

*For immediate Release: Tues 18<sup>th</sup> December 2012*

## **MOMENTUM PROGRAMME OFFERS 6,500 TRAINING AND EDUCATION PLACES FOR JOBSEEKERS**

Today (18<sup>th</sup> December, 2012), An Tánaiste, Eamon Gilmore TD, together with the Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairí Quinn TD, and the Minister of State for Training and Skills, Ciarán Cannon TD, announced an innovative Government initiative which will provide free education and training projects for up to 6,500 long-term jobseekers.

This initiative, MOMENTUM, will assist 6,500 long term unemployed jobseekers to gain in-demand skills and to access work in sectors of the economy where there are job opportunities. The programmes will include on-the job training in the form of work experience modules as well as the development of the workplace skills required to obtain and retain employment.

36 education and training providers from both the private and public sector will be offering 62 individual MOMENTUM programmes in 87 locations across the country. These projects will be in the expanding employment areas of ICT, digital media, healthcare and social services, the green economy, food processing and sales and marketing.

Specific projects will also be available for those under 25 to assist them to enter or return to employment including, 'Train To Work Opportunities', 'Green Pathways' and a Graduate Activation Programme.

MOMENTUM is an outcomes-based model of education and training that sees best international practice adapted to an Irish context. The courses are tailored to both the needs of the long-term job-seeker, but also employers who are experiencing skills shortages.

Courses are free, full and part-time and are aligned to levels 3 to 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or to an industry required certification within the sector. The projects range in duration from 11 weeks – 45 weeks.

An Tánaiste said: "The Government's priority is to get our people back to work. We are spending more than €20 million in order to assist thousands of long-term jobseekers in getting new skills and returning to employment in areas where there are currently opportunities."

Announcing the 6,500 places today, Minister Quinn said "We all know that budgets are tight, in households and in the Government Departments. But, we are committed to ensuring that our limited resources are targeted and allow unemployed people to access high quality and relevant education and training. The MOMENTUM model, which sees skills provision married with on the job experience, is a significant innovation in how we spend public money on further education and training."

Minister Cannon said, "Momentum is part of the major reform of the further education and training sector. I am spearheading the creation of Solas and it will facilitate a coherent integrated strategic national response across the further education and training sectors."

Speaking at Windmill Lane Recording Studios where the launch took place, Paul O'Toole, Director General, FÁS said "This programme provides a real opportunity to long term jobseekers to develop the skills that employers are looking for. We believe that the training, education and real experience provided through the projects will significantly enhance participants' capacity to compete for jobs".

MOMENTUM is administered by FÁS and funded by the Department of Education & Skills through the ESF supported Labour Market Education & Training Fund (LMETF). The payment system to providers is outcomes based with part payment reserved for key stages of the programme, including challenging certification, progression and employment outcomes at the end of the programme.

Further information on MOMENTUM, its projects and providers and eligibility criteria can be found on the website: [www.momentumskills.ie](http://www.momentumskills.ie) or from the any Employment Services Office.

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#### Notes to Editors

MOMENTUM builds on the experience of the first Labour Market Activation Programme with an emphasis on strong labour market opportunities including significant work placement as an integrated part of courses.

Funding is only available for MOMENTUM projects in areas of skills needs, identified by FÁS' Skills and Labour Market Research Unit and its National Skills Database (NSD), as well as research by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), the National Skills Strategy and other relevant sources which provide for accredited in-demand NFQ or industry qualification.

#### Themes

LMETF funding is being utilised to provide education and training solutions to the needs of both unemployed individuals and employers within the context of four themes and across ten (10) geographic regions. The first three themes are based on 'clusters of occupations'. These have been chosen because there is evidence available which shows that these skills are associated with relatively good employment opportunities and furthermore, that these employment opportunities can be accessed by the client group identified.

#### Theme 1: Occupations in

- Information Communications Technology
- Digital Media
- Gaming
- Telecommunications.

#### Theme 2: Occupations in

- Transportation
- Distribution and Logistics
- Sales and Marketing.

### Theme 3: Occupations in

- Health Care and Social Services
- Manufacturing - Process Technicians
- Natural Resources Energy Conservation
- Food Processing and Food and Beverage Services.

Theme 4 is dedicated to the cohort of under 25 year olds with the clear objective of moving them off the Live Register into employment and/or to provide a solid foundation for them to continue in further education and training that will progress them along their pathway into employment.

#### Eligibility:

To be eligible for a place on a MOMENTUM project, a person must be unemployed for at least 12 months or longer and be in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance/Benefit or be signing on for Social Insurance Contribution Credits for 12 months or longer, and actively seeking employment.

#### **Examples of Momentum Programmes:**

**Project:** Airblown Fibre Optic Cable Network Installation & Maintenance Technician

**Provider:** Broadbandcareers Ltd

**Category:** Aged under 25s

**Description:** The aim of this project is to provide participants with the knowledge, skills and qualifications to work as technicians constructing networks using blown fibre installation techniques. Certification is FETAC level 6.

**No. of participants:** 60

**Location:** This project is targeted for those aged under 25s in the Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary South, Waterford, Wexford areas

**Modules:** Air Blown Fibre Installation  
Optic Fibre Installation  
Career Planning and Employment Support  
Work Experience

**Duration:** 45 days training and 25 days in-company experience.

**Project:** Certificate in Contact Technical Support

**Provider:** Progressive Education Ltd

**Category:** Sales & Marketing

**Description:** This project is targeted towards people in the Cork and Kerry regions and will provide participants with skills and certification at level 6 in Contact Centre sales.

**No. of participants:** 100

**Location:** Cork and Kerry

**Duration:** 118 days in training and 57 days in-company experience.