



NYCI PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION 2019

Future Proof with Investment in Youth

The best means of securing long-term social and economic sustainability is investment in our growing youth population

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National Youth Council of Ireland

The National Youth Council of Ireland is the representative body for voluntary youth organisations in Ireland. It uses its collective experience to act on issues that impact on young people.

www.youth.ie

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There are a million good reasons to invest in our youth population

The number of young people aged 10-24 will increase by 13.2% between 2015 and 2025 resulting in a population of one million young people by 2025 (1,005,938) ¹

1 MILLION YOUNG PEOPLE BY 2025



The youth work sector has the scale to support it

1,400 staff support 40,000 volunteers to reach over 383,000 young people in almost every community in Ireland



383,000 YOUNG PEOPLE

And it makes economic sense to invest in youth work

According to Indecon every €1 invested in youth work saves the State €2.20. ²



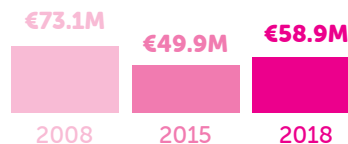
€47.7 MILLION

Indecon estimated the annual economic value of youth work-related volunteering at €47.7m. ³

...but investment is still 20% less than 10 years ago...

Investment in youth work services from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs

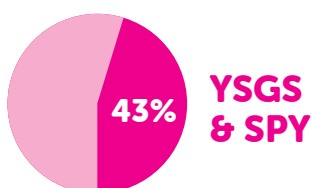
decreased by 31.7% over an eight year period, from €73.1m in 2008 to €49.9m in 2015.



↓ 20% BELOW 2008 FUNDING

While funding for youth work from DCYA had recovered to €58.9m by 2018, it is 20% below what it was a decade ago.

We need to strengthen existing schemes and focus on making them sustainable...



For example, the Youth Services Grant Scheme (YSGS) and Special Projects for Youth Scheme (SPY) combined constituted 43% of the overall youth work funding envelope from DCYA in 2018 (€25.4m out of a total budget of €58.9m) yet only received 16% of the new funding (€1.16m out of €7m) available in 2017 and 2018.

NO FUNDING INCREASE IN 2018



In 2017 the SPY Scheme received an additional 5% with a marginal decrease of 0.34% in 2018, while the YSGS received 4.95% in 2017 and effectively no increase in 2018.

¹ E3003, Population 2011-2016 by Single Year of Age, Sex, County and City, CSO, <https://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?maintable=E3003&PLanguage=0>

² Assessment of the Economic Value of Youth Work by Indecon Economic Consultants, November 2012

³ Assessment of the Economic Value of Youth Work by Indecon Economic Consultants, November 2012

Summary of Costed Recommendations

In this submission, NYCI recommends to Government a number of priorities for investment in Budget 2019.

1. INVEST IN VOLUNTARY YOUTH ORGANISATIONS AND YOUTH WORK SERVICES

Increase investment in voluntary youth work organisations and youth work services to ensure the provision of more supports and services for young people and to meet the needs of a growing youth population and support the introduction of a Compliance Fund.

INVESTMENT
€11.5M

2. HALVE LONG-TERM YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Increase the investment in the education, training and access to apprenticeships to halve long-term youth unemployment by the end of 2019.

INVESTMENT
€22M
(€8M NET COST)

3. EQUALITY FOR YOUNG JOBSEEKERS

Restore the full adult rate of €198 to young people on Jobseeker’s Allowance over the next two budgets. In Budget 2019 increase the rate for young people aged 18-24 by €45.15 a week and those aged 25 by €22.60 per week to €152.85 and €175.40 respectively.

INVESTMENT
€40.5M

4. WORKING TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Restore the full rate of Jobseeker’s Allowance to young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and restore the full adult rate to qualifying care leavers aged 25 years.

INVESTMENT
€2.2M

Background

The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) is the representative body for 51 voluntary youth organisations in Ireland. Our member organisations work with and for up to 380,000 young people aged 10 to 24 years in every community in Ireland with the support of 40,000 volunteers and 1,400 paid staff⁴. NYCI functions to represent the interests of young people and youth organisations. NYCI’s role is recognised in legislation (Youth Work Act) and is represented on the National Economic and Social Council.

INTRODUCTION

The results of Census 2016⁵ confirmed that Ireland has one of the youngest populations in Europe with one-third aged less than 25 years. Another CSO study⁶ found that Ireland had the highest number of 0-14 year olds in the EU. The latest census results also indicate that **the number of young people aged 10-24 will increase by 13.2% between 2015 and 2025 and there will be just over one million young people by 2025 (1,005,938)**⁷. While it is true that Ireland, in line with most countries in the developed world, has a growing older population, these figures confirm that Ireland is also unique in that exhibits a large and growing youth population. Many other countries are grappling with a declining youth population, whereas Ireland has a unique opportunity to invest in a growing number of young people.

While we understand the rationale for setting aside monies in a so-called ‘rainy-day’ fund, it does not in our view make a lot of sense when we currently have so many pressing social and economic needs. NYCI is of the view that **wise investment in our growing youth population now would be the best way to ensure long term social and economic success** and better secure us against future economic and social shocks and difficulties. Therefore our submission is entitled ‘Future Proof with Investment in Youth’. NYCI is calling on Government to implement a number of recommendations and policies in the 2019 Budget to meet the needs of young people and support them to achieve their full potential.

⁴ Assessment of the Economic Value of Youth Work, Indecon Economic Consultants, NYCI, 2012 http://www.youth.ie/sites/youth.ie/files/Economic_Benefit_Youthwork_2012.pdf

⁵ Census 2016, Central Statistics Office, <http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?maintable=EY007&PLanguage=0>

⁶ Measuring Ireland’s Progress <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-mip/mip2015/introduction/>

⁷ E3003, Population 2011-2016 by Single Year of Age, Sex, County and City, CSO, <https://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?maintable=E3003&PLanguage=0>

NYCI welcomed the commitment in the 2016 Programme for Government concerning young people; which states:

“There are over 800,000 people aged 10-24 in Ireland. As these young people transition from adolescence to adulthood, primary school to secondary and further education or work, they are faced with major changes, pressures, expectations and, indeed, opportunities. We must ensure that their voice is heard, that they are respected, safe and healthy and that they meet their full potential in life and in education⁸.”

We acknowledge that some progress has been made in realising the commitment in the allocation of additional funding for youth work services and the increased welfare supports for young people in the last two budgets. Much more needs to be done. Further investment is required to undo the damage of austerity and to meet the needs of a growing youth population. If such a commitment is to be fully realised, young people need to be supported and this should be reflected in political decisions, policy action and through increased financial support. The forthcoming budget provides an opportunity for the Government to demonstrate that commitment.

This submission puts forward a number of policy proposals designed to address key issues for young people and the youth work sector. The submission also takes into account the commitments in the **Programme for Government**⁹, the **National Youth Strategy**¹⁰ and our obligations under the **Sustainable Development Goals**¹¹. In implementing these proposals, the Government will not only be supporting young people to seize opportunities and tackle challenges but will be meeting its own existing commitments and obligations.

⁸ “A Programme for Partnership Government”, May 2016, pp78

⁹ Programme for Partnership Government, May 2016 http://www.merrionstreet.ie/MerrionStreet/en/ImageLibrary/Programme_for_Partnership_Government.pdf

¹⁰ National Youth Strategy, 2015-2020 <https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/20151008NatYouthStrat2015to2020.pdf>

¹¹ UN Sustainable Development Goals, <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Youth Work Services

RECOMMENDATION: Increased Investment in Voluntary Youth Work Organisations and Youth Work Services

RATIONALE:

A decade on from the start of the great recession and as our society and economy recovers, among one of the positive indicators in Ireland is our growing youth population. Census 2016 shows that the number of young people aged 10-24 will grow by 13.2% between 2015 and 2025.¹ This will also create challenges, however, with adequate resources voluntary youth work organisations are well placed to support young people to reach their potential and make Ireland the best country in the world in which to be a young person.

Voluntary youth organisations are active in almost every community reaching over 383,000 young people. They are particularly active in supporting young people from economically or socially disadvantaged communities, with 53% of all participants coming from these areas. Voluntary youth organisations work in a range of areas such as promoting active citizenship, social and political education and supporting the participation of young people in education and training. They also deliver programmes to promote positive mental health, school completion and employability and are running projects in youth justice, equality and alcohol and drug awareness. Voluntary youth organisations also organise international exchange programmes for young people, allowing them to meet, engage and work with young people from other countries and cultures. The track record, credibility and reach of the youth sector is also demonstrated by the fact that Ireland has the **highest level of involvement in youth services in the EU, with 26% of young people active in a youth club or organisation.**²

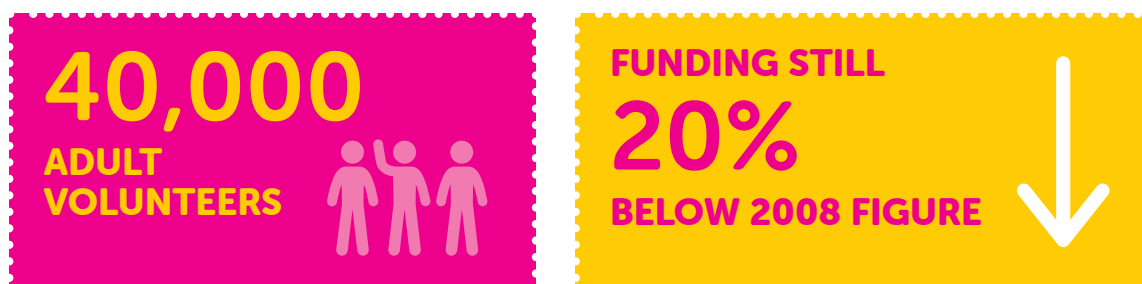


¹² E3003, Population 2011-2016 by Single Year of Age, Sex, County and City, CSO, <https://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?maintable=E3003&PLanguage=0>

¹³ European Commission 2011, "Youth on the Move" - Analytical Report of Flash Eurobarometer Number 319a

As detailed in the Indecon Report¹⁴ for every €1 invested in youth work the economic benefit/ costs saved by the State in the long run are €2.20. This study demonstrates that investment in youth work not only supports young people to reach their full potential and become active citizens, it also reduces long-term costs for the State in relation to the health, justice and welfare services for young people. **One of the unique features of youth work services in Ireland, is the contribution of the over 40,000 adult volunteers who work with and for young people.** These volunteers bring their life experiences and expertise and provide a critical resource to organisations in the sector and considerable savings to the State. In 2012, Indecon estimated that the annual economic value of youth work-related volunteering at €47.7m¹⁵. Too often the State has viewed the work of recruiting, training and maintaining volunteers as being cost free, when in fact voluntary youth organisations have to invest staff time and resources in gaining new and supporting existing volunteers. The State must urgently provide more financial assistance in this regard.

Investment in youth work services from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) **decreased by 31.7% over an eight year period, from €73.1m in 2008 to €49.9m in 2015. While funding for youth work from DCYA had recovered to €58.9m by 2018, it is still 20% below that of a decade ago.** These severe cutbacks have left significant deficits and have put significant strain on volunteers, staff and organisations to deliver quality youth services and supports for the increasing number of young people, while also meeting the increasing level of governance requirements. Many voluntary youth organisations are reaching a crisis point as they stretch already diminished budgets to meet ever growing governance and compliance requirements such as Children First, the National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) for the Youth Work Sector, vetting, charities regulation, the Companies Act, lobbying regulation, GDPR, etc. while also responding to the changing and growing needs of young people in their programmes and activities. Furthermore, if we are to achieve the outcomes set out in the National Youth Strategy, to cater for the increased youth population and to meet the new regulatory demands it is vital and urgent that the Government invests significantly in young people and youth work. We welcome the commitment in the Programme for Government¹⁶ to “fund an expansion of Youth Services that support, in particular, Early School Leavers into employment and in recognising the value of such services and groups”, however to date the delivery has not matched the intent. The lack of resources and investment in the youth work sector needs to be urgently addressed in Budget 2019.



¹⁴ Assessment of the Economic Value of Youth Work by Indecon Economic Consultants, November 2012

¹⁵ Assessment of the Economic Value of Youth Work by Indecon Economic Consultants, November 2012

¹⁶ “A Programme for Partnership Government”, May 2016, pp79

In 2008, the investment in youth work services was €76 per young person. By 2014, this had collapsed to €58 per young person. As outlined earlier, while there has been an increase in funding, the youth population is also growing significantly; therefore the actual investment in 2018¹⁷ comes to just €64 per young person. The results of Census 2016 indicate that there will be 961,786 young people aged between 10-24 years in 2020. We propose that investment in youth work services should be increased to €85 per young person by 2020, which amounts to €82m. In order to achieve this, Government must invest an additional funding allocation €23m or €11.5m per annum in current expenditure in the next two budgets as follows;



TARGETED INVESTMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

While we welcome the additional resources of approximately €8.5m allocated to youth work services since 2016, analysis as detailed in Table 2 (page 13) indicates that most of the extra funding has been allocated to new projects or initiatives, with more limited additional funding being made available to voluntary youth work organisations supported under existing and long standing schemes and budget lines. NYCI supports and recognises the importance of ensuring that additional funding is available to resource youth work in new areas and to address issues too long ignored. The €400,000 allocated to develop a new LGBTI+ Youth Strategy is a positive example in this regard. An analysis of the allocation of the additional €7m in funding made available in 2017 and 2018 indicates that existing schemes such as the Youth Service Grant Scheme (YSGS) and the Special Projects for Youth (SPY) Scheme, which resource a significant percentage of both mainstream and targeted youth work have not benefitted proportionately from the new funding. **For example, the YSGS and SPY combined constituted 43% of the overall youth work funding envelope from DCYA in 2018 (€25.4m out of a total budget of €58.9m) yet only received 16% of the new funding (€1.16m out of €7m) available in 2017 and 2018.** In 2017 the SPY Scheme received an additional 5% with a marginal decrease of 0.34% in 2018, while the YSGS received 4.95% in 2017 and effectively no increase in 2018. This lack of investment needs to be addressed urgently in Budget 2019. NYCI welcomes the decision of DCYA in 2017 and 2018 to increase funding for the Local Youth Club Grant Scheme by 5% and 10% respectively. These additional resources maintain volunteer led youth services which are supported by national and regional youth organisations.



¹⁷ Census 2016, CSO <http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?maintable=EY007&PLanguage=0> (925,582 young people and a budget of €58.9m)

Therefore, NYCI proposes that the additional funding commitments required in 2019 are allocated as detailed in Table 1 (page 12). In relation to the additional €11.5m recommended, we suggest that a slightly higher proportion of new monies should go to the Youth Service Grant Scheme in light of its impact on local and national services across the country. All other funding lines would also receive necessary increases to meet ongoing and growing needs. NYCI would welcome the opportunity to engage further with DCYA in advance of the Budget and indeed after the announcement of the overall funding envelopes in October 2018. NYCI acknowledges the intention of DCYA to advance the Value for Money and Policy Review report and to place the four existing schemes (Special Projects for Youth, Young People’s Facilities and Services Fund Round 1 & 2 and the Local Drugs Task Force Projects Scheme) into a single scheme, namely the Targeted Youth Funding Scheme. For the purposes of this submission and in light of the fact that the new scheme has yet to be established, or commenced, the NYCI proposals are made according to the existing funding schemes.

COMPLIANCE FUND

One of the major changes in the last five years has been the significant increased workload arising from compliance and governance requirements. NYCI does not query the need for enhanced regulation; however it is important that it is applied in a smart and proportionate manner by Government Departments and agencies. **Voluntary youth organisations have had to invest significant staff and volunteer time and financial resources into meeting the operational and reporting requirements of a range of new provisions, such as Children First, the National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) for the Youth Work Sector, vetting, charities regulation, the Companies Act, lobbying regulation, GDPR, etc.** without any additional funding to meet these costs. We are concerned that already stretched staff and volunteer time and budgets are being diverted from direct work with young people towards compliance, governance and reporting. Therefore to ensure that direct work with young people is not undermined, NYCI proposes the introduction of a dedicated €1.5m Compliance Fund in Budget 2019. This fund would resource the actions and activities of voluntary youth work organisations to meet the operational and reporting requirements of a range a new regulatory provisions as outlined above.

SIGNIFICANT RESOURCES USED ON OPERATIONAL & REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

✓ —

✓ —

✓ —

CHILDREN FIRST

✓

VETTING

✓

GDPR

✓

NQSF FOR THE YOUTH WORK SECTOR

✓

THE COMPANIES ACT

✓

CHARITIES REGULATION

✓

LOBBYING REGULATION

✓

TABLE 1

NAME OF SCHEME	2018 FUNDING	FUNDING INCREASE	2019 FUNDING
Youth Service Grant Scheme	€ 10,658,170	€2,600,000	€13,258,170
Local Youth Club Grant Scheme	€ 2,313,924	€460,000	€2,773,924
Special Projects for Youth Scheme	€ 14,714,217	€2,470,000	€17,184,217
YPFSF Round 1	€ 5,735,599	€ 900,000	€6,635,599
YPFSF Round 2	€ 13,515,056	€ 2,100,000	€15,615,056
Local Drugs TF Projects	€ 1,218,639	€ 200,000	€1,418,639
Revised Youth Funding Scheme (Sample)	€ 2,661,826	€ 275,000	€2,936,826
Youth Information Centres	€ 1,377,060	€220,000	€1,597,060
Other National Youth Organisations and Youth Initiatives	€ 1,742,210	€ 280,000	€2,022,210
Internal Policy/Youth Officers/ Technical Support	€ 4,958,299	€ 495,000	€5,453,299
Governance/Compliance Fund	€0	€1,500,000	€1,500,000
TOTALS	€ 58,895,000	€11,500,000	€70,395,000

We believe this additional support is necessary in light of the increased youth population, the need to provide more and greater supports to young people and the additional commitments and regulatory requirements. This investment would meet Ireland's commitment under Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

INVESTMENT:

An additional €11.5m investment in youth work services, to strengthen voluntary youth work organisations to provide more supports and activities for young people and to meet the needs of a growing youth population and support the introduction of a Compliance Fund as detailed above in Table 1.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

TABLE 2

FUNDING LINE	2016 TOTALS	2017 BUDGET +/-	% +/-	NEW TOTALS 2017	2018 BUDGET +/-	% +/-	NEW TOTALS 2018
Special Projects for Youth	€ 14,061,769	€ 703,088	5%	€ 14,764,857	-€ 50,640	-0.34%	€ 14,714,217
Young People & Fac/Services Fund 1	€ 5,279,042	€ 263,952	5%	€ 5,542,994	€ 192,605	3.50%	€ 5,735,599
Young People & Fac/Services Fund 2	€ 12,675,829	€ 633,791	5%	€ 13,309,620	€ 205,436	1.50%	€ 13,515,056
Local Drugs Taskforce Projects	€ 1,123,829	€ 56,192	5%	€ 1,180,021	€ 38,618	3.30%	€ 1,218,639
Sample VFMPR Projects/Revised	€ 418,535	€ 1,610,927	384%	€ 2,029,462	€ 632,364	31%	€ 2,661,826
Youth Service Grant Scheme	€ 10,148,980	€ 502,785	4.95%	€ 10,651,765	€ 6,405	0.06%	€ 10,658,170
Local Youth Club Grant Scheme	€ 1,997,068	€ 106,500	5.33%	€ 2,103,568	€ 210,356	10%	€ 2,313,924
Youth Information Centres	€ 1,216,652	€ 60,738	5%	€ 1,277,390	€ 99,670	8%	€ 1,377,060
Other Nat Youth Orgs/Youth Initiative	€ 1,511,073	€ 124,208	8.20%	€ 1,635,281	€ 106,929	6.50%	€ 1,742,210
New/Internal/ Policy/ETBI	€ 3,452,490	€ 1,447,552	42%	€ 4,900,042	€ 58,257	1%	€ 4,958,299
TOTAL	€ 51,885,267	€ 5,509,733	10.60%	€ 57,395,000	€ 1,500,000	2.60%	€ 58,895,000

Youth Unemployment

2

RECOMMENDATION:

Halve Long-Term Youth Unemployment by the end of 2019

RATIONALE:

We welcome job growth in the Irish economy and the consistent trend of reduced youth unemployment, which has fallen to 12% by April 2018¹⁸. We are concerned, however, **about the 8,915 young people¹⁹ who are now long-term unemployed (for 12 months or more)**. As noted by a Eurofound study²⁰, while Ireland has a lower than average EU youth unemployment rate, we have a higher than average long term youth unemployment rate. This is worrying in light of the commitments in the EU Youth Guarantee to provide any young person an education, training and/or work experience place if they were unemployed for four months or more. NYCI broadly welcomed the Irish plan for the Youth Guarantee²¹ when it was published in January 2014. As we outlined to both the Oireachtas and the European Court of Auditors,²² NYCI is concerned at the overall slow pace of implementation four years into the process. We concur with the report of the European Court of Auditors²³ on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee scheme in Ireland which found that the results to date from the Youth Guarantee in Ireland “*had fallen short of expectations.*”

8,915

**YOUNG PEOPLE
NOW LONG-TERM
UNEMPLOYED**



¹⁸ CSO, Monthly Unemployment Report, April 2018, <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/mue/monthlyunemploymentapril2018/>

¹⁹ Dáil Éireann, Parliamentary Question, 22nd March 2018, 287 <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-03-22a.796>

²⁰ Eurofound (2017), Long-term unemployed youth: Characteristics and policy responses, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1729en.pdf

²¹ Implementation Plan of the EU Council Recommendation on the Youth Guarantee <http://www.welfare.ie/en/downloads/youth-guarantee-implementation-plan.pdf>

²² NYCI Presentation to the European Court of Auditors, February 11th 2016

²³ European Court of Auditors, Special Report, No 5/2017 <http://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/DocItem.aspx?did=41096>

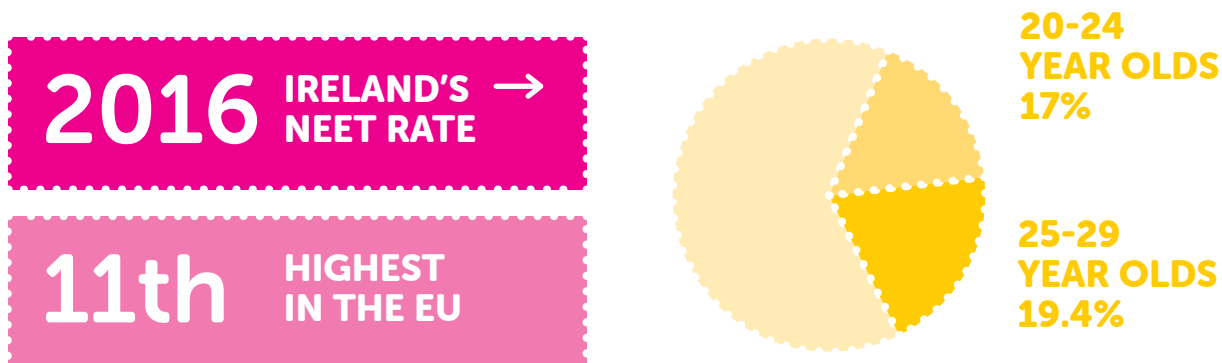
²⁴ Eurostat Statistics Explained, Share of young people neither in employment nor in education and training, by sex and age, 2016 http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Share_of_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_and_training,_by_sex_and_age,_2016.PNG

Another area of concern is the continued high number of young people ‘not in education, employment and training’ (NEET). **In 2016, Ireland’s NEET rate among 20-24 year olds was 17%, which is above the EU28 average, and the 11th highest in the EU. Likewise the NEET rate among 25-29 year olds at 19.4% is both above the EU28 average and the 11th highest in the EU.**²⁴

We welcomed the announcement in Budget 2018 of the new Youth Employment Support Scheme (YESS)²⁵ which is targeted at young people aged 18 – 24 who are long-term unemployed or who face barriers to employment. We note that YESS is designed to provide the long term unemployed with the opportunity to learn basic work and social skills in a supportive environment while on a work placement. YESS is designed to serve as a replacement for JobBridge, which was abolished in October 2016. We are disappointed given the still high number of long term young jobseekers that the new scheme has not yet been launched (June 2018), although we understand this is imminent, we are also concerned at the initial allocation of just €1m for the scheme.

We are calling on Government in Budget 2019 to commit to reducing the number of young people under 26 who are long-term unemployed, to fewer than 4,500 by the end of 2019. It is vital we support young jobseekers into education, training and work experience and prevent the drift into long-term joblessness. This will require additional investment in career guidance, access to apprenticeships and the provision of additional education and training places.

NYCI recommends an additional investment of €22m in Budget 2019 to reduce the number of young people long-term unemployed by the end of 2019. We propose the provision of an additional 2,650 education and training places which will cost €20m based on the average cost of a SOLAS training place²⁶ of €7,578. This is the gross cost, as this investment would lead to reduced social welfare payments as more young people move into employment. For example, if we assume 50% or there were 2,650 fewer young people on €107.70, the lowest rate of Jobseeker’s Allowance, this would save just over €14m per annum, so the estimated net cost would be €6m.



²⁵ Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Budgetary Measures, October 2017, <https://m.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Budget-2018.aspx>

²⁶ <https://www.welfare.ie/en/downloads/Youth-Guarantee-Implementation-Plan.pdf> pp26

We are also proposing that €2m is invested in an access to apprenticeship programme. We welcome the expansion and growth in apprenticeships in the last number of years. The number of apprentices in training in 2017 was 12,849, up from 10,445 in 2016²⁷ driven by a 53% increase in the number of new entrants between 2015 and 2017.²⁸ We support the overall Government commitment to double the number of new entrants by 2020 to 9,000 per annum with the introduction of a range of new apprenticeships including in areas such as animation, horticulture and healthcare²⁹. **As we expand the number and range of apprenticeships, it is vital that these opportunities remain open to all young people, in particular young people who are economically and socially disadvantaged and those who have limited formal qualifications.** We propose that programmes such as the DIT Access to Apprenticeship³⁰ programme should be rolled out nationwide to provide supports and address barriers, which may prevent disadvantaged young people from opting for and being able to sustain an apprenticeship, with a particular focus on the long term unemployed.

INVESTMENT:

€22m gross cost to halve long-term youth unemployment (€8m net cost).

RESPONSIBILITY:

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection/Department of Education and Skills.

IT IS VITAL APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES REMAIN OPEN TO ALL YOUNG PEOPLE



FOCUS ON THE DISADVANTAGED & THOSE WITH LIMITED FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS



²⁷ Dáil Éireann, Parliamentary Questions 114, 117-119, 18th January 2018 <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-01-18a.295>

²⁸ Dáil Éireann, Parliamentary Question 79, 22nd March 2018, <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-03-22a.192>

²⁹ <https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2017-Press-Releases/PR17-12-08.html>

³⁰ <http://www.dit.ie/colleges/collegeofengineeringbuiltenvironment/accesstoapprenticeship/>

Social Protection for Young Jobseekers

3

RECOMMENDATION: Equality for young people on Jobseeker's Allowance

RATIONALE:

NYCI supports full equality for young people. We opposed the decision of previous Governments to reduce welfare payments to young unemployed people under 26 years of age and we want the full rates to be restored. We acknowledge the decision of Government in Budget 2017, in line with a proposal made by NYCI since 2014 to restore the full adult rate to young people engaged in education, training and work experience. We are, however, disappointed that no progress was made on this issue in the 2018 Budget. We believe the imposition of lower rates on young jobseekers is contrary to the provisions of Article 40.1 of the Irish Constitution,³¹ which dictates that all citizens should be treated equally and must be addressed.

The most recent data indicates that **73% or 14,095 of the 19,477 young people in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance (JA) in April 2018 were on €107.70 a week, 10% or 2,019 were on €152.80 with 17% or 3,363 on the full rate of €198 per week.**³² In 2014, we published the results of a poll which found that 4 out of 10 young people on JA were struggling to make ends meet.³³



³¹ Irish Constitution http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/eng/Historical_Information/The_Constitution/February_2015_-_Constitution_of_Ireland_.pdf

³² Dáil Éireann, Parliamentary Questions 204-205, May 16th 2018 <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-05-16a.546>

³³ NYCI Briefing Paper on Jobseekers' Allowance http://www.youth.ie/sites/youth.ie/files/NYCI%20Briefing%20Paper_RedC_Jobseekers%27%20Allowance_Final.pdf

YOUNG PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 26 IN RECEIPT OF JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE AT THE END OF APRIL 2018 BY RATE.		%
RATE	RECIPIENTS	
€107.70	14,095	73%
€152.80	2,019	10%
€198	3,363	17%
Total	19,477	100%

15.6%

2015 POVERTY RATE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15-24 YEARS (ALMOST DOUBLE THE OVERALL RATE)



The impact of these reduced payments is confirmed by the statistics on the rate of consistent poverty among young people aged 15-24³⁴. **The consistent poverty rate for young people aged 15-24 years in 2015 was 15.6%, which is almost double the overall rate of 8.7% and the highest of all age cohorts.** The percentage of young people aged 15-24 years in consistent poverty has increased by 73% between 2010 and 2015, compared to the overall increase of 40% over the same period. In addition to the data there is compelling anecdotal evidence that the cuts are leading to youth homelessness. NYCI is calling on the Government to reverse these cuts over the next two Budgets, beginning in Budget 2019. This proposal, if implemented, would contribute to Ireland’s commitment under Goal 8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

In Budget 2019, NYCI calls on Government as the first of two steps in eliminating the age-related difference in payment by increasing the Jobseeker’s Allowance rate for 18-24 year olds by €45.15 per week from €107.70 to €152.85 and increase the rate for 25 year olds by €22.60 from €152.80 to €175.40 per week. According to data provided by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, these two measures would cost €37.3m and €3.2m respectively in a full calendar year³⁵.

INVESTMENT:

€40.5m as the first of two steps to restore young people to full adult Jobseeker’s Allowance rate.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

³⁴ Social Inclusion Monitor 2015, Department of Social Protection pp42 <https://www.welfare.ie/en/downloads/SocialInclusionMonitor2015.pdf>

³⁵ Dáil Éireann, Parliamentary Questions 205-206, June 13th 2018 <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-06-13a.521>

Youth Homelessness

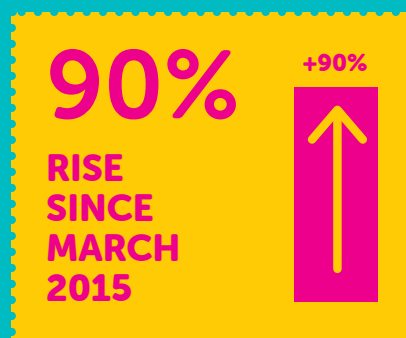
4

RECOMMENDATION: Working to End Youth Homelessness

RATIONALE:

In April 2018, 9,652³⁶ people were recorded as homeless, which included 5,963 adults and 3,689 children under 18 years. **The number of young people aged 18-24 who are homeless was 924 in April 2018 representing a rise of 90% in the three years since March 2015.**

The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014–2015, Better Outcomes Brighter Futures, identifies ‘economic security and opportunity’ as a national outcome for children and young people up to the age of 25. Despite this, homelessness amongst young people in Ireland as outlined above is a significant and growing problem. While there are many reasons a young person can experience homelessness, issues such as reduced social welfare supports, young people being a lower priority on housing waiting lists, unsuitable emergency accommodation and inadequate support services, especially for those leaving care are major contributory factors. Many have difficulty accessing affordable and quality housing in the private rental market and/or social housing sector. The current levels of youth unemployment and cuts in social welfare for young people in successive budgets have made it increasingly difficult for many to be able to afford to leave home and live independently. Likewise, these cuts and lack of supply have made it very challenging for young people leaving care to access housing.



³⁶ The Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government Homelessness Report April 2018, http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/homeless_report_-_april_2018_0.pdf

The cuts in welfare payments have particularly impacted on young people at risk of homelessness. **Between 2007 and 2015 the rate of severe deprivation among 18 to 24 year-olds increased by almost 157% (4.6% to 11.8%), twice that of the general population.**³⁷ The policy has yet to be reversed despite improvements in the national finances in recent years. It is welcome that Government have previously protected young people leaving care aged 18-24 years from the reduced welfare rates, where they have been in care any time in the previous 12 months before the age of 18. Existing Government policy stipulates that when such a young person reaches the age of 25, they are subject to the lower rate, so their weekly payment is reduced from €198 to €152.80 per week and then at the age of 26 years if they are still on or return to the live register reverts to €198 per week. This policy makes no sense and should be amended so that all young people aged 18-25 years who have left care should receive the full adult Jobseeker's Allowance rate. We are not in a position to cost this proposal as the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection has indicated that data on the number of young people in this category is not available³⁸. While this policy has a severe impact on those affected, we would be of the view that the overall numbers are small and therefore the cost of changing this policy would be minimal.

We now also believe it is time to protect young people experiencing homelessness and restore the full rate to this cohort in Budget 2019. While we are proposing a phased restoration of the full adult rate for all young people, we believe we cannot wait for future budgets to address the needs of young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. We need to provide young people with adequate income now. The current policy of reduced Jobseeker's Allowance payment mean that young people who do not come from a care background and have become homeless will not be able to support themselves out of homelessness and into accommodation. In the vast majority of cases, the causes of their homelessness mean that returning to the 'family home' is not a viable option. Given the priorities in the allocation of social housing, the most likely route for a young person to secure accommodation is through Rent Supplement and the Housing Assistance Payment. We welcome the changes in Budget 2017, which reduced the contribution of young people under 26 (on the lowest Jobseeker's Allowance rate) to Rent Supplement from €30 to €10,³⁹ however, this still leaves young people on the lowest rate with a disposable income of just under €98 per week. As a result of this limited income it is almost impossible for young people to secure viable rental accommodation.



³⁷ European Survey of Income and Living Condition 2016. Eurostat Indicator: ilc_mddd11

³⁸ Dáil Éireann, Parliamentary Questions 207, June 13th 2018 <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-06-13a.525>

³⁹ <http://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Rent-Supplement.aspx>

⁴⁰ Independent Review of Homeless Services, Mazars for the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government, December 2015 http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/independent_review_of_homeless_services_-_mazars.pdf

While taking up an education and/or training course will result in a full payment being made, this cannot be used as the basis of a move to independent living as it would be impossible to sustain the accommodation after the training is completed. The result of this policy anomaly is that young people will spend much longer periods in homeless services, increasing the likelihood that they become entrenched in homelessness. This policy is not only detrimental for the young people involved; it is also costly for the state. Supporting young people in homeless accommodation is very expensive. A Mazars report⁴⁰ estimated that the average cost of supporting a person experiencing homelessness in 2014 was €19,179 per annum.

NYCI endorses Focus Ireland's proposal that where a young person under 26 years has been assessed as being homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, they would qualify for the full rate under the discretions allowed as part of the supplementary welfare payments procedure. Once a young person on the reduced rate has been assessed as in need of support to address homelessness, a case conference would be triggered that would include, the case/support worker, a local authority housing officer and Intreo office official, and any other appropriate services that the young person may be accessing. Once a pathway out of homelessness and support plan is agreed with the young person the local Intreo office could use the discretion available under article 38 of the supplementary welfare regulation SI 412 of 2007 to provide an increased payment to the young person in accordance with the support plan agreed with the young person. This proposal, if implemented, would contribute towards Ireland's commitment under Goal 1 of the Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty in all its forms everywhere.

We estimate that the cost of implementing this new policy would be €4,695⁴¹ per qualifying young person. In the unlikely event that all 924 young people who are currently homeless would move from the reduced rate to the full rate, such a proposal would cost €4.4m. This maximum cost is extremely unlikely, as 73% of young people are on the lowest Jobseeker's Allowance rate of €107.70 and it is possible that some young people will not meet all the criteria for the increased payment. This proposal could be a last hope and resort for many young people who are homeless and desperate to secure accommodation. The investment proposed would actually save the State significant resources as otherwise homelessness supports would have to be provided to the young person. NYCI estimates that up to 50% of the current cohort could qualify for increased at a cost of €2.2m in 2018.

INVESTMENT:

€2.2m towards ending youth homelessness.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection/Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government.

⁴¹ €90.30 per week x 52 weeks = €4,695.60

Conclusion

Budget 2019 presents an opportunity for Government to invest in our growing youth population, which will increase by 13.2% between 2015 and 2025.

The investment in youth work services and voluntary youth organisations, employment, education and social protection supports, and measures to tackle and prevent youth homelessness in 2019 will not just make a difference now but will generate a social and economic dividend over the coming decades.

As the title “Future Proof with Investment with Youth” illustrates, the best means of securing long-term social and economic sustainability is investment in our people, in particular our growing youth population.

We call on Government to make that choice in Budget 2019.



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