



Youth Work Ireland

Press Release  
Youth Work Ireland  
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**“Voluntary and Community Bodies need to be Involved in Key Lottery Decisions” says Leading Youth Organisation**

Youth Work Ireland today said that voluntary and community bodies, who benefit from National Lottery funds, needed to be consulted about any decisions relating to the future of The National Lottery. The youth organisation believes that any change to the lottery should benefit the areas set out in the original Act governing the operation of the Lottery and could go a long way to protecting frontline services to the most vulnerable groups. The youth group pointed out that the original aim of the lottery was to provide funds for areas and groups that did not traditionally benefit from Government support and that major changes to this should not be rushed in to. The organisation said it was not so important who ran the lottery but the amounts generated for good causes was critical and any windfall or potential extra revenue should benefit front line services in the areas set out in the 1986 Act and subsequently in Iris Offigiul.

“We all know that the National Lottery is there to support good causes such as the arts and youth work. The entire logic of establishing the fund was to support things which were not being supported out of Government coffers. I’m sure Lotto players would think that their money goes straight to those good causes; however this is often not the case. Several areas supported by the Lottery have been subjected to drastic cuts of about 25%. We know that several disadvantaged communities will suffer due to swinging cuts to the youth projects around the country, many in very disadvantaged communities” said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“Any changes to the lottery need to be carefully examined and be consistent with the principles under which it has operated since its foundation. If the Government can generate a windfall through privatization that is a matter for consideration but the areas that benefit from the lottery must also benefit from such a development. It is hard to see the logic of putting all the benefits from a privatization in to one single project no matter how worthy, while other areas supported by the lottery down the years are closing important front line services around the country. While there may be commercially sensitive elements to such negotiations the voluntary and community sector who depend so much on lottery funding need to be consulted on whatever arrangements might emerge” Mc Loughlin added

ENDS

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