

# JOBBRIDGE: STEPPING STONE OR DEAD END?

Exploring the views, perspectives and experiences of young people aged 18-25 years who participated in the National Internship Scheme, JobBridge

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**Complete report** and infographic summary available at:  
[youth.ie/JobBridge](http://youth.ie/JobBridge)

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# BACKGROUND

- NYCI working on issue of youth unemployment since 2009
- Fallen to under 22% but still very high
- Range of initiatives introduced by current and previous Government
- JobBridge introduced in July 2011
- Much commented on-but we wanted to get experience & evidence
- This report explores views and experience of young participants and makes recommendations

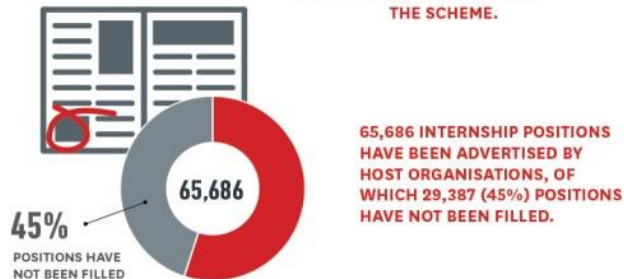
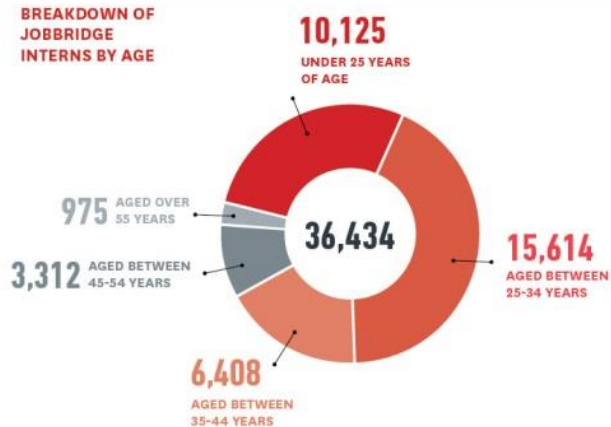


# DEFINING INTERNSHIPS

- Perlin book “Intern Nation”- background to Internships
- Well established in a few professions but relatively new development in general workforce - global explosion in last 3 decades
- “Young people can hardly believe in a world before internships”
- Concept not well understood in Ireland - particularly by some employers



# JOBBRIDGE KEY NUMBERS



- 15,900 host organisations have participated
- 376 host organisations have taken on 10 or more interns
- Top 5 hosting organisations have taken on 805 interns
- 65,686 internship adverts but 45% never filled
- 520 complaints about the scheme
- 43 host organisations have been excluded indefinitely from scheme

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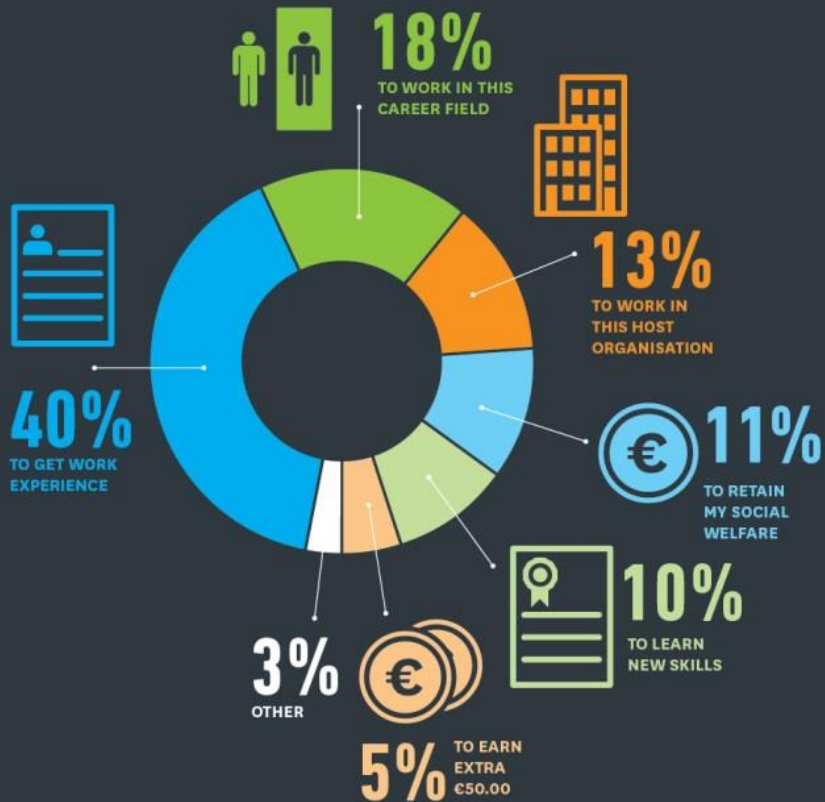


# GENERAL VIEW OF YOUNG PEOPLE ON JOBBRIDGE

- Only 54% aware of scheme (higher among 22-25/ABC1 & those on live register)
- 58% agree that it assists jobseekers progress into employment  
22% disagree
- 52% agree scheme exploits those taking part  
30% disagree
- ‘Exploits’: higher among 22-25 year olds, C2DE & jobseekers



# MAIN MOTIVATION IN APPLYING FOR JOBBRIDGE



## DID ROLE MATCH ADVERT?

Role matched internship advert to large extent	47%
Role matched internship advert to some extent	35%
Role did not match internship advert	17%

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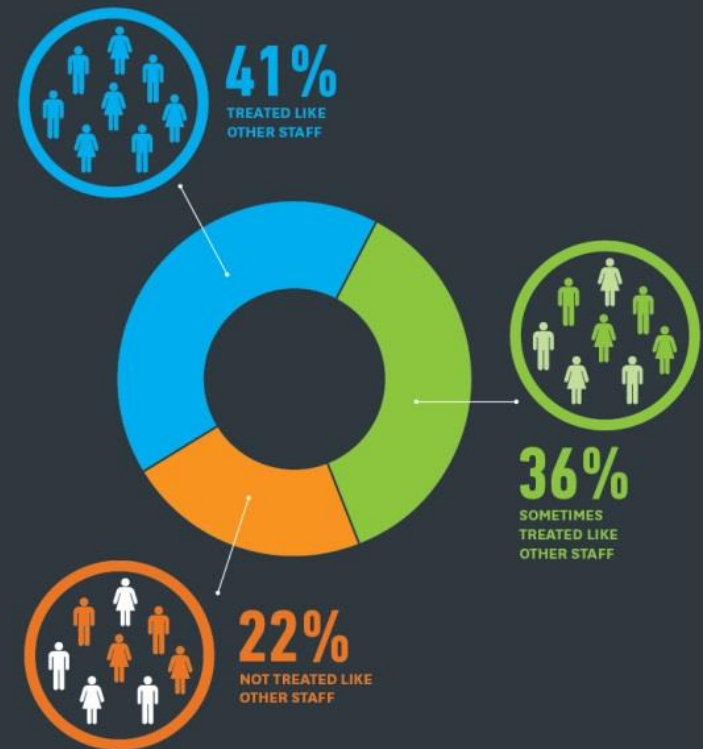




# MENTORING

- Only 76% stated mentor assigned
- 45% met mentor once a week but 25% never met mentor
- 60% found meetings with mentor useful

## TREATMENT BY HOST ORGANISATION





## CONCERNS/ DIFFICULTIES DURING INTERNSHIP

- 56% did experience concerns/difficulties during internship
- Concerns about costs
- Concerns about job displacement
- Concerns about amount of work
- Concerns about treatment by host organisation

## RAISE CONCERNS/DIFFICULTIES WITH DSP?

- 31% Would raise with DSP
- 25% Not willing to raise with DSP
- 21% Not aware could raise with DSP
- 10% Aware could raise with DSP but not sure how



# COMPLETION OF INTERNSHIP

- 66% completed full term of internship

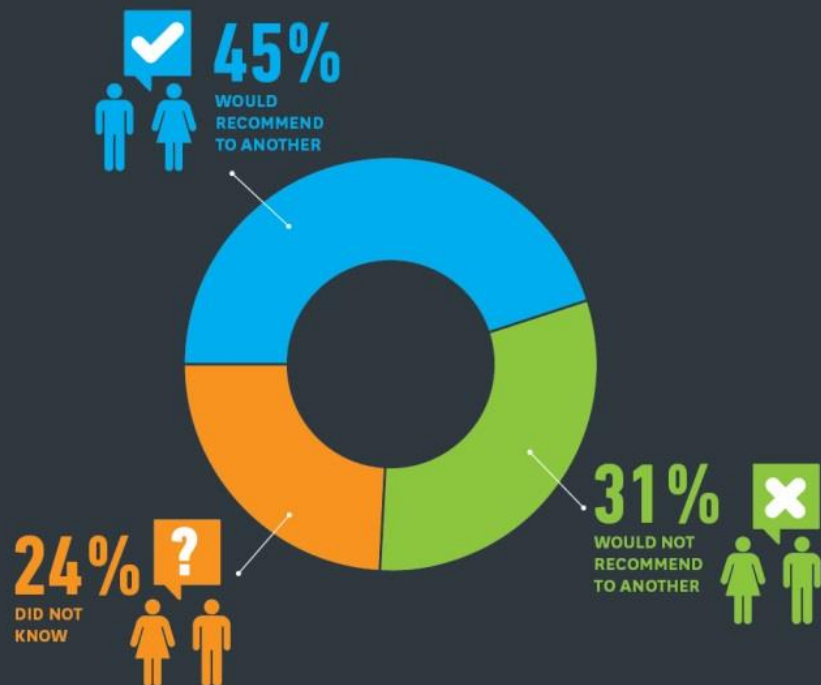
Of early finishers...

- 34% got a job
- 17% dissatisfied with internship
- 17% 'other'
- 13% host organisation ended internship/took up other opportunity

# SATISFACTION WITH YOUR INTERNSHIP

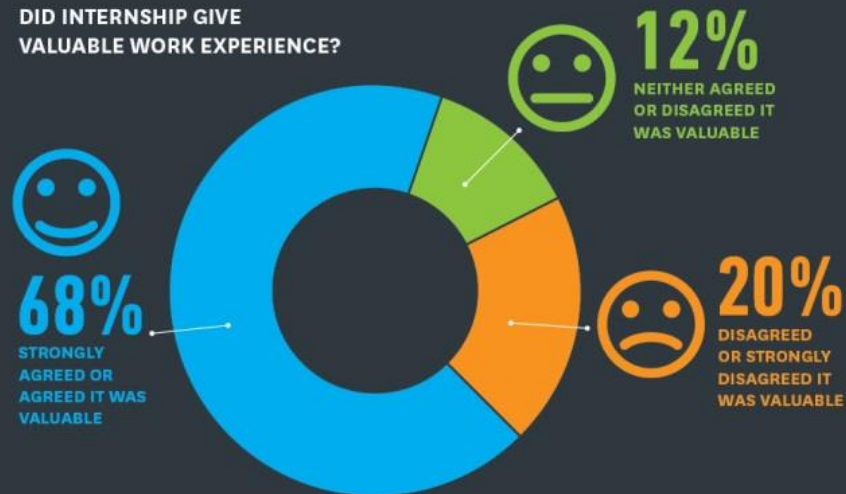


# RECOMMEND TO ANOTHER JOBSEEKER

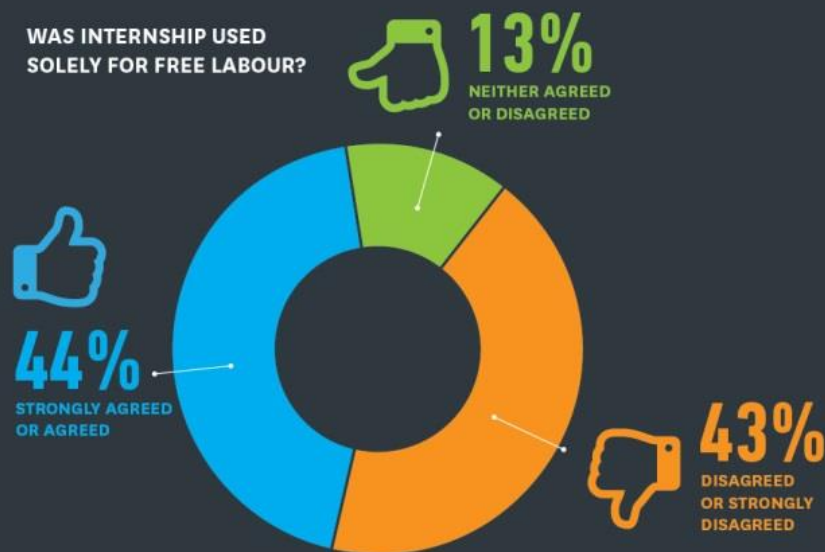


# VIEWS ON INTERNSHIP

DID INTERNSHIP GIVE VALUABLE WORK EXPERIENCE?



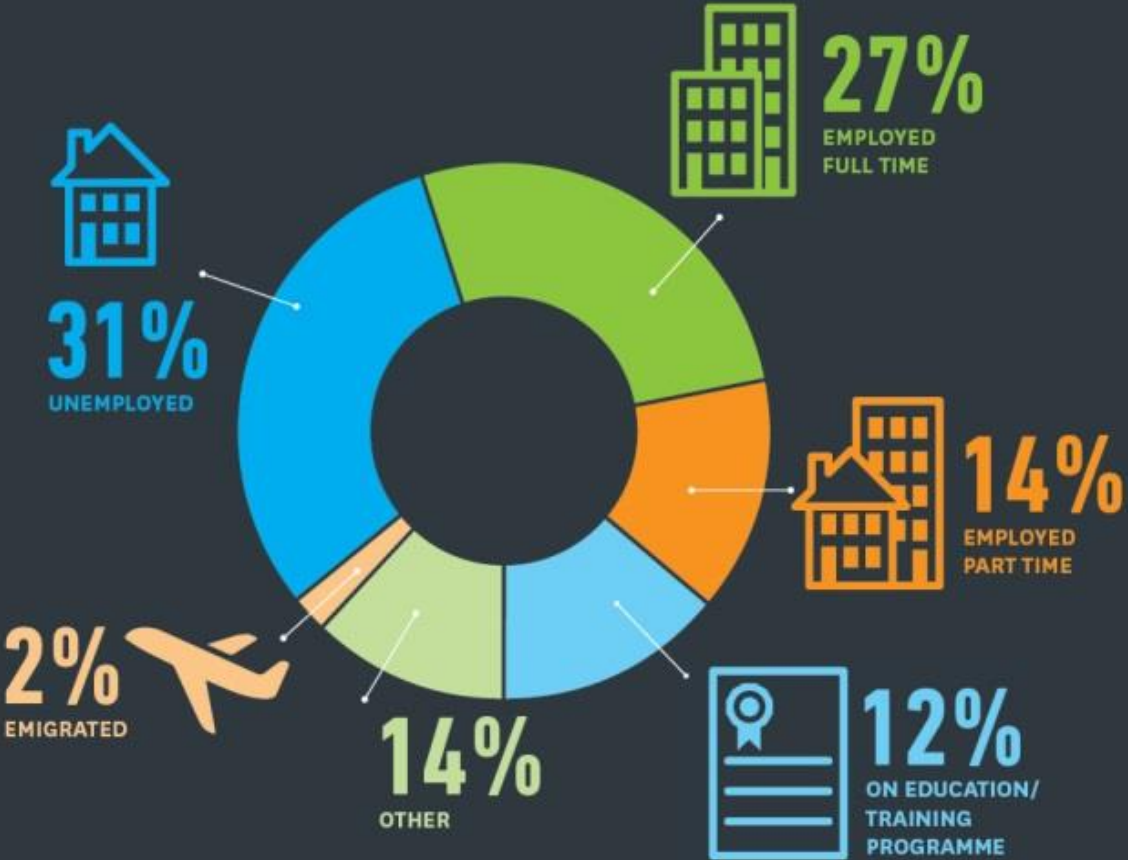
WAS INTERNSHIP USED SOLELY FOR FREE LABOUR?



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# STATUS POST INTERNSHIP



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# INTERVIEWS: MAIN FINDINGS



**"WAS NEVER ASSIGNED A MENTOR FORMALLY, THERE WAS JUST A LIST OF NUMBERS I COULD CALL."**

JOBBRIDGE PARTICIPANT, MALE, 24



## POSITIVE

- Work experience strong motivating factor
- Helped young jobseekers get out of rut
- Networking and contacts key positive factor
- Many did gain valuable work experience



## MIXED

- Experiences in relation to how interns treated was mixed: some interns treated very well by host organisations, some very poorly
- Post internship employment prospects were mixed - although most felt internship would assist in securing job



## NEGATIVE

- A number of participants struggled to meet extra costs and found €50 top-up inadequate - some could not have participated without parental support
- Mentors appointed but mostly in name only as very little mentoring provided
- Some evidence of abuse of the cooling off period and job displacement
- Lack of rights for interns and lack of clarity on rights regarding illness, injury, expenses, etc

## OVERALL

- General overview summed up by one interviewee: "So many pros and so many cons."

**"SO MANY PROS AND SO MANY CONS."**

JOBBRIDGE PARTICIPANT, MALE, 24



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# CONCLUSIONS

- There are positives & JobBridge providing routes to employment for some
- Deficiencies in the scheme and a lack of quality emerged consistently
- Scheme is funded by the State & jobseekers are impacted when quality lacking, dangers of job displacement-current situation not acceptable
- NYCI perspective is that now good time (employment growing) to take stock & review
- Recommendations are our proposals - willing to engage with all on best way forward



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**NYCI recommends that JobBridge should be reformed and revised to enhance the experience of participants, improve quality and increase progression into secure and sustainable employment.**

## **1. Contribution to Employment**

An analysis of JobBridge should be undertaken with the inclusion of a control group to determine the actual contribution of scheme to employment and employability.

## **2. Promoting Progression**

The scheme should only be open to host organisations and sectors of the economy that demonstrate high levels of progression to employment.

## **3. Monitoring for Quality**

The current monitoring system should be reformed with a greater emphasis on quality. It should also incorporate feedback from interns and primarily be directed at host organisations and sectors with higher levels of dissatisfaction.

## **4. Curtailing Abuse of Cooling Off**

The Department of Social Protection should enhance monitoring of compliance with the cooling off period to prevent job displacement.





# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5. Top Up-Payment

The weekly top-up payment for all participants on the JobBridge scheme should be doubled to €100 a week.

## 6. Charter of Rights for Interns

A Charter of Rights for Interns should be developed in consultation with former and current interns which outlines their rights in relation to issues such as time off, holiday period, expenses, rights when ill/injured, force majeure leave, insurance, mentoring and support, treatment by host organisations. This Charter should be put on a statutory basis by means of primary or secondary legislation.

## 7. Mandatory Internships

Participation in JobBridge should remain voluntary and the Department of Social Protection should ensure no young person is compelled to participate. Proposals from Government to introduce a mandatory variant of the scheme for 1,500 long term unemployed young people should be abandoned.

## 8. Advertising Internships

Proposed internship advertisements should be subject to greater scrutiny and host organisations should be required to confirm that internship will largely match position advertised. Where significant changes are made this should only be done with agreement of both intern and host organisation and approval by Department of Social Protection.

## 9. Mentoring

A review of the mentoring process should be undertaken. The Department of Social Protection should organise workshops on mentoring to provide greater guidance and training on the role and duties of host organisations. Attendance at these workshops should be compulsory for persons appointed as mentors.

## 10. Support for Interns

The Department of Social Protection should organise regional or sectoral meetings/group engagements for interns to provide information and allow interns to seek advice/support on their placement. These meetings could also serve as a means to facilitate feedback from interns to improve the quality and monitoring of the scheme.



# THANK YOU

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# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

