



Broader Approaches to Learning

Better Tackling Early
School Leaving in Europe
Restart (topic-based workshop)

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Outline of Presentation

- Aims and Objectives
- Methodology
- Importance of Research in this area
- Types of Early School Leavers/Underachievers
- The English System: Post-16 Choices
- Current Situation
- Interventions
- Gaps in Provision
- Conclusion



Aims and Objectives

- An outline of the educational system in England and Wales;
- The extent of the problem of underachievers and those that are Not in Education and Employment (NEET);
- Mapping of the different types of interventions on a national, regional and local level;
- Case studies of innovative interventions.



Importance of Research in this area

- Competitiveness of Europe in global economy & individual member states
- Life chances of young people
- Social issues

early leaving/underachievement (UK terminology NEET; programmes for underachievement)



Methodology

The research methodology employed in this mapping exercise included:

- *Desk research*
various search engines and gateways for interventions; *sourcing research on underachievers and NEET*
- *Telephone interviews* with key informants in order to identify key interventions and their views on the gaps in provision and policy issues
- *In-depth interviews* of organisations delivering interventions in order to form the *case studies*



Types of Early School Leavers / Underachievers

There are at least six different types of early leaver, each with their own different reasons and needs:

- *Positive leavers*
- *Opportune leavers*
- *Would-be leavers or reluctant leavers*
- *Circumstantial leavers*
- *Discouraged leavers*
- *Alienated leavers*



The English System: Post-16 Choices

In England and Wales compulsory education is up to the age of 15/16 (GCSE level exams). The choices post-16 include a number of options:

- *Further education* at a college or sixth-form (qualifications and skills);
- *Government-supported training* (learning and earning);
- *Employment* (getting a job);
- *Other options* (such as volunteering or NEET/unemployment).

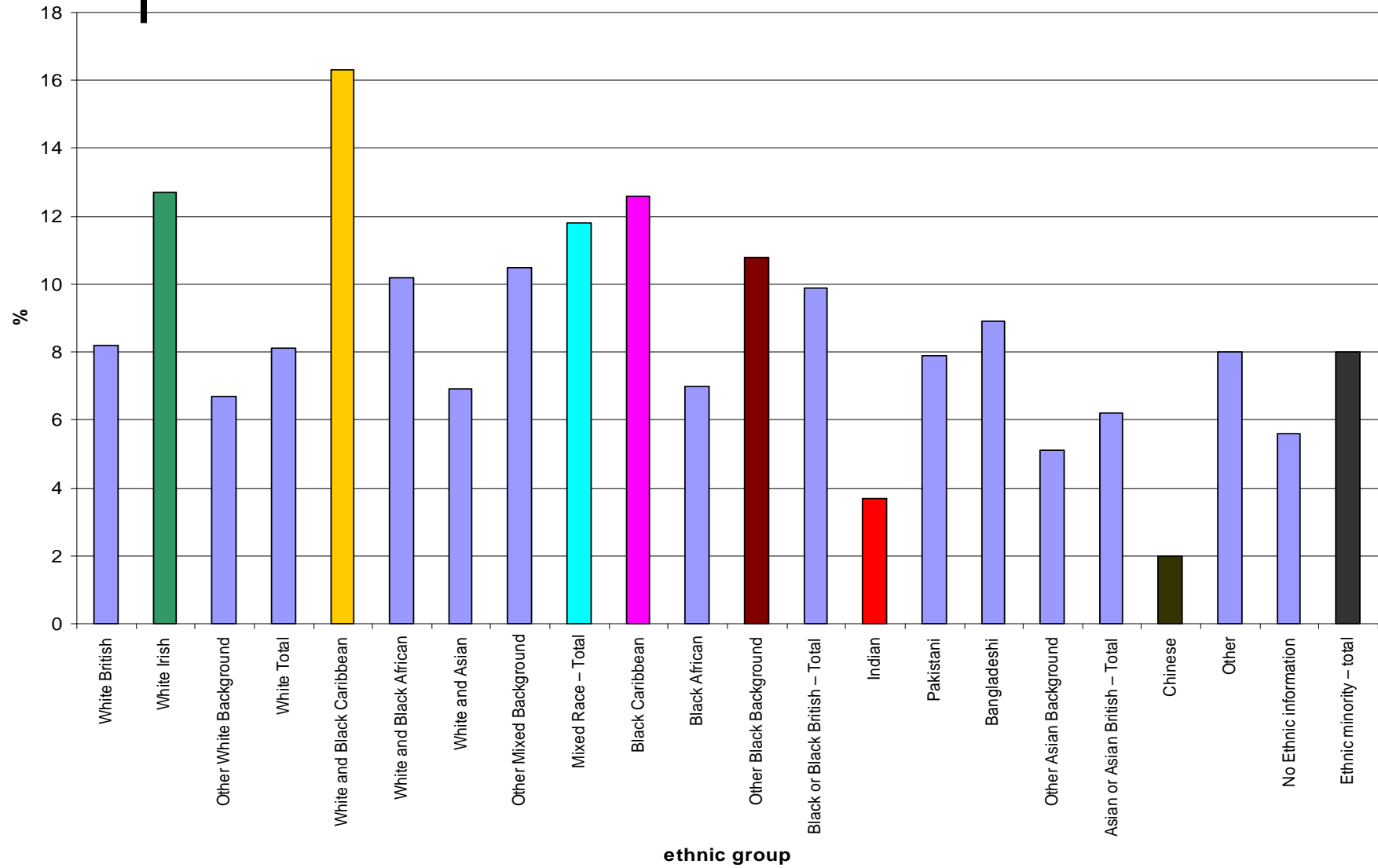


Current Situation

- GCSE pass rates
- Exclusion
- NEET
- Factors impacting upon disengagement /underachieving:
 - *Policy*
 - *School*
 - *Family*
 - *Individual*



Percentage of 16-19 yr olds NEET (Dec 05)





Factors which impact upon disengagement

Policy factors may include

- The national curriculum
- Fragmentation of vocational provision
- League tables

School factors may include:

- Low status of vocational education
- Lack of alternative education with little formalised accreditation
- Lack of investment in pastoral support
- Community/regional factors
- Economic/social deprivation and unemployment in some areas
- Lack of self-esteem



Family factors

- Education is not valued
- Absence condoned by parent
- Dysfunctional families
- Family problems
- Lack of parenting skills
- Different social behavioral expectations
- Cultural constraints

Individual factors:

- Peer pressure/poor peer relationships
- Curriculum irrelevant for pupils
- Lack of self-esteem/self-confidence
- Lack of social skills
- Inability to cope with traditional assessment procedures
- Boredom, lack of engagement
- Learning problems
- Experiences of racism
- Discouraged



Interventions

Interventions are available in the form of Government-funded programmes; VCS and private sector programmes

- *National Level*
- *Region Level*
- *Local Level*



Gaps in Provision

- Curriculum (however, there have been some recent reforms)
- Socio-economics issues
- New Methods
 - Funding
 - Innovative methods; not widespread



CONCLUSION

- NEET and underachievers – heterogeneous group, therefore tailored support is necessary; group level/individual
- Require home (parents/carers) and school support
- Danger that individualised interventions will overlook structural and institutional problems, such as barriers to education/employment and racism