

Action Plan for Jobs 2015



INOUE

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According to the most recent Quarterly National Household Survey, Q2 2014 there were 1,901,600 employed, an annual increase of 31,600. Over the same period unemployment fell by 46,200 to 254,500. However, it is important to note that unemployment falls for a number of reasons and not all of them positive: employment; emigration; education and training; and people dropping out of the official statistics because they have become discouraged and / or inactive. It is these latter groups that the INOUE are particularly concerned with, as they include people who require supportive and well resourced interventions to find a sustainable pathway into work. The Potential Additional Labour Force figures aims to capture unemployed people in this position and in Q2 2014 it stood at 51,800.

A key question unemployed people raise with the INOUE is: *'where are the jobs everyone is talking about?'* Over the past year three sectors accounted for 65% of employment growth: administrative and support services; accommodation and food services; and agriculture, forestry and fishing.

Many commentators have noted that employment opportunities are as likely to come from job replacement as job creation. In the recent SOLAS implementation plan for the Further Education and Training Strategy they noted:

- High turnover rates in: sales, clerks, healthcare, electricians, drivers, catering, fitters, IT workers, childcare and elementary workers.
- Labour Market expansion opportunities in: science, engineering, IT, legal, business, finance, transport, sales, arts, sports, tourism and operatives.
- Skills shortages in: IT, multilingual contact centre staff, scientists / technicians, engineers, business professionals, medicine, tool makers, meat industry related occupations, supply chain managers.

Employment growth in agriculture, forestry and fishing comes with a statistical health warning from the Central Statistics Office, yet it is still noticeable by its absence in SOLAS's list of potential employment opportunities into the future. This raises serious questions about urban and rural employment opportunities.

Key questions for the Action Plan for Jobs to address:

- How do unemployed people get to hear about employment opportunities?
- How will unemployed people be matched-up with or find their best employment option?
- Who has the information and how is it disseminated?
- How do we make the most out of the opportunities emerging?
- How do we meet the challenging regional and occupational spread of employment?

Education and Training Actions

- I. Looking at the educational profile of people who are unemployed it is clear that a wide range of provision is required to improve their employment prospects. For example 23% have lower secondary and less; 29% have higher secondary; 14% have third level honours degree +. To meet the needs of the latter two groups and to address evident skills gaps in the labour market it is important to build on initiatives like Springboard, ICT Conversion and up-skilling programme, Skillnets, and Momentum.
- II. To meet the educational needs of people for whom academic education is unattractive and to develop a properly structured activation / career path further education and training alternatives are critical. As part of these developments it will be important to build a broader apprenticeship system; and to realise the full potential of FET proper resources must be put in place.
- III. To ensure that all unemployed people get access to the most relevant programme for them it is important that there is good assessment of their current skills / education levels and this feeds into the identification of the most appropriate intervention / support.
- IV. A number of practical tools must be put in place to support the roll-out of best practice and the more efficient and effective use of resources. A single course database or universal course calendar covering the full range of courses on offer which unemployed people could access. Such a database is essential for both planners, providers and learners.
- V. Evidence shows that the best outcomes arise for participants and resources are used most effectively when good practice guidelines are followed and these include:
 - ☛ A comprehensive recruitment process that strives to match the individual to the most appropriate course.
 - ☛ Good programme supports starting with a built-in induction period and the flexibility to take into account the life circumstances of the adult participants.
 - ☛ Flexible and considered programme design provided by high quality tutors.
 - ☛ Post progression supports to support the learner to find either paid employment or a suitable further course of study

Lead players:

I. DES; HEA; SOLAS; DSP; Intreo; Learner and employer representatives.

II. DES; SOLAS; DSP; Intreo; learner and employer representative.

III. DSP; Intreo; HEA; SOLAS; ETB.

IV. DES; HEA; SOLAS; DSP; Intreo; learner and employer reps.

V. DES; HEA; SOLAS; ETB; providers; learner and employer representatives.



Timeframe: now and on-going

Local Community Based Actions

Lead players:

I. DECLG; DJEI; other relevant Departments / Agencies

II. DES; HEA; SOLAS; ETB; learner and employer representative.

III. DJEI; DECLG; DSP; LDC; LEO.

IV. DJEI; DECLG; DSP; LDC; LEO.

V. DSP Employment Services; LDC; LES; CE projects.

- I. The INOU is keenly aware through feedback from our affiliates that local community based responses are critically important in addressing social and economic exclusion. This is particularly true given the geographical and sectoral focus to employment growth. To address these issues it will be important to look to alternative economic strategies including the potential of the green economy. Adopting such an approach could address such social challenges as fuel poverty, assist Ireland to meet our environmental targets while creating local sustainable solutions through, for example, retrofitting and developing local renewable energy.
- II. Following on from this action and to address potential skills gaps a new green economy apprenticeship model should be rolled-out which could create a dynamic of local development, local employment.
- III. To support local communities to address their local socio-economic needs, plan and budget for the roll-out of the Forfás report on the potential of social enterprises. A separate budget line is critical.
- IV. Build on the role played by initiatives like Community Employment, Tús in the delivery of local public / community services, many of which are social enterprises, to create sustainable employment. In many marginalised communities these initiatives are often the only route into employment.
- V. The stark reality is that for many marginalised unemployed people programmes like Community Employment are the only access point to the

labour market. So to improve progression outcomes in the wider labour market work must be undertaken to break down the skills acquired through training and experiential learning. This information should then be used to support the participant to find subsequent employment through enhanced job-matching facilities.

Timeframe: now and on-going



Inclusive Labour Market Actions

- I. Unemployed people must be facilitated to take-up work and maintain their links with the labour market. So to build an inclusive labour market and create a positive dynamic in the local economy, the welfare to work journey should be as seamless as possible. To that end the DSP must pro-actively promote 'Fast-track', FIS, Part-time Job Incentive Scheme and JobsPlus.
- II. Ensure that when job announcements are made that Intreo and the Local Education and Training Boards work with the employers to run appropriate training courses that give unemployed people the best chance of getting these jobs.
- III. Improve the efficiency of job-matching. This would build up the confidence of employers that they will be able to access the employees they need through the public employment service; and it would build up the confidence of unemployed people that the service will meet their employment needs.
- IV. Ensure that supports for small and medium sized enterprises also provide proper supports for unemployed people seeking to set-up their own businesses.
- V. Encourage and support the development of alternative enterprise models including cooperatives and social enterprises.

Lead players:

I. DSP; Intreo / SWO; LES.

II. DSP / Intreo; DES; SOLAS; HEA; ETB.

III. DSP; Intreo / SWO; LES.

IV. DSP; DJEI; DECLG; LEO; LDC.

V. DJEI; DECLG; LEO; LDC.

Timeframe: now and on-going



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