



Youth Work Ireland

Press Release
Youth Work Ireland
14 June, 2022

“No Word on Young People who Receive Sub-Minimum Wage in Move to Living Wage” Says Leading Youth Organisation

Youth Work Ireland has today highlighted the number of young people be paid less than their co-workers doing precisely the same job due to the law on “sub-minimum” wages. The organisation believes this is symbolic of the low priority given to young people in the pandemic and in recovery. The Government has committed to equalising the minimum wage with a "living wage" but there has been no mention of sub-minimum wages in this process. These are the same young people who missed out on swathes of education, were last to get the vaccination and now have to work while receiving less pay than their colleagues. Young people in contact with the organisation have even been offered supervisory roles at the same “sub-minimum” wage where they would manage staff earning more than them. The organisation has called on the Government to have the issue examined by the Low Pay Commission.

“Young people have been to the forefront of the reopening of hospitality and the debate about this issue has been ongoing, there has been very little concern about the young people in the latest announcement about a "living wage". However huge numbers of young people are working on sub-minimum wages, getting paid significantly less than people working alongside them as the law provides for automatic discrimination against young people when it comes to the minimum wage. An eighteen-year-old adult will receive 80% of a 21 year old co-worker under our current system or indeed anyone carrying out the same work. There is no “equal pay for equal work” when it comes to young people who will be critical to this reopening” said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“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 This discrimination is based on outmoded and outdated Victorian ideas.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 into 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 pay systems do not get into our personal circumstances to any great degree. The only area where this is provided for is in relation to the minimum wage and young people” Mc Loughlin added

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Youth Spokespersons may be available