



Intergenerational Futures All Party Parliamentary Group



Inquiry into Intergenerational Fairness and Employment

Call for evidence

The Intergenerational Futures All Party Parliamentary Group (IGF APPG) is conducting an inquiry which will explore some fundamental issues concerning intergenerational fairness and employment. Some of these issues would arise even in benign economic conditions, but the inquiry will also consider the immediate impact of the current recession on intergenerational fairness and employment policy and practice.

We would be grateful to have your advice on the most important and urgent problems in this policy area as well as your suggestions as to reasonable remedies that could be introduced to tackle them. In addition to seeking advice on the key issues affecting intergenerational fairness and employment, we would welcome brief case studies which illustrate excellent business practice in promoting intergenerational fairness in employment.

Some specific issues the inquiry team wishes to explore include:

1. How should the concept of “intergenerational fairness” be defined in terms of employment policy and practice?
2. Does the extension of opportunities for older people to remain in the workforce restrict opportunities for young people by limiting opportunities for entry to the labour market and promotion once in it?
3. Are British employers securing the best balance between experience and youth and, if not, why not? Is this balance likely to change during the recession?
4. Which employers have proved notably successful in achieving an effective blend of young and older workers? How do they cope with any issues of intergenerational conflict that may arise between young and older workers?
5. Are some significant Government policies discriminating unfairly in favour of certain age groups – that is, is there discrimination and, if so, is this discrimination unjustified (for example, comparing support for provision of apprenticeships, between provision for the 16-19 age group with 0/25s)?
6. Do employers give the same priority and financial support for training provision for all age groups?
7. In the UK some 75% of the 2020 workforce is already in work and we face a significant skills gap. Should all employers be encouraged to support the development of a culture in which it is the norm for individuals to develop their skills throughout their working lives by making their training programmes equally available to all workers regardless of age?
8. Should support for “middle-aged” workers – both in employment and among the unemployed - be improved? Policy-makers often focus on the needs of young and old people, but middle-aged

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people may be bearing the greatest social and financial burdens – caring for children and elderly parents, while paying a mortgage – so employment opportunities at this age can be crucial.

9. Is legislation in the UK concerning maternity/paternity leave now so generous that it places an unfair burden on other workers, especially those without children, and small businesses? If so, should it be restricted or should the Government be made to bear a greater share of the economic cost of providing it (such as compensating small businesses for the additional costs of hiring cover for staff on maternity/paternity leave)?

10. Should policy and legislation to support those with caring responsibilities be applied equally to parents and grandparents caring for children and grandchildren and to people with elderly, dependent parents? Is this fair to other workers, (those without dependent children or parents) who may bear the burden of covering for absent colleagues, and to small businesses? If such policies are desirable, should the Government be made to bear a greater share of the economic cost of provision, including compensating small businesses for the additional costs of hiring cover for staff?

11. Given gender differences in the shape of career paths, how should policies designed to ensure intergenerational fairness take such differences into account and thereby promote fairness between and within generations?

12. Should flexible working be encouraged as a means of allowing people of all ages to achieve a better work-life balance? Would more extensive flexible working improve the likelihood of achieving intergenerational fairness or is it likely to be of disproportionate benefit to some generations?

13. How do (or should) employers, especially small businesses and organisations, mediate between employees' competing claims for flexible working, taking into account the needs of the organisation and intergenerational fairness?

14. Is the current recession having a disproportionate impact on the employment opportunities available to certain generations and, if so, should they receive greater Government support than is currently being made available?

15. How does the Government decide how to allocate resources to support employment between young people, the middle-aged and older workers? Does it help that relevant support programmes – and Ministerial responsibility for their success - are divided between the DCSF, the DIUS and the DWP?

Guidance to those submitting written evidence

Written evidence is invited in response to the questions listed above and other relevant issues, **to arrive by 30 June 2009.**

Intergenerational fairness and employment policy and practice is a huge and complex issue. There is no need for individual submissions to deal with all the issues referred to in this document. Evidence should be kept as concise as possible: submissions of not more than three sides of A4 paper of free-standing text, are preferred.

If you are drawing the inquiry team's attention to an example of best practice, please include a one paragraph summary of the case study *and* a one paragraph summary of its impact (ie evidence of success) to date in your evidence.

Evidence should be sent electronically to patricia.constant@centrallobby.com Submissions will be acknowledged. Any enquiries should be addressed to Patricia Constant.

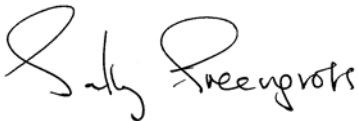
Evidence should be attributed and dated, with a note of the author's name and position. Please state whether evidence is submitted on an individual or corporate basis.

Evidence becomes the copyright of the IGF APPG and may be printed or circulated by the IGF APPG. You may also publicise or publish your evidence yourself.

This is a public call for evidence. You are invited to bring it to the attention of other organisations and individuals who may not have received a copy directly.

The members of the IGF APPG inquiry team include: Baroness Greengross (Chair), Baroness Howe of Idlicote and John Leech MP.

The final report and recommendations will be launched in the autumn and it will be submitted to Ministers and Shadow Ministers, who will also be invited to the report's launch.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Greengross". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Baroness Greengross OBE

CLC, 7 May 2009