NEET Young People and Training for Work: learning on the margins

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Abstract

The number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is rising to alarming levels. Being NEET seriously affects the life chances of many of these young people as they face the possibility of long-term unemployment, isolation and social exclusion. Re-engaging them in training is therefore a priority for policy-makers and practitioners.

This book examines the experiences of a group of young people in the post-industrial north of England attending Entry to Employment, a work-based learning programme for those who have been NEET or risk becoming so in the future. It critically appraises the discourse on NEET young people and its social, economic and political context, and it challenges conventional stereotypes of ‘the NEETs’ as dysfunctional and lacking aspiration. Drawing on a detailed ethnographic study of young people and the practitioners working with them, it explores the complexities and realities of learning on the margins.
1 – Labour market participation of young people
Youth unemployment
Young people in work
Conclusion.

2 – Young people not in employment, education or training
Origin and development of the term NEET
NEET as a concept and indicator in the EU
Main traits of the NEET population
Common patterns among European countries
Conclusion.

3 – Institutional and structural determinants
Role of labour market institutions
Role of education and training institutions
Macro-structural influences
A holistic view
Conclusion.

This report analyses the labour market situation of young people in Europe, with a specific focus on the group categorised as NEET. It examines the determinants of belonging to the NEET group, and measures the economic and social costs of NEETs. Although discourses associated with these categories of young people often present them in negative terms, the paper shows that this type of conceptualisation is inadequate to understand the lives of young people on the margins of education and employment. The paper also finds that the success of E2E in improving employability is mixed.