

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

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6.1 In this report the Committee has attempted to address each of the factors which influence the employment of young people in a logical manner. Young people are disadvantaged in the labour market. If they were not they would not experience proportionally greater unemployment than adults, at whatever that prevailing level of unemployment happened to be. The Committee's recommendations address both sides of the labour market for young people — those issues which affect the qualities young people take to the job market and those issues which affect the number of jobs and training opportunities which employers offer young people.

6.2 In attempting to address the disadvantaged position of young people the Committee has made recommendations which will help improve young people's skills and attitude and their awareness of employers' requirements. In essence, these are changes which will make young people better value to employers and hence more competitive when they are looking for a job. Part of this strategy is to improve young people's awareness of where the job opportunities are and to guide them in making career decisions which suit their interests and aptitudes.

6.3 The strategies to improve the employability of young people are long term and some, such as greater emphasis on literacy in primary schools, would take several years before affecting the position of young people in the labour market. This is consistent with the Committee's expectation at the commencement of the inquiry that there would be no easy solutions.

6.4 The Committee was not able to agree on recommendations in relation to youth wages. The members of the Coalition parties on the Committee, however, agreed on a number of substantial recommendations about youth wages addressing the factors which distort the labour market decisions of employers and young people. It is **not** the intention that the proposed National Youth Wage be set at a low level inconsistent with Australian community values and expectations. However, the Committee members from the Coalition parties do not believe it is possible to retain the existing youth wage structure and adequately address its deficiencies. The existing structure discourages the adequate provision of employment based training opportunities by employers and participation in them by young people. The Committee as a whole agreed that payroll tax on all employees under 21 years of age should be abolished.

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