

Press Release
Youth Work Ireland
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“Emigration Figures Illustrate Lack of Government Action on Youth Unemployment – More Intensity in Jobs Strategy Needed” Says Leading Youth Organisation

Youth Work Ireland has renewed its call on the Government to commit itself to a dedicated youth employment strategy in light of emigration figures from the UK today showing the majority of nearly 14,000 new Irish National Insurance registrants were under 25. The youth organisation has warned that this is a major economic as well as social issue as the loss of a key productive sector of the population will hamper any future recovery if growth returns. The group, which represents 22 local voluntary youth services around the country, has said young people should be given a range of options including work experience, further education and starting a business if jobs are scarce at home. In its own 10 Point Plan for Youth Employment the organisation suggests investing funds from the pension reserve fund in employment and training for young people.

“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. Thousands were unable to access CAO or PLC courses last year. 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

“The spectre of emigration is a major social tragedy and seems to be accepted as almost an Irish solution to an Irish problem, this must be challenged. 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

Youth Work Ireland’s 10 Point Youth Jobs Plan

1. Remove age restrictions to open up all labour market schemes to all those over 18
2. Revive the Student Summer Jobs Scheme which gives valuable labour market experience to young people and helps the voluntary and community sector
3. Reverse the PLC places freeze
4. Maintain apprenticeship numbers as was done with the ESB scheme,
5. Foster and support young entrepreneurs – Facebook, the multimillion dollar site, was started by young people

6. Establish a process to commercialise young people's ideas e.g. transition year & young scientist entries
7. Work with young people on new areas of economic potential in music, arts and technology
8. Capitalise elements of the pension reserve fund on a commercial basis to support job creation for young people – after all it's their future pension!
9. Ensure every young person has an offer of work, education, training or quality work experience to prevent the drift into a culture of long term unemployment
10. Develop work placements and public works for the most hard to reach

ENDS

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