.2
65 and over	39.6	16.8

Source: British Broadcasting Corporation

Note: 1. For radio listening the age categories are 4-14 and 15-24.

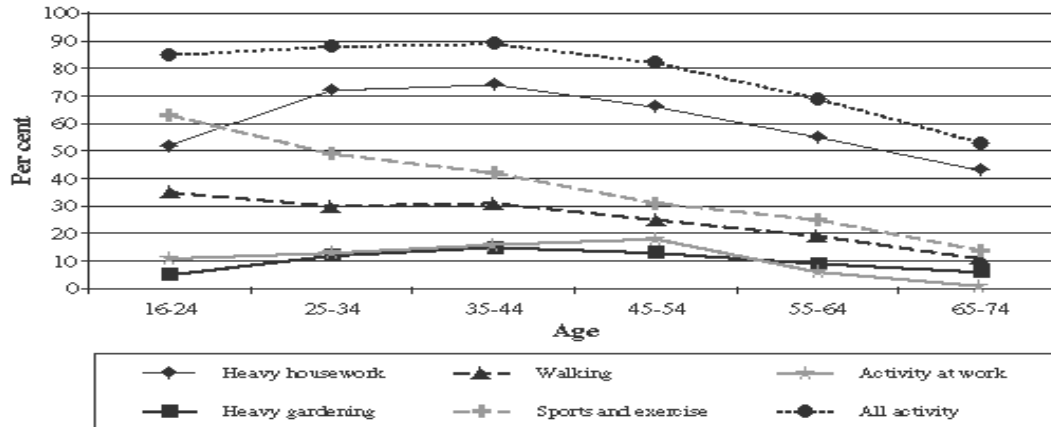
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/stats/sss/docs/sss10-05.asp>

Graph 4 - Percent of men doing each type of activity by age, Scotland



Orientations of Young Men and Women to Citizenship and European Identity
 Workpackage No 4, Socio Demographic Profile
 Scotland and England, UK
 2002

Graph 5 - Percent of women doing each type of activity by age, Scotland



Source: Pitson,, 1998, Scottish Health Survey

Young adults tend to be the highest users with new technology such as the internet and mobile telephones. Many (82%) of those in the 16-24 age group have used the Internet. Looking at the population as a whole, usage of the Internet declines with age and tends to be used slightly less by women than men.

Table 28 Adults who have used the Internet by their characteristics: Individual Internet Access, GB

	July 2000	October 2000	January 2001	April 2001	July 2001	October 2001	February 2002
All Adults	45	45	51	51	51	53	56
Men	52	52	57	57	56	55	58
Women	39	39	45	46	47	51	54
All Adults by age group							
16 to 24	69	82	85	82	88	87	82
25 to 44	60	60	66	69	69	69	74
45 to 54	49	50	50	54	59	58	58
55 to 64	33	28	39	31	38	37	41
65 to 74	10	14	15	22	11*	11	12
75 years and over	6	4	6	7			

Source: National Statistics Omnibus Survey February 2002

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/xsdataset.asp?More=Y&vlnk=4085&All=Y&B2.x=44&B2.y=11>

Young people have access to mobile phones to a greater degree than the rest of the population. It is estimated that 81% of the 15-24 year old group have a mobile phone in comparison to 70% of all adults in the UK (Harrington & Mayhew, 2001). As high phone users they are also disproportionately the victims of a huge growing trend of mobile phone thefts that numbered around 470,000 in 2000 (British Crime Survey, 2001).

Social Exclusion among Young Adults

The age 18-24 is an insecure and uncertain time for many people. Jobs that were once guaranteed are no longer available or have short-term contracts. There has been a reduction in affordable housing. Some forms of income support previously provided by the state have been withdrawn. Added together the changes in society over the last 30 years has meant that the widespread expectation of achieving independence in young adulthood has for some people become harder to achieve. Many young people, even if they are in paid employment, need the financial and material support of older adults, particularly parents. Young people without such support are at risk of missing out on opportunities, and accumulating disadvantages in housing, employment and income. A young person estranged from his or her family faces a very difficult time. As Anne Stafford has indicated, the “lower rates of benefit and National Minimum wage hourly rates for young people” assume some familial support for young adults and “serve to emphasis their (semi-) dependence on family members” (Stafford, 2000, 16).

The New Policy Institute (NPI) in their report ‘Sidelined: Young Adults’ Access to Services’ (Howarth & Street, 2000) highlight that the age group may experience to a greater degree than other adults, problems of low pay, unemployment, suicide, drug abuse, problems connected with having no qualifications, criminality, lack of current work, training or education.

The NPI using poverty and social exclusion indicators believe that over the last few years drug use has increased while numbers of those young adults currently without a job, training or education have decreased.

Table 29 Key Indicators of Poverty and Social Exclusion

Young adults in England	Trend over the medium term	Trend over the latest year
17. Unemployed (16-24)	Improved	Steady
18. On low rates of pay (16-24)	Steady	Steady
19. Not in education, training or work (16-18)	Steady	Improved
20. Problem drug use (15-24)	Worsened	Worsened
21. Suicide (15-24)	Steady	Steady
22. Without a basic qualification (19-year-olds)	Improved	Steady
23. With a criminal record (18-20)	Steady	Steady

Source: NPI (<http://www.npi.org.uk/summaries/summ%20mpse%202000.htm>)

Suicide

The suicide rate for 18-24-year-old males rose from 58 deaths per million of population in 1974 to 170 deaths per million in 1997. The number of young adult males who commit suicide has doubled in the ten years up to 1999. (<http://www.successunlimited.co.uk/suicide.htm>). Interestingly, it was found that while the rate of young adults committing suicide in England and Wales has fallen by

20% in the last ten years, in Scotland the number has apparently risen by 75% (Platt, 2000; Howarth & Street, 2000). The rates of suicide are particularly great for people from low socio-economic background and for the unemployed. The higher experience of poverty and unemployment in Scotland might explain the huge variance between England and Scotland (Christie, 2001). Furlong suggests that “the lack of jobs, high levels of unemployment and the associated feeling of helplessness among young people may be reflected in mental health problems and suicidal behaviours” (2002:18) and Platt adds that a lack of stability in family relationships may increase the rate of suicide (Platt, 2000). A number of authors have referred to a ‘crisis of masculinity’ triggered by the decline in traditional male working-class occupations and an alleged shift in cultural valorizing to traditionally feminine rather than masculine skills and attributes (Jones, 2000).

Debt

Britons purchase goods using their credit cards more than citizens of any other European countries: 8.5% of purchases in contrast to just 1% in Germany and France (O’Hara, 2002). According to the Office of Fair Trading, British people are in debt averaging £2500 pounds per person (excluding mortgages) (<http://www.of.t.gov.uk/News/Press+releases/2000/PN+49-00.htm>). Other figures suggest higher debts for certain groups such as single women (£9,431), single men (£13,183) and couples (£17,720) (O’Hara, 2002). A survey of adults by MORI (2001) found that 76% of people aged 16-34 saw this debt as unavoidable.

Students in England receive different financial support to those from Scotland. Scotland has abolished the annual £1000 tuition fees required of students and reinstated grants of £2000 for the poorest students. However in England and Wales the only financial support given to the majority of students is the possibility of taking out a student loan. Around 88% of students take out a student loan. It is estimated that average debt for students when they have finished their course is £9000 (NatWest Money Matters Survey, 2001). Many students have been forced to take part-time work to supplement their income and reduce debt and this can be seen to have a negative impact on their studies. There has been a rise in the number of students studying in the city where their parents live so that they can stay at home and save money on accommodation (From Student Living Report, UNITE: <http://www.mori.co.uk/polls/2000/unite.htm>).

Homelessness

Homelessness has a strong link to poverty, family problems, being brought up ‘in care’, lack of work, mental health problems, being in the army or in prison, having drug or alcohol problems as well as difficulties obtaining support from the government (Fitzpatrick for JRF: www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/housing/410.asp).

The Lothian Anti Poverty Alliance suggests that about one in four homeless people are under 25 years old. (<http://www.lapa.org.uk/Poverty/Causes%20and%20Effects/Homeless/homeless.htm>). However, figures do not always account for all those young people who are sleeping on friends’ floors (Fitzpatrick for JRF: www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/housing/410.asp). About half of the young adults living on the streets have been in care and 40% of the young women on the street have been the victims of sexual abuse. Many of the young adults who are homeless have mental health problems. <http://www.lapa.org.uk/Poverty/Causes%20and%20Effects/Homeless/homeless.htm> Crisis, an

organisation who work with the homeless, suggest that many young people on the streets have no qualifications, come from violent family backgrounds, and a third of them all will have attempted to commit suicide. Nearly 9 out of 10 young adults on the street are not there by choice but have been evicted from their previous home (www.crisis.org.uk).

Drug Use

In a national Scottish survey of crime, use of illegal drugs in the last twelve months was reported by 18.1% of 16-24 year olds. As the table below shows, the most likely users in this group are females aged 16-19 years old. These findings represent a significant decline on 1996 Scottish Crime Survey figures (Fraser, 2002).

Table 30 : Reported drug misuse 'in last 12 months'- adults aged 16-59, 2000, Scotland

Age Group	Males (%)	Females (%)
16-19	15.4	20.6
20-24	19	17.4
25-29	18	11.5
30-39	7.5	3.3
40-59	2.1	0.8

Source: 2000 Scottish Crime Survey

As the table below highlights, of the drugs that people had taken, cannabis was by far the more popular. This is significant given the current move to reclassify the criminality of possessing cannabis. Whilst in the 1980s and 1990s Ecstasy was considered the drug of youth, figures below show this not to be the case in the late 1990s. The decline in use may have been fuelled by high profile cases such as that of Leah Betts who died in 1995 after taking a single Ecstasy tablet.

Table 31 Percentage of young people who had used selected drugs in the last year: by age, 1998, England & Wales

	16-19	20-24	16-24
Cannabis	28	26	27
Amphetamine	9	10	10
Ecstasy	4	6	5
Poppers	4	5	5
Magic mushrooms	4	3	4
Cocaine	1	5	3
LSD	2	3	3
Any drug	31	28	29

Source: British Crime Survey, Home Office

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D3542.xls>

If we study the whole of Britain, it emerges that in Scotland whilst the use of cannabis is lower than in England and Wales the use of opiates such as heroin and crack cocaine is the same. The south-east and west of England along with London are the areas where opiates are used the most by 16-29 year olds.

Table 32 Drug use among 16-29 year olds, 1998 UK

	% Used	% Used any
	cannabis	opiates+ substances
England and Wales	22	3.0
North East	19	1.0
North West	20	1.0
Yorkshire and the Humber	25	3.0
East Midlands	18	1.0
West Midlands	19	1.0
East	19	2.0
London	30	9.0
South East	22	5.0
South West	29	5.0
England	23	4.0
Wales	16	1.0
Scotland	15	3.0

Opiates = heroin, methadone, cocaine, crack

Source: British Crime Survey, Home Office; Scottish Crime Survey, Scottish Executive

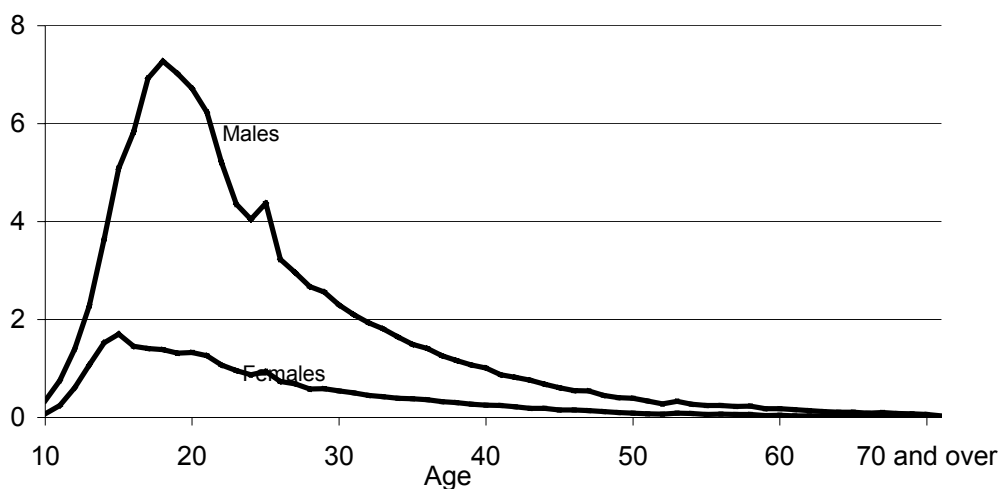
Criminal record

There has been much concern of late about the number of young people who commit crimes or who have anti-social behaviour. It is estimated that currently 2/5ths of all

known offenders are under the age of 21 (<http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/crsdoc7.htm>). 3% of 18-20 year olds (56,000) in England and Wales have been found guilty of an indictable offence.

Some crimes are more likely to be committed by people at different ages. For instance, shoplifting is a crime most commonly committed by the under 16s (both sexes) while violent behaviour is highest for those men aged 16-25 (Soothill, Francis & Fligelstone, 2002).

Graph 6 Offenders as a percentage of the population: by gender and age, 2000 (England & Wales)



Offenders = People found guilty or cautioned for indictable offences in 2000.

Source: Home Office

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D5064.xls>

England and Wales followed closely by Scotland have the highest prison populations in Europe with 125 and 118 per 100000 in prison respectively. These top rates are followed by Spain (111 per 100000), Germany (95) and Austria (85). The lowest nation is Denmark with 68 prisoners per 100000 of the population.

(Prison Statistics Scotland, 1999 – see http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/whats_happening/research/pdf_subj_maps/smda01-09.pdf)

In 2000 there were 64,800 prisoners in England and Wales, 6,176 in Scotland. The number of people in prison in England and Wales has risen by about a third in the last decade; in Scotland it has increased but at a slower rate (Home Office, Scottish Executive, 2000). In 2000, 33% (n=1885) of people in custody in Scotland were aged between 16-24 years old. Of these, 1803 were men and 82 were women (Scottish Executive, 2000). As of March 2001 there were 801 young offenders (12-20 years old) in Scottish prisons, 211 (174 men, 37 women) of whom were awaiting trial. The number of young adults in Young Offenders Institutes (for those aged 12-20 years old) was 2687 in 1999, of which 152 were women (GRO, www.scotland.gov.uk).

Having a criminal record negatively affects people beyond the sentence they may serve or the fine they may pay. Problems attached to having a criminal record may include the ability to secure employment, housing or finance.

As well as problems of social exclusion, many people reconvict – after 24 months over 77% of young male offenders (aged under 21 at sentencing date) will have reconvicted (Home Office, ONS, Social Trends 30). NACRO, a British charity who work with ex-offenders, suggest that the way forward is to jail less of the convicted young adults. They suggest that a great many of the crimes committed by this age group are part of an age phase rather than the beginning of a criminal career. They argue that prison does not help young people move on from this phase instead, their experience of prison may in fact lead to more crime once they are released (Bright & Patton, 2001).

Victims of Crime

Young adults, particularly those who have independence from their family, are often the victims of crime. The British Crime Survey of 2001 found that in England and Wales, those households headed by young adults (16-24) were more likely to suffer from burglary and/or having their vehicle stolen (Kershaw et al, 2001).

Young men, aged 16-24 years, are most likely to be victim of violent attack. While the average risk for all adults is 3.9% for years 1999-2000, for young men it is said to be 18.8% (Living in Britain, 2000). While young women are less likely in general to suffer a violent attack than young men, they are more likely to experience 'domestic violence' in the form of an attack from a family member than young men.

Teenage Sex, Pregnancy and Sexually transmitted infections

Although the trend is for women to first become mothers at a later age, the UK has a high rate of teenage pregnancy in comparison to the rest of Europe. In Scotland, from March 1999-March 2000, there were 7.3 conceptions per 1000 women aged 13-15, 67.4 per 1000 women aged 16-19, and overall 41.9 per 1000 women aged 13-19 (Scottish Health Statistics, 2000). In England and Wales in 1999 there were 63 conceptions per 1000 women under 20. Two-fifths of these led to abortion and three-fifths to maternity (ONS). For the UK as a whole the rates of pregnancy to women under 20 years of age is 30.8 per 1000 women in the age group. Rates for other European countries include: the Slovak Republic at 26.9, Czech Republic at 16.4, Austria at 14, Germany at 13.1 and Spain at 7.9 per 1000 (UNICEF, 2001).

Surveys have found that there is a trend to early sexual encounters among British teens, which partly helps to explain the higher rates of conception (UNICEF, 2001). In the UK the percentage of women found to have sex before the age of 20 was 87% and 64% of women were below 18 at first sexual intercourse.

As well as the high rate of teenage pregnancies, British young adults are experiencing a rise in the number of sexually transmitted diseases. Despite a drop in figures in the 1980s and early 1990s, figures are on the rise again. There were 3145 new reports of HIV or AIDS in Scotland, of which 898 were amongst the 15-24 age group (Scottish Statistics, 2000). Looking at the sexually transmitted infections not including HIV and

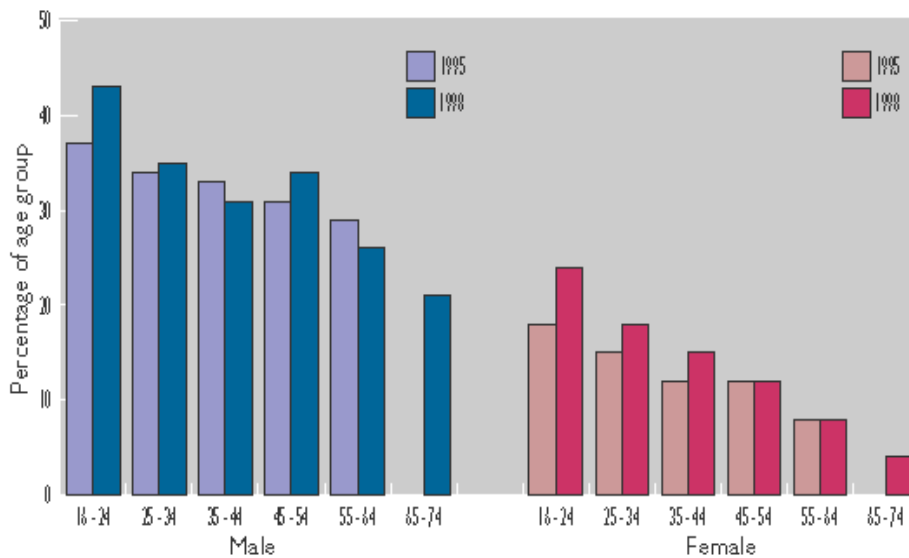
Aids, we find that in Scotland in 2000, 10,130 out of a total of 22113 new cases were identified in the 15-24 age group (Scottish Statistics, 2000).

The increase amongst teenagers may be through having a high number of sexual partners and/or the lack of prophylactics such as condoms. The Health Monitoring Survey for ONS and the Health Education Authority in England found that in 1998 28% of 16-19 year olds and 38% of 20-24 year olds had 2 or more sexual partners in the previous year (Social Trends 30, 2000).

Drinking

There has been a long history of concern about alcohol consumption in Britain prompting government health education campaigns often specifically targeted at young people. For instance television advertising is currently running in Scotland targeting young adults. In recent years there has been a growth in drinking over the safe limit particularly noticeable, as the table below highlights, amongst young adults. The recommended ‘safe’ number of units of alcohol is 21 for men and 14 for women.

Graph 7 Those drinking more than the recommended limit, 1995 and 1998, Scotland



Source: Scottish Health Survey: Scottish Executive
 Note: Data for 65-74 year olds not available for 1995

Figures from the Scottish Health Statistics (2000) suggest that nearly half of young men aged 16-24 (43%) and a quarter of women (24%) drink more than the safe limits every week. Similar figures emerge from an English survey, which found that 42% of males and 26% of women drank above the recommended units of alcohol per week (Institute of Alcohol Studies, 2001).

Other Health Issues

As well as drinking and drugs, young people are over-represented in those with eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia, particularly women from middle-class backgrounds. Young adults also have the poorest diet. Figures for the Scottish Health Statistics (2000), suggest that 18-24 year olds eat more foods containing

saturated fats, fried foods, refined sugars and starches than other age groups in the population.

Although there has been a decline in smoking, the 16-24 age group (37%) are second only to the 25-34 age group (39%) in the high numbers of people who smoke. Furthermore, 45% of expectant mothers in the 16-19 age group were smokers on their first visit to the antenatal clinic. Analysis links this to the fact that the highest rates of teenage pregnancies happen in deprived areas where smoking is also high (Scottish Health Statistics, 2000).

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