

Press Release
Youth Work Ireland
10 May 2011



“Extra Places in Jobs Initiative a Move in the Right Direction but More Needs to be Done for Young Unemployed” Says Leading Youth Organisation

Youth Work Ireland has today given a cautious welcome to new places announced in education, training and internships announced in the Jobs Initiative. The youth organisation, many of whose members deliver frontline education and training services, has emphasised the need to deal with the lack of capacity in the education and training system where the huge level of demand from young people is not being met. Young people should be given a range of options including quality training, second chance programmes further education, work experience and starting a business if jobs are scarce at home. However the youth organisation believes that targets for internship numbers in the programme for government are unrealistic and more emphasis should be placed on quality education and training.

“The commitments in the new Programme for Government may be overly reliant on exorbitant numbers taking up internship programmes. The current internship programme run by FAS has scarcely filled its target of 2,000 so it is hard to see how we are suddenly to fill 60,000 places on a similar programme. With economic growth returning in other major economies Ireland is now experiencing a substantial rise in emigration particularly amongst young people. There must be a dedicated jobs strategy for young people if we are to avoid a return to the massive emigration of the 1980s which so decimated communities. Young people are desperately seeking employment, education and training but the options are simply not there. The new places announced today are a step in the right direction. Young people can be the innovation that drives a new economic recovery in smart industries but policies must facilitate greater capacity in the education and training system so that in the future certain areas can grow and succeed providing qualified young people with a chance in this country.” said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“Ireland’s recession is becoming a lengthy one and it disproportionately affects our young people. There can be no recovery on the backs of people who have the least. Jobs strategies and initiatives need to have specific and dedicated measures that help young people. Work experience and internships can play a part but young people need real skills and real work. There are numerous restrictions and blockages in the education and training system, real public reform can address these and free up capacity to accommodate the huge demand for education and training amongst our young people. Increased emigration amongst young people is a major economic issue as this group has been very well educated, now a different country will reap the benefit of this investment and Ireland will lack the people and the skills to build a smart economy. We need to see young people as a resource for example in starting new smart tech companies in new economic areas. These measures can generally be achieved quite cheaply if social welfare savings are applied in keeping these young people off the dole queues” Mc Loughlin added

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