



The Young Fabians digest of the latest policy publications

Welcome to Issue 10 of Policy News, brought to you every two months by the Young Fabians executive. The newsletter brings together ideas from think tanks, third sector organisations and Whitehall departments, providing an outline of the best recent policy publications. You can read the reports in full by following the link at the end of each summary.

June and July saw the Government presses go into overdrive as a stream of weighty policy documents was released. This included a major report on the future of social care, the final conclusions of Milburn's 'Panel on Fair Access to the Professions', and 'Building Britain's Future', the Government's much-anticipated roadmap for the next five years.

Around the themes of social care and social inequality, various think tanks have added their own contributions. Particularly interesting are new analyses of public attitudes to these two challenges by the IPPR/PwC and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation/Fabian Society respectively. The Women & Work Commission has also released a follow-up to its seminal report on gender inequality at work, 'Shaping a fairer future', three years after it was published.

Finally, some good reports are starting to appear on what Austerity Britain could mean for core public services, as well as what the recession heralds for the youth voluntary sector and youth employment in the next few years. It all makes for sobering reading.

To suggest a publication to include in the next issue of Policy News (August- September), or for any other comments, please send an email with full details to the address below.

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Publications

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

► **The Nuffield Foundation - Education for All: The future of education and training for 14-19 year olds**

The review, published in June, represents the largest independent study of education and training for 14-19 year olds in England and Wales since the Crowther Report in 1959. The Crowther Report recommended the raising of the school leaving age to 16, but still saw post-16 education to be for the small minority in the sixth-forms of grammar schools. We now live in a different world where most young people participate in some form of post-16 education and training. The Review welcomes this, but argues that much more needs to be done if all young people are to live fulfilling lives and if the social and economic problems of the community are to be met.

The review welcomes much that the Government has done over the past decade, but says that more needs to be done to tackle the issue of 'NEETs' (young people not in employment, education or training) and to provide a more flexible qualifications system. It says the present 'three-track' Framework of Qualifications in England, with its GCSE/A Levels, Diplomas and Apprenticeships, is obsolete. What is required is a more unified and flexible system, recognising all types of learning, varying levels of achievement and different learning styles. Collaboration between schools, colleges and work-based learning-providers is also essential if the future needs of 14-19 are to be met.

►► Summary available at: www.nuffield14-19review.org.uk/cgi/news/news.cgi?t=template.htm&a=63

► **Demos - Knowledge Nomads: Why science needs migration**

In this analysis of the movements and motivations of international scientists, innovators and entrepreneurs and of the comparative barriers they face around the world, the report's authors consider the UK's current system to have made "significant policy advances". However, they argue the quality of the UK's migration policies is hindered by a paucity of analysis regarding emigration (who is leaving, where they are going, what their motivations are and for how long they intend to leave) and that immigration data needs to provide a better picture of sort of people who are coming into the country, under which categories and why.

The report calls on the UK to embrace the suggested EU 'blue card' - a policy that would give eligible highly skilled non-EU nationals access to the entire EU labour market. Although the UK is commended for its simpler procedures and its ability to attract scientists, the report considers the

new points-based system not to "...work for other innovators because of its emphasis on measures such as... salary levels and formal education, which can fail to capture the potential of those in less formal sectors." Meanwhile the entrepreneurship category fundamentally misunderstands the value and realities of entrepreneurship. Requiring applicants to have significant personal collateral as a condition of entry assumes that the majority of people seek to move permanently. As this analysis shows, this is no longer the case and it is questionable whether such a security blanket is necessary.

▶▶ Available at: http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Knowledge_nomads_-_web_1_.pdf?1247483484

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

▶ HMG - Shaping the Future of Care Together

In July the Government launched 'Shaping the Future of Care Together', which sets out a vision for a new care and support system. The Green Paper highlights the challenges faced by the current care system and the need for radical reform in order to develop a national care service that is fair, simple and affordable for everyone. As Gordon Brown says in his foreword, "a care and support system that reflects the needs of our times and meets our rising aspirations is achievable, but only if we are prepared to rise to the challenge of radical reform."

Some of the issues highlighted include the fact that by 2026 one in five people will be aged 65 or over. Between 2008 and 2032 the number of over-85s will have doubled to 3.1 million. The Green paper sets out the reforms to care that the Government hopes will meet this massive rise in demand while maintaining quality and fairness.

▶▶ Available at:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_102338

▶ IPPR and PwC - Expectations and aspirations: public attitudes towards social care

This IPPR paper suggests that there could be a 'ticking timebomb' around the issue of social care with many families reluctant to support elderly relatives. The report exposes a lack of awareness about social care, confusion about how services are funded and a widespread lack of preparation or planning for future care needs. The IPPR and PwC social care programme seeks to generate public debate about the future of social care and considers how the social contract between the state, organisations, communities, families and individuals may need to change to ensure that the future of social care is based on principles of fairness and sustainability.

Key themes emerging from the report include an apparent lack of awareness about social care;

uncertainty about how services are funded; a widespread lack of preparation or planning for future care needs; and a pressing need for more information and debate on the future of social care.

▶▶ Available at: <http://www.ippr.org/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=669>

▶ **Social Market Foundation- From Feast to Famine: Reforming the NHS for an era of austerity**

Over the past two years the SMF Health project has examined the future of the NHS in the coming decade in the face of demographic, technological and now economic change. In the context of a crisis in public finances the final report looks again at the sustainability of tax funding, and asks how an equitable health system can be safeguarded in the years ahead. The report examines whether new measures should be taken to manage demand for health services to relieve pressure on the NHS.

Having enjoyed massive increases in funding since 1999, the NHS now faces the need to adjust to the lean times ahead. There are major savings to be made, but they must be driven by high quality local commissioners, with central government taking far less responsibility for health services. This will mean a political shift away from the idea of a uniform National Health Service towards an acceptance of locally varied, diverse provision. Only through empowering locally accountable commissioners and managing demand can the health service survive the challenge of the next decade.

▶▶ Available at:

<http://www.smf.co.uk/assets/files/Health%20Report%20From%20Feast%20to%20Famine.pdf>

WELFARE AND WORK

▶ **Women & Work Commission – Shaping a fairer future: A review of the recommendations of the Women and Work Commission three years on**

Three years after the commission's original 'Shaping a Fairer Future' report - which set out 40 recommendations for tackling the gender divide at work - Equality Minister Harriet Harman invited it to reconvene to see what progress had been made. While improvements are apparent in key areas like childcare and the right to request flexible working, the commission reports being "disappointed" in the lack of overall progress. It adds that the gender pay gap still "stubbornly persists despite monumental changes in women's position in the workplace". More needs to be done to promote quality flexible and part time work, it says. Breaking down stereotypes at school should now be the government's priority to ensure girls are not funnelled into the "five c" careers - caring, cashiering, clerical, cleaning and catering - where pay levels tend to be lower.

Among the 43 recommendations put forward in the review were work experience placements for girls in occupations where women are traditionally not well represented, school careers advisers trained in challenging gender and socio-economic stereotyping, and a professionalized and higher paid childcare sector, which still attracts mainly women workers.

▶▶ Available at: <http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/WWC%20Report%20web.pdf>

▶ Centre for Cities - Sticking plaster or stepping-stone? Tackling urban youth unemployment

Here the author predicts that long-term youth unemployment will almost treble between now and the end of 2011. Specifically, it suggests that the number of young people who experience long-term unemployment is likely to rise from 130,000 in May 2009 to 350,000 by December 2011.

The report reveals that cities like Sunderland, Barnsley, Swindon and Milton Keynes have been hardest hit by rising levels of youth unemployment. It notes that the £1billion Future Jobs Fund announced in the 2009 Budget aims to create 150,000 new jobs during 2009-11 for long-term unemployed young people. However, the report argues that this will help less than half the expected 350,000 young people due to be long-term unemployed by December 2011.

The Centre for Cities contends that the fund serves as a "sticking plaster" initiative. To maximise its impact, the fund will need to be targeted at those cities where high increases in youth unemployment have been caused by the recession. Other funding streams, like the Flexible New Deal, will need to address more ingrained and long-term unemployment.

▶▶ Available at: <http://www.centreforcities.org/assets/files/09-06-23%20Youth%20unemployment.pdf>

▶ The Prince's Trust and ESRC - Rethinking recession: needs and opportunities for sector change

This short paper, commissioned by the Princes Trust, claims young people living in deprived areas not only face massive increases in unemployment but also a decimated local voluntary sector. It warns that youth charities may be unable to keep up with demand as funding disappears and services face spiralling demands from disadvantaged young people.

Despite the huge need for charitable services aimed at youth, youth causes currently receive just 1% of the voluntary sector's total income of £48 billion, capturing just 1.5% of private voluntary donations. Charitable trusts' donations to youth charities would fall by nearly £8 million if funds were to drop by just 3.8% in 2009, as predicted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the UK economy. Moreover, nearly a third of companies expect corporate giving to fall in the recession, putting further pressure on services for disadvantaged young people.

▶▶ Available at: <http://www.princes->

trust.org.uk/pdf/Princes%20Trust%20Rethinking%20Recession%20may09.pdf

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY

► **Brookings Institution – Protectionism Is on the Rise: Antidumping import investigations**

WTO agreements mean that trade tariffs in most places cannot be raised, but the Brookings Institute argues that protectionist can take other forms such as antidumping, anti-subsidy, and safeguard tariffs, and that the economic crisis has been accompanied by a marked increase in the use of such protection.

Comparing 2008 to 2007, the number of new anti-dumping investigations opened in 2008 was up 31%, while the number of anti-dumping measures actually applied increased by 19%. Developing countries dominate this trend on both sides; they initiated 73% of all new investigations and were the target of 78% of them. New figures continue an upward trend which began in the second half of 2007.

►► Available at: http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/0305_antidumping_bown.aspx

► **World Bank – Aid Effectiveness and Governance: the good, the bad and the ugly**

In this paper the effectiveness of aid today is compared with the world twenty years ago. It focuses on the donor community's failure to "face up to the new world reality", particularly the implications of the global financial crisis for future constraints on aid budgets, the changing needs of developing countries and the shift in the role of government more generally. It considers current pledges to be at strong risk of not being met and that this will have severe consequences for developing countries both directly and in terms of their relationships with donors.

Yet the crisis also opens up space for a radical change in our approach. This should involve:

- Giving priority to governance and political corruption;
- Furthering capacity, probity and freedom of the media;
- Fully embracing the IT revolution, where the traditional donor approach is behind;
- Accelerating adoption of and support for innovative public-private partnerships.

►► Available at: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTWBIGOVANTCOR/Resources/kaufmann-corrected.pdf>

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

► Cabinet Office- The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions

The 'Panel on Fair Access to the Professions' published its final report last week. Led by Alan Milburn, its 18 panel members examined the barriers and pathways to reaching professions for all people - regardless of their background. The report was commissioned by the Prime Minister following the 'New Opportunities' White Paper which examined the issue of social mobility and its importance for the economy and social justice.

The Panel found that the UK still had a 'closed shop' mentality when it came to the professions, and that the current generation of doctors, lawyers and senior civil servants may come from an even more privileged background than a generation ago, meaning both lower and middle class kids risks missing out. Up to seven million more professionals are likely to be needed in Britain by 2020 as the global economy expands. A new focus is therefore needed, the report says, to unleash aspiration in all children and make social mobility the number one social policy priority for this and future governments.

The report proposes 80 recommendations to achieve this, including replacing the current 'Connexions' careers service, requiring universities to publish the socio-economic background of their students, and asking the professions to review their recruitment and internship practices by 2010.

►► Available at: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/227102/fair-access.pdf>

► Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Fabian Society - Understanding attitudes to tackling economic inequality

This report claims that most people believe high incomes are fair and based on effort, while people on low incomes largely deserve to be poor. The financial crisis has produced greater distaste for the "super rich" but has had no impact on wider attitudes to the income gap between rich and poor. Echoing the Victorian concept of the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor, negative perceptions of benefit claimants were countered by strong sympathy for the working poor.

Recent research on UK public attitudes towards economic inequality and welfare policy has tended to focus more on highlighting attitudes than exploring what prompts them. This report attempts to investigate some of the underlying causes of such beliefs and fill in some of the gaps in the existing research base in ways that may provide useful insights for both academics and practitioners.

►► Available at: www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/attitudes-tackling-economic-inequality-full.pdf

► **National Institute for Economic and Social Research- The Business Case for Equal Opportunities**

It has long been argued that equality of opportunity brings business benefits and that it is in employers' interest to implement policies to promote equality of opportunity. Here the NIESR presents new evidence on this issue from the Workplace Employment Relations Survey 2004. There do not appear to be large and widespread business benefits associated with Equal Opportunities policies amongst the establishments that implement these; nor do there appear to be large and widespread costs to these businesses. Nevertheless, the report suggest that the net benefits to society of Equal Opportunities policies are likely to differ substantially from the net benefits to businesses.

►► Available at: http://www.niesr.ac.uk/pdf/300609_130607.pdf

OTHER

► **Fabian Society - In the Mix: Narrowing the gap between public and private housing**

The report argues that housing policy across the last century has been nothing short of disastrous for many people. Despite the great ambitions of successive Labour Governments, housing still fails too many social groups. This Fabian Policy Report shows a strong association between public housing, worklessness and poverty, but the system also fails first time buyers, people living in cities and even middle class home owners. This is only being made worse by the economic crisis.

The authors say that we need to get housing policy right for the recession years and for the longer term. With detailed policy proposals, 'In the Mix: Narrowing the gap between public and private housing' sets out proposals to make a fundamental shift in the way we think about housing, for example by mixing public and private, using holistic housing management, replacing Housing Benefit with a Housing Cost Credit, and balancing the 'right to buy' with a 'right to sell'.

►► Summary available at: <http://www.fabians.org.uk/publications/policy-reports/in-the-mix-narrowing-the-gap-between-public-and-private-housing>

► **HMG - New industry, new jobs: Building Britain's future**

This much-discussed paper sets out the Government's vision for Britain in the recovery and beyond, across the whole policy brief.

►► Available at: <http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file51023.pdf>