



NIYF Youth Guarantee

The Northern Ireland Youth Forum has highlighted Youth Unemployment as one of their Key Priority Campaigns for the foreseeable future.

With NI's youth unemployment rate at around 1 in 4 and emigration being higher than ever the Youth Forum is urging the NI Executive to implement a 'Youth Guarantee' to address the issue.

The European Commission has recommended this concept of a Youth Guarantee and has advocated that young people should be offered the chance of a job; work experience; an apprentice; training or combined work and training on leaving school.

Sweden; Finland and Austria have rolled out similar schemes in recent years.

The Youth Guarantee:

The Youth Forum would propose that **every young person aged between 16 and 24 will be offered a job, work experience, apprentice training or combined work and training within a defined period of time after leaving school; (ideally within 4 months).**

The Youth Guarantee scheme must be resourced and quality assured.

The Stormont Executive should consider what incentives it can give to employers who buy into the Youth Guarantee Scheme such as reduced tax. For example the Department of Finance in ROI recently put in place legislation that will ensure grants paid to companies participating in the 'JobsPlus' scheme, which encourages employers to hire the long-term unemployed, will not be subject to tax.

The Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) policy should be considered as part of this scheme – i.e. TBUC outlines the creation of 10,000 one-year placements in a 'United Youth' programme.

The Voluntary sector should be supported and funded at higher levels to provide **overseas opportunities (that enhance skills and capacity but also bring young people back home to work); personal and developmental work; and targeted interventions aimed at the long term unemployed.**

We are unsure of what resources are available via TBUC. Based on work in other countries we would anticipate that a Youth Guarantee would cost around £5,544 per person.

Additional aspects of the Youth Forum's Youth Guarantee are as follows:

- Establishment of a public; private sector; young people's coalition which will monitor and address the issue of Youth Unemployment; as well as stimulate investment across sectors to fund the Youth Guarantee;
- The establishment of an Invest NI funded young entrepreneur scheme;
- Invest NI to ring fence more funding towards local employers as oppose to focusing on large multinationals;
- 'Create 108' – MLAs to create and fund 108 apprentices within their offices;
- Young people to be co-opted onto the Strategic Investment Board;
- Abolish University Fees to give more young people improved access to further education regardless of social or economic class;
- DE to implement a strategy for improved careers advice and work experience in schools;
- DEL to develop Youth Apprenticeship Schemes across all sectors;

Costs; Stats and estimates:

- Based on the last census there are currently 227,625 young people aged 16 – 25 in NI.
- Latest statistics (Oct '13); would suggest that 22.5% of these young people are unemployed.
- Therefore we are estimating a total of 51,216 unemployed young people (16 - 25).
- The Cost of a youth guarantee scheme could be up to £283M.
- United Youth Contribution = 10,000 young people over 3 years (3,300 young people per year)?
- Population of NI: 1,180,863
- NIYF would propose a phased approach i.e. targeting 16 – 18 year old school leaving young people and a percentage of long term unemployed initially.
- If we target 16 – 17 year old School leavers only we are looking at around an estimated total of 11,571 young people at this age who are unemployed.
- If we roll out a Youth Guarantee Scheme to 3,000 young people from this group the total cost would be £16,632,000

Where could we find money?

- Assets recovery: Hand out £500,000 pa to community orgs
- Invest NI Underspend 2012: £39,000,000
- NI Assembly budget ring fenced to tackle poverty: £80M unspent (reported 22nd Oct)
- Annual Assembly Underspend
- Unspent monies as we approach Comprehensive Spending Review.