



Tithe an Oireachtais

An Comhchoiste um Ghnóthaí an Aontais Eorpaigh

ÁR dTODHCHAÍ A RÁTHÚ

**TUARASCÁIL AR AN nGÁ ATÁ LE RÁTHAÍOCHT A
THABHAIRT DON AOS ÓG**

Rapóirtéir: An Seanadóir Kathryn Reilly

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Houses of the Oireachtas

Joint Committee on European Union Affairs

GUARANTEEING OUR FUTURE

A REPORT ON THE NEED FOR A YOUTH GUARANTEE

Rapporteur: Senator Kathryn Reilly

June 2013

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN UNION AFFAIRS

GUARANTEEING OUR FUTURE

A REPORT ON THE NEED FOR A YOUTH GUARANTEE

Decision of the Joint Committee

The Joint Committee on European Union Affairs at its meeting on 21 February 2013 considered a proposal by Senator Kathryn Reilly to produce a report for the Joint Committee on the Youth Guarantee.

It was agreed at that meeting that Senator Reilly, acting as Rapporteur to the Joint Committee should proceed to produce such a report.

The Joint Committee, at its meeting of 20 June 2013 considered and agreed the report, further agreed that the report be laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas and thanked Senator Reilly for the work done in its preparation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dominic Hannigan', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Dominic Hannigan T.D.
Chairman
20 June 2013

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Eoin Ó Broin and Seán Ó Deoráin for assistance in writing this report.

Many thanks to James Doorley of the National Youth Council of Ireland, James Higgins from the European Youth Forum and Dr Dermot Stokes for reading and commenting on initial drafts of this report.

1. Youth Unemployment

Twenty six million people were officially unemployed across the European Union at the end of April 2013. Nineteen million of these were in the Eurozone area.¹

According to Eurostat the EU27 unemployment rate was 11% in April. The EU17 unemployment rate was 12.2%, the highest since records were first collected in 1999.

At 13.5% in April Irish unemployment is the fifth highest in the Eurozone, below Greece, Spain, Cyprus and Portugal.²

Across the EU rates of youth unemployment are significantly higher. In 2012 the EU27 youth unemployment rate was 22.8% while in the Eurozone it was 23.1%.³

Again Ireland is amongst the member states with the highest rate of youth unemployment. At 30.4% in 2012 we came in fifth highest in the Eurozone, after Greece, Spain, Portugal and Italy.

Significantly our youth unemployment rate has more than trebled since 2007. In that year the rate was 9.1%. In 2008 it jumped to 13.3% and again increased significantly in 2009 to 24%.

Since 2009 the rate of increase has slowed significantly. Nonetheless the overall rate has continued to climb from 27.6% in 2010 to 29.1% in 2011 and then to 30.4% in 2012.

The most recent CSO Quarterly National Household Survey results indicate that as of Quarter 1 2013 there were 53,800 under 25s unemployed.⁴

While the total number of unemployed under 25s had fallen by 11,000 since Quarter 1 2011 there was no corresponding increase in the numbers in employment. In fact between Quarter 1 2011 and Quarter 1 2013 the number of under 25s in employment fell by 24,100.⁵

During the same period the total number of under 25s in the labour force fell by 34,500.⁶

Census 2011 recorded 553,400 young people between the ages of 15 and 24. Of these, only one in four (130,900) were in employment; At the start of 2008 250,000 young people were in employment. This represents an effective collapse of youth employment since the start of the economic crisis.

Where have these young people gone? While we do not have a definitive answer to this question we do know that some will have entered full time education, others will have emigrated while some will have disengaged from the employment services completely.

¹ Eurostat, Euro area unemployment rate at 12.2%, 31 May 2013

² ibid

³ Eurostat, Unemployment rate by sex and age groups, 2 April 2013

⁴ CSO, Quarterly National Household Survey, 30 May 2013

⁵ ibid

⁶ ibid

Latest figures from the Central Statistics Office indicate that emigration from Ireland has increased significantly, with 87,100 leaving in the twelve months to April 2012. 31,181 of these were under 25, representing 35.8% of the total. This represents a doubling of the emigration rate for under 25s since 2007.⁷

The National Youth Council of Ireland have also noted that ‘Ireland has the 4th highest rate of young people “not in education or employment or training” in the EU at 18.4%.’⁸

It is fair to assume that without the ‘safety valve’ of emigration, unemployment levels, and youth unemployment levels in particular, would be significantly higher.

It is also fair to assume that there are a significant number of young people who are currently ‘outside the system’ not engaging with employment services or in receipt of social protection support.

The combined effects of youth unemployment and in particular long term unemployment combined with high rates of non-participation in education and training have serious personal, social and economic consequences.

The National Youth Council of Ireland argues that ‘the negative social impact of unemployment on the wellbeing of young people, their families and communities is incalculable.’⁹

They also cite Eurofound’s study of the costs of youth unemployment across the EU which indicated that the Irish exchequer loses €3.16 billion annually as a result of lost tax revenue and social welfare transfers arising from our high rate of youth unemployment. This is equivalent to 2% of Gross Domestic Product.¹⁰

The Eurofound report estimates that the cost to the EU arising from young people not in employment, education or training is at least €153 billion annually, with countries such as Ireland suffering a larger proportionate loss due to higher than average levels of youth unemployment.¹¹

It is important to note that, while the Eurofund estimate includes the cost of social welfare payments and lost tax revenue, it does not take into account the broader social and economic costs of youth unemployment. These include the costs of physical and psychological impacts of long term unemployment and the cost of increased crime and social unrest that often accompanies high levels of unemployment.

Given the scale of the youth unemployment across the EU, and particularly in Ireland, there has been a significant increase in the level of public and policy debate on how best to respond to what many believe is a crisis.

⁷ CSO, Population and Migration Estimates, 27 September 2012

⁸ NYCI, Youth Guarantee Factsheet, 2013

⁹ NYCI, Youth Guarantee Factsheet, 2013

¹⁰ NYCI, Youth Guarantee Factsheet, 2013

¹¹ Eurofound, press release, 22 October 2012

At the centre of this debate has been the idea of a youth guarantee, to which we now turn.

2. National Youth Guarantees

A Youth Guarantee is a state backed promise that a person under the age of 25 will be guaranteed a job, education, training or an apprenticeship within a specified period of time after leaving school or becoming unemployed. The time period is usually between three and six months.

The first Youth Guarantee programmes were introduced in Denmark and Sweden in the early 1980s. By the 1990s similar schemes operated in Norway, Finland and Iceland.

A typical example of a Youth Guarantee is that found in Finland. The scheme targets the under 25s and aims to reduce the period of time a young person not in employment, education or training by improving their chances of finding a job.¹²

Once a young person is registered as a jobseeker the employment service must develop a personal plan for the young person which includes an individual needs assessment of what support the person needs in order to find employment. The assessment is then followed by offers of employment, education placement (academic or vocations) or a range of other services including training, counselling, subsidised work or start-up funding to assist self-employment.

While there are significant differences between the early Youth Guarantee schemes they all share a number of core characteristics including:¹³

- A guarantee of a job or education/training placement within a set number of months
- Tailored assessments of individuals needs and on-going engagement with local employment services or related providers
- Increased state resources to fund additional education/training programmes
- Tax breaks or subsidies for employers hiring unemployed young people

Assessments of the early Youth Guarantee programmes found that the schemes produced mixed results including:¹⁴

- Benefits for those with higher levels of education and/or employability
- Benefits for very young people
- Parallel improvements and increased investment in secondary and vocational education and training

There were also significant weaknesses in the schemes, the lessons of which are important for the development of any future Youth Guarantees.

The schemes proved more successful for newer entrants to the labour market or those willing to engage with the local employment services.

¹² For a discussion of national youth guarantees see Eurofound (2012), Hummeluhr (1997), Besamusca 2012) and Party of European Socialists Guide on Youth Guarantees (2011).

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ *ibid*

Significantly the longer a young person was unemployed or the lower their educational skills or employability level the less likely they were to engage with or benefit from the Youth Guarantee schemes.¹⁵

It has been widely noted that the earlier schemes were not geared to ‘deeply entrenched’ and ‘hard-to-help’ sections of the youth unemployed population.

Following the dramatic rise in youth unemployment from 2007 a number of EU member states revised their Youth Guarantees. New programmes have been launched in Austria, Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden.

For a detailed discussion of these new schemes see Besamusca et al (2012). The key common features of these schemes included:

- Increased state investment in apprentices¹⁶ and vocational education
- Additional incentives for employers to employ young workers
- New focus on low skilled or unskilled young people

In the Netherlands a new scheme launched in 2011 focused on 50,000 low skilled young people and 97,000 out of work young people who were not yet registered as unemployed. The Government allocated €250 million over two years.

According to a report published by the Renner Institute the scheme led to 170,000 young people securing employment, internships or traineeships. A further 20,000 secured further full time vocational training while the total number of traineeships in the country was increased to 220,000.¹⁷

A similar scheme was introduced in Austria in 2008. An annual budget of up to €145 million was allocated with a focus on increased apprenticeships and subsidies for private employers who introduced traineeships.

The National Youth Council of Ireland contends that evaluations of the current Youth Guarantees in Sweden and Finland demonstrate that they contribute to reduced youth unemployment and labour market inactivity.¹⁸

It is also important to note that these countries also have high quality employment services with strong links into schools, training centres and higher education institutions and strong clear vocational pathways.

Interestingly youth unemployment rates in countries that currently operate Youth Guarantees are currently significantly lower than those that do not (Austria 9%, Norway 10%, Netherlands 10%, Denmark 14%)¹⁹.

¹⁵ See Hummeluhr (2007) for a detailed assessment of the Nordic schemes.

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Besamusca et al, The European Youth Guarantee: A Reality Check, Renner Institute, 2012

¹⁸ NYCI, Youth Guarantee factsheet

¹⁹ Eurostat, Dataexplorer, 2.4.13

Some countries that operate youth guarantees, such as Sweden and Finland, do have higher youth unemployment rates (Finland 19% and Sweden 24%). However the rate of increase in their youth unemployment levels since 2008 has been significantly lower than the EU average (a 3.5% increase in both countries compared to a 7% increase EU wide).

Clearly these differences in youth unemployment rates cannot be solely attributed to the existence or absence of a Youth Guarantee. However it is fair to say that they play an important role in reducing youth unemployment and increasing young people's access to training, education and jobs.

3. An EU Youth Guarantee

Throughout 2012 a number of political and civil society organisations across the EU campaigned for an EU wide Youth Guarantee. The European Youth Forum and its Irish member organisation the National Youth Council of Ireland were among those calling for an EU programme to compliment initiatives at a member state level.

In response to these campaigns the European Commission published a Youth Employment Package in December 2012 which included a proposal for a Council Recommendation to establish a Youth Guarantee.

In February 2013 the European Council announced a Youth Employment initiative through which €6 billion would be spend from 2014 to 2020 in member states with youth unemployment levels above 25% on ‘measures aimed at addressing youth unemployment, including the Youth Guarantee.’

Half of the funds were to be sourced from existing European Social Fund sources and half via a new Youth Employment Fund.

The Council Recommendation made clear that the €6 billion would be used to ‘support the measures set out in the [European Commissions] Youth Employment Package of 5 December 2012 and in particular to support the Youth Guarantee.’

The Recommendation went on to say, ‘The Youth Guarantee should be implemented by a scheme consisting of supportive measures, and should be geared to national, regional and local circumstances.’

It recommended six ‘axes’ on which these measures should be built including:

- Building up partnership-based approaches
- Early intervention and activation
- Supportive measures enabling labour market integration
- Use of EU funds
- Assessment and continuous improvement of the scheme
- Swift implementation

The Council was explicit in what the Youth Guarantee should promise, ‘that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprentice or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.’

In April the Employment and Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament agreed a number of amendments to the European Commission’s initial youth guarantee proposal. The age limit was raised from 25 to 30 and the reach of the scheme was extended from regions with a youth unemployment rate of 25% to those with a rate of 20%.

If these changes are formally incorporated into the EU Youth Guarantee scheme they will significantly increase the number of regions and people who would be able to avail of the initial funding allocation. However no additional funds have been made available.

Youth advocacy organisations who had played an important part in promoting the idea of an EU wide Youth Guarantee gave a mixed reaction to the Council Recommendation. They welcomed the aim, intention and policy framework of the Council's proposals.

However the European Youth Forum spoke for many when they said that the €6 billion Youth Employment Initiative fund 'is grossly inadequate to fully address the problem' of youth unemployment.

The Forum went on to say that, 'Only a youth guarantee scheme that received adequate investment, is accessible to all, and works in the interests of young people will be able to address youth unemployment and boost the European economy.'

4. An Irish Youth Guarantee?

In February 2013 the Government launched its Action Plan for Jobs. The plan noted that youth unemployment was of ‘particular concern.’

The plan went on to say that:

‘The Irish Presidency will place a spotlight on youth unemployment throughout our six months in office. We intend to gain momentum behind the Youth Employment and Social Investment Packages. The Youth Employment Package includes a “Youth Guarantee” aimed at ensuring that young people who are not working or studying receive an offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship.

The European Council has decided to reinforce EU efforts to address youth unemployment in a special dedicated “Youth Employment Initiative,” and will mobilise support in the order of €6 billion to that end, in certain regions with levels of youth unemployment above 25%. The Presidency will work with the European Commission and the European Parliament in advancing this initiative.

At a national level, as outlined in this Action Plan, we will deliver a range of actions to prepare young people for work through education, training and work placement measures.’

The Action Plan included four recommendations relating to young people (175, 231, 232 & 233). Three relate to the role of youth services in addressing youth unemployment while the fourth promises to have a youth element to a proposed policy statement on entrepreneurship. None relate to a Youth Guarantee scheme.

On April 24th in response to a parliamentary question on the issue of a Youth Guarantee Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton said:

‘While it is recommended that the guarantee should be implemented as soon as possible, it is recognised that implementation will be more gradual in the Member States experiencing the most severe budgetary difficulties and higher rates of youth unemployment. The government will now review the current range of youth employment policies in Ireland to assess what measures will need to be taken to commence the gradual implementation of the guarantee. This will include the identification of what would be the appropriate timescale for implementation in Ireland's current employment and budgetary circumstances.

In this context, the Government intends to work with all relevant stakeholders to maximise the impact of a youth guarantee in Ireland. We have sought funding from the European Commission for a the proposed pilot Youth Guarantee project in the Ballymun area of north Dublin, and numerous organisations (e.g. IBEC, Ballymun Job Centre, National Youth Council of Ireland) have agreed to participate in this pilot.

The scale and nature of any additional measures required for the gradual implementation of a guarantee at national level will depend on the trend in youth unemployment, and in particular the number of young people likely to experience periods of unemployment of more

*than four months under current policies. In this context, it is a welcome development that the official labour market figures published by the CSO recently indicated that the number of young unemployed at the end of 2012, at 59,000, a reduction of almost 9,000 on the same time a year earlier. It is to be hoped that this is the beginning of a sustained downward movement in youth unemployment as the economy recovers. Even so, the implementation of a guarantee will, almost certainly, require an expansion in the range of opportunities currently on offer to young people in the form of further education and training, internships, subsidised private-sector recruitment, and supports for self-employment.*²⁰

Further details on the proposed pilot scheme in Ballymun were provided by the Minister in a parliamentary on 15 May. The pilot scheme hopes to have an intake of 90 young people per month over a 12 month period. The expected cost of the pilot is €302,279 of which €250,000 is being sought from the EU. The start date is expected to be six months after approval of the EU portion of the funding. The focus of the scheme is to be new entrants onto the live register and young people on the register ‘for some time’

It is imperative that the Ballymun pilot is rigorously evaluated to test the transferability of the model to other locations, particularly those with lower levels of community support.

As with the response of advocates of a Youth Guarantee to the Council Recommendation earlier this year, the response to the actions of the government to date has been mixed.

There is strong cross party support for the idea of a Youth Guarantee scheme, across both the Government and opposition parties and deputies. The Government played an important role in ensuring agreement on the Youth Guarantee at the February European Council meeting.

However, notwithstanding the Ballymun pilot project, it is not yet clear what the Governments wider intentions are in terms of funding commitments to, or development and implementation of a state wide Youth Guarantee.

In light of this the Oireachtas European Affairs Committee would like to make the following recommendations for the Governments consideration.

²⁰ Written Answers, Social Protection, Youth Guarantee, Written answers Wednesday, 24 April 2013. Appendix 2 contains a collection of recent cross party parliamentary questions specifically dealing with the issue of a youth guarantee.

5. Recommendations

Youth Unemployment is one of the biggest challenges facing the European Union today.

As the proposal for a Youth Guarantee was initiated by the European Commission and agreed to by Council, the European Affairs Committee felt it appropriate to consider this issue.

However the committee recognises the cross departmental nature of the issues involved.

We note the Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation's report *Creating Policies that Work - Actions to Address Youth and Long-Term Unemployment* published in February 2013, and in particular Recommendation 2 supporting the introduction of a youth guarantee in 'the shortest possible timeframe.'

As the Department of Social Protection is now taking the lead in the youth guarantee pilot scheme we would ask that the Committee on Social Protection table our final report for discussion with a view to reaching their own conclusions on the matter.

Without prejudice to the recommendations from the Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation or any future views from the Committee on Social Protection, the European Affairs Committee, believing that a state wide Youth Guarantee scheme working to assist the 53,800 unemployed under 25s would play a positive role in assisting these people into training and education and back to work, recommends the following:

1. That the European Commission, Council and Parliament should consider increasing the total available funds for the Youth Guarantee in recognition of the scale of the problem across the EU, the increasing numbers of young people affected by youth unemployment and the proposals from the European Parliament to expand the eligibility for the scheme.
2. That Ireland's MEP's should press Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion László Andor to support the call for an increase of funding for Youth Guarantee schemes and to press member states to implement their schemes as a matter of urgency.
3. That the Government should design, fund and implement a state wide Youth Guarantee scheme as a matter of urgency.
4. That the design, implementation, governance and on-going evaluation of this scheme should involve relevant Government departments, employment services, educational and training bodies, employers, youth services, youth advocacy organisations and young people.
5. That the Ballymun pilot Youth Guarantee is rigorously evaluated to test the transferability of the model to other locations, particularly those with lower levels of community support.
6. That the scheme should in particular focus its attention on the long term youth unemployed, those with low skills levels and those not currently engaging with employment services or formal training and education.
7. That the scheme should be (i) based on international best practice and learn from both the positives and negatives in existing national Youth Guarantee schemes and (ii)

funded accordingly from a combination of European Youth Initiative funding and from the Governments own resources.

8. That Government should allocate significant resources, both financial and human, to develop and implement a Youth Guarantee taking into account the levels of investment in similar schemes in other EU member states. In doing this they should actively consider examples such as the Swedish Youth Guarantee which costs approximately €6,600 per participant.
9. That the Government should commit to the provision of quality education, training, work experience and employment opportunities under the Youth Guarantee scheme which enhance young people's employability and assist them into well paid and decent work.
10. Any Youth Guarantee scheme must include on-going monitoring and evaluation to ensure that there is consistency and coherence across the state. Monitoring and evaluation systems must include strong systems for participant evaluative feedback and for collation of data focusing on the effectiveness and outcomes of the schemes.
11. The Government should undertake to examine existing employment supports and see how they can be enhanced to support the implementation of the Youth Guarantee scheme.
12. That the next Government Action Plan on Jobs include a dedicated section on the issue of youth unemployment including the details of a state wide youth guarantee scheme.

6. Conclusion

A Youth Guarantee is not a quick fix solution to the serious problem of youth unemployment. On its own it will not address the growing percentage of under 25s unable to find work, not in education or training or disengaged from employment services.

However, as the experience of a significant number of other EU member states shows, Youth Guarantees can play an important part in addressing youth unemployment. If properly focused and resourced they can also have a positive impact in reducing the number of young people not in employment, education or training.

The Government has a unique opportunity to design and implement an intervention that could improve the opportunities and quality of life for a very large number of young people.

If they are to achieve this they need to be bold and imaginative in how they approach the issue of a Youth Guarantee.

A high quality youth guarantee scheme that receives adequate investment, is accessible to all, targets those in greatest need and works in the interests of young people can help address youth unemployment and in turn boost social and economic recovery.

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APPENDIX 1

European Youth Guarantee and Ireland Discussion

Thursday, 21 March 2013

The Joint Committee met at 14:10

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Deputy Eric Byrne,

Deputy Timmy Dooley,

Deputy Bernard J. Durkan,

Deputy Joe O'Reilly,

Senator Terry Leyden,

Senator Kathryn Reilly.

DEPUTY DOMINIC HANNIGAN IN THE CHAIR.

European Youth Guarantee and Ireland: Discussion

Chairman:

The meeting is now in session and I ask everyone to turn off their mobile telephones because they can interfere with the broadcasting equipment.

The first item on our agenda today is the European Youth Guarantee and its impact on Ireland. On behalf of the committee, I am delighted to welcome Mr. James Doorley from the National Youth Council of Ireland, Mr. James Higgins from the European Youth Forum and Mr. Dermot Stokes, an ex-member of Youthreach.

As members will know, at the end of the February the Council of the European Union reached political agreement on a recommendation addressed to the member states to establish a youth guarantee scheme, the aim of which is to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 who lose their jobs or who do not find work after finishing formal education quickly receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, or an apprenticeship or traineeship. The guarantee states that they should receive such an offer within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. The guarantee is intended to provide for a smooth transition between school and work, support labour market integration and make sure that no young person is left out. The measure is a key part of the response to the worsening youth unemployment situation in Europe. In Ireland, youth unemployment stands at 32% and in countries such as Spain, the unemployment rate for those under 25 is almost 50%. We all recognise that something needs to be done and this committee is interested in exploring how the proposed scheme might work in practice. In that context, we look forward to hearing the views of our witnesses today on how such a scheme might work and whether it could be customised for the Irish market.

I wish to draw attention to the parliamentary practice to the effect that members should not comment on, criticise or make charges against an individual or entity either by name or in such a way as to make him, her or it easily identifiable. By virtue of section 17(2)(I) of the Defamation Act 2009, witnesses are protected by absolute privilege in respect of their

evidence to this committee. However, if they are directed by the committee to cease giving evidence on a particular matter and they continue to do so, they are entitled thereafter only to a qualified privilege in respect of their evidence. They are directed that only evidence connected with the subject matter of these proceedings is to be given and are asked to respect the parliamentary practice to the effect that, where possible, they should not criticise nor make charges against any person or entity by name or in such a way as to make him, her or it identifiable.

Mr. James Doorley:

On behalf of the National Youth Council of Ireland, NYCI, I thank the committee for the invitation to speak on the youth guarantee.

The NYCI is the representative body for more than 50 organisations working with young people in almost every community in Ireland. We have 40,000 volunteers working in the youth sector in Ireland and around 1,400 full-time-equivalent staff. A lot of people work on a part-time basis but the overall figure is approximately 1,400 whole-time equivalents. A recent independent assessment of the number of young people participating in programmes run by youth organisations in Ireland showed that there were about 382,000 in the 10-to-24 age group involved. A significant number of young people are, therefore, engaged with our member services and 53% of those young people are from what can be described as economically and socially disadvantaged areas.

Members are well aware of the seriousness of youth unemployment, but there have been some changes in that regard since the crisis first hit. The number of young people on the live register has dropped relatively significantly since 2010, by approximately 23,000 to 24,000. Alongside that, however, we have seen an increase in long-term youth unemployment. At the end of October 2012 there were 30,000 young people who had been signing on the live register for 12 months or more. There has also been a significant amount of emigration, with estimates indicating that 142,000 people under 25 have emigrated. Obviously, many more between the ages of 25 and 30 have also left. Even though the number of unemployed young people has come down, the number of young people in the labour force has also dropped. In 2012, the labour force participation rate for young people fell by about 10%. Between 2008 and 2012, the number of young people under 25 in the workforce almost halved. It is important to put those figures on the record to demonstrate the scale of the crisis we are facing.

Levels of youth unemployment are directly related to levels of education and qualifications, which is not a new phenomenon. International and national studies have shown that young people insulate themselves against unemployment to some degree by continuing in education. High educational attainment will not provide complete protection against joblessness; figures show that the level of unemployment among young graduates was around 18%, but among those educated only to primary level it was 70%. Ireland has the fourth highest number of young people who are in the so-called NEET category, meaning they are not in employment, education or training. The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions estimated that it costs approximately €150 billion per year, at a European level, to have that number of young people not engaged in the workforce or in training. The cost to Ireland is estimated to be €3 billion per annum. My colleague Mr. James Higgins from the European Youth Forum will talk some more about the European dimension, but the committee might be interested to note that recent statistics indicate that there are almost 14

million young people between 15 and 29 who are not in education, employment or training. That is equal to the population of seven member states - admittedly, seven of the smaller states - and is a staggering figure.

On the issue of education and training, we are of the view that while there has been some increase in the availability of some of the existing schemes, as well as new initiatives such as Springboard, MOMENTUM and JobBridge, overall, there are not enough places and opportunities to meet the demand. A few weeks ago an affiliate of one of our member organisations in Tipperary had a meeting to recruit 20 young people for a training course, but 120 turned up. Mr. Stokes would know more about this than I do, but there is evidence that many Youthreach centres have long waiting lists for their services. The lack of capacity is a major issue. We are particularly concerned that the young people who have the lowest level of educational qualifications and who may be dealing with other issues such as lack of parental support, bad experiences in school and so forth are being pushed to the back of the queue. The increase in unemployment has been so great and the demand for training courses so extensive that the young people with greater resources at their disposal are the ones who end up getting a lot of the training places, to the detriment of those who might need those places most. We did an analysis of some of the existing Government programmes and found that the number of long-term unemployed young people participating in some of them was very low, which is a worry. Additional efforts are required to address this issue. Youthreach is certainly doing a lot of excellent work but, as far as I am aware, the capacity of Youthreach has not been increased significantly since the start of the crisis.

We are also concerned about the quality of some of the programmes and courses on offer. While there is a lot of good work being done, there are some courses and training opportunities which are short-term and not very well targeted, whose value to participants is not clear or which may not be useful in leading to either further education or employment. We are spending significant resources in this area but the question arises as to whether those resources are being spent wisely and well.

We strongly welcome the youth guarantee and the decision of the EU Employment and Social Affairs Council last month to agree it. We compliment the Irish Government on securing that agreement. The NYCI was one of the first organisations in this country to call for a youth guarantee and for one to be implemented in Ireland.

However, the idea is a good one. The issue is how to implement it and how it will work in practice. For us, the three key issues are funding, quality and progression, and reaching and supporting the most disadvantaged young people in Ireland.

The International Labour Organization carried out an analysis of the funding of the youth guarantee that operates in Sweden. The analysis concluded that it cost approximately €6,600 per participant. Clearly, we cannot take a scheme from another European jurisdiction and plant it in Ireland and suggest it would be the same here, but I believe that figure would be rather low with regard to engaging with the most disadvantaged young people. Likewise, among some people who may need limited support, that figure could be rather high. Let us suppose we took the figure of €6,600 and applied it to Ireland. Let us further suppose we were to engage with young people who have been unemployed for 12 months or more. We would be facing an annual bill of approximately €200 million. However, we maintain that is money well spent because the cost of leaving that cohort of young people on the live register

rather than having them engaged would cost us more in the long run. The €6 billion that has been agreed by the European Union-----

Chairman:

🗣️🗣️Is the figure for young people 35,000? Is that what you make it?

Mr. James Doorley:

The long-term unemployed figure for young people is 30,000. The €6 billion is welcome but perhaps Mr. Higgins has more expertise on that issue and I will leave it to him. Anyway, there is an issue in that the Irish Government will have to provide matching funding and this is something we need to address. I do not believe that somehow all of this money will come from Europe. Sometimes there is a sense that it will always come from Europe but we know that is not the case. However, Ireland is in a strong position to draw down significant resources from the fund.

We are keen to put the issue of the private sector on the table. The private sector benefits from the education and training of young people and many sectors of the economy have vacancies. There is a question of whether the private sector could contribute as well. It is clear that there is a lack of capacity. If the Government decided to implement a youth guarantee in the morning, we simply would not have sufficient training, education or work experience places. I am not suggesting it cannot be ramped up over time, but we certainly need to consider that issue. Another issue we have identified is that there has not been the right emphasis. We need a national emphasis but we need to engage with groups at local level as well. I imagine all Deputies and Senators are aware of great work that is being done at local level. We should engage with the community and voluntary sectors to deliver some of these places as well as ramping up schemes such as Youthreach and others.

It is important we do not increase the number of places for the sake of it. We must have regard to equality and progression. We need to ensure young people benefit from the programme, especially young people who have had a bad experience of the education system and who perhaps have other issues. Such people may need longer-term supports to enable them to get the benefits from education and training. Some young people may have literacy or addiction issues and we believe we need to do more in that regard. We do not want a situation whereby a young person goes through the youth guarantee process but ends up in a part-time or temporary job on low pay, because he or she will simply end up back on the live register within a short period.

We need to put in considerable efforts in Ireland to determine how we can implement this in the best way possible and how to make the best use of resources. There is also another concern. The United Kingdom introduced what was known as a payment-by-results model. The Irish Government is considering the introduction of third parties from the private sector to the activation system. As far as I am aware in the United Kingdom, the payment-by-results model involved getting a cohort of people off the live register and moving them into employment. Those responsible were paid based on the percentage of those who were brought into employment. However, some of those people were progressed into not very satisfactory employment. There was also a tendency to cherry pick those who were close to the labour market and those who needed least support. We need to consider these issues carefully.

We believe there is a need to concentrate primarily on the most disadvantaged young people. We are now four or five years into the crisis. One could argue that we are heading towards the previous scenario again but we do not want to create the problem which we had in the 1980s and 1990s whereby we created a cohort of people who were long-term unemployed and who needed a great deal of support to get back into the labour force. In particular we are calling for an emphasis on the long-term unemployed, especially the 30,000 people who have been unemployed for more than one year and the 17,000 people who have been unemployed for two years. They need a particular focus. The youth guarantees in Sweden and Finland, which have been quite successful, were not as successful with this cohort. We believe that the youth sector and the organisations we represent, which are working with young people and which have credibility in communities, could play a role. We have already spoken to the Government in this regard and in terms of putting forward proposals that some of the money coming from the youth guarantee should be designated to address the hardest to reach and the most disadvantaged young people. If it is not, there is a danger they will be marginalised and left behind once again. I will leave it there but I will be glad to answer any questions later.

Chairman:

 I call Mr James Higgins from the European Youth Forum.

Mr. James Higgins:

I am glad to be here. I will give some European context to the debate. On 28 February, the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council, EPSCO, approved a recommendation for a youth guarantee. This directly followed the European Commission proposal as part of its youth employment package at the end of last year. The Council recommended that member states begin to implement the scheme as soon as possible and preferably from the start of 2014. I will provide some rationale behind the scheme. Mr. Doorley said it is based on a Nordic model of early labour market activation measures which have been in operation in some ways since the 1980s. Sweden first introduced the job guarantee, as it was termed, in 1984. It was followed shortly afterwards by other Scandinavian countries, including Finland. There have been many reworkings of these schemes since they were first introduced and there is a good deal that European member states can learn from the way these countries have had to adapt and change schemes to allow for the way the labour market has changed, specifically with regard to young people.

One significant element of the Commission's proposal was the idea that youth organisations and the representatives of young people should be involved in the design and implementation of the scheme. The reason for this, as Mr. Doorley remarked, is that it is difficult, unfortunately, to reach long-term unemployed young people because of some of the issues of social exclusion that arise for them. Often, it requires civil society organisations to intervene.

One major advantage of the youth guarantee, in the way it has been implemented in the Nordic model, is that it prevents the onset of long-term unemployment when it is implemented correctly. Unfortunately, statistics show that long-term unemployment is growing in Europe as a whole. It has increased by 3.7% since 2008 and it is increasing at a rate higher than the adult rate of long-term unemployment. This is almost unheard of considering that young people usually do not fall into long-term unemployment in the same way as older people.

I will outline the way it has been implemented in Sweden and Denmark. As Mr. Doorley remarked, the programme costs approximately €6,600 per participant under the Swedish model and there is considerable popularity for the scheme there. In 2008, approximately 10,000 young people were participating in the scheme in Sweden and that figure is currently at 53,000.

The implementation of the youth guarantee in the short term places a large strain on public employment services. There needs to be a reorientation of public employment services in some ways towards the uptake from young people. I will offer one example. In Finland in 2009, due to an increased demand from young people, there was only one youth adviser for every 700 young people participating in the scheme. Therefore, Finland had to invest radically in the scheme, but it had a good deal of success. In 2010, Finland put more public expenditure towards it and there was successful intervention for 83.5% of young people participating. This meant they got some form of training or a job within the three months in Finland.

Although a lot can be said about the cost, one of the reasons it has remained popular in the Nordic countries is that in the medium to long term, it not only saves money but there is a net profit per participant. As Mr. James Dooley mentioned, it costs approximately €6,600 for young people. However, a Swedish report produced in 2010 found that the state tends to recoup the amount of money it has invested within one year. After the one-year period, the average net gain per participant in the scheme is just over €4,000. The short-term investment produces a long-term gain especially in terms of preventing young people from falling into long-term unemployment.

A total of €6 billion funding has been earmarked by the European Union under the MFF over a six-year period, based on the €21 billion recommended by the ILO, which equates to about 0.5% of eurozone expenditure. Even if this money was to be matched by member states, it would still be insufficient to implement the scheme fully. As we have seen from the way it has been implemented before, if there is not sufficient investment the services often become over-burdened and the scheme will not work to the same extent.

Chairman:

🗣️ I thank James Higgins for an interesting presentation. I call Dermot Stokes.

Mr. Dermot Stokes:

I am probably one of the few people remaining who can remember the social guarantee which was introduced in 1984, 30 years ago.

Deputy Bernard J. Durkan:

🗣️ I remember it.

Mr. Dermot Stokes:

Thinking back about the experience of that measure, it acted as a trigger or it had a fundamental aim to help to direct funding from the European Social Fund. In Ireland it led to the establishment of community training centres, subsequently the Youthreach programme

and PLCs, initially as VPT. It became the trigger or the driver of quite substantial system change. It is important to bear this in mind. I have now retired from active service, as it were, but I have been doing a study for the OECD on local youth employment strategies. I am bringing some of the encounters from that study to this discussion.

I will begin by stating that youth is changing. In 1994 when the social guarantee was in place, the transition between school and employment, between youth and independent adulthood, was a fairly straightforward. It was, relatively speaking, a short experience. Now, a generation later, youth begins earlier; physical puberty is achieved earlier and independent adult status is achieved later. Therefore, adolescence, *per se*, has been stretched out now between the ages of 12 and 25 - some would say even later - before emerging adulthood. It has become an extended and quite complex process. It is important to understand this process. We may think that helping young people to find a stable place in the labour market is a simple exercise but in the modern context that is not actually the case.

Work is also changing. Young people now have a greater capacity to communicate and much greater personal freedom but there is also much less structure and predictability and jobs are of shorter duration. This has a significant impact on how services conceive the idea of jobs and the transitions. Although there is increased mobility, the crisis has eroded the shield that qualifications provided. Now it is the case that unemployed young people include those with degrees. This was not the case ten or 20 years ago when a degree was a pretty good shield against unemployment. There are also significant levels of under-employment and part-time employment. The guarantee is not just a matter of switching on somebody who is stuck; it is a much more complex process.

In Ireland we are engaged in a major and extremely ambitious reform programme with regard to employment services, education and training structures and provision and reform of local government. These are very onerous reforms to be attempting while at the same time also trying to deal with a very complex issue such as youth employment and unemployment.

There is no youth employment strategy. One can infer a strategy from what is there but there is not such a strategy in place. We have to acknowledge that the Irish education and training system is socially reproductive. There are high levels of retention - meaning more people staying in education up to leaving certificate level - which is unusual in the European context. However, much of this statistic may be made up of parking, so to speak, where people have no alternative.

We have very late vocational choice in Ireland, which is unusual in the European context. That includes vocational choices in higher education. We have an extremely sophisticated and effective framework in vocational education training as per the national framework of qualifications. However, that is not necessarily mirrored in the cohesion of the vocational and education and training system. For example, we have a very small apprenticeship system and vocational education has a very low status relative to higher education and secondary education. In this regard we are quite different to many other European countries.

There are major issues to do with pathways for young people. In countries where the youth guarantee scheme has been effective they tend to have stronger vocational pathways and greater clarity in the structures. The German system is quite determinative but our system is virtually open choice and *laissez-faire*. Where there are not strong vocational pathways one needs to place a greater emphasis on guidance. In Ireland one could set out on one page a set

of guidance measures. There is virtually no cohesion across the board and a very wide range of guidance issues.

Reference was made in the earlier presentation to the issue of disadvantage. I endorse everything Mr. Dooley said. However, when one talks to employers, there are other issues related to education and training which are very pertinent in the context of a youth guarantee system. I refer, for example, to the mismatch issue. Employers will say that they are not encountering people with the required qualifications. People are coming out of education with qualifications but these are not the qualifications which employers want. In other words, an employer advertises a job vacancy for which many applications are received but these applications do not match up to the job being advertised. We are not producing an appropriate balance of intermediate skills. Employers in the call centre sector, in the hotels and catering sector, the hospitality sector or in retail, will say that they are not encountering people with the skills they require. The jobs are available but they cannot be filled. Very often, employers have to import talent, so to speak.

We may also be producing large numbers of people with qualifications in ICT but employers will say that the particular qualifications are not the ones required by employers. We have many web designers but we do not need that many web designers; we need people with other IT skills.

Migration is an issue. Non-Irish people are emigrating and at the same time people are coming into the country. We have an immigration and emigration scenario. The research has found that some of those who are emigrating have jobs and they are moving to other jurisdictions. I refer to a study by Mary Gilmartin in Maynooth. Her view is that it is too early to draw absolute conclusions. We may actually be seeing an extended form of the gap year migration. It may be that instead of staying in Ireland in a low status job, young people are travelling the world and they may still return.

I will focus on a couple of issues to do with the youth guarantee scheme. Is it a quick fix for the current crisis or a trigger for systematic change? In my view it should be the trigger for system change.

It is important to take a long-term view as well as seeking to understand the immediacy of a crisis.

A question was asked as to whether the live register is the gateway to the youth guarantee. As members are aware, many young people are not on the live register. Information released a couple of days ago shows that the number of young people on the live register has decreased. If that is the case, then we have an issue and we must ensure all young people are accounted for on the live register. That would create another potentially significant political problem because the numbers would appear to be going up, even though it would not necessarily be indicative of any substantive change in the employment scenario.

There is an issue relating to increased caseloads in respect of Intreo and the new converged employment service. Those involved in the relevant services are also expected to meet clients three times more frequently than was the case in the past. Once one gets into caseloads, one is at risk of developing a process whereby attempts are made to move people into and off the system quickly. There are issues in respect of personal plans and profiles. For example, IBEC

has questioned whether the personal plan model is appropriate if it is not embedded in a deeper guidance model. This is a matter which we must address.

Reference was made to employment options and I was asked whether there are enough jobs and, if not, what action should be taken. I was also asked if the education and training options are suitable to local employment contexts and to the needs of the individuals who are coming through the system. Travelling throughout the country with the OECD's LEED team, we were certainly impressed by the social enterprise models - as an alternative to employment - we encountered. To return to what Mr. Doorley stated, this relates to the need to keep people out of long-term unemployment and to ensure the engine of employment continues to run.

There are issues with regard to quality. The quality of what one obtains from a short-term programme must be equivalent one would obtain across the board. Quality is a measure of evaluation and it is important it is consistent and is based on good data. It must be remembered that there are structural and cyclical issues at play here. Early school leaving, for example, is a structural problem. All European Union and OECD states experience early school leaving both in good times, when systems are operating at optimum level, and in bad times. There is a need for structural responses to structural problems and cyclical responses to cyclical problems. It becomes quite an awkward issue because one may well be asking private sector providers to become involved in short-term contracts to provide for extra groups. This then begs a range of questions with regard to supervision, evaluation, monitoring and so on. In the context of the Youthreach programme, there is a quality framework whereby inspectors from the Department of Education and Skills provide external evaluations. Those inspectors publish their evaluations on an ongoing basis in the same way as they would in respect of schools. That is a perfectly open, transparent and rigorous quality system. There is also a quality system in place in the youth sector whereby anybody who has been commissioned to do work with young people not from those sectors needs to be able to satisfy the same kind of rigorous quality standards.

Overall, there is another issue which arises in respect of system animation and connecting the various elements of the system. This involves cohesion and communication. When IBEC compiled a study of employers that are using the different supports and incentives available to them in order to take people on, it discovered that a significant number of employers were not aware of these. We met groups of small and medium employers who stated that incentives were suited to very large employers but not to small employers. Many stated that they had not heard about the incentives, etc. I have figures relating to that matter which I can make available to members. It is really important to communicate what the youth guarantee involves and what we are trying to achieve. The Government recently changed the incentives in exactly the way that would have been recommended by employers and experts. However, it is important that employers should be informed of this. What we are discussing here must not merely be a mechanism for moving people off the live register. Rather, it must change the system and be part of a wider dialogue or discourse about employment, employment generation and economic regeneration.

Senator Kathryn Reilly:

☺ I welcome our guests. This is an important debate. I am compiling a report on the youth guarantee for the committee and everything our guests are saying will feed into that. If, therefore, I ask very specific questions, they will know why.

The areas on which I wish to comment are: the practical and operational details of the youth guarantee; the successes and failures which have occurred in other states and the lessons we can learn from these; funding; and the level of roll-out required in this State. Having considered the research material, I have discovered that the failure of youth guarantee programmes in other states came down to the public policies that were pursued. I refer in this regard to the public employment service infrastructure. Are our guests of the view that public employment structures in Ireland are both up to standard and fit for purpose in the context of trying to deal with the youth guarantee? How will these structures need to adapt? Will additional funding be required? Who will assess the success of the public employment structures into the future? Will our guests indicate how the roll-out of the youth guarantee can be monitored effectively - in the context of job creation and placement services - to ensure it will be of good quality and will not merely be a tick-the-box exercise? Do the public employment services have the capacity to deliver on the guarantee and to monitor the various matters relating to it?

Mr. Doorley referred to youth unemployment figures and indicated that he is considering these in the context of young people who were educated to primary level and junior certificate level and those in disadvantaged groups. He indicated that failures occurred in Sweden and Finland in terms of successfully targeting disadvantaged groups. Will he inform the committee with regard to how we might reach out to young people who are far removed from the labour market at present or who do not traditionally come on the radar of the public employment services? Mr. Doorley referred to a role for youth organisations in that regard. The Council recommendation on the youth guarantee states that we should define the corresponding starting point to deliver the youth guarantee for young people. Do youth organisations constitute an alternative starting point to the public employment services and, if so, how does Mr. Doorley believe they might deliver in areas in respect of which those services fail?

Mr. Higgins referred to public employment services and the funding thereof. He indicated that even if there were matching funding for the €6 billion included under the youth employment initiative, this would be insufficient in the context of trying to deal with youth unemployment on a European level. How should this matter be addressed? There is a danger it could just be a flash in the pan and that people will say: "We are going to deal with youth unemployment and we will make some money available but we will not provide matching funds." How can we ensure the guarantee will not essentially be a damp squib? From where might we attract matching funding? What kind of financial commitment should the Government make to roll out what is envisaged? What schemes should it roll out as part of its initiative in this regard?

I will leave it at that. I am very interested in the practical and operational details. If, however, our guests have views on particular failures relating to the schemes rolled out in other states and what we might learn from these, I would appreciate hearing them.

Deputy Joe O'Reilly:

🗣️ I join my colleague, Senator Kathryn Reilly, in welcoming our guests and I thank them for their presentations.

I wish to begin by making a general point.

Our macroeconomic strategies are working to the extent that the haemorrhage of 275,000 jobs over a three year period until 2011 has been replaced by a small increase in job numbers. While tentative, that is indicative and welcome. A total of 12,500 new jobs were created last year, which is good. We have a crisis with youth unemployment that challenges all of us. A rate of 30% youth unemployment is not acceptable. The drop in the live register to 68,361 from 91,646 is welcome. I am interested in Mr. Stokes's reference to the live register. What explanation does he give for this reduction? I presume some of it is due to the creation of new jobs and educational and training opportunities. I understand emigration, while remaining high, has stabilised. Given the decline in emigration, the reduction in the number on the live register cannot be explained fully by emigration. Will the delegates explain how they interpret the change in the live register?

I wish to raise the issue of apprenticeships. I recognise that the construction industry is in a bad place, as we all know. However, Senator Kathryn Reilly and I were both campaigning for a couple of schools to be built and there is still infrastructure to be developed. I accept that there is a problem in the construction sector, but apprenticeships are important. Is enough being done to simulate apprenticeship conditions within schools, colleges and training centres? It is not possible for young people to be offered apprenticeships. It is good for a young person to do an apprenticeship. One might ask what is the point in qualifying to become a blocklayer, carpenter, plumber or electrician in the current conditions, but if a person has an aspiration and a capacity in the area, it is a building point. What do the delegates know about what has been done to simulate apprenticeship conditions to avoid people having to go on a treasure hunt seeking an apprenticeship which tends to be like jobs in Guinness's long ago which were passed from father to son. It is impossible to be offered an apprenticeship.

I was preparing a speech in recent weeks for a debate in the House and during my research I came across the fact that there was a great dearth of IT personnel. The IT sector has indicated there are approximately 4,800 vacancies which we do not have the domestic capacity to fill. The situation is replicated in particular in Germany and other European countries. Do the delegates consider we are doing enough to produce expertise in the sector? Long-term unemployed youth have been identified as a problem. It is a challenge for us to deal with the problem. Could those with low educational attainment and the long-term unemployed be directed to the IT sector? Are there jobs at a basic level or are all of the jobs in the sector for graduates or those who require postgraduate qualifications? It is correct to applaud Youthreach. We have good Youthreach centres in the constituency. When a young person comes out of a Youthreach centre at the age of 17, 18 or 20 years with a low level of educational attainment – perhaps with FETAC qualifications – is there potential for him or her to pursue a career in the IT sector? Could such young people find a job at the level of programmer or are all of the jobs in cloud computing and at other exalted levels?

The payment-by-results approach is interesting, on which I would like some elaboration. I presume the training units and educational centres would receive payment according to results. There would be equality results also. I am a former teacher. Reference was made in the presentation to the fact that a person should stay for the maximum period in the traditional formal school system. Therein lies the key, as the statistics for youth unemployment bear out. It was clearly outlined that the bulge in the pyramid relate to people with low educational qualifications who had left school young. When the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Deputy Richard Bruton, was in opposition, he examined this issue. It is not

always easy to get the money to do such things. What is the opinion of the delegates of incentives to keep people in the traditional school setting?

Chairman:

🗣️🗣️ Before I call Deputy Bernard J. Durkan, I remind members that we are expecting a vote to be called at 3.15 p.m. or 3.20 p.m. Bearing this in mind, I urge the next speakers to limit their contributions to three minutes. That would be appreciated.

Deputy Bernard J. Durkan:

🗣️🗣️ I congratulate the delegates on their presentations. This is probably the most important presentation we have heard in recent times because youth unemployment is an important and sensitive issue. Youth are impressed by what they see around them. In terms of a determination of what is likely to happen and what has happened, they have a short perception of history. Montgomery said in the 1950s that in 1939 Britain was capable of fighting the First World War. In 1993 or 1994 we were capable of dealing with the unemployment problem in this country that we had inherited from the 1980s. That was the sad part about it and Mr. Stokes is a fitting example. I do not say he lost the hair on his head for that reason, but my hair changed colour in the intervening period. It is amazing the lessons we learn over a huge period. We saw in the early 1990s that graduates came from other European countries, both from within the European Union and outside, to seek job opportunities in this country. They worked at any job that was available. They worked as waiters and waitresses, although they were laden with degrees. It was embarrassing at the time and they were ideally placed to fill positions that became available. We discovered during the 1980s that we had to deal with the problem on the basis of applying sticking plasters. One assessed and tried to deal with issues one by one and moved on to the next group that was coming on-stream to address the matter from the point of view of the person who was unemployed and had few prospects. The changes that have taken place in meeting market requirements in terms of job skills are hugely important. All of us have tabled questions on the issue in recent years and it is clear that there was a disconnect somewhere along the line. In order to meet the requirements of the market there should be some relationship with the education system to find out what is required and how to plan accordingly. That is what we must do. I accept that the delegates are doing this and I congratulate them on it.

We also had another important issue to face. During the late 1990s and 2000s a huge number of young people with great expectations, ability and capabilities were in the education system which, unfortunately, they left early. They went into the marketplace to fill jobs in areas where there was a big demand at the time. Huge salaries were available to people with relatively few qualifications and people were attracted to them. How could one say to a young person that he or she should stay in education for another three or four years and that there would be a nice job for him or her or that there was the prospect of a job at a fairly attractive salary? We must ask ourselves what are the options. To my mind, the options are stark and simple. We must, first, encourage young people to move in the direction which is in their long-term interests. Two colleagues referred to outreach schemes. That is a conduit we must explore to a greater extent.

We have done all of that previously but the Government schemes are now beginning to focus on the issues that are affecting the young people of the country.

The emigration issue distorts our situation to some extent. We all know young people who were in painful circumstances in that they had the option of remaining on the dole for long periods, perhaps doing the occasional nixer and being caught, or emigrating with a view to doing something for themselves and trying to get back some dignity. It is very difficult and heart breaking to have to deal with those situations from the point of view of parents, the educational system, the youth services that are doing a great job throughout the country and the individuals themselves.

I would like to have the opportunity of having a longer debate on this subject because what is happening is not new. It has happened throughout history, and it will continue to happen because every generation makes a mistake, even though the previous generation did so and did not learn lessons from it. We try to introduce the finger in the dike to stop the flow at the time it happens and sometimes it works, but sometimes it does not.

I refer to the group of people throughout Europe who are disaffected and disconnected. They are not interested. The people in that group do not see any reason to continue. All the people here deal with young people in that category, and they do not see any prospects for themselves. They believe there is nothing available for them.

We must separate from that group the people with addictions because they are different. There is a tendency to encompass the people who are disconnected and disaffected in the same group as those who have addictions. The people who have addictions need to be dealt with separately. Their addictions and other problems have to be addressed. They must be helped to understand their particular circumstances and that their addiction will not be a help to them.

The people who are disaffected are slightly different. They have no confidence in the system. They believe that politicians are a shower of so-and-sos. We hear that on a regular basis. They believe the system does not address the issues of young people, but that is wrong. When I first came into this House a colleague of mine was the later Professor John Kelly who told me that he felt very sorry for young people, but they were not the first young generation. We were all once part of the young generation. Looking at the colour of the hair on my head the Chairman probably thinks I was never young, but I was. All these situations presented themselves to us in very difficult circumstances because there were very few options available at that time.

Why is there not enough places in education and training? I know the answer, but I would like to hear it again.

I referred already to the question of the most disadvantaged and those most in need being pushed to the back of the queue but what is the reason for that? I will contribute again later.

Deputy Eric Byrne:

Along with Deputy Durkan I could talk all day on this topic because it is complex. I welcome the three witnesses who are specialists in the field. Unfortunately, they are posing as many questions to us as we wish to pose to them.

The €6 billion from the European Union is more than welcome. I presume it would be over the five year period of the budget and internationally targeted throughout. I understand it will probably be broken down even within wealthier countries to targeted areas of disadvantage.

A major problem in this country is the class and structural divide between the early school leavers and the social housing dependent groups. I want to ask about the type of structures we should be putting in place. When I first got involved in the community sector I almost had to learn a new language but even in terms of targeting people into employment, we currently have JobBridge, community employment, Tús, the JobsPlus initiative and the Momentum programme. I do not know at this stage whether the CERT training programme still exists. That was a training programme for people in the catering industry. We also have SOLAS as a new structure.

My particular interest is in the statistics the witnesses presented to the committee, particularly about targeting the long-term unemployed. The long-term unemployed, in the main, tend to be early school leavers but I understand this European youth guarantee only comes into play for those between the ages of 18 and 24. To talk geographically, I represent Dublin South Central and I can tell the witnesses that one can read the statistics about the degrees of disadvantage in Dublin 10 and Dublin 8. The disadvantage is comparable in terms of early school leavers, social housing schemes, all the inner city flat complexes. In terms of Cherry Orchard and Ballyfermot, Dublin 10, there is a large number of statistics to prove disadvantage.

Do we need a number of new structures to target people? Somebody mentioned the need to involve the community and voluntary sector. Those of us who know the area well will be aware of the EU urban programme attached to Cherry Orchard and Ballyfermot, of which I was a big fan. That programme transformed Cherry Orchard and Ballyfermot. It was a successful, targeted programme to uplift a community not by way of employment, but by way of the provision of services from crèches to preschool facilities, parks, leisure centres and so on. Do the witnesses believe there is any validity in arguing that specific structures be put in place within regions of Dublin, for example, targeting a particular structure in Dublin 8 and Dublin 10 for a particular coterie of people?

Chairman:

Deputy, could you move your telephone away from the microphone?

Deputy Eric Byrne:

Is my telephone on? Sorry about that.

It is rather complex. We might revisit this because I am not sure what criteria central Government will use in drawing down funds. Are we building this up as a solution to a problem that has already been created by the children who leave school before the age of 18?

What would we do if we could not look at what our Nordic cousins are doing? The problem is that they pay a large amount of taxes. The people of this country want the services but do not seem to be able to come to terms with the cost of the provision of these services.

I know intimately the work of Youthreach. It is a phenomenally successful concept and the staff who work in it are well able to relate to the client base. Everyone involved in Youthreach should take a bow. I am not as familiar with all the other programmes as I am with Youthreach, as a former CDVEC employee. My questions are about the structures and whether we are coming too late to help that coterie of people, namely, the early school leavers who will become long-term unemployed.

Chairman:

Before I ask for a response I want to ask about an issue that was not covered by my colleagues. It concerns the timescales for this process. Mention was made of the need to ramp it up and that there is not a sufficient number of schemes. What is the witnesses' best estimate on when a youth guarantee scheme can be up and running in its entirety in the country, bearing in mind the issue of funding and the need for some sort of pilot scheme? When do the witnesses believe something will happen in this country? Bearing in mind the time, I ask the witnesses to limit their comments to about six or seven minutes each. Does Mr. Higgins want to go first?

Mr. James Higgins:

I thank the members for the questions. I want to clarify I am not here on behalf of any Nordic Government.

There are a lot of questions specific to Ireland that I will leave to Mr. Doorley. I will address Senator Reilly's question on the operation level of the youth guarantee. The first phase in tackling youth unemployment is to bite the bullet. The official rate across the Union is 24% but young people are much less likely to approach their public employment service than older people. The first stage is to get a real grip on the actual number of young unemployed people.

One weakness of the Swedish model was that it focused too much on jobs. What happened, unfortunately, was that some young people were pushed into jobs that were not appropriate for them. I refer to the skills mismatch that was mentioned. The Swedes have worked to address the problem. The Finns knew about the problem when they began with implementation so there was much more focus on vocational education and training, with a slightly more long-term approach. It has had more success, even in respect of the level of uptake among young people interested in the scheme.

One of the main problems in many European countries, as mentioned by everyone, especially Deputy Durkan, is that some public employment services unfortunately operate at a level that obtained perhaps ten or 20 years ago in terms of the labour market. The labour market is much changed, especially in regard to the flexibility younger people have by comparison with older workers. In Belgium, where the European Youth Forum is based, it takes between nine and 12 months to obtain one's social benefits and dole. This period involves an activation measure that applies before one is eligible to obtain benefits. For many young people, it takes so long and it is so difficult to get benefits that it is very difficult to motivate them to come off them. This is just one example of how some of the schemes are not in the interest of young people.

Senator Reilly asked about funding and its origin. The €6 billion that is earmarked is for a six-year period. It applies to a region known as NUTS 2 and is distributed on a regional basis.

This has many advantages because some regions in Europe have a level of youth unemployment that is much higher than the national average. The fund will go to about 16 member states.

The funding of €6 billion is an investment and is to be welcomed for what it is, but in terms of the overall budget, the European Youth Forum contends that young people deserve a much bigger investment, specifically when one considers how much money the youth guarantee could save in the longer term if implemented correctly. Let me give an example. I read in *The Irish Times* recently that €5 billion in EU funds was misappropriated in 2010 alone. If one compares this with the €6 billion investment over six years for the youth guarantee system, one gets a more comparative figure.

There were many questions on vocational education and training. The German and Austrian systems are very developed in this regard and there is much to be learned from them. In Germany, there is a labour market that very much lends itself to vocational education and training. It is a very highly developed industrial labour market that can absorb young people who undertake training in this area. In the Irish case, there is a lot to be learned, specifically in respect of getting young people into the IT sector. The sector is well represented here.

On the question of whether we need new structures, I have learned from other countries that it is not necessarily a case of throwing the baby out with the bathwater. There are many structures in place that are very good. It is about reorienting them towards the needs of young people and bringing in measures in which young people can believe. It may be a matter of bringing in youth organisations as part of a monitoring mechanism to ensure the youth guarantee schemes that are introduced are always in the interest of the young people who participate in them.

Mr. James Doorley:

Senator Reilly asked whether the public employment service is fit for purpose. We surveyed young jobseekers two or three years ago and asked them about their experience in engaging with FÁS and the Department of Social Protection. Generally, jobseekers understood the system was under a lot of pressure and that the numbers had increased a lot in recent years. Generally, apart from one or two good examples, there was a sense that jobseekers did not receive the sort of engagement they needed. Jobseekers just felt they were given information at a hatch five or six times without getting the expected support. The new Intreo model represents an effort to have greater engagement, but this requires many more people on the front line engaging with jobseekers, especially young jobseekers because many of them do not have work experience. They are in a different set of circumstances. It is really important that their needs be addressed.

Many young jobseekers take jobseeking very seriously because they feel that if they make the wrong choice in regard to a training course or work experience, it could be detrimental to their careers. They regard engagement with the service as similar to a job interview and are disappointed if they are just given five minutes. I have heard some really dispiriting examples. Just last week, we had consultation with youth workers who are working with the category of young people in question. People in the public employment services are working under great pressure and have considerable workloads and many are doing great work, but in some cases young people get a very negative reaction from staff. They may feel demeaned and this does not really help to encourage them to engage.

We need independent monitoring of the youth guarantee in Ireland. We will need to know whether it is working and we need the involvement of the young people who are using the system. The latter is vital. There is not enough external evaluation of public employment services.

One must put oneself into the shoes of disadvantaged young people. Many young people might have had a very bad experience of the education system. The level of trust of young people in the system is quite low, as stated by Deputy Durkan. They get the letter in the post from the FÁS office and automatically assume it contains bad news. Many of our member organisations and youth workers have credibility and a track record. We are not saying they comprise the total solution but that people working with disadvantaged young people have a role to play. We are not training providers and we are not offering an employment service but many of our member organisations could serve as a bridge to the young people who will not go to a training centre. Many young people in the category in question have actually been thrown off training courses because they are not prepared. They might have had difficulties and started with an addiction problem, as said by Deputy Durkan, and may not have the supports necessary to help them. It is a question of support to keep them on track.

With regard to Deputy O'Reilly's question on whether the rate is lower, emigration is obviously a factor. The number staying in education and training is also a factor. There is a growing category of young people who do not qualify for social welfare benefits. They are living at home with their parents and might be just over the threshold so do not see the point of signing on. Mr. Stokes might have said that if the live register is to become a gateway for the youth guarantee, we will have a problem. This is because there will be a category of young people who are not signing on and who will not come under the guarantee under the current model.

I agree on apprenticeships. The number of apprenticeships dropped from 8,000 per year to 1,000 per year because of the crash in the construction sector. Apprenticeships are a real alternative for many young people who may not want to be web designers. They may want a trade or skill and we need to do more about this. I recently encountered a scheme in Drogheda that offers funding to do up old local authority houses that have been neglected. The scheme uses young people to renovate houses over eight or nine months.

Under the payment-by-results model in the United Kingdom, as I understand it, the Government involved the private sector and offered to pay a certain sum if 70% or 80% of 10,000 unemployed people, for example, were moved on within a certain period.

Our concern is that for some young people, it might be very ambitious to state they will be in a job in six or 12 months. They might need a lot more support and if the process is completely focused on getting a young person into a job within six or 12 months, the young people who are closer to the labour market will be picked and the others forgotten. My understanding is it created some absurd situations where churning took place, whereby people were being moved into jobs but ended up back on the dole again, even though the private provider was paid for moving them on into that job. There were a lot of issues in this regard.

Deputy Bernard J. Durkan also is correct when he observes we have been here before. Unfortunately, all the analysis shows the youth guarantee is the sort of thing one would have in the good times because it would catch people before they fell into long-term

unemployment, rather than doing so in the middle of a crisis. As has been noted, it is a major task to do it while undergoing such huge institutional reform in the public employment services and further education and training sector. However, our point on the most disadvantaged young people in particular is that it is about giving them a little confidence or hope. Some young people may think to themselves there is no point in going on a training course or staying on to complete one's leaving certificate examinations because no jobs are available. However, we are trying to put forward the argument that while things may be tough, one can give them that sense of hope, as well as resilience and the soft skills many employers also seek. While people may not have hard skills, employers certainly need soft skills such as consistency, the ability to work in a team and make decisions, as well as showing innovation and similar skills that are really important in the current labour market.

On Deputy Eric Byrne's points, I agree that we must ensure the money is targeted. As to how this is done, while obviously it is a matter for the Government, during the 1990s particular schemes operated - the Deputy mentioned the urban programme - that made sure the money did not get lost between the European Union, Departments and different agencies. It did go almost straight into communities, which definitely is what must be ensured. The Deputy also made a valid point with which I certainly agree in respect of coherence. I have been trying to carry out an analysis of the different schemes and programmes and there is a lack of coherence because a lot of schemes have different conditions for different age groups. While there are certain reasons for this, there is also a lack of coherence and even the staff dealing with jobseekers find it very difficult to understand for what a person who comes in, having been unemployed for nine months, actually qualifies. It is a difficult job and perhaps we might try to make further education and training and the employment support system a little more coherent and a lot less complex. In addition, as Mr. Stokes mentioned, we could try to make it more joined up in order that it is not a lottery. People become extremely upset when they think they are eligible for a course and then find out they are obliged to wait for a further six months.

On the Chairman's points on the timescale, it would be an issue in certain respects. I assume the European funding is an integral part for the Government, but it may not commence until 2015. However, the Government can do a lot immediately. There is a pilot scheme for which it has applied in Ballymun, as far as I am aware, in which we are involved.

Chairman:

☺ I thank Mr. Doorley. While a vote has been called in the Dáil Chamber, members have a few minutes before they must leave. I suggest the joint committee continue on and listen to Mr. Stokes's response. If anyone considers it necessary to leave, he or she can always consult the full response in the online debate records. I also propose that the joint committee suspend without going into private session, as no private business is scheduled to be taken.

Deputy Bernard J. Durkan:

☺ If there is an opportunity of having a further extension of the meeting, I would greatly appreciate it.

Chairman:

☺ I will remain and conclude the meeting if the Deputy wishes to leave before Mr. Stokes makes his contribution.

Mr. Dermot Stokes:

As for the timescale, it would be possible to do it very quickly if it simply was a matter of getting it on the table. While one must take a long-term view of all these measures, one can start in the understanding that one will not finish it very quickly. I was handed the brief for Youthreach in 1988 and it took the guts of two decades to move from the point at which there was nothing to something that was able to stand alongside other things. Consequently, one must take a long-term view, even though one must act very quickly and one can do both.

As for the local structures, one item afoot under the proposals in respect of education and training boards and so on is an attempt to establish local structures that will be responsive. There is a risk that this could be instrumental and would lose the developmental functions, for example, that VECs traditionally have fulfilled. However, if one takes into account the education and training boards that are coming into play, the local development companies and partnerships, as well as the new structures in the context of the local authority reforms and realignment, it may not be a matter of establishing new entities at local level. However, as Mr. Doorley also mentioned, local action is extremely important. This is because there are variations right across the board and whatever national framework policies are introduced they must be capable of interpretation at the local level in flexible ways that are tailored to working.

In respect of the payments for results issue, the critical point pertains to cherry-picking. If several hundred young people are looking for a place, if one has 20 places available and placing them all in employment is a condition of getting all of one's funding, inevitably one will select those who are most employable and cherry-pick. That was a major problem with some of the FÁS programmes in the late 1980s and early 1990s such as the youth skills programme. When one comes to monitoring their effectiveness, one actually winds up monitoring the "in person" factors rather than the "in training" factors, if members understand my point. In other words, what looks very effective when one considers the results may actually not pertain to the effectiveness of either the training or the action but to the people one has selected to participate. This is a significant issue.

On apprenticeships, I wish to make two points. First, I refer to those areas where numbers declined in, for example, traditional apprenticeship areas. Incidentally, we have a very narrow apprenticeship system in Ireland. However, with regard to such areas, in the past we have made use of mechanisms such as, for example, the community youth training programme that FÁS used to run. One still sees signs around the country that houses, buildings or old heritage sites were renovated. In many instances, they were temporary employment mechanisms that allowed people to continue on the path of apprenticeship during a period of low employment or a period in which employers were not able to take them on board. FÁS also had a linked work experience programme, which was another useful mechanism. Consequently, the models are available to maintain the apprenticeship line, but it also is the case that there is an increasing interest internationally; one can see it here in initiatives such as JobBridge, in what might be described as apprenticeship-style measures that focus on using the workplace, linking the training and the workplace and putting the individual in a work environment. There are many benefits to so doing, but perhaps it is at a higher level and might be described as a professional apprenticeship model. That also would surmount a comment which

frequently is made by many employers to the effect that many young people are ill-prepared for work when they are employed. I have heard it from small employers and very youth-friendly employers, as well as people who had no particular bias one way or the other and it is a consistent comment from small, medium and large employers. Some of this pertains to expectations, perhaps as a hangover from the Celtic tiger period, when people expected to walk straight into a job which paid well. There are many possible explanations for this.

There is a remarkable consistency in what employers say. For example, a person may come in having done a degree and having had 30 days to do a project in the workplace, they are expected to do that within a day. I have met groups of employers in Dublin and the south east as part of the study I was working on. They consistently said it takes six months for a young person to get up to speed in order to make a contribution to the enterprise.

Apprenticeship approaches, including internships like JobBridge, are a way of overcoming that. They are also a way of connecting the world of employment and work with the world of education and training. Over the years in Ireland we have allowed for that. The high demand in the labour market meant nobody needed to work hard at that bridge, which simply existed by virtue of high labour market demand. As a model to connect the world of work with the education and training sector, apprenticeship is very significant and important. I anticipate that we will be paying much more attention to that in future.

A question was asked about IT skills. The FIT programme is an effective way of working, particularly in relatively disadvantaged areas and connecting them with work in the IT sector. There are good data supporting the approach and a strong evaluative culture within that action.

It is the case that those who find it most difficult to engage with the labour market and services are, simply by virtue of how things work, liable to wind up at the back of the queue. That is something that must be addressed.

A question was asked about whether public employment services were fit for purpose. A discussion needs to occur at the operational level between employment services, education and training providers, and community and voluntary services, including local development companies.

People on the social protection side are focused on the disadvantaged and those furthest from the labour market. Their worry is that because education and training providers will be judged on the basis of placement and results, the focus will be on the easy to place and not the most disadvantaged. Regardless of whether that is correct, it indicates a strong need for them to talk and all be of one mind when it comes to focusing on target groups at a local level. In other words, the action must be consistent, coherent and collaborative between different arms of the service.

It comes back to the point about whether the public employment service is the gateway to the youth guarantee. If so, it would suggest that the public employment service is in the driving seat. That sets up another relationship with employers and education and training providers who become clients of the public employment service. Historically, there has always been an uneasiness on the public employment services side regarding their relationship with education and training providers. Equally, the latter are very uneasy with seeing themselves

as being service providers to the public employment service. Therefore, a serious conservation needs to happen, especially at a local operational level.

The question of guidance is particularly pertinent to the more disadvantaged clients of the public employment service. It comes back to how people are being trained. At the moment, substantial numbers of people are being drawn together from three very different services into the one organisation through Intreo.

A community welfare officer has a set of skills that do not readily translate into the case management of an unemployed person, yet that is how the service will operate. There is a good deal of inter-service knowledge exchange, which will be important. Creating the time for that is also important. Intreo staff will have to meet people three times as often as they did under the national employment action plan process. Suddenly therefore, people will have a significant increase in their workload. At the same time, we are asking them to engage at close quarters locally.

Employers consistently say they are not talked to locally about service provision, employment services or education and training. We had a meeting with some very significant employers, who have been doing important developments in the south east. They said it was the first time anyone had ever asked them to such a meeting. The employment service got to meet that set of demands from the local education providers and also increased their level of activity. It is quite a challenge.

Chairman:

🗨️🗨️ On behalf of the committee, I thank all three of our guests for their input. As Senator Reilly mentioned, she is preparing a report for the committee on the youth guarantee scheme. I have no doubt the contributions of our three guests today will form a valuable input into that report. I thank them again for taking the time to attend this meeting.

The joint committee adjourned at 3.45 p.m. *sine die*.

APPENDIX 2

Recent Parliamentary Questions asked on the issue of a Youth Guarantee

Wednesday, 29 May 2013

Willie O'Dea (Limerick City, Fianna Fail)

23. To ask the Minister for Social Protection the progress that has been made in implementing the youth guarantee scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [25807/13]

Joan Burton (Minister, Department of Social Protection; Dublin West, Labour)

The EU Council Recommendation on a Youth Guarantee received political agreement at the EPSCO Council meeting on 28 February and was adopted formally last month. The Recommendation is that Member States should ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

While it is recommended that the guarantee should be implemented as soon as possible, it is recognised that implementation will be more gradual in the Member States experiencing the most severe budgetary difficulties and higher rates of youth unemployment. The Government will now review the current range of youth employment policies in Ireland to assess what measures will need to be taken to commence the gradual implementation of the guarantee. This will include the identification of what would be the appropriate timescale for implementation in Ireland's current employment and budgetary circumstances. In this context, the Government intends to work with all relevant stakeholders to maximise the impact of a youth guarantee in Ireland. We have sought funding from the European Commission for a the proposed pilot Youth Guarantee project in the Ballymun area of north Dublin, and numerous organisations (e.g. IBEC, Ballymun Job Centre, National Youth Council of Ireland) have agreed to participate in this pilot.

The scale and nature of any additional measures required for the gradual implementation of a guarantee at national level will depend on the trend in youth unemployment, and in particular the number of young people likely to experience periods of unemployment of more than four months under current policies. In this context, it is a welcome development that the official labour market figures published by the CSO recently indicated that the number of young unemployed at the end of 2012, at 59,000, a reduction of almost 9,000 on the same time a year earlier. It is to be hoped that this is the beginning of a sustained downward movement in youth unemployment as the economy recovers. Even so, the implementation of a guarantee will, almost certainly, require an expansion in the range of opportunities currently on offer to young people in the form of further education and training, internships, subsidised private-sector recruitment, and supports for self-employment.

In this regard the State already provides a significant number of initiatives which are of relevance to young people and the Department of Social Protection took steps in Budget 2013

to increase funding and places for schemes such as JobBridge, Community Employment, TÚS and a new state employment scheme in the local Government sector. In total an additional 10,000 places will be provided. Other relevant provision is made through the training and education programmes delivered through FÁS and the further education sector. The size and the timescale for any additional provision that is both desirable and feasible, over and above that outlined above, will be established over the coming months.

Tuesday, 28 May 2013

Peadar Tóibín (Meath West, Sinn Féin)

426. To ask the Minister for Social Protection the provisions that she is making to ensure that employment creation and retention forms part of any youth guarantee scheme. [24442/13]

Joan Burton (Minister, Department of Social Protection; Dublin West, Labour) | Oireachtas source

The EU Council Recommendation on a Youth Guarantee received political agreement at the EPSCO Council meeting on 28 February 28 and was formally adopted by the Council last month. The Recommendation is that Member States should: "Ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education."

While it is recommended that the guarantee should be implemented as soon as possible, it is recognised that implementation will be more gradual in the Member States experiencing the most severe budgetary difficulties and higher rates of youth unemployment. The government will now review the current range of youth employment policies in Ireland to assess what measures will need to be taken to commence the gradual implementation of the guarantee.

With regard to job creation for youth in support of the guarantee, the Government's primary strategy to tackle youth unemployment is to create the environment for a strong economic recovery by promoting competitiveness and productivity. Economic recovery will underpin jobs growth. Past experience suggests that youth unemployment, which tends to rise relatively rapidly in a downturn, can be expected to fall relatively rapidly during the recovery. The government's job-creation policies are outlined in the Action Plan for Jobs, which sets out a target for 100,000 net new jobs to be created by 2016, many of which will be filled by young people. Under the updated Action Plan for 2013, a new recruitment incentive – JobsPlus – has also been developed by my Department and was approved by the Government. This incentive will cover the cost of c. €1 in every €4 of an employer's wage costs and will be launched for availability by July 2013. Young people are likely to be major beneficiaries of this initiative as employers tend to hire young people when there is a recovery in employment. This incentive will be launched for availability by July 2013.

The scale and nature of any additional measures required will depend on the trend in youth unemployment, and in particular the number of young people likely to experience periods of unemployment of more than four months under current policies. In this context, it is a welcome development that the official labour market figures published by the CSO recently indicated that the number of young unemployed at the end of 2012, at 59,000, a reduction of almost 9,000 on the same time a year earlier. It is to be hoped that this is the beginning of a sustained downward movement in youth unemployment as the economy recovers. Even so, the implementation of a guarantee will, almost certainly require an expansion in the range of opportunities currently on offer to young people in the form of further education and training, internships, subsidised private-sector recruitment, and supports for self-employment. In this regard the State already provides a significant number of initiatives which are of relevance to young people and the Department of Social Protection took steps in Budget 2013 to increase funding and places for schemes such as JobBridge, Community Employment, TÚS and a new state employment scheme in the local Government sector. In total an additional 10,000 places will be provided.

The size and the timescale for any additional provision, over and above that outlined above that is both desirable and feasible will be established over the coming months.

Wednesday, 15 May 2013

Aengus Ó Snodaigh (Dublin South Central, Sinn Fein)

157. To ask the Minister for Social Protection when the pilot youth guarantee scheme will commence in Ballymun, Dublin; the resources that have been allocated to this scheme; the length of time this scheme will run for; the number of young persons who will benefit from this scheme; the details of the consultation that have taken place with residents in relation to this; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [23086/13]

Joan Burton (Minister, Department of Social Protection; Dublin West, Labour)

Under the EU Commission's recent call for proposals for preparatory actions under the 'Youth Guarantee', the Department of Social Protection in conjunction with local groups has sought EU funding to pilot a Youth Guarantee Scheme in a local area. The pilot YGS will look to develop an activation approach tailored to the needs of young people in a deprived urban area and then test it within a specific geographical location (Ballymun).

It is intended that the pilot YGS will, in respect of the target group of young people, guarantee access to career guidance/assistance leading to identification of an individual career plan for the young unemployed person with follow-through to training, education, work experience or full-time employment. Depending on the needs of the young individual the steps in the career plan might include personal assessment, job search assistance, skills training, work experience internships, but the objective in all cases will be to lead the young person to employment placement or further education or training. A particular focus of the pilot YGS will be to involve, and build links with, employers in the locality and the

immediate hinterland in order to ensure that the guidance and training elements of the YGS are tailored to the needs of the local labour market and also to generate work placement/experience opportunities for the YGS participants.

The European Commission is currently evaluating the high number of proposals received for the Youth Guarantee funding call for proposals. Due to technical constraints, the evaluation process is delayed. Nevertheless, we expect a finalisation of the evaluation process by June at the latest. The total cost of the project is EUR 302,279, we are seeking EUR 250,000 EU contribution. The project should start after signature of the grant agreement, expected within six months of the submission date. The duration of project will be 12 months maximum.

It is proposed that the principal target group for participants will be unemployed persons aged 18 to 24 years. It is proposed that the YGS will apply to an intake of c 90 young people per month drawn from two streams.

(i) Young people who are coming on to the Live Register during the period of the pilot and who are registering at the Ballymun office. We expect this cohort to be of the order 60 young people per month. The intervention will commence once the young person has established eligibility to a Jobseekers claim. Not all of the target cohort will require an intervention over and above an initial needs assessment.

(ii) It is also intended to target young people who have already been unemployed for some time. Currently, there are approximately 360 young people who are wholly unemployed and on the register in Ballymun for a year or more. This group will be targeted for intervention at a rate of c 30 per month over the life of the pilot. (In months where the intake of cohort (i) is less than 60 the intake of long term unemployed young people will be increased and vice versa).

The YGS will be developed through co-operation of all of the relevant stakeholders including the PES (DSP), education and training providers, voluntary and community groups, employers and youth organisations. As part of the bid for this funding the Department of Social Protection consulted with Ballymun Youthreach (CDVEC) Centre of Education Ballymun; Ballymun Job Centre/Local Employment Service Network; Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme; Ballymun Regional Youth Resource Limited; Ballymun Community Training Centre; Trinity Comprehensive School; Ballymun Youth Action Project Ltd.; The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) and IBEC with a view to establishing a partnership as required by the terms of reference of the proposal.

The Local Implementation Team will comprise representatives of relevant stakeholders, including the Department of Social Protection, FAS, CDVEC, Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership, Ballymun Job Centre/Local Employment Service Network, North Dublin Chamber of Commerce, Ballymun for Business, EQUAL Youth, and a representative young person (to be identified).

Tuesday, 14 May 2013

Alan Farrell (Dublin North, Fine Gael)

163. To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide a progress update on the youth guarantee fund; the way these funds may be accessed and the proportion of funding that he expects to draw down; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [22816/13]

Eamon Gilmore (Tánaiste; Minister, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Dún Laoghaire, Labour) | Oireachtas source

Youth unemployment is one of the greatest challenges of the current crisis and the Irish Presidency has worked hard to address the problem and mobilise available instruments and resources to support Member States with the greatest difficulties posed by youth unemployment.

The EPSCO Council under the chairmanship of the Irish Presidency agreed on the key principles of the Youth Guarantee in February and we also worked to ensure that further resources in the MFF would support its implementation.

The €6 billion Youth Employment Initiative endorsed by the European Council in its February conclusions on a new MFF 2014-2020 will be key. €3 billion is expected to come from the existing European Social Fund, and €3 billion from a new budget line, open to all regions where youth unemployment exceeds 25%. While the methodology for allocating these monies has not yet been drawn up, Ireland will expect support as one of the Member States with the biggest youth unemployment challenge. We have an excellent track record in attracting and using EU funding. The Irish Presidency aims to get agreement on the new MFF in June.

Tuesday, 30 April 2013

John Paul Phelan (Carlow-Kilkenny, Fine Gael)

316. To ask the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide an update on the introduction of a youth guarantee here; and the proposed pilot project in Ballymun, Dublin. [20245/13]

Joan Burton (Minister, Department of Social Protection; Dublin West, Labour)

The EU Council Recommendation on a Youth Guarantee received political agreement at the EPSCO Council meeting on February 28th and was formally adopted by the Council last week.

The Recommendation is that Member States should: Ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an

apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

While it is recommended that the guarantee should be implemented as soon as possible, it is recognised that implementation will be more gradual in the Member States experiencing the most severe budgetary difficulties and higher rates of youth unemployment. The government will now review the current range of youth employment policies in Ireland to assess what measures will need to be taken to commence the gradual implementation of the guarantee. This will include the identification of what would be the appropriate timescale for implementation in Ireland's current employment and budgetary circumstances.

The scale and nature of any additional measures required for the gradual implementation of a guarantee at national level will depend on the trend in youth unemployment, and in particular the number of young people likely to experience periods of unemployment of more than four months under current policies. In this context, it is a welcome development that the official labour market figures published by the CSO recently indicated that the number of young unemployed at the end of 2012, at 59,000, a reduction of almost 9,000 on the same time a year earlier. It is to be hoped that this is the beginning of a sustained downward movement in youth unemployment as the economy recovers. Even so, the implementation of a guarantee will, almost certainly, require an expansion in the range of opportunities currently on offer to young people in the form of further education and training, internships, subsidised private-sector recruitment, and supports for self-employment.

In this regard the State already provides a significant number of initiatives which are of relevance to young people and the Department of Social Protection took steps in Budget 2013 to increase funding and places for schemes such as JobBridge, Community Employment, TÚS and a new state employment scheme in the local Government sector. In total an additional 10,000 places will be provided. Other relevant provision is made through the training and education programmes delivered through FÁS and the further education sector.

The size and the timescale for any additional provision that is both desirable and feasible, over and above that outlined above, will be established over the coming months.

In this context, the Government intends to work with all relevant stakeholders to maximise the impact of a youth guarantee in Ireland. We have sought funding from the European Commission for a proposed pilot Youth Guarantee Scheme (YGS) in the Ballymun area of north Dublin, and numerous organisations (e.g. IBEC, Ballymun Job Centre, National Youth Council of Ireland) have agreed to participate in this pilot. We are currently waiting to hear from the European Commission as to whether or not our application has been successful. We have been informed that a final decision on our application will be made by the end of June.

Subject to approval from the Commission, the proposed Ballymun YGS pilot will look to develop an activation approach tailored to the needs of young people. It is intended that the Ballymun pilot YGS will, in respect of the target group of young people, guarantee access to career guidance/assistance leading to identification of an individual career plan for the young unemployed person with follow-through to training, education, work experience or full-time

employment. Depending on the needs of the young individual the steps in the career plan might include personal assessment, job search assistance, skills training, work experience internships, but the objective in all cases will be to lead the young person to employment placement or further education or training. A particular focus of the pilot YGS will be to involve, and build links with, employers in the locality and the immediate hinterland in order to ensure that the guidance and training elements of the YGS are tailored to the needs of the local labour market and also to generate work placement/experience opportunities for the YGS participants.

Wednesday, 24 April 2013

Willie O'Dea (Limerick City, Fianna Fail) | Oireachtas source

26. To ask the Minister for Social Protection the progress she has made on implementing a youth guarantee scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [18946/13]

Peadar Tóibín (Meath West, Sinn Fein)

48. To ask the Minister for Social Protection the details of her implementation plan of the Youth Guarantee; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [18841/13]

Joan Burton (Minister, Department of Social Protection; Dublin West, Labour)

I propose to take Questions Nos. 26 and 48 together.

Following some small changes required by the Council's Jurist/Linguists, it is anticipated that the final text will be formally adopted by the Council this month. The Recommendation is that Member States should: Ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

While it is recommended that the guarantee should be implemented as soon as possible, it is recognised that implementation will be more gradual in the Member States experiencing the most severe budgetary difficulties and higher rates of youth unemployment. The government will now review the current range of youth employment policies in Ireland to assess what measures will need to be taken to commence the gradual implementation of the guarantee. This will include the identification of what would be the appropriate timescale for implementation in Ireland's current employment and budgetary circumstances.

In this context, the Government intends to work with all relevant stakeholders to maximise the impact of a youth guarantee in Ireland. We have sought funding from the European Commission for a the proposed pilot Youth Guarantee project in the Ballymun area of north Dublin, and numerous organisations (e.g. IBEC, Ballymun Job Centre, National Youth Council of Ireland) have agreed to participate in this pilot.

The scale and nature of any additional measures required for the gradual implementation of a guarantee at national level will depend on the trend in youth unemployment, and in particular the number of young people likely to experience periods of unemployment of more than four months under current policies. In this context, it is a welcome development that the official labour market figures published by the CSO recently indicated that the number of young unemployed at the end of 2012, at 59,000, a reduction of almost 9,000 on the same time a year earlier. It is to be hoped that this is the beginning of a sustained downward movement in youth unemployment as the economy recovers. Even so, the implementation of a guarantee will, almost certainly, require an expansion in the range of opportunities currently on offer to young people in the form of further education and training, internships, subsidised private-sector recruitment, and supports for self-employment.

In this regard the State already provides a significant number of initiatives which are of relevance to young people and the Department of Social Protection took steps in Budget 2013 to increase funding and places for schemes such as JobBridge, Community Employment, TÚS and a new state employment scheme in the local Government sector. In total an additional 10,000 places will be provided. Other relevant provision is made through the training and education programmes delivered through FÁS and the further education sector. The size and the timescale for any additional provision that is both desirable and feasible, over and above that outlined above, will be established over the coming months.

Tuesday, 5 February 2013

Nicky McFadden (Longford-Westmeath, Fine Gael)

To ask the Minister for Social Protection if the possibility of introducing a youth guarantee scheme in order to provide young persons with a quality offer of employment or training within four months of leaving school or becoming employed is being considered; if the scheme could be supported on an EU level by the European Social Fund; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [5827/13]

Joan Burton (Minister, Department of Social Protection; Dublin West, Labour)

The European Commission has made a proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Youth Guarantee. In the form proposed by the Commission, the Recommendation would be for Member States to ensure that all young people receive a quality offer of employment, continuing education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

To be adopted, the Recommendation has to be agreed by the Member States. The process of negotiation on the Recommendation is currently under way, and the Irish Presidency has indicated our intention to have the agreed Recommendation adopted at the Council of relevant ministers at the end of February, and by the European Council before the end of our Presidency.

The main issues under discussion in the negotiations relate to the identification of the target group of young people, to the length of the period within which a guarantee would apply, the types of measure that would qualify as meeting the guarantee, and the question of flexibility for Member States with particularly high levels of youth unemployment and/or particularly difficult circumstances in relation to their public finances.

When an agreed Recommendation has been adopted, the Government will review existing policies related to youth unemployment and identify the measures that will be required for the implementation of the guarantee.

With respect to the question of obtaining funding from the European Social Fund (ESF), in 2012 the European Council concluded that Youth Guarantee measures can be supported by the ESF. However, as of now there are no proposals to provide additional ESF funds specifically for this purpose; funds devoted to measures related to a Youth Guarantee would therefore have to be diverted from other policy areas.

Tuesday, 29 January 2013

Timmy Dooley (Clare, Fianna Fail)

To ask the Minister for Social Protection the progress that has been made on the establishment of a youth guarantee scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [4095/13]

Joan Burton (Minister, Department of Social Protection; Dublin West, Labour)

The European Commission has made a proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Youth Guarantee. In the form proposed by the commission, the Recommendation would be for Member States to ensure that all young people receive a quality offer of employment, continuing education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. To be adopted, the Recommendation has to be agreed by the Member States. The process of negotiation on the Recommendation is currently under way, and the Irish Presidency has indicated our intention to have the agreed Recommendation adopted at the Council of relevant ministers at the end of February, and by the European Council before the end of our Presidency.

The main issues under discussion in the negotiations relate to the identification of the target group of young people, to the length of the period within which a guarantee would apply, the types of measure that would qualify as meeting the guarantee, and the question of flexibility for Member States with particularly high levels of youth unemployment and/or particularly difficult circumstances in relation to their public finances. When an agreed Recommendation has been adopted, the Government will review existing policies related to youth unemployment and identify the measures that will be required for the implementation of the guarantee.

Tuesday, 7 February 2012

John Lyons (Dublin North West, Labour)

Question 288: To ask the Minister for Social Protection if, in considering measures to tackle youth unemployment, she has examined the possibility of providing a youth contract or youth guarantee so that those under 25 years of age and out of work or education would be guaranteed a work placement, training or an internship within a set period; if she will outline the funding or measures that would be necessary to provide this commitment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [6882/12]

Joan Burton (Minister, Department of Social Protection; Dublin West, Labour)

The Department of Social Protection, through the wide range of schemes and interventions it provides, impacts on the lives of almost every person in the State at some stage. A number of these measures already support those under 25 years of age.

In this regard the back to education allowance (BTEA) scheme is a second chance education opportunities scheme designed to remove the barriers to participation in second and third level education by enabling eligible people on social welfare to continue to receive a payment while pursuing an approved full-time education course that leads to a higher qualification than that already held.

A BTEA applicant must be in receipt of a relevant social welfare payment and be at least 21 years of age (24 years postgraduate courses) prior to commencing an approved course of study. However, lone parents and persons in receipt of jobseekers payments can qualify at 18 years of age provided they are out of formal education for at least 2 years.

Changes made to rate of payment of jobseekers allowance to young people since 2009 were undertaken in order to incentivise under 25 year old jobseekers to avail of education and training opportunities and try to avoid them becoming welfare-dependent from a young age. The full adult rate of the relevant payment will be paid to under 25 year olds who participate in full time approved education or training programmes. This measure provides this group with a strong financial incentive to engage in education or training or to take up employment.

In addition JobBridge, the National Internship Scheme, assists individuals to bridge the gap between unemployment and the world of work. It provides those seeking employment with an opportunity to undertake a 6 or 9 month internship in a host organisation. Participation on the scheme assists in breaking that cycle whereby unemployed people are unable to get a job without experience. On completing their internship, participants will have improved their prospects of securing employment. The scheme is scheduled to run for two years with a maximum of 5,000 places at any time. Interns receive an allowance of €50 per week on top of their social welfare entitlement payable for the period of the internship.

It is intended that both the BTEA and the internship programme will be reviewed to assess their effectiveness and the outcome of those reviews will be used to determine whether policy changes are required to meet labour market activation objectives.

APPENDIX 3

THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN UNION AFFAIRS

LIST OF MEMBERS

Deputies:	Dominic Hannigan	(Labour) (Chairman)
	Pascal Donohoe	(Fine Gael) (Vice Chair)
	Timmy Dooley	(Fianna Fáil)
	Bernard Durkan	(Fine Gael)
	John Halligan	(Independent)
	Eric Byrne	(Labour)
	Seán Kyne	(Fine Gael)
	Seán Crowe	(Sinn Féin)
	Joe O'Reilly	(Fine Gael)
Senators:	Colm Burke	(Fine Gael)
	Fidelma Healy Eames	(Fine Gael)
	James Heffernan	(Labour)
	Terry Leyden	(Fianna Fáil)
	Kathryn Reilly	(Sinn Féin)

APPENDIX 4

JOINT COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN UNION AFFAIRS

ORDERS OF REFERENCE

Dáil Éireann on 8 June 2011 ordered:

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| <p>“(1) Go gceapfar Roghchoiste, dá ngairfear an Roghchoiste um Ghnóthaí an Aontais Eorpaigh, ar a mbeidh 9 gcomhalta de Dháil Éireann, chun breithniú a dhéanamh ar cibé nithe a éiríonn—</p> | <p>(1) That a Select Committee, which shall be called the Select Committee on European Union Affairs, consisting of nine members of Dáil Éireann, be appointed to consider such matters arising from—</p> |
| <p>(a) as ballraíocht na hÉireann san Aontas Eorpach agus</p> | <p>(a) Ireland’s membership of the European Union, and</p> |
| <p>(b) as Éirinn do chloí leis an gConradh ar an Aontas Eorpach agus leis an gConradh ar Fheidhmiú an Aontais Eorpaigh</p> | <p>(b) Ireland’s adherence to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,</p> |
| <p>a roghnóidh sé agus nach bhfuil tarchurtha chuig aon Choiste eile.</p> | <p>as it may select and which are not referred to any other Committee.</p> |
| <p>(2) Gan dochar do ghinearáltacht mhír (1), breithneoidh an Coiste—</p> | <p>(2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Select Committee shall consider such—</p> |
| <p>(a) cibé Billí a bpléann an Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála leis an dlí reachtach ina leith,</p> | <p>(a) Bills the statute law in respect of which is dealt with by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade,</p> |
| <p>(b) cibé tograí a bheidh in aon tairiscint, lena n-áirítear aon tairiscint de réir bhrí Bhuan-</p> | <p>(b) proposals contained in any motion, including any motion within the meaning of Standing</p> |

Ordú 164, agus

Order 164, and

(c) cibé nithe eile,

(c) other matters,

a tharchuirfidh an Dáil chuige.

as shall be referred to it by the Dáil.

(3) Beidh an tAire Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála (nó comhalta den Rialtas nó Aire Stáit a ainmneofar chun gníomhú ina áit nó ina háit chun na críche sin), ina chomhalta nó ina comhalta ex officio den Roghchoiste chun na nithe atá leagtha amach i mír (2)(a) agus (b) a bhreithniú agus beidh sé nó sí i dteideal vótáil in imeachtaí an Roghchoiste.

(3) The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (or a member of the Government or Minister of State nominated to act in his or her stead for that purpose) shall be an ex officio member of the Select Committee for the purpose of consideration of the matters outlined at paragraph (2)(a) and (b) and shall be entitled to vote in Select Committee proceedings.

(4) Beidh ag an gCoiste na cumhachtaí a mhínítear i mBuan-Ordú 83(1), (2) agus (3).

(4) The Select Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 83(1), (2) and (3).

(5) Déanfar an Roghchoiste a chomhcheangal le Roghchoiste arna cheapadh ag Seanad Éireann chun bheith ina Chomhchoiste um Ghnóthaí an Aontais Eorpaigh, agus, gan dochar do ghinearáltacht mhír (1), déanfaidh an Roghchoiste an méid seo a leanas a bhreithniú—

(5) The Select Committee shall be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann, to form the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs, which, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), shall consider—

(a) doiciméid phleanála straitéiseacha Choimisiún AE lena n-áirítear Clár Oibre an Choimisiúin,

(a) the EU Commission's strategic planning documents including the Commission Work Programme,

(b) forbairtí beartais tras-earnála ag leibhéal an Aontais Eorpaigh,

(b) cross-sectoral policy developments at European Union level,

(c) nithe a liostaítear lena mbreithniú ar an gclár gnó i gcomhair cruinnithe de Chomhairle Gnóthaí Ginearálta na nAirí agus toradh cruinnithe den sórt sin.

(c) matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the General Affairs Council of Ministers and the outcome of such meetings,

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| <p>(d) cibé rialacháin faoi Achtanna na gComhphobal Eorpach, 1972 go 2009 agus ionstraimí eile arna ndéanamh faoi reacht agus is gá de dhroim na n-oibleagáidí a ghabhann le ballraíocht san Aontas Eorpach a roghnóidh an Coiste,</p> | <p>(d) such regulations under the European Communities Acts 1972 to 2009 and other instruments made under statute and necessitated by the obligations of membership of the European Union as the Committee may select,</p> |
| <p>(e) fógraí arna dtarchur ag an Dáil faoi Bhuan-Ordú 106(1)(a),</p> | <p>(e) notifications referred by the Dáil under Standing Order 106(1)(a),</p> |
| <p>(f) fógraí i dtaobh tograí chun na Conarthaí a leasú a fuarthas ón gComhairle Eorpach de bhun Airteagal 48.2 den Chonradh ar an Aontas Eorpach,</p> | <p>(f) notifications of proposals for the amendment of the Treaties received from the European Council pursuant to Article 48.2 of the Treaty on European Union,</p> |
| <p>(g) fógraí i dtaobh iarratas ar bhallraíocht san Aontas Eorpach a fuarthas ón gComhairle Eorpach de bhun Airteagal 49 den Chonradh ar an Aontas Eorpach, agus</p> | <p>(g) notifications of applications for membership of the European Union received from the European Council pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, and</p> |
| <p>(h) cibé nithe eile a tharchuirfidh an Dáil chuige ó am go ham.</p> | <p>(h) such other matters as may be referred to it by the Dáil from time to time.</p> |
| <p>(6) Tabharfaidh an Comhchoiste tuarascáil do dhá Theach an Oireachtais ar oibriú Acht an Aontais Eorpaigh (Grinnscrúdú), 2002.</p> | <p>(6) The Joint Committee shall report to both Houses of the Oireachtas on the operation of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act 2002.</p> |
| <p>(7) Beidh ag an gComhchoiste na cumhachtaí a mhínítear i mBuan-Orduithe 83 (seachas mír (2A) den chéanna), 106(1)(a) agus 107.</p> | <p>(7) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Orders 83 (other than paragraph (2A) thereof), 105, 106(1)(a) and 107.</p> |
| <p>(8) Beidh ag an gComhchoiste an chumhacht chun moltaí a dhéanamh chun an Aire Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála (nó chun Aire Stáit) i dtaobh nithe a bhaineann leis an</p> | <p>(8) The Joint Committee shall have the power to make recommendations to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (or Minister of State) on European Union matters.</p> |

Aontas Eorpach.

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| (9) Féadfaidh na daoine seo a leanas freastal ar chruinnithe den Chomhchoiste agus páirt a ghlacadh in imeachtaí gan ceart vótála a bheith acu ná ceart tairiscintí a dhéanamh ná leasuithe a thairiscint: | (9) The following may attend meetings of the Joint Committee and take part in proceedings without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments: |
| (a) Comhaltaí de Pharlaimint na hEorpa arna dtoghadh ó thoghcheantair in Éirinn, lena n-áirítear Tuaisceart Éireann, | (a) Members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland, including Northern Ireland, |
| (b) Comhaltaí de thoscaireacht na hÉireann chuig Tionól Parlaiminteach Chomhairle na hEorpa, agus | (b) Members of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and |
| (c) ar chuireadh a fháil ón gCoiste, Comhaltaí eile de Pharlaimint na hEorpa. | (c) at the invitation of the Committee, other Members of the European Parliament. |
| (10) Déanfaidh an Comhchoiste ionadaíocht do dhá Theach an Oireachtais ag Comhdháil na gCoistí um Ghnóthaí Comhphobail agus Eorpacha de chuid Pharlaimintí an Aontais Eorpaigh (COSAC) agus tabharfaidh sé tuarascáil ar an gcéanna do dhá Theach an Oireachtais. | (10) The Joint Committee shall represent both Houses of the Oireachtas at the Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) and shall report to both Houses of the Oireachtas thereon. |
| (11) Beidh Cathaoirleach an Roghchoiste, ar comhalta de Dháil Éireann a bheidh ann nó inti, ina Chathaoirleach nó ina Cathaoirleach ar an gComhchoiste freisin. | (11) The Chairman of the Joint Committee, who shall be a member of Dáil Éireann, shall also be Chairman of the Select Committee." |

Seanad Éireann on 16 June 2011 ordered:

"(1) Go gceapfar Roghchoiste, dá

(1) That a Select Committee, which shall

ngairfear an Roghchoiste um Ghnóthaí an Aontais Eorpaigh, ar a mbeidh 5 chomhalta de Sheanad Éireann, chun breithniú a dhéanamh ar cibé nithe a éiríonn—

- (a) as ballraíocht na hÉireann san Aontas Eorpach agus
- (b) as Éirinn do chloí leis an gConradh ar an Aontas Eorpach agus leis an gConradh ar Fheidhmiú an Aontais Eorpaigh

a roghnóidh sé agus nach bhfuil tarchurtha chuig aon Choiste eile.

- (2) Déanfar an Roghchoiste a chomhcheangal le Roghchoiste arna cheapadh ag Dáil Éireann chun bheith ina Chomhchoiste um Ghnóthaí an Aontais Eorpaigh, agus, gan dochar do ghinearáltacht mhír (1), déanfaidh an Comhchoiste an méid seo a leanas a bhreithniú—

- (a) doiciméid phleanála straitéiseacha Choimisiún AE lena n-áirítear Clár Oibre an Choimisiúin,
- (b) forbairtí beartais tras-earnála ag leibhéal an Aontais Eorpaigh,
- (c) nithe a liostaítear lena mbreithniú ar an gclár gnó i gcomhair cruinnithe de Chomhairle Gnóthaí Ginearálta na nAirí agus toradh cruinnithe den sórt sin.
- (d) cibé rialacháin faoi Achtanna na gComhphobal Eorpach, 1972 go 2009 agus ionstraimí eile arna

be called the Select Committee on European Union Affairs, consisting of 5 members of Seanad Éireann, be appointed to consider such matters arising from—

- (a) Ireland's membership of the European Union, and
- (b) Ireland's adherence to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

as it may select and which are not referred to any other Committee.

- (2) The Select Committee shall be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Dáil Éireann, to form the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs, which, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), shall consider—

- (a) the EU Commission's strategic planning documents including the Commission Work Programme,
- (b) cross-sectoral policy developments at European Union level,
- (c) matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the General Affairs Council of Ministers and the outcome of such meetings,
- (d) such regulations under the European Communities Acts 1972 to 2009 and other

- ndéanamh faoi reacht agus is gá de dhroim na n-oibleagáidí a ghabhann le ballraíocht san Aontas Eorpach a roghnóidh an Coiste,
- (e) fógraí arna dtarchur ag an Seanad faoi Bhuan-Ordú 102(1)(a),
- (f) fógraí i dtaobh tograí chun na Conarthaí a leasú a fuarthas ón gComhairle Eorpach de bhun Airteagal 48.2 den Chonradh ar an Aontas Eorpach,
- (g) fógraí i dtaobh iarratas ar bhallraíocht san Aontas Eorpach a fuarthas ón gComhairle Eorpach de bhun Airteagal 49 den Chonradh ar an Aontas Eorpach, agus
- (h) cibé nithe eile a tharchuirfidh an Seanad chuige ó am go ham.
- (3) Tabharfaidh an Comhchoiste tuarascáil do dhá Theach an Oireachtais ar oibriú Acht an Aontais Eorpaigh (Grinnscrúdú), 2002.
- (4) Beidh ag an gComhchoiste na cumhachtaí a mhínítear i mBuan-Orduithe 71 (seachas mír (2A) den chéanna), 101, 102(1)(a) agus 103.
- (5) Beidh ag an gComhchoiste an chumhacht chun moltaí a dhéanamh chun an Aire Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála (nó chun Aire Stáit) i dtaobh nithe a bhaineann leis an Aontas Eorpach.
- (6) Féadfaidh na daoine seo a leanas freastal ar chruinnithe den
- (d) instruments made under statute and necessitated by the obligations of membership of the European Union as the Committee may select,
- (e) notifications referred by the Seanad under Standing Order 102 (1)(a),
- (f) notifications of proposals for the amendment of the Treaties received from the European Council pursuant to Article 48.2 of the Treaty on European Union,
- (g) notifications of applications for membership of the European Union received from the European Council pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, and
- (h) such other matters as may be referred to it by the Seanad from time to time.
- (3) The Joint Committee shall report to both Houses of the Oireachtas on the operation of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act 2002.
- (4) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Orders 71 (other than paragraph (2A) thereof), 101, 102(1)(a) and 103.
- (5) The Joint Committee shall have the power to make recommendations to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (or Minister of State) on European Union matters.
- (6) The following may attend meetings of the Joint Committee and take part

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| <p>Chomhchoiste agus páirt a ghlacadh in imeachtaí gan ceart vótála a bheith acu ná ceart tairiscintí a dhéanamh ná leasuithe a thairiscint:</p> | <p>in proceedings without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments:</p> |
| <p>(a) Comhaltaí de Pharlaimint na hEorpa arna dtoghadh ó thoghlaigh in Éirinn, lena n-áirítear Tuaisceart Éireann,</p> | <p>(a) Members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland, including Northern Ireland,</p> |
| <p>(b) Comhaltaí de thoscaireacht na hÉireann chuig Tionól Parlaiminteach Chomhairle na hEorpa, agus</p> | <p>(b) Members of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and</p> |
| <p>(c) ar chuireadh a fháil ón gCoiste, Comhaltaí eile de Pharlaimint na hEorpa.</p> | <p>(c) at the invitation of the Committee, other Members of the European Parliament.</p> |
| <p>(7) Déanfaidh an Comhchoiste ionadaíocht do dhá Theach an Oireachtais ag Comhdháil na gCoistí um Ghnóthaí Comhphobail agus Eorpacha de chuid Parlaimintí an Aontais Eorpaigh (COSAC) agus tabharfaidh sé tuarascáil ar an gcéanna do dhá Theach an Oireachtais.</p> | <p>(7) The Joint Committee shall represent both Houses of the Oireachtas at the Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) and shall report to both Houses of the Oireachtas thereon.</p> |
| <p>(8) Beidh Cathaoirleach an Chomhchoiste ina chomhalta nó ina comhalta de Dháil Éireann.</p> | <p>(8) The Chairman of the Joint Committee shall be a member of Dáil Éireann.</p> |

