

Achieving Better Outcomes in our National Budget

Budget Submission 2015



Youth Work Ireland

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HEALTHY

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DEVELOPMENT

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Executive Summary

The Government has recently launched an ambitious Policy Framework for children and young people. If the ambition of this joined up strategy is to be delivered a whole of Government Approach will be needed and this has been sadly lacking in the past. Enormous damage has been done to the lives of young people and those who work with them since the beginning of the recession as has been illustrated by a number of expert reports.

It is now clear that the worst of the austerity days are over and the Government is faced with a relatively neutral budgetary situation in order to restore some of the damage done during the recession measures we suggest are costed individually on this assumption. The discrete amounts needed can be raised from the introduction of minimum pricing for alcohol consistent with the National Substance Misuse Strategy which will have knock on effects on excise duty and adjustments to policy on the National Lottery.

1. Implement the National Substance Misuse Strategy (€14m)
2. Delivery on the various guidelines on diet and exercise for young people through schools and voluntary youth services for example those recommended by Safe Food Ireland (€2m)
3. Establish a fund for community based sports and leisure activity for young people (€6m)
4. Increase Excise duty to fund the above and other measures in this submission consistent with various expert reports (+€75m)

1. Deliver on the Junior Cycle Student Award (no cost)
2. Introduce similar reform for the Leaving Certificate (no cost)
3. Reintroduce the Early School Leavers Survey (€0.5m)
4. Increase support for literacy and numeracy work in schools and voluntary youth services (€5m)
5. Increase support for voluntary youth services who work with early school leavers and the hardest to reach young people, support certified learning in these informal settings (€8m)

1. Implement the Report of the Internet Safety Review Group (€1m)
2. Increase Support for Garda vetting in light of the Garda Netting Bureau Act 2012 (€2m)
3. Ensure TusLa is operating on a secure financial footing (to be determined)
4. Expand the remit of Garda Diversion projects (€2m)



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5. Support a broad range of youth activities to combat anti-social behaviour in our communities (€2m)

1. The network of Youth Information Centres need to be reinforced and become the backbone of a youth focused pre-employment service linked to the Pathways for Work Initiative (€2m)
2. 10,000 new places to be made available for young people on labour market relevant courses utilising voluntary youth services to source the most disadvantaged where relevant (€28m net of Youth Guarantee contribution)

1. The amount for good from the National Lottery causes should be set at 33% and this should be a key deliverable for any franchisee. (€3m for youth services)
2. 20% of any windfall arising from the sale of the lottery license should be ring fenced for the good causes the lottery supports. This should be in a dedicated fund which will help these key areas salvage their services from the higher than average cuts they have been subjected to in recent years. (+€2m Annuity)
3. Funding for youth affairs should increase by 3% in Budget 2015 to undo the damage of the past (€1.5m)



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Introduction

It isn't always easy being young in Ireland today. The economic downturn and the decline in traditional institutions means everybody is worried about the future. It is often said young people are the Ireland of tomorrow, we disagree, young people are the Ireland of today! All around this country by engaging with young people in our communities our workers and volunteers make Ireland a better place for young people to develop as active citizens.

Our work ensures young people choose healthy lifestyles, engage with their communities and develop as well rounded citizens today and for the future. By entrusting young people with leadership roles today we know our countries future is in safe hands tomorrow.

Ireland needs strong and vibrant local youth services in all our communities. Youth Work Ireland makes a real difference to young people's lives today and for the future. Young people and youth work need to be supported today if we are to have a tomorrow.

The turnaround in the Irish economy is very much real if in its early stages. The impact on Government finances and the budgetary situation is evident. While there are disputes about the precise nature of the

recovery it is clear from macroeconomic material and Government statements that the adjustment forecast for Budget 2015 will be substantially less than planned and indeed a neutral budget is actually possible. However given the experience of young people over the last number of years there are key measures that need to be taken at this time which we will outline here.

It is beyond doubt and widely accepted that the current unprecedented economic crisis is impacting differentially on our country. Recent reports by both the ESRI and the National Economic and Social Council have highlighted this. Furthermore the impact on young people in particular has been nothing short of cataclysmic. Yet over 5 years since the collapse of the world financial system there has not been one single dedicated measure from Government aimed at even partially relieving in a dedicated way the situation for young people in Ireland. NESC have expressed the situation at its most basic;

“Young people are experiencing high levels of unemployment, with many of them now long-term unemployed. Unemployment among young people is particularly detrimental to the young people themselves and to wider society, and often has long-term consequences.”¹

Young people also suffer in being children of workless households and where parents have suffered a job loss or a reduction in income. The presence of children leads to an increased risk in the transmission of poverty. The ESRI has focused on those under and over 45 in its analysis but the implications are similar. The decreases in income for the under 45s both include those in younger years who have no work and the teenage children of those in negative equity and those who have lost jobs and/or income²

The importance of maintaining the situation of children and young people has been emphasised in commentary;

“NESC (and NESF) have argued that children should receive priority in social policy because of the later problems that result from a poor start in life for both individuals and society. Adhering to such a precept accepts that parental circumstances should not be the cause of any child being denied access to key developmental opportunities, so that while all children are supported, some are supported more than others based on need”³

Macro-Economic Situation

The target of reducing borrowing to 3% of GDP can be achieved and critically in doing so steps can be taken to undo the damage of previous decisions. As economic growth is more positive and the numbers on the live register are decreasing the budgetary situation is eased somewhat. All annual growth predictions are now well ahead of forecast with the Minister for Finance predicting 4.5% annual growth this year. While prudent economic management is still necessary the choices the Government now has to reach these figures are their own subject to current EU commitments, the Troika no longer has a role in domestic economic decision making.

¹ The Social Dimensions of the Crisis: The Evidence and its Implications, NESC Dublin 2013

² Research Notes *Younger and older households in the crisis* Petra Gerlach-Kristen ESRI, Dublin 2014

³ NESC *ibid*

Other factors also contribute to a more benign economic picture particularly on the expenditure side for example the rescheduling of IMF debt which is estimated to be worth 400m per year, the carryover of items from previous budgets such as water charges providing an income of 450m, the “full year” impact of a number of measures such as pension fund and other levies and exchequer targets been exceeded in 2014 due to economic activity being ahead of expectations. Ireland still falls in to the category of a low tax country under Eurostat definitions although the precise distribution of the tax burden is still an issue.

The original suggestion of a 2bn euro budget adjustment is now no longer relevant. In fact a combination of a “do nothing” approach coupled with improved growth, carry over items from the previous year and continued improvements in employment numbers would actually lead to a balanced budget. We have thus taken the approach of suggesting discrete revenue raising measures to finance an additional expenditure suggested here.

Better Outcomes Brighter Futures

The publication of The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People is a welcome development. The document represents a clear and well elucidated attempt to set out the Governments responsibilities and strategies across a range of public policy measures to promote the interests, rights and well-being of children and young people. All in all this is a good thing, however as always the devil can be in the detail.

Rather than restrict itself to what we might see as traditional areas of children and youth policy the Framework seeks a cross cutting approach realising that these issues do not fit neatly in to policy compartments and Government departments. This is a welcome approach and one which was signified by the more formal establishment of the OMCYA in 2008 and reflects the views of many observers in the field.

Like many policy documents and strategies if all the commitments and plans in this document were realised and the “joined up approach” reflected in everyday decisions and policy we really would be heading for a brighter future. However a more sober assessment of the policy environment and realities for children and young people in the last few years suggests that while ambition is always to be welcomed it must be based on real and substantive change across Government. Regardless of policy commitments the realities of the day to day world of improving outcomes for children is fraught with obstacles and blockages many of which emanate from the actions or inactions of other, often quite important, policy players.

Mental Health

Ireland's National Children's Strategy commits the state to support children's mental health and emotional well-being. Under the "Vision for Change" mental health strategy a key cornerstone of this is the development of Community Mental Health Teams. Although some additional support has been forthcoming for this work it is falling behind target with long waiting lists and waiting times. Clearly with an epidemic of youth suicide in Ireland a proper mental health infrastructure for young people is a must. The admission of children and young people to adult psychiatric facilities is also a blot on our mental health system for young people.



Year in year out we hear terrible news concerning road deaths of young people. While this is a complex problem there is a definite need for much greater work on safety for young drivers. Many youth services and schools already provide these in a non-formal way. There would be a dividend in mainstreaming these efforts.

One of the main contributors to mental health problems for young people is Ireland's continuing alcohol problem. The Government has had the findings of its National Substance Misuse Policy for a considerable period now and needs to act on it.

Obesity

The Growing Up In Ireland Survey has found that 75% of nine-year-olds in the Growing Up in Ireland study were defined as being of healthy BMI, 19% were overweight and 7% were obese. Girls are more likely to be defined as being overweight (22%) or obese (8%) than boys (17% and 5%); thus a total of 30% of girls and 22% of boys are defined as overweight/obese ($P < 0.001$). There are pronounced social-class inequalities in the prevalence of overweight and obesity among nine-year-olds. These rates are high by international standards

The survey further states;

"Worse health behaviours (worse diets and less physical exercise) and higher levels of obesity among working-class children suggest that resources for interventions should be heavily targeted at lower socio-economic schools and communities. However, interventions to promote behavioural change will have limited effect if the structural reasons for the higher levels of risk factors among lower socio-economic groups are not also tackled. This will require a far larger effort across a number of different agencies that would be facilitated by leadership from a core government department such as the Department of the Taoiseach, in a similar manner to that adopted for 'poverty proofing' under the National Anti-Poverty Strategy"

Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco

The Government should have stuck to measures already agreed under the National Substance Misuse Policy rather than give in to sectional interests. It is important to tackle the factors that influence the culture of alcohol promotion but the Government has been firmly in the Arthurs Day camp when it came to the advertising and promotion of alcohol.

There have been countless reports and strategies in this area down the years. Clearly there has been a huge political unwillingness to engage properly with this issue and the influence of the industry is plain to see. It is now a critical time for this Government to step up to the plate in terms of tackling this hugely serious problem. The recommendations in the Substance Misuse Policy were clear and it was time for real action to deliver on these for the good of our population and our young people but the Government have failed to do this

The main pillars of a successful alcohol strategy have long been accepted as price, restricting promotion and acting on availability. The promotion and sponsorship of alcohol is designed to set the mood music and backdrop to everyday living in order to make consumption more acceptable and thus more widespread. We know that alcohol related harm extends into many areas of society beyond drinkers themselves. The need for high level political action has been clear for a number of years and this needs to be headed at the highest level in Government

Successive Governments have made commitment after commitment on alcohol regulation and advertising yet all we have seen to date have been weak voluntary codes and delayed actions. The use of world famous leaders in promoting alcohol and associating Ireland globally with alcohol flies in the face of all international research for example by the WHO on the Royal College of Physicians. This visit comes at a critical time in the development of our alcohol policy particularly in relation to young people.

Recommendations

5. Implement the National Substance Misuse Strategy
6. Delivery on the various guidelines on diet and exercise for young people through schools and voluntary youth services for example those recommended by Safe food Ireland
7. Establish a fund for community based sports and leisure activity for young people
8. Increase Excise duty to fund the above and other measures in this submission consistent with various expert reports

Junior Cycle Student Award

Schools play a dominant role in young people's lives both in terms of their socialisation and their learning and development. On a basic level young people spend a large proportion of their waking life in school. So what goes on at school is hugely important for young people. Yet we rarely stop to ask just what is a school, how is it run and does it accord with the type of principles and rights we would expect in other institutions. We have seen instances in our history where institutions have disregarded the voice and the rights of children and young people and we know the impact of this.



ACHIEVING
IN ALL AREAS OF
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It is currently a time of change in education the development of the Junior Cycle Student Award has been a key milestone in this process. All the research on best practice in education from the ESRI, the OECD and the NCCA illustrates that the new Junior Cycle Student Award is the way to go. At long last it throws off the hugely problematic system of exams and rote learning and introduces a forward looking system that builds active citizens and rounded future employees.

However the pace is too slow. The timescale for reform of the senior cycle is unclear and thousands of young people will still go through the same process over the next number of years. Business shares many people's concerns and the OECD illustrates that our system while producing good results for some still fails many.

Disadvantage in Education

Whether in Boom or Bust Ireland has a deep seated problem relating to educational disadvantage. Early school leaving remains an issue in many disadvantaged areas. The performance of children on key indicators under the PISA system is significantly less in DEIS schools despite some improvement. Nonattendance measured by TusLa (formerly the NEWB) is still high. We are still a way off the generally accepted school completion rates to senior cycle. Curriculum reform at the senior level needs to be a greater priority. Data in this area and the related area of vocational education and training is weak since the ESRI's School Leavers Survey was effectively defunded.

A joint ESRI/Barnardos Study has found Early school leaving has striking consequences for adult outcomes and leads to substantial costs for society. Key findings included:

- Early leavers were 3 to 4 times more likely to be unemployed than those with higher qualifications, even before the current recession.
- Early leavers in employment hold less skilled jobs and earn lower wages.
- Young women who leave school early are more likely to become lone parents.
- Early leavers have poorer health levels and are more reliant on the medical card to address their health needs.
- Early school leaving reinforces existing social and economic inequality since early leavers mainly come from working-class backgrounds.

- Early leaving means substantial costs for society, leading to higher expenditure on welfare, health and prisons as well as lower tax revenue.

Recommendations

6. Deliver on the Junior Cycle Student Award
7. Introduce similar reform for the Leaving Certificate
8. Reintroduce the Early School Leavers Survey
9. Increase support for literacy and numeracy work in schools and voluntary youth services
10. Increase support for voluntary youth services who work with early school leavers and the hardest to reach young people, support certified learning in these informal settings

Child Protection

Given the major changes introduced to the area of child protection in the last number of years the challenges for the future will be how these are bedded down in our work. The number of new procedures and the presence of new agencies will inevitably involve some getting used to the system. The indications are that the child protection system will still be challenged in terms of capacity and this will have an impact on all NGOs working with children and young people.



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The Government has been extremely busy in the legislative field here and this means considerable change for local providers. A period of consolidation is needed to ensure services coping with less funding and increased demand can deliver on this change. More broadly youth clubs, groups and projects can offer the critical safe space that many young people need. Key groups also need special attention such as those in care and emerging from care, travellers, LGBT youth and asylum seekers to mention just a few. With young people increasingly connecting online this will be a critical area for supporting young people living safely.

The advent of TusLa the new Child and Family Agency also contributes to an environment of widespread change management in this field. A number of services which many people in the field felt might fit with the remit of the new agency did not transfer to it such as public health nurses, child and adolescent mental health teams and speech and language therapists. These arrangements would provide a more holistic service. Budget deficits already appear to be arising as an issue for the agency.

Bullying

Ambitious plans have been developed to combat bullying in the education sector with a particular focus on LGBT students. The Department of Education and skills has updated its guidelines. It is critical that bullying is seen in its widest possible context and that schools and other groups have policies and awareness at all levels. This work needs to be reflected in the youth sector for all vulnerable young people.

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Many young people are the subjects of crime and anti-social behaviour. There has also been a role out of projects via the Irish Youth Justice Service. In many areas the victims and perpetrators of crime and anti-social behaviour intermingle and overlap. Intensive work is needed in some of the most disadvantaged communities to break this spiral.

The successful impact of youth diversion models already established in the youth sector needs to be furthered. Low level anti-social behaviour is not the same as other offending behavior but research on Garda Diversion projects has shown the links with alcohol and public order issues. We have made recommendations elsewhere in this submission about Ireland's alcohol issue.

Recommendations

6. Implement the Report of the Internet Safety Review Group
7. Increase Support for Garda vetting in light of the Garda Netting Bureau Act 2012
8. Ensure TusLa is operating on a secure financial footing
9. Expand the remit of Garda Diversion projects
10. Support a broad range of youth activities to combat anti-social behaviour in our communities

Youth Unemployment

It is important to look briefly at some of the data impacting on the lives of young people at the moment. Clearly the number one concern for young people is the economic situation and the knock on effect on employment and education. While there has been some minor improvements in the field of youth unemployment recently the figures still remain stark and are undoubtedly “improved” by huge increases in emigration.

It is important also to note that the increase in emigration is generally forced emigration, the return of high rates of emigration is a major drag on economic recovery. Few economies recover when losing the most productive part of their workforce. Furthermore the economic investment in these young people’s education is lost to the Irish economy and serves to assist our competitors.



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Young Peoples Employment and Unemployment				
<i>Year</i>	<i>NQH Survey</i>	<i>% U25 LF</i>	<i>Live Register</i>	<i>% U25 LF</i>
2007	31.1	8.5	30.8	8.4
2008	52.4	16	40.8	12.5
2009	74.6	25.6	79.3	27.2
2010	72.5	28.8	85	33.8
2011	67.7	29.1	81.4	35
2012	59	27.6	73	34.1
2013	48.8*	22.3	66.2**	30.3
2014	52.6*	26.9	55.1**	28.2

CSO NQHS (Q4), Live Register (March) *Q2 ** September

Male Youth Unemployment		
<i>Year</i>	<i>NQH Survey</i>	<i>% LF Rate</i>
2007	18.6	9.6
2008	34.8	20.4
2009	50.1	33.4
2010	43.5	34.4
2011	42.8	34.9
2012	36.9	33.3
2013	28.1	26.1
2014*	29.4	28.1

CSO NQHS *Q2

While some improvements can be observed recently it should also be noted that the NQHS illustrates some people are leaving and becoming detached from the labour force which is effectively another form of unemployment. This masks the true rate of unemployment observed. Also the impact of the recession and construction on young males is clear; they experience the highest rates of unemployment, with over a third of those in the Labour Force being out of work. These rates shot up at the end of the boom. Of course the other major masking of unemployment numbers is emigration. Over 210,000 young people have left Ireland since the start of the recession and the large increase in the figures suggests a large “forced” component.

Emigration amongst Young People	
<i>Year</i>	<i>Emigration 15-24</i>
2006	15.9
2007	18.2
2008	17.8
2009	27.9
2010	26.7
2011	35.4
2012	35.8
2013	34.8
2014	33.5

CSO, Census and Annual Population and Migration Estimates

Some of the changes in labour market status are related to an increased take up of education and training places. While the recession is an immensely difficult time for young people the large numbers seeking education and training and indeed the large number emigrating illustrates young people are trying to deal with the crisis any way they can. These figures give lie to the suggestion of a workshy age group. The key capacity constraints are illustrated by the figures and reports by various education bodies and professionals like the IVEA and CAO of several thousand young people being turned away from chosen courses. This is an obvious area of attention for any strategy for recovery.

There is now a growing problem of long term unemployment amongst young people in Ireland and a preventative approach is much needed in employment policy towards young people. In quarter four of 2012 over half of male youth unemployment was long term and despite improvements in the overall number in September 2014 this figure is close to 52%. There is currently no dedicated youth employment policy in Ireland. The worst youth unemployment rates are not surprisingly concentrated in those with the lowest educational attainment and this has a spatial dimension with counties such as Limerick City, Donegal and Wexford fairing particularly badly while areas like Dun Laoghaire have much better rates⁴.

Youth unemployment is a particularly serious issue as it forms labour market habits and experiences early and has been shown to have serious long term affects. Younger people may often lack the social

⁴ ESRI ibid

networks and connections to assist in the job search process. The research confirms what is known anecdotally that youth unemployment must be high on any government’s agenda. Ironically at a time of youth unemployment and emigration Ireland is also experiencing a skills shortage that a concentrated effort relating to young people and the labour market could address particularly in the areas of I.T., sciences and languages.⁵

A Youth Guarantee?

The commitment at European level to the concept of a “Youth Guarantee” has yet to be translated in to reality here in our view. The European Social Fund is a major tool for doing this. While it is quite difficult we have made some very broad estimates about what a Youth Guarantee would entail and what level of provision would need to be delivered in Ireland for it to become a reality. The results illustrate a very major challenge for Ireland in this area.

Young Peoples Education and Training 18-25	
<i>Demand</i>	
Leaving Cert	57,837
Early School Leavers	7,000
Live Register	60,000
Total	125,337
<i>Options for Young People</i>	
FAS	22,000
FETAC	20,000
IT	18,719
University	22,030
Other	10,000
Less mature and international	-10,000
Total	82,749
Youth Guarantee?	42,588

Source: Fas, Department of Education, CSO

⁵ See for example <http://www.djei.ie/labour/workpermits/highlyskilledoccupationslist.htm>

Clearly a renewed commitment to young people and youth unemployment in the field of education and training related to the Youth Guarantee should be a cornerstone of Ireland's approach to the structural funds and the European Social Fund in particular. In our view the plan agreed with the European Commission in this regard falls well short of the ambition needed.

It is clear that all EU Institutions are committed to utilising the ESF to support a Youth Guarantee;

“The Commission is ready and willing to make available substantial financial contributions from the European Social Fund and other EU structural funds. At the same time, the Commission confirmed in the 2013 Annual Growth Survey adopted in late 2012 that Youth Guarantee schemes are key measures that should be prioritised within growth-friendly fiscal consolidation. For the Commission, investment in Youth Guarantee schemes is crucial expenditure if the EU wants to preserve its future growth potential.”

(Commission Press Release 28.02.2013 Reference: MEMO/13/152)

There is a general move up the institutional ladder in terms of education and training with many institutions seeking university status and offering more degree programmes. There is a critical need to maintain provision for more disadvantaged young people in the vocational space but to also ensure such provision is labour market relevant. Support for youth entrepreneurship is an area that needs to be prioritised particularly in new technologies and industries.

Youth Information, Young People and the Labour Market

While today's recession is one of the worst seen in modern times it is not the first and there have been previous initiatives to deal with issues like youth unemployment. The network of Youth Information Centres in Ireland and throughout Europe was developed in the past by the EU and its member states recognising the importance of such centres in connecting young people to the labour market. Specialised youth information emerged rather quickly, starting in the late 1950s, when information offices for internal migrants opened in Finland to support young people who moved from the countryside to the big cities. Already then the underlying idea of youth information was to give orientation to young people when they are faced with complex surroundings and questions particularly relating to education, training and the labour market.

In 1961 the need for specific provisions for young people in problem situations inspired the “Young People's Consultation Centre” in London was recognised. Probably the first ‘walk-in’ centre for young people in Europe, where young people could directly approach a professional with their issues. It was critical to not give adolescents the feeling of being thought of as having a mental illness when seeking for help. Hence, the centre was designed in a way that young people would feel as little inhibition as possible to enter and receive immediate attention and help in order to prevent serious social and psychological harm in later stages of their lives.

The development of Youth Information Centres in Ireland has been closely related to the labour market needs of young people and these are often the main accessible and free service to assist young people

in their labour market activity for example in CV preparation, letter writing, job search and interview preparation.

The Department of Social Protection's activation policy has recently being outlined in Pathways to Work. The objective of policy is to ensure that as many as possible of the job opportunities that arise in the economy are taken up by unemployed welfare recipients. 'Pathways to Work' is based on five strands;

1. More regular and on-going engagement with the unemployed
2. Greater targeting of activation places and opportunities
3. Incentivising the take-up of opportunities
4. Incentivising employers to provide more jobs for people who are unemployed
5. Reforming institutions to deliver better services to the unemployed

There is no dedicated youth strand or measure within the policy which is somewhat surprising given the high levels of youth unemployment. However youth work and youth services can play a role in this field. Already local youth services can and do support employment preparation and labour market activities in a whole host of areas. With a proper dedicated support under the proposed youth guarantee such a service could be properly established and linked to the Department of Social Protection in an agreed fashion. Such an initiative needs to avoid the mistakes made by Connexions in the UK and utilise the important soft skills and relationships evident in youth work consistent with the Dublin declaration of the European Expert Roundtable on Youth Work and Employment in June 2013.

Under the previous EU Employment Initiative YOUTHSTART Youth Work Ireland (then the National Youth Federation) ran a programme also called Pathways which concentrated on supporting the labour market journey of young people. The lessons of this initiative can still be harnessed today in a new setting.

Recommendations

3. The network of Youth Information Centres need to be reinforced and become the backbone of a youth focused pre-employment service linked to the Pathways for Work Initiative
4. 10,000 new places to be made available for young people on labour market relevant courses utilising voluntary youth services to source the most disadvantaged where relevant

Youth Services

We all know times are hard but Disadvantaged Youth Projects are being cut at nearly 6 times the rate of public expenditure. We find this unacceptable. Such cuts now need to be halted as disadvantaged youth projects have contributed way more to recent adjustments than other areas of public expenditure without any policy basis, contrary to Government policy. Particularly many of the VfM tests outlined in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reforms Comprehensive Review of Expenditure have not been carried out.



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<i>Government Current Expenditure</i>				
	€bn	% decrease	€m YW	YW % decrease
2008	53.4		68.4	
2009	55.7	+4.31%	65.5	4.3%
2010	54.2	2.69%	63.3	3.3%
2011	52.9	2.40%	60.1	5%
2012	52.3	1.13%	56.8	5.6%
2013	51.1	2.29%	51.1*	10%
Total	-2.3bn	-4.3%	-17.3m	-25.3%

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, CRE & DPER Book of Estimates

* Estimate – DCYA no longer publishes this figure

All public services have been subjected to across the board cuts since 2008. The Government has never explained why the limited resources which support youth work programmes have been subjected to cuts six times that of the average particularly when the national lottery part funds these budget sub heads.

The continuing cuts exceeding general reductions in spending are making many local services for young people untenable. Already projects have closed and it is becoming increasingly difficult to meet basic standards of operation. Ironically this is all at a time when the Government is imposing greater requirements and duties on NGOs in the field of Child protection and other areas. This appears to be a classic mismatch between the left and the right hand. The Governments commitments to essentially remove large swathes of public spending from possible cuts means other areas much take a much greater hit, this is fundamentally unfair.

However we also see the tremendous benefit and impact of local youth services for our communities. Even using a basic calculation of the impact of voluntary work and the savings to the state we estimate the value of youth work to be in the region of €1.5bn and a recent report by Indecon Economic Consultants for the National Youth Council has found a significant economic impact from youth work in Ireland.

Youth Services in Ireland are co-financed by the National Lottery, the contract between lottery players and good causes must remain. If the exchequer is cutting matching funds by greater amounts then such a contract is threatened.

Year	2008	2014	%
<i>Youth Affairs Funding</i>	68.4	49.8	27.9
<i>National Lottery Income</i>	267.8	210	21.6

Revised Estimates of Public Services & National Lottery * estimate

There has been an amalgamation of subheads recently which unfortunately makes further year on year comparisons impossible. However the figures from the relevant books of estimates still suggest that the exchequer component of national lottery co-financed expenditure is being cut to a greater degree than the decline in national lottery income.

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	Cumulative %
Total	435.387	410.685	365.58	333	28%
Lottery	275	250	230	220	20%
Exchequer	160.387	160.685	135.58	110	31%

Revised Estimates of Public

Overall we can see that the Government has cut the exchequer contribution to lottery supported programmes by more than the decline in the lottery income, no explanation has ever being provided for this.

The Government has announced its intention to sell the license for the National Lottery for the next 20 years. There has been no discussion or consultation with beneficiaries about this decision. It has further been announced that much of the proceeds of the sale will be used for the new National Children's Hospital even though the original National Lottery legislation sets out entirely different priorities for any funds raised. The Government had previously stated that it would ring fence the amount made available for good causes for the term of the license at 30.5% based on 2011 figures, this idea was not discussed or shared with lottery beneficiaries. The concept has not made its way in to the legislation on the lottery however.

Recommendations

4. The amount for good from the National Lottery causes should be set at 33% and this should be a key deliverable for any franchisee.
5. 20% of any windfall arising from the sale of the lottery license should be ring fenced for the good causes the lottery supports. This should be in a dedicated fund which will help these key areas salvage their services from the higher than average cuts they have been subjected to in recent years.
6. Funding for youth affairs should increase by 3% in Budget 2015 to undo the damage of the past