

Securing the future? Young people, diversity and work entry route strategies

Pauline Leonard, LLAKES,
University of Southampton

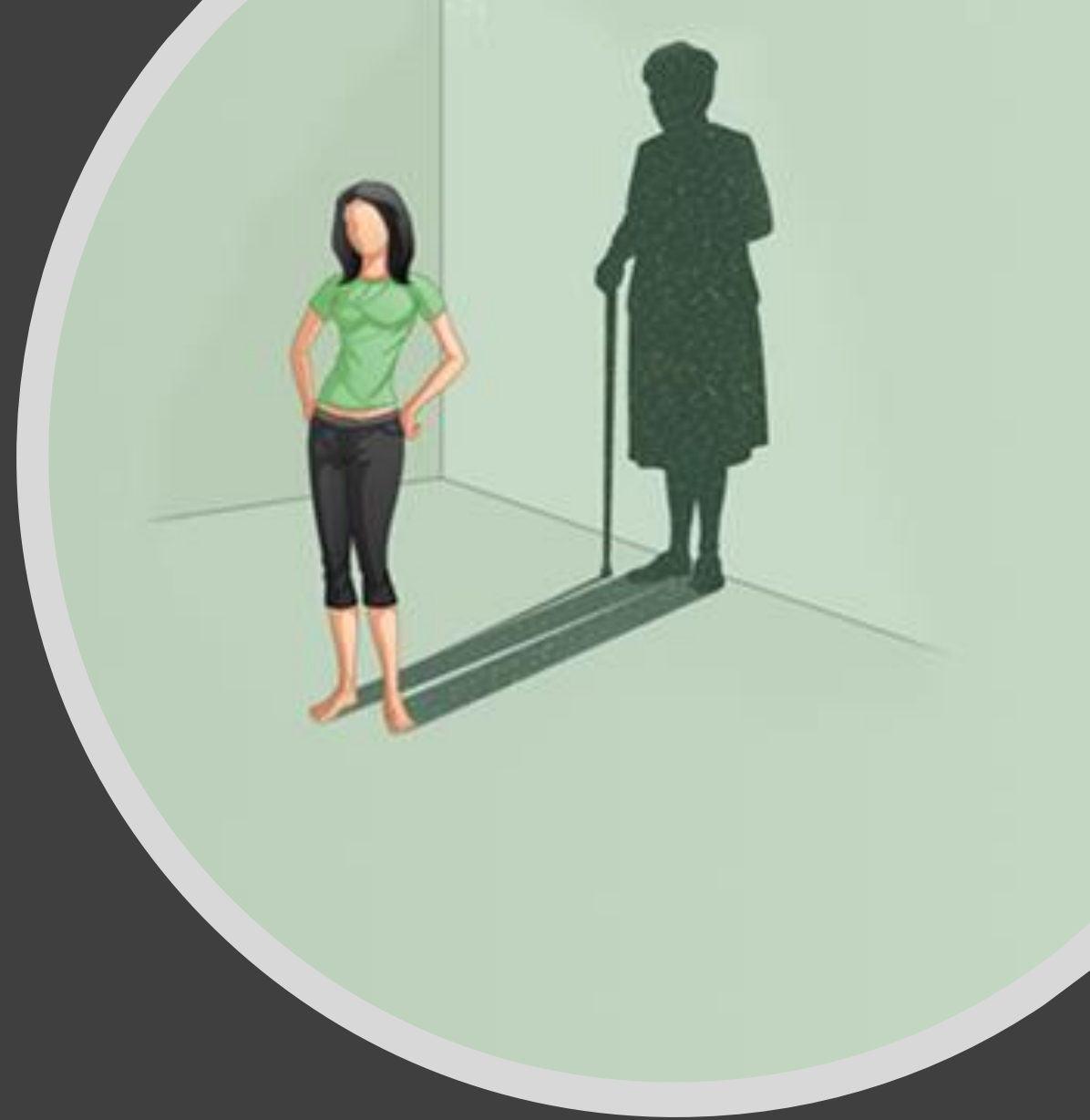
Bryony Hoskins, LLAKES,
University of Roehampton

Rachel Wilde, LLAKES,
Institute of Education, UCL



Securing the future? Young people, diversity and work entry routes

- ESRC LLAKES Research Centre Theme One : **Youth, Inter-generational Mobility, and Civic Values**
- Project 1.3 Getting in and Getting on in the Youth Labour Market: Entry Practices, Under-Employment and Skill Formation in Regional Economies
- Two sub-projects:
 - Ethnographic case studies of employability schemes
 - CELs data analysis : **how did young people negotiate pathways into employment during the economic recession?**



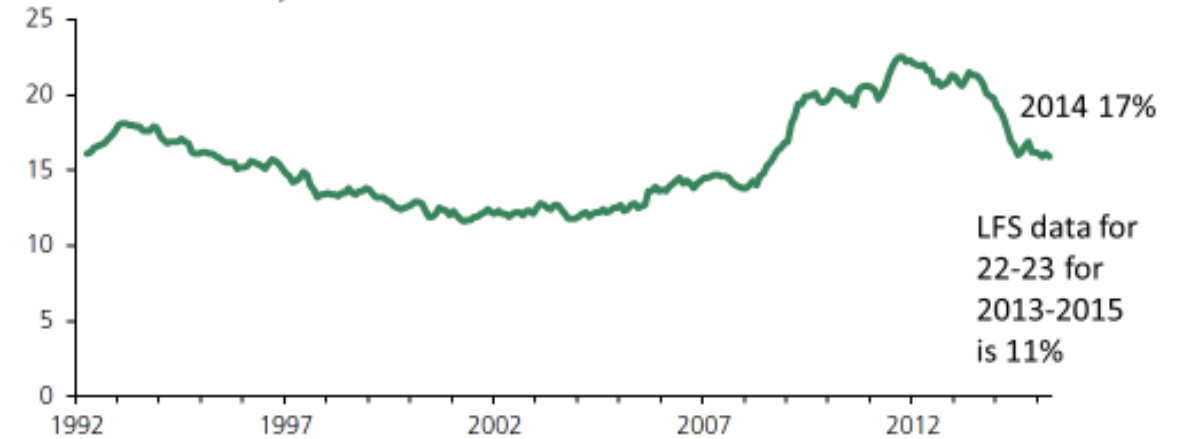
Securing the future? Young people, diversity and work entry routes : Background and rationale

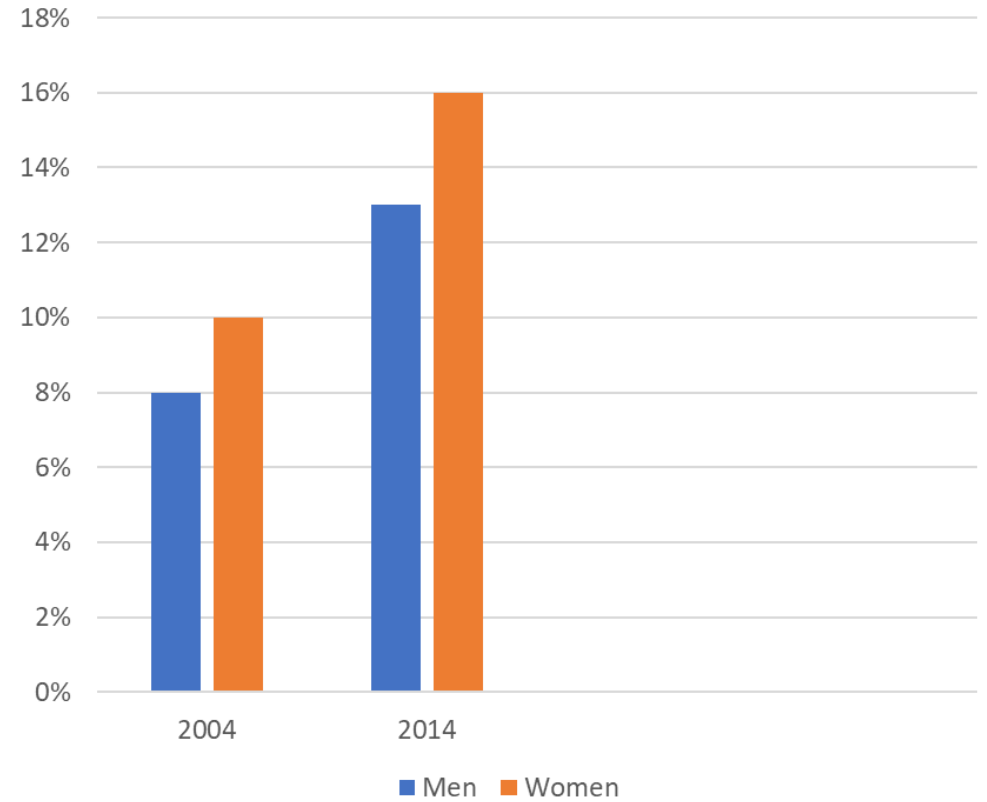
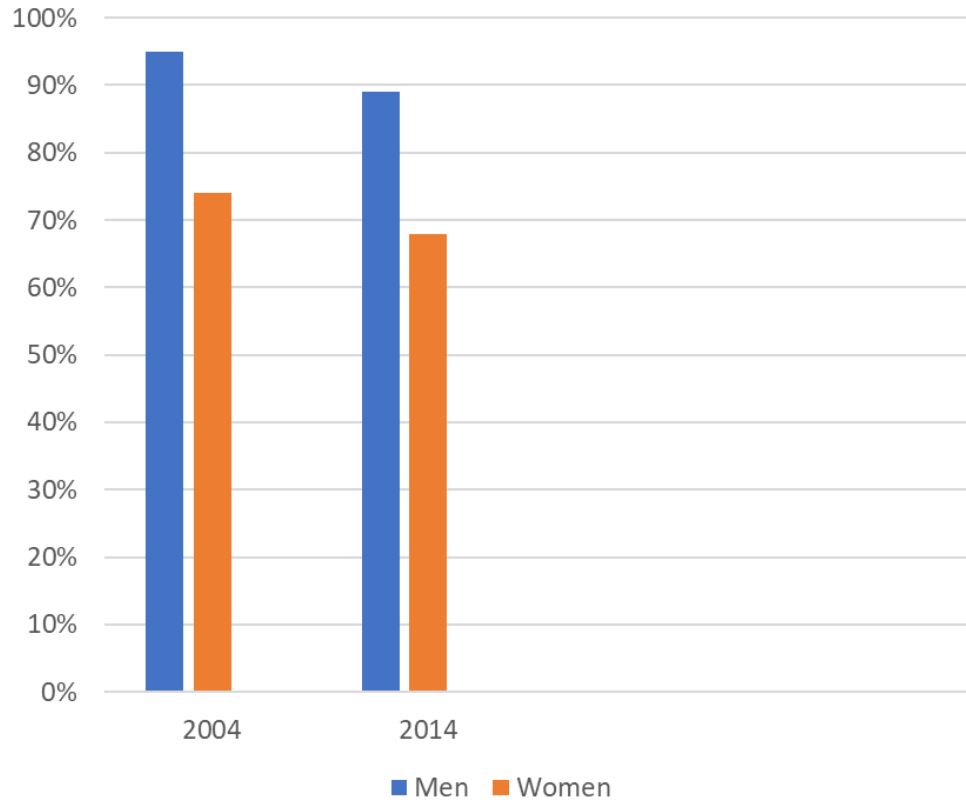
1. High levels of youth unemployment for young people of all educational backgrounds

Youth Unemployment

Unemployment Rate

People aged 16-24
% of economically active





2. Poor job quality:

Figure 1: Reduction in availability of full time work

Figure 2: Rise in levels of precariousness

A 'lost generation'?

Aim:

- To explore how different groups of young people fared during the critical period of economic uncertainty to inform future policy and practice.

Key research questions:

- How did young people from different educational backgrounds negotiate the contraction of job opportunities during this time?
- Who were the hardest hit and who were more successful in their strategies to find work or enter a desired career during this period?



Conceptual Framework

- Neoliberal context of economic instability, delayed transitions, individualization, responsabilization and choice:
- ‘Exploring’ /‘Floundering’?
- ‘Victims’ of the churning trap or ‘Surfers’ experimenting?
- Importance of class and gender



Mixed Methods

- **Quantitative**

- CELS Dataset:

Study began in 2003 young people aged 11/12

Every two years until 2011 (round 5) aged 19-20 and then finally in 2014 (aged 22-23)
Round 6

- Descriptive statistics
- Logistic regression using Rounds 5 and 6 of the longitudinal data

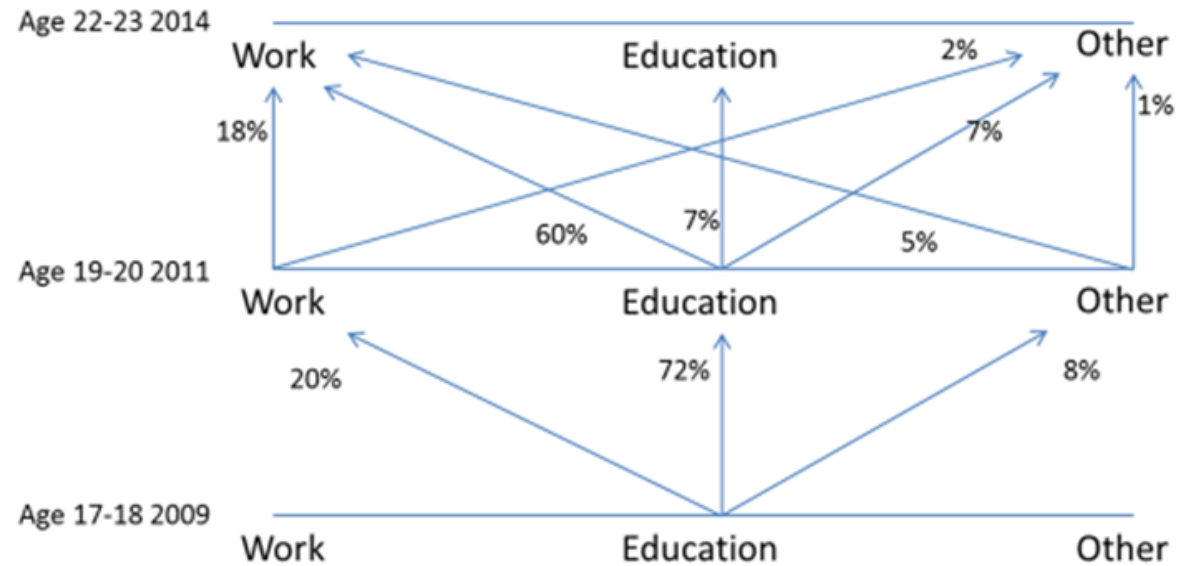
- **Qualitative**

- 101 interviews, approx. 1 hour each
- Majority drawn from CELS sample
- Top Ups via Twitter, and Youth Organisations for greater diversity
- Diverse social characteristics: class; gender; ethnicity; education; parental education

Descriptive Statistics: Trajectories for R4-6

- Most common route School-HE-Work
- By age 22-23
- Graduates in Work = 52%
- Graduates Not in Work = 7%
- School Leavers in Work = 20%
- School Leavers Not in Work = 1%

Pathways



284 cases (91% of cases who are in R4, R5 and R6)

First pathway analysis N=284

- Selected only students in education in R4
- Who participated in R4, 5 & 6
- Who answered these questions

Inferential analysis:

- Finding a job quite possible but
- Leaving school/college and transitioning into work at 19-20 in 2011 was the most effective method for being in work at 22-23
- Doing a degree was also effective but slightly less so
- Control variables show that **number of books in the home** (proxy for class) is **significant**: as these increase, so do the chances of being in work
- No gender difference

Results

	Logit coefficient	S.E.	Absolute odds ratio	Probability in work	Probability out of work
R5Degree	-0.519*	0.25	1.54	61%	39%
R5NEET	-1.709***	0.28	0.47	32%	68%
R5College	-1.09***	0.29	0.87	46%	54%
Constant (R5work/male/no books)	0.949	0.62		72%	28%

2

Social background

Books at home	mean	CI
Education then work	4.47	4.32-4.61
work then work	3.99	3.78-4.20

Limitations

Little information on quality of work or security of contracts



Does not reflect on what will happen throughout their lifetime – just the situation for them in 2014



Are the results effected by issues in the dataset (i.e. low levels of unemployment rate within the dataset compared to national levels)



Are these results something new and interesting or do young people after their degrees always take a bit of extra time to find a job?

Qualitative analysis: School leavers in work: *Securing the future*

- *“I’ve been in work since 2009 working at a care home, laundry and cleaning. . . I want more, because I’m growing up now, I want more hours, earn more money, more things. I’m young, I need to get out there, working hard and earning a good living”. (Louise, 22)*
- *I love to work. I LOVE to work. I do up to sort of 96 hours in a row. We do 12 hour shifts, 8 til 8, so I can do up to sort of 13 days in a row, maybe have a weekend off...**We’ve got this house recently, two weeks ago, so I’ve got a mortgage – quite scary, bit creepy, so a lot more responsibility...To me, earning money is more important than getting it down on paper, although I know I have to do that to go forward and earn more money, right now this took a lot of time and effort and money the past sort of year, so I’ve sort of just been working as much as possible...**(Emma, 22)*



“I am thinking long term. I want like an office job where it’s 9 to 5, get weekends off, I want it to be permanent, I want a pension! I’ve started to think that way...” (Charlotte, 22)

School leavers not in work: *Thwarted and unsupported*

- *“I would like to get a good job but I don’t have the education to get it. . . obviously there isn’t enough places so you have to go to your catchment school, which normally isn’t the best one that you’d wish to go to. In a way it is discrimination because you can’t go to that school because you can’t afford to live in the posh area, so. . .”*

(Jasmine, 24)

- *“...You were lied to. . . They Jobcentre said you would find employment from it if you stuck with volunteering . . . I didn’t though, all what happened was you work for 30 hours a week unpaid and if you didn’t you were homeless. . . People wouldn’t have minded so much if they said ‘you do this for a month and then you’re guaranteed a place”*
- (Dean, 23)

Graduates in work: *Biding time*



- *“.my position here at home is that I need to bring in a full time wage,. . . as much as I'd like to have this time now to just be able to do internships and then find my way, my mum needs me to bring in a proper wage, so I'm willing to take anything – the plan now is work full time now...then leave to go to a grad scheme next year” (Sophia, 22)”*
- *“The job, I started when I was in college, just Saturdays. As soon as I finished last year my job became a full-time post, so I thought until I get something in my field I might as well take this opportunity, and I don't regret it at all because I would have been without a job” (Parveen, 22)*
- *...it's been a bit disheartening, because I think it's hard to get a job, even though I may now have a Masters, I may now have much more experience, it's still really difficult to get a job in terms of what I want to do as well. So ...that's the shadow...I want to go into fashion buying, but it's highly, highly, highly competitive in terms of like they want people that have been able to work for 3 or 4 years before they can actually give you a job. It's one of those type of industries (Jamelia, 23)*

Graduates not in work: *Trying to find a balance*



- *My main goal is to find employment with a video production company in London, which I've been slowly working towards for the last year now. With that in mind, I've been slowly building up my portfolio of work as an editor/motion graphics designer in the hopes that it will boost my chances, and will make me stand out from other candidates. This is taking time, as it's not always easy to get work, so I work part-time in a restaurant close by, which, to be honest, is not where I imagined I'd be a year and a bit after graduation..." (Stephen, 22)*
- *"The problem is I have no money, so I'm stuck between getting a part-time job in somewhere like Sainsbury's and then doing something else to try and get into publishing at the same time, or to stick with unpaid work experience. I'm on Jobseeker's Allowance at the moment, I'm kind of torn between the two at the moment, I'm trying to find a balance, because obviously I need the money but I want to do what I want to do. . ." (Julia, 22-year-old White British postgraduate)*
- *It's not even about whether you've got a degree now, or like how hard you've done this. If you know the right people and if you get that opportunity where you know you can get it, then you just kind of do. (Humera, 21)*

Findings and Conclusions

“When I was 16 I thought I’d finish my degree, get a good job just like that and start earning. But now I’ve actually got out there and started looking for a job, it’s a lot harder than I expected” (Athula, 21)

1. Finding a job not that difficult, even within a restricted labour market, but finding a **good quality** job within a desired career pathway far less easy.

2. Most young people are delaying the transition into the labour market by pursuing higher education, with specific aspirations to improve job prospects. But for graduates, finding a job they enjoyed was sometimes harder than for school leavers, and thus more were disappointed.

3. Neither ‘*exploring*’ nor ‘*floundering*’ but more diverse: ‘*securing*’ the future; ‘*biding time*’ with unpaid work; just ‘*balancing*’ or ‘*thwarted*’ and ‘*unsupported*’.