



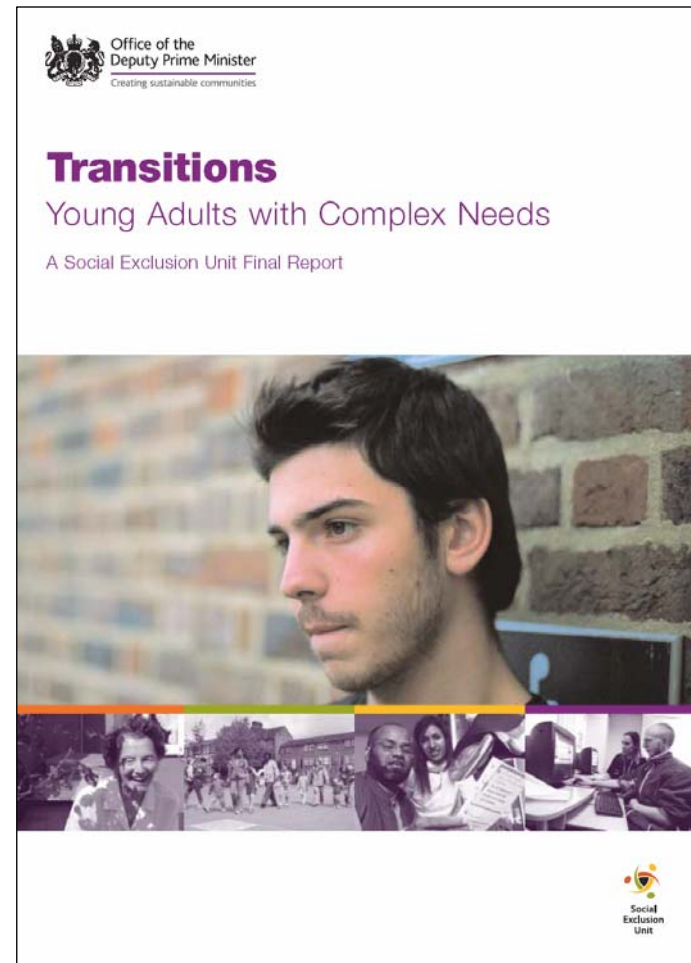
Transitions: Young Adults with Complex Needs

Alun Hughes
UK Social Exclusion Task Force

alun.hughes@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

Overview

- What is social exclusion?
 - Social Exclusion Unit
- Progress since 1997...
 - ... and remaining challenges
- The Transitions report
 - Aims
 - The problem
 - Key facts
 - The Solutions



What is Social Exclusion?

“Social exclusion is a complex and multi-dimensional process. It involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole”.

The Social Exclusion Unit - SEU

"Our vision is to end social exclusion. The task... will not be easy. But it is essential for the Government's success"

Peter Mandelson, August 1997

The **Social Exclusion Unit** was established by the British Prime Minister in 1997.

In 2006, members of the Unit combined with the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit to form the **Social Exclusion Task Force**

The SEU published over 50 reports. Subjects explored included:

- Rough Sleeping
- Teenage Pregnancy
- Young Runaways
- Mental Health
- Older People

The Social Exclusion Task Force published ***Reaching Out: An Action Plan for Social Exclusion*** in September this year

Progress to date

...and remaining challenges

- ✓ 2.5m more people in work
- ✓ 800,000 children and 1 million pensioners lifted out of relative poverty
- ✓ Rising incomes
- ✓ Rising educational achievement
- ✓ Falling crime

- × Poor employment rates and educational achievement for specific groups
- × 'NEETs'
- × Very lowest incomes = very lowest rates of growth

Aims of the Project

One of the key findings of *Breaking the Cycle* concerned the age boundaries of nearly all policy provision, and the paucity of arrangements which can support a young person through into early adulthood.

The aim of our project was to find out what caused young people (16-25) to experience problems in their transition to adulthood and draw up practical actions which would improve service delivery to young adults.

The Transitions Project

- Work with other **Government Departments**
- Engaged key stakeholders from the **voluntary sector** – local and national
- **Consulted** widely with practitioners through a written questionnaire, steering groups and visits
- Gathered views from a varied audience through a series of **regional road shows** and presentations at conferences
- 16 **focus groups** with vulnerable young adults
- Evaluated current **research** available on the 'Transition to Adulthood' and commissioned our own research on Thinking and Behaviour
- Produced an **interim report** in March 2005
- Published a **Final Report** *Transitions: Young Adults with Complex Needs* (November 2005)

Troubled youth – a new phenomenon?

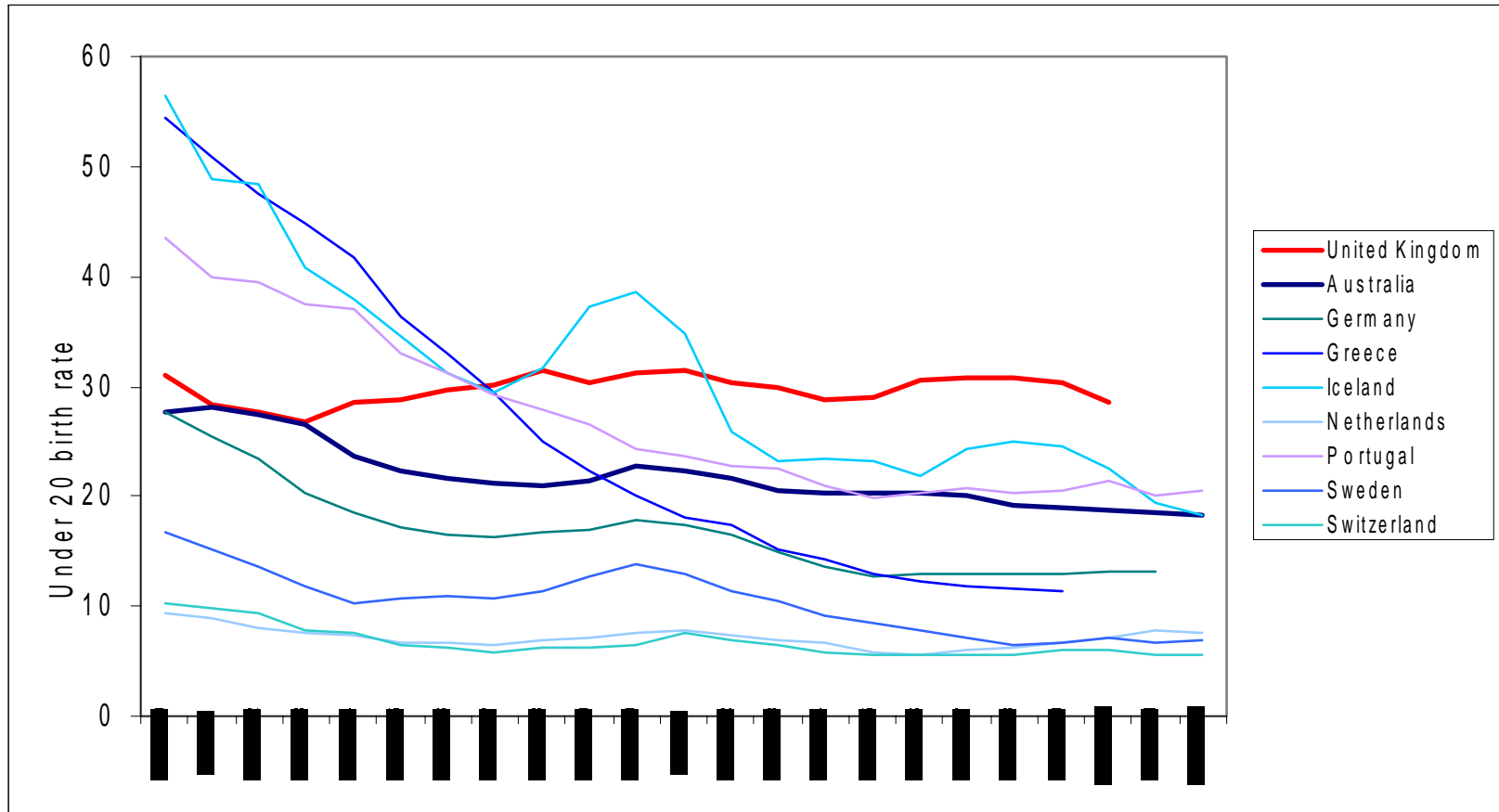
I would there were no age between ten and three and twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest; for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancients, stealing, fighting...

The Winters Tale, William Shakespeare, c1611

Key Facts

- **Suicide** is the cause of **a quarter of all deaths** amongst 16-24-year-old men
- **Substance misuse** affects around **a third to a half** of people with severe mental health problems
- Young people who have been in care are **two and a half times more likely to be teenage parents.**
- **Obesity** – up from 9.9% in 1995 to 14.3% in 2004 for 2-10 year olds
- **Binge drinking** – in 2004 a third of all young males and a quarter of all young women reported binge drinking in the week prior to survey

Under 20 Birth Rates 1980-2002: a comparison



The Key Areas

1) The role of the “trusted adult” & the importance of holistic services

“You might only have a few sessions with them then they are gone and a new one starts” *SEU Focus Group*

2) The problems caused by age-bound policies

“The problems associated with youth transitions do not conclude at neat, age-specific points” *Poor Transitions, Social Exclusion and Young Adults, Webster et al*

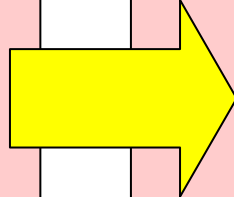
3) The thinking and behaviour of young people and its importance in policy making

“Make them feel like they are achieving something, tell them why they are doing the training and where it’s leading them” *SEU Focus Group*

Health: Thinking and behaviour

Issue:

Policies need to take into account the way young adults think and behave;



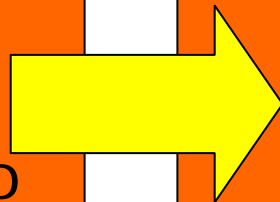
Areas for action:

- Drug treatment: capitalizing on the 'fateful moment';
- Promoting 'talking therapies'.
- Multisystemic Therapy

Health: Age boundaries

Issue:

- Support should follow need, not age;
- Better transition to adult services;
- Fewer cliff edges



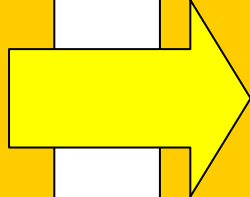
Areas for action:

- Better transition between CAMHS and AMHS
- More need-specific services

Health: The 'trusted adult' and holistic services

Issue:

Services should join up around young people; trusted adults are key for support



Areas for action:

- Funding streams that encourage holistic support
- Specialist services working through 'trusted adult'

What did the Project change?

- *Youth Matters*
- *Care Matters...* The Children in Care Green Paper
- ...in Health
- Social Exclusion Task Force
- Comprehensive Spending Review 2007



Transitions: Young Adults with Complex Needs

Alun Hughes
UK Social Exclusion Task Force

“When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years”.

Mark Twain, "Old Times on the Mississippi"