



Youth Work Ireland

Youth Work Ireland
Press Release
28 May 2024

“Government’s Charter a Step in the Right Direction but More still Needed for all Young People to Transition to Employment” says Leading Youth Organisation

Youth Work Ireland has today welcomed the publication of the Government’s Employment and Youth Engagement Charter with a focus on improving the connection between young people and employers in a tightening labour market. The organisation, whose members run a number of employment related projects, believes a greater connection with employers and more ongoing engagement can assist young people’s engagement in the labour market. However, the organisation also believes other actions are needed in this area particularly reform of sub-minimum wages which act as a disincentive for young people in many areas and are very prevalent amongst leading employers. The group believes that while INTREO plays a major role in youth engagement voluntary youth organisations can reach many young people that the state cannot, and their links are underutilised.

“Real world experience with an employer is an important part of young people’s journey in the world of work. Any charter or plan that can aid that is welcome. There are however other issues frustrating this journey which need attention. 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 them. An eighteen-year-old adult will receive 80% of a 21-year-old co-worker, or indeed anyone carrying out the same work, under our current system. Addressing this would also positively impact on young people in the labour market” said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“Similarly, while INTREO and state services provide an important service we find they can be seen as distant from many young people facing the biggest challenges in the labour market. Local community actors like Youth Services working with the state can often reach out more effectively to unemployed or NEET young people and there are many good models of this around the country. These services can also offer their own guidance and support in a more familiar setting to young people, who have often left school early or face significant barriers, in their progress in the world of work, training and education. Certifying and recognising some of the learning young people receive in youth work is a tangible outcome that employers also value and reaches out to some of the most excluded” Mc Loughlin added.

ENDS

Contact: Michal Mc Loughlin 087 6677499