



## Youth Work Ireland

Press Release  
Youth Work Ireland  
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### **“Sinn Fein Bill Highlights Legalized Pay Discrimination for Those Doing Equal Work Side by Side” says Leading Youth Organisation**

Youth Work Ireland has welcomed the publication by Sinn Fein of a Bill to review the situation of young people in relation to the minimum wage. The organisation, who’s members work with over 110,000 young around the country, considers it is high time that the unequal treatment of young people in relation to the minimum wage is examined. The youth group believes that the differential rate paid to young people is grossly unfair and may be an intrusion on their rights to privacy and equality as it is based on certain assumptions about their personal circumstances. It is also fitting that the issue is being highlighted at the same time as there is much outrage about the gender pay gap which is not lawful whereas this discrimination is provided for in legislation. The organisation is urging politicians to consider grounds of equality in analyzing this question

*“It is wholly unacceptable that young people are paid less for precisely the same work as older people who they could even be working alongside in the same workplace. This discrimination is based on outmoded and outdated Victorian ideas. It is predicated on the notion that young people have less responsibilities than others and this is far from clear. Such an assumption intrudes in to young people’s personal lives and is not acceptable in the tax or welfare code for other people. We do not, for example, vary the minimum wage for people with more children or those who may care for older people or people with disabilities. In the end of the day the state does not get involved in our personal circumstances to any great degree. The responsibilities or lack of responsibility are personal issues for individuals and should not be brought in to the issue of the minimum wage particularly though legislation. Employers and employees can negotiate deals depending on their situations, but the state should treat everybody the same. Apart from marriage the only area where this is provided for is in relation to the minimum wage and young people”* said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

*“The issue of equal pay for equal work has rightly been highlighted due to the gender pay gap recently as people are shocked that women can earn less than men. However, this type of discrimination is unlawful, and the figures often reflect aggregate rather than individual situations. Discrimination against young people is however allowed for and indeed provided for in legislation, it is high time this changed. In fact, the biggest issue with this age cohort is the lack of opportunity which is driving many to emigration. We can see from the amount of internships and other arrangements that young people are motivated and trying their best to break in to the jobs market. A change to the lower rate for young people would be an important incentive and assist the huge number of them working in lower paid service jobs”* Mc Loughlin added

ENDS

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