

NIACE Research and Development



Key Findings



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NIACE Adult Participation in Learning Survey 2006

Abstract

The 2006 NIACE Adult Participation in Learning survey continues the series documenting adult participation in learning in the UK. Using responses of around 5,000 adults in the UK, it offers key findings, breaking down participation, trends in participation and future intentions to learn by a range of demographics. It provides up to date data as well as a valuable means for comparison over time.

In 2006, questions were also asked on paying for learning, attitudes towards qualifications, learning at work and media literacy. Additional analysis and commentary on these questions will be released throughout the year.

Research methodology:

The survey, undertaken by RSGB, interviewed a weighted sample of 4,924 adults, aged 17 and over in the UK in the period 15 Feb – 5 March 2006. Respondents were selected from a minimum of 139 sampling points by a random location method, and were interviewed at home through computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI).

Key Findings

The main conclusions of the project are:

- ❖ One in five adults are currently learning, with 42% having participated in some learning activity during the last three years. Just over one third of adults have not participated in learning since leaving full-time education.
- ❖ Participation in learning varies by gender, socio-economic class, age, employment status, terminal age of education and occupational sector.
- ❖ Women are more likely than men to be participating in learning.
- ❖ Socio-economic class is a key determinant of participation with those in the highest around twice as likely to be learning than those in the lowest.

- ❖ Workers and the unemployed are more likely to be learning than those not in paid employment and the retired.
- ❖ The older people are, the less likely they are to participate in learning.
- ❖ There is a key divide in participation between those who leave school at the earliest opportunity and those who stay on, even for a short while.
- ❖ Participation varies by occupational sector, with the highest rates to be found within the health and education sectors.
- ❖ There is little variation in participation either nationally or by English region. 47% of adults who have left full time education say that they are likely to take up learning in the next three years; 50% are unlikely to do so.

Recommendations

Output

- ❖ Aldridge, F. and Tuckett, A. (2006) *Green Shoots: The NIACE survey on adult participation in learning*, Leicester: NIACE

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Duration: Annual survey. Fieldwork undertaken during February - March. Results released in May for Adult Learners' Week.

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Requests for 'Key Findings' in other formats, such as large print, are welcome. We would be pleased to consider your request.



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