



# JobsPlus Youth

An investment in employer subsidies to kick-start young people's careers

## IRELAND

**Title of the practice (in original language)**

JobsPlus Youth

**Who is implementing the practice?**

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP)

**Which other organisations were involved in the practice?**

- Organisations involved in funding and implementation:
- Employment Support Services (sub-unit of the DSP)
- Organisations involved in evaluating
- European Union compliance unit in DEASP
  - Employment support services in the DEASP

**What were the main objectives of the practice?**

JobsPlus Youth aims to further increase employers' demand for young jobseekers under the age of 25 through a two-year subsidy. It is expected that at the end of the subsidy period, young people who participate in the measure will gain valuable labour market experience and be better able to secure sustainable employment opportunities.

**When was the practice implemented?**

Since January 2015 (ongoing)

**Who was targeted by the practice?**

JobsPlus Youth targets young people under 25 years of age who have been unemployed for at least four months in the previous 6 months and are registered with the public employment service (PES). JobsPlus Youth also engages with employers; in order to be eligible for the subsidy, employers must offer a contract that is a minimum of 30 hours per week (public-sector employers are not eligible for the subsidy)<sup>1</sup>.

**What activities were carried out?**

- In JobsPlus Youth, the following processes take place<sup>2</sup>:
- If an employer wishes to recruit a candidate who may be eligible for a JobsPlus Youth subsidy, they first must complete an online application form giving information on the size of their workforce, their bank details and the sector they operate in to ensure they are eligible. A DEASP officer reviews these details and emails the employer if the application has been approved.

<sup>1</sup> Internet: <https://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Jobs-Plus.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

## What activities were carried out?

- Once the application is approved, the prospective employer will start the recruitment process by contacting the local PES to register the vacancy and show that it qualifies for the JobsPlus Youth subsidy.
- Typically, the PES will encourage applications from candidates who have been identified as eligible. Only after preliminary interviews and with a short list drawn up, should employers ask candidates whether they qualify for JobsPlus Youth. This can be quickly checked online.
- Shortlisted candidates are then provided with a form. The form has two parts: one for the candidate and one for the employer. The applicant's part is to be filled and signed by the candidate and is a proof of their eligibility to their prospective employer of the subsidy. The form can be taken to job interviews and can be also pro-actively used by young job seekers.
- In cases where the employers select a candidate who qualifies for the JobsPlus Youth subsidy, they must fill in the employer's part of the form and send it to the DEASP. The DEASP reviews this form and emails the employer to confirm they have been awarded the subsidy.
- The employer of the eligible young person is then granted subsidy payments of up to EUR 416 per month for two years (details on the size of the subsidy are given in the table below<sup>3</sup>).

Eligible person	Amount (over two years)
Unemployed for at least four months	EUR 7 500
Unemployed for 24 months or more	EUR 10 000

## What were the sources of funding?

JobsPlus Youth is jointly funded by the Irish Exchequer and the European Commission, through the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and European Social Fund (ESF). Both organisations contribute equally. For the period 2015 to 2017, the ESF and YEI each allocated approximately EUR 2.7 million to JobsPlus Youth.

## What were the outputs: people reached and products?

### People reached<sup>4</sup>:

- A total of 734 employees under 25 years of age were supported by JobsPlus Youth one year after its implementation.
- There were 432 employers with staff who were supported by JobsPlus Youth in the same period.
- These figures are broadly in line with the two-year participation target of 1 800 young people.

### Products:

- JobsPlus Youth information portal  
<http://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Jobs-Plus.aspx>
- JobsPlus employee registration portal  
<https://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/secure/jobsplus-employee.aspx>
- JobsPlus employer registration portal  
<https://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/secure/jobsplus-employer.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> Internet: <https://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Jobs-Plus.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> Evaluation of the operation of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) element of the European Social Fund (ESF) Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020, pages 43 to 46 Internet: <http://www.esf.ie/en/ImageLibrary/Repository/Files/YEI-Evaluation.pdf>

## What were the outcomes: medium-term results or effects?

The following outcomes have been identified so far<sup>5</sup>:

- Young people who took part in JobsPlus Youth were identified as having improved their attitude to work (100 %), increased their confidence and self-esteem (81 %) and reduced their barriers to employment (76 %). This serves to build resilience which will keep young people in the labour market.
- PES staff confirmed that JobsPlus Youth complements other measures designed to increase the employability of young people.
- 37 % of PES case officers suggest that JobsPlus Youth is contributing to reduced youth unemployment. This is based on feedback received informally by employers that 'the programme is having a positive effect.' However, it is too early to make a definite judgement as there is little hard data so far.
- Evidence suggests that JobsPlus Youth has not displaced others in the labour market who are not in receipt of the subsidy.

## What were the lessons learnt and success factors?

### Lessons learnt:

- A good monitoring system needed to be set up to ensure an efficient follow-up and to allow for evaluation of the measure.
- Raising employer awareness about JobsPlus Youth remains a challenge.

### Success factors:

- Case officers identify jobseekers who are 'employment ready' and match jobseekers with employers who have employment opportunities. By promoting JobsPlus Youth to the employer, it incentivises the employer to employ a young jobseeker;
- Being eligible for JobsPlus after four months compared with other jobseekers reduces the likelihood of a person under 25 years remaining on the Live Register<sup>6</sup> and moving into long term unemployment.
- Awareness-raising of the scheme among employers and young people – relating to whether they are eligible and how they can apply for the subsidy – is very important in ensuring take-up.

## What are the key sources of information

<https://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Jobs-Plus.aspx>

5 Evaluation of the operation of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) element of the European Social Fund (ESF) Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020, pages 43 to 46 Internet: <http://www.esf.ie/en/ImageLibrary/Repository/Files/YEI-Evaluation.pdf>

6 The Live Register is an administrative database that provides data on persons registering for Jobseekers Benefit Jobseekers allowance as well as other statutory entitlements.