



## Youth Work Ireland

Press Release  
Youth Work Ireland  
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### **“Young People Cannot be Less Favourably Treated in any Further Reopening due to their Vaccination Status – Solidarity is a two-way Process” Says Leading Youth Organisation**

Youth Work Ireland has today expressed concern that young people are again to be left out in the cold in relation to Covid restrictions following the Government’s announcement to pause aspects of the planned reopening. The Organisation whose members work with over 100,000 young people around the country believes requiring vaccination for people to access normal activities is highly problematic and impacts in a hugely disproportionate way on young people. The group believes that young people have generally been the ones worst impacted by a whole range of Covid restrictions in work, education and socialisation and this major change in policy is simply too much and undermines the critical ‘in it together’ mantra which has defined Ireland’s Covid approach to date. The organisation has pointed out that young people have not been vaccinated as a direct consequence of decisions by Government so it is manifestly unfair for them to once again be treated less favourably.

“It is widely recognised that young people have made enormous sacrifices in the effort to combat Covid 19 and this was generally accepted as a price to get society back to normal for the greater good. Tremendous inter-generational solidarity has been in evidence in local communities particularly when the emphasis was on protecting the most vulnerable and ensuring the health service was not overwhelmed. There has been a price to pay for this however with the ESRI, Eurofound and others illustrating the huge economic impact on young people of the lockdowns. Similarly we are all aware of the confusion and disruption to exams and the education system which has been hugely problematic for young people. Mental health services have reported increased traffic and traditional supports like youth services have been restricted. The impact of the crisis on young people has been truly profound” Said Michael Mc Loughlin from Youth Work Ireland

“The one mantra that was repeated to young people throughout this time was that we were all in this together. There was a basic concept that sacrifices were been made for the common good and everyone would benefit equally particularly when we emerged from the crisis through the vaccination programme. When the idea of vaccinating young people earlier was floated as a more efficient approach to roll out the Government rejected this and stuck to an age and vulnerability approach. Unvaccinated young people will be front and centre then working in retail, hospitality and other frontline areas. This major change in Government policy is hugely problematic and furthers a view that young people are way down the list of priorities for our politicians and their needs and sacrifice count for very little in these matters. Equality and fairness, particularly relating to the vaccine, must remain central values in the reopening programme and in the next stage of deliberations” Mc Loughlin added

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Contact: Michael Mc Loughlin 087 6677499