



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí Department of Social Protection

www.welfare.ie

http://twitter.com/welfare_ie

Tánaiste addresses Ballymun Youth Guarantee Conference as figures show 29% reduction in number of young people signing on the local Live Register

23 March 2015: The number of young people signing on the Live Register in Ballymun dropped by 29% in 2014, significantly exceeding the national average of 19%.

The figures are contained in a report on the Ballymun Youth Guarantee Project, under which almost 600 young jobseekers in Ballymun were supported into jobs, work experience, education or training during the course of the year.

The report – *“Policy and Practice, Key Learning from the Ballymun Youth Guarantee Project”* by Professor Maurice Devlin – was launched by the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton T.D., at a conference held in Ballymun today to discuss the outcomes of the pilot.

The Tánaiste said: **“Youth unemployment can have lifelong consequences, which is why the EU-wide Youth Guarantee has been introduced. Its aim is simple – to ensure young jobseekers get a good-quality, personalised offer of employment, education, apprenticeship or training within four months of their becoming unemployed. Already, 25,000 young jobseekers in Ireland benefitted from the Guarantee in 2014, and youth unemployment, which stood at over 30% in 2012, will drop below 20% this year.**

“But that is still far too high, which is why the pilot in Ballymun is so important. We will use the lessons learned in Ballymun to further shape the nationwide rollout of the Youth Guarantee and improve our offering for young people. The early signs are encouraging. Of every 10 young people in Ballymun who received a formal offer, six were offered further education or training, and four work experience or employment. In 2014, we saw a drop of 29% in the number of young people signing on the Live Register in Ballymun. That’s fully 10 points ahead of the national average, and while not all of this can be attributed to the pilot, it is clear it is having a positive impact.

“The objective for us now is to take the lessons from Ballymun and improve our services both locally and nationally so that we can further reduce youth unemployment and give our young people the opportunities they deserve to build productive careers.”

The Tánaiste told the conference that the role of employers in engaging with and providing opportunities to young jobseekers is critical to ongoing progress.

“Young people are not a homogenous group. They vary enormously in terms of their background, life experience, educational attainment, skills level and employment experience. The Department of Social Protection is committed to providing them with the guidance and support that they need to help them identify and embark on their pathway to employment.

Addressing their needs will require new, innovative approaches with regard to personal development, basic skills, education, training, development and work experience options.

“In this employers have a crucial role to play, by providing opportunities for work experience and placements. There are a number of schemes, services and supports available and I would urge employers to avail of these. The Department of Social Protection is committed to working with employers to ensure that young people in particular, are able to avail of a wide range of opportunities.”

The Tánaiste welcomed the agreement between the Department and Dublin Chamber of Commerce to pilot an employer engagement liaison to make it as easy as possible for employers to hire off the Live Register.

The main plank of the Youth Guarantee, the Tánaiste said, is to enable young people to find and secure sustainable jobs. This year, there is a specific focus on assisting people who are long-term unemployed and on young people who are out of work, especially those who have never worked. This year in particular will see the development of new apprenticeships and traineeships.

The Government is engaged in a radical renewal of the apprenticeship model which will have two main strategies:-

- reviewing the apprenticeships currently available to ensure that they measure up to the rapidly evolving 21st century workplace; and
- exploring with industry and other stakeholders the sectors that would benefit from the apprenticeship model and launching new apprenticeships in those areas. This work is already underway and will be a key feature of Government employment policy in 2015 and beyond.

In conclusion, the Tánaiste said that her Department will carefully consider the lessons learned from the Ballymun Youth Guarantee pilot project and thanked Professor Maurice Devlin for his report. She also paid tribute to all the stakeholders involved in the pilot project for their hard work and co-operation. She welcomed the joint Declaration signed by all of them committing to continue to work together to support young people into employment.

Link to report ‘Policy and Practice, Key learning from the Ballymun Youth Guarantee Project’ by Professor Maurice Devlin:

ENDS