

2.10 Deputy D.W. Mezbourian of St. Lawrence of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding the numbers of school leavers not entering further education:

Would the Minister advise Members of the number of students who left school this year, and of those leavers the number who did not go into any form of further education?

Senator M.E. Vibert (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):

The number of students who reached the end of their compulsory education at age 16 in 2006 was 1,038. Of this number, 882 have continued in full-time further education on the Island. This leaves a total of 156, some of whom have gone into employment, including apprenticeships, which may involve part-time day release courses at Highlands. Some will have left the Island, and a number will still be seeking work. The Career Service will, over the next few weeks, be gaining more detailed information on the destinations of these young people.

2.10.1 Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

According to recently released unemployment statistics, 38 more people were registered as unemployed in August than July. Will the Minister advise whether there is any tracking system in place between his department and Social Security to monitor how many school leavers register as unemployed?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The emphasis is “register as unemployed.” There is no compulsion on young people to register as unemployed. What we do do is at the end of September we ask all secondary schools to compile destination lists of students; so whether they are going on to Hautlieu, whether they are staying on at school, whether they are going to Highlands, et cetera. Those with no known destination listed next to them, the Career Service attempt to contact by telephone to offer their services and we will be doing that in the next few weeks. That is how we keep track and try to ensure that we offer whatever help we can to any young person who has left school and is still not in employment.

2.10.2 Deputy J.A. Martin:

From his answer, it does seem clear that the Education Minister does not really have any idea what happens to the 156 young people. Some may be employed; some may not be. What my question is, Sir, is how closely does he work with the Minister for Social Security? I know there is no need to register, but surely if there are 156 16 year-olds in Jersey - and the Minister says some may have left the Island - I am quite concerned that 16 year-olds feel forced to leave the Island because they have no unemployment. How closely are these 2 Ministers working together for the children of 16 who are finding themselves leaving school with no prospects of employment and having to leave the Island?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I do not think the Deputy was listening at all to the answer, or at least did not understand it in any form whatsoever. As I said, a total of 156 have not gone on to further education, a number of whom have gone into employment, including apprenticeships...

2.10.3 Deputy J.A. Martin:

If he is quoting numbers and he knows exact figures, could the Minister please inform the House, a number of whom ... If he knows the answer, can he please let us know?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Again, Sir, I do not think the Deputy was listening or understood. As I said, by the end of September, when we know who has gone on to further education, we then do ask all the schools to return to us a destination list, which they are compiling now. Following that destination list being returned to us, we then will know exactly how many have gone on to education in school; we will know exactly how many have gone on to Highlands; we will get a very good idea, unless they have changed jobs in between, which have gone on to employment, and we will then know the number that are left that we have no destination for; and as I said, we contact those, or attempt to contact all those by phone so that we can offer our help. So we are doing and we do work closely with Employment and Social Security to ensure that we continue to help and try to ensure that no young person who has left full-time education is left without any support and advice on gaining employment.

2.10.4 Deputy J.A. Hilton of St. Helier:

It is my understanding that the construction faculty at Highlands College currently offer in the region of something like 28 places to school leavers to pursue apprenticeships in the construction industry, and it is also my understanding that this year 80-odd youngsters applied for those places, so obviously there were quite a number who would have been disappointed. Can the Minister tell me whether in light of those statistics he is going to look at increasing the number of places available to those children - those 16 year-olds - who wish to pursue an apprenticeship in the construction industry?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes, Sir.

2.10.5 Deputy A. Breckon of St. Saviour:

I wonder if, concerning the process the Minister has just described about monitoring, about people leaving and where were their destinations, the Minister could give Members any figures from previous years and say whether it is just a new phenomenon or whether it has been in place before; and if he cannot do that now, if he would agree to do that in short notice, Sir?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I cannot compare with this year's figures because we have not compiled this year's figures yet, but when we have them I am quite happy to compare with previous years' figures and let the Deputy and other States' Members have them.