



Public affairs with a difference...

Welfare, Work, Economy, poverty, jobs

### Public sector workers to lose perks

Daily Telegraph, The Times, Independent

IT emerged last night that annual leave and sick pay for c450,000 public sector employees could be cut under a wide-ranging review of civil service employment terms and conditions.

A senior manager in Whitehall said this was an **“opportunity”** for officials to cut back on out-of-date perks which have left the Civil Service **“open to caricature”**.

Senior aides to Francis Maude, the Cabinet Office minister, said the review was considered necessary and that privileges that will be reviewed include the right to time off to mark the Queen’s Birthday and a half-day on Maundy Thursday.

Perks such as the generous clothing allowance, whereby the taxpayer can meet the bill to replace snagged tights, have prompted critics to say that civil servants lead a pampered lifestyle.

It emerged that a male employee who damaged a £300 woollen suit at work would be paid £225 if it was 12 months’ old and £150 if it was two years’ old.

The Daily Telegraph also disclosed this year that a growing number of officials were working nine-day fortnights by cutting short their lunch breaks and staying in their offices until 6pm.

### British teenagers are the happiest people in Britain

The Daily Telegraph

TEENAGERS are the happiest people in Britain despite high youth unemployment and the prospect of university tuition fees of up to £9,000 a year.

A report by the Office for National Statistics found that 16 to 17-year-olds were the **“most satisfied”** with life.

Teenagers were also found to be the most optimistic about the future and the least anxious. When asked how optimistic they felt about the next 12 months, 16 to 19 year-olds gave an average score of 8.5 out of 10. This compared with a score of under six out of 10 for people aged between 50 and 54.

This optimism may be considered surprising against the background of rising tuition fees and unemployment among 16 to 24 year-olds hitting a million.

### Graduates taking lower paid jobs

Daily Telegraph

A study, by the Higher Education Careers Service Unit, says that employment prospects are **“better than feared, despite a weakening economy and further job losses from public spending cuts”**.

However, it was claimed that many graduates had to turn to relatively poorly paid work. Companies were now checking students’ “credentials” and employing graduates in lower-skilled jobs, the study found.

The study, published jointly with the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services, was based on an analysis of students who left university in summer last year and analysed their position last January.

According to the figures, 104,455 graduates were in a skilled job, compared with 100,265 last year, a rise of 4.2 per cent.

The number of university leavers in non-graduate jobs rose by six per cent from 57,910 to 61,395.

A separate study published earlier this year found that, of those graduates in work, 14 per cent were in sales and customer service positions, including sales assistants, market traders and call centre staff.

### Youngsters drop soft subjects to get jobs

The Daily Telegraph

RISING numbers of teenagers are dropping **“soft subjects”** in favour of core academic disciplines during the recession, according to research.

Colleges are reporting a fall in enrolment for courses such as hair and beauty and the arts this autumn compared with last year.

The Association of Colleges, which carried out the study, said the shift reflected growing demand from businesses for workers with advanced technical skills.

It is also likely to be driven by the Government’s decision to almost triple university tuition fees to £9,000 this year.

### Kingfisher cuts jobs

The Daily Telegraph

KINGFISHER, the owner of B&Q, is to cut 220 jobs at its head office in Southampton.

The company said it was making the cuts, which represent around 15pc of head office staff, to create a more “customer focused, agile, omni-channel retailer”, and warned that the changes were “fundamental to creating sustainable jobs and the future growth of the business”.

Last month Kingfisher reported a near-20pc profit fall due to Britain's wet summer.

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## **Insulation scheme delays threaten thousands of jobs**

**The Daily Telegraph**

INSULATION industry groups have warned that delays to the Government's flagship energy efficiency schemes will put 16,000 people out of work over the next year. Ministers are preparing to introduce the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO) to replace energy efficiency schemes that finish this year.

However, in an open letter to Energy Secretary Ed Davey, the Insulation Industry Forum, which represents 70pc of the UK's insulation industry, warned that it is **"extremely concerned about the Government's plans for its implementation"**.

It argued that the gap between existing schemes ending and the new schemes becoming fully operational will "put 16,000 people out of work in the industry over the next year – with many jobs going before Christmas".

**yes**Minister

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