

# Tackling ethnic minority youth unemployment

**ACTION FOR RACE  
EQUALITY**

# Ten recommendations for action



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# Introduction

This paper presents ten recommendations for actions to close the continuing employment gaps experienced by young Black men and other groups of ethnic minority young people in the UK.

These recommendations are particularly aimed at national and regional decision makers on youth employment and race equality policy. The recommendations are also relevant to agencies that make policy, allocate funding or deliver services in youth employment and/or racial justice, and to all employers.

These recommendations are based on evidence and learning from Action for Race Equality's 10 years as a strategic partner in the Moving on Up (MoU) initiative. From 2014 to 2024, MoU tested new approaches to improve employment outcomes for young Black men in London. Young Black men experience unemployment rates that are two to four times higher than young White men, regardless of their qualification levels.

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# Unemployment rates for young people, UK 2023

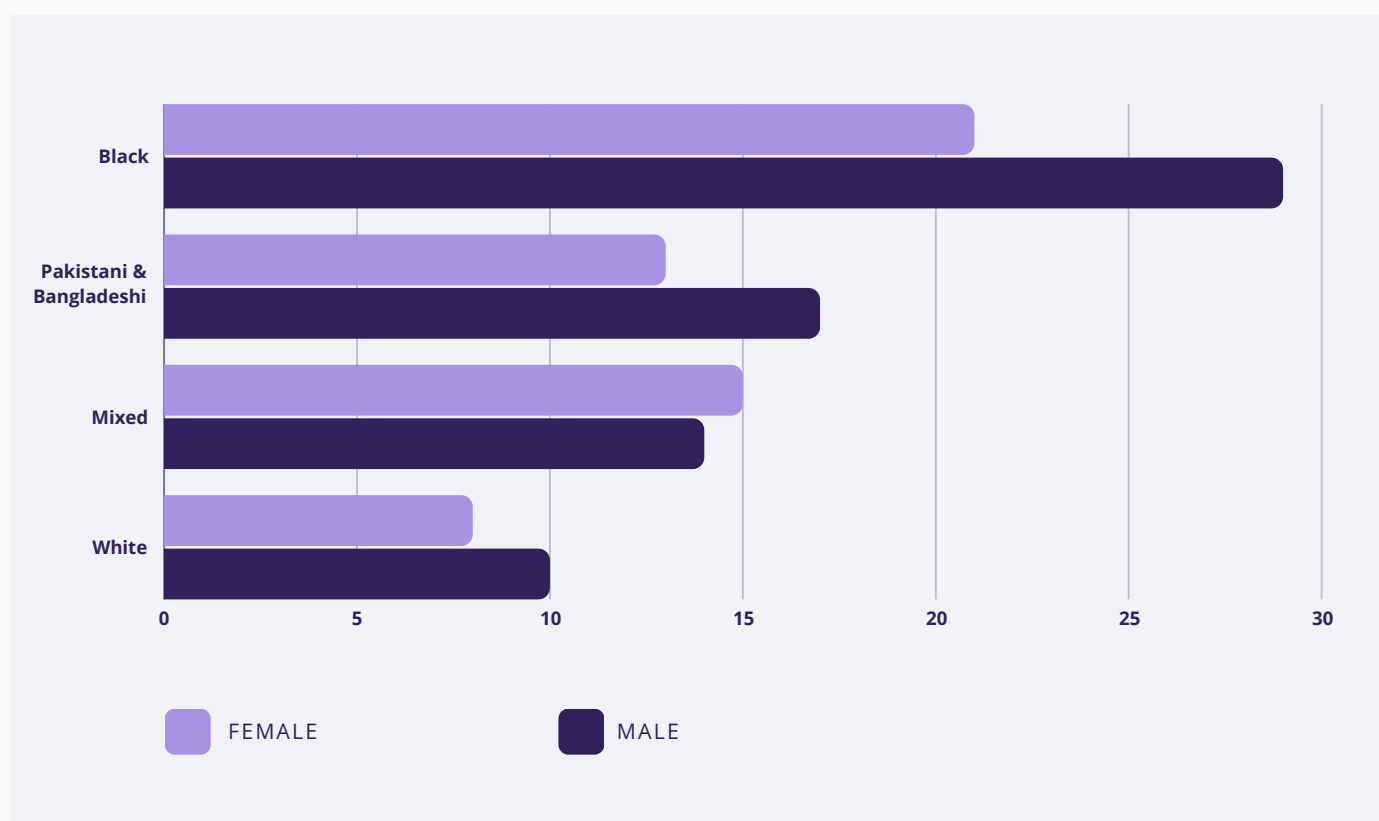
The chart shows unemployment rates (the % of the economically active population that meets the International Labour Office definition of unemployed – see definition below) for young people in the UK, by gender and ethnic group.

Data source

Annual Population Survey, Jan to Dec 2023

Office for National Statistics. (2024). Annual Population Survey, January - December, 2023. [data collection]. UK Data Service.

SN: 9248, DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-9248-1>



Definitions

Young people = age 16-24

Economically active = Economically active people are those aged over 16 who are either in employment or International Labour Organisation (ILO) unemployed. This group of people are those active in the labour force.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/methodologies/annualpopulationsurveyapsqmi#concepts-and-definitions>

Unemployed = economically active people without a job who are available to start work and have been actively seeking employment.

Unemployment rate = % of economically active people who are unemployed.



# Ten recommendations for action

ARE's ten recommendations for action to close the race disparities in youth employment:

**01 Set a national target.**

The government should set a national target to close the long standing gaps in unemployment rates between some ethnic minority groups and the averages for all young people.

**02 Establish regional targets and action plans.**

City and metro Mayors should establish appropriate regional targets and lead inter-agency action plans to improve employment outcomes for local populations facing barriers to labour market access and progression.

**03 Publish national and regional statistics on youth employment by ethnicity.**

The government should publish national and regional statistics on youth employment by ethnicity, age and gender so that disparities can be tracked and addressed, specifically for: unemployment rates, apprenticeship applications, and Universal Credit claimants.

**04 Target co-ordinated local action in areas of high ethnic minority unemployment.**

The government should initiate and resource co-ordinated local action to end racial disparities in unemployment rates within target areas. Jobcentre Plus; local authorities; Further and Higher Education institutions, and civil society organisations should be expected to work together to improve employment outcomes for local populations facing barriers to labour market access and progression.

**05 Invest in evidencing what works to end race disparities.**

The government and other funders of employment support should invest in research and evaluation to evidence what works to close the racial disparities in the recruitment, retention and progression of young people into quality jobs.



# Ten recommendations for action (continued)

## 06 Commission regional Positive Action Centres.

In partnership with city and metro Mayors, the government should commission five regional Positive Actions Centres to boost employer led initiatives and provide on-going expert support.

## 07 Mandate employers to collect and review workforce ethnicity data.

The government should mandate medium and large employers to collect, analyse, review and publish workforce data by ethnicity, age and gender in order to track the recruitment, retention and progression of young people from under-represented ethnic groups.

## 08 Encourage employer take up of existing positive action resources.

Rather than creating new race Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) or positive action resources, agencies should focus on updating existing resources and encouraging more employers to make use of these.

## 09 Put national leaders at the head of race equality campaigns.

Campaigns to encourage employer engagement in race EDI actions should be fronted by recognised leaders, such as Mayors or Ministers, to maximise the likelihood that employers will respond.

## 10 Race Equity in Employment Task Force.

The government, city and metro Mayors should engage with the evidence and recommendations from the Race Equity in Employment Task Force.

**This paper has been produced by Action for Race Equality.**

**The paper does not present the many achievements and successes of Moving on Up but focuses on how the lessons learned from the project should now be taken forward by politicians and officials with responsibility for youth employment and race equality policies.**



# More resources



A more detailed set of learning insights from the Moving on Up (MoU) is available for anyone interested.



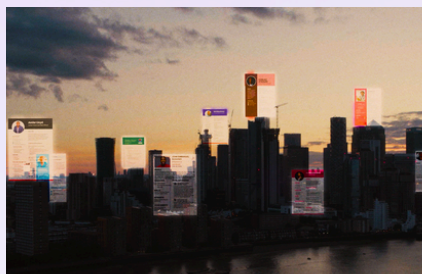
For this, or any other queries regarding MoU or the recommendations in this paper, please contact:



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PREPARING FOR YOUR INTERVIEW: TOP TIPS



MAYOR'S INCLUSIVE EMPLOYERS TOOLKIT



A JOURNEY TO INCLUSION: YOUNG, BLACK AND TALENTED

10  
YEARS

OF MOVING ON UP  
RESOURCES & PRODUCTS



POSITIVE ACTION  
GUIDE FOR  
CHIEF EXECUTIVES



COLLECTIVE IMPACT  
PARTNERSHIPS:  
EVALUATION REPORT