**Human Rights and Young People in Ireland**

[http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Youth/Pages/CallInputsYouth.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Youth/Pages/CallInputsYouth.aspx)

* **Challenges faced by young people in your country**

Ireland’s UN Youth Delegates are undertaking a survey of young people’s issues in advance of Ireland reporting to the High Level Political Forum in New York in July 2018. This report will be launched in April 2018. Feedback from the survey includes the following issues/challenges for young people:

* Housing: Affordable accommodation; homelessness crisis; independent living for young people with disabilities
* Mental Health including access to appropriate facilities and services for young people
* Employment – quality jobs, job security, availability of jobs in rural areas, future opportunities
* Access to further education – cost and availability
* Drugs and Alcohol

Public Health (Alcohol) Bill <http://www.youth.ie/nyci/Public-Health-Alcohol-Bill-vital-fight-combat-impact-alcohol-mental-health-Ireland%E2%80%99s-youth>

* Bullying
* Gender equality – sexual health education, sexual and reproductive rights
* Obesity
* Suicide
* Depression
* Homophobia and Transphobia
* Islamophobia and racism
* Isolation and lack of facilities in rural areas
* Direct Provision and effects on young people – especially education, food, health and everyday life
* Lack of public transport – particularly in rural areas
* Quality of life – linked to cost of living and pressure and anxiety
* Financial future
* Voting rights – campaign to reduce voting age to 16 years is ongoing
* Economic inequality and effect of capitalism
* Use of social media – online bullying, addiction, age appropriateness
* Cost of motor insurance
* Stress in school
* Youth Employment remains an issue in Ireland <http://www.youth.ie/nyci/European-Court-Auditors-Ireland%E2%80%99s-implementation-EU-Youth-Guarantee-falls-short-expectations>
* Brexit is a big challenge <http://www.youth.ie/nyci/Brexit-Forum-Children-and-Young-People-opportunity-address-youth-needs-and-concerns>
* Youth Participation at UN has improved given that Ireland has a UN Youth Delegate Programme since 2015 – the challenge now is to deepen the Programme and engage more within Government Departments to strengthen the public diplomacy potential of the UN Youth Delegates themselves, but also other young people who wish to play a role. Another challenge and opportunity is to link better with European & global counterparts – organisations supporting UN Youth Delegate Programmes and become more streamlined and supported at UN, European, and National levels. The SDGs process now is throwing up huge opportunities but also challenges in terms of staying actively engaged including the HLPF, monitoring and evaluation, reporting, education, etc <http://www.youth.ie/nyci/Ireland%E2%80%99s-UN-Youth-Delegate-addresses-UN-meeting-New-York> and <http://www.youth.ie/nyci/Delegates-Action> There is great opportunity via the UN Youth Office to deepen the UN Youth Programme and working with co-ordinators as well as UN Youth Delegates and supporting regional organisations including the European Youth Forum, the programme could develop, deepen and create some very interesting, engaged and long term outcomes that would be beneficial to the many. It would be great to explore this
* Funding challenges continue to be challenging – to adequately finance good practice and also to support communities with specific needs and innovative practices
* The diversity of young people is a challenge – meeting the needs of young people from a variety of backgrounds, living in both rural and urban areas, and specific requirements, and abilities

Additional national/global issues identified by young people in Ireland

* Migration and refugee crisis – effects on young people in particular
* Climate change, global warming, recycling and sustainable living/futures. Plastic pollution
* Peace and insecurity – political and global instability, terrorist attacks
* FGM – strong laws in Ireland but some people have broken these laws
* Widening gap between rich and poor in Ireland and in the world
* Tax evasion and lost monies to improve public services
* Hunger - Feeding a growing world population
* War
* **Examples of discrimination against young people in the exercise of their rights**

Some examples:

Young minorities in Ireland: [www.youth.ie/minority](http://www.youth.ie/minority)

Mental Health Services: <https://www.oco.ie/news/report-childrens-mental-health-services-shows-childrens-mental-health-not-prioritised/>

Ombudsman for Children information on young people and rights: <https://www.oco.ie/news>

Consultation with Young People on Human Rights <https://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/publications/20160510ConsultationYoungPeopleHumanRightsSandraRoe.pdf>

Children and Young People – Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) <https://www.esri.ie/research/children-and-young-people/>

Empowering People in Care: <http://www.epiconline.ie/topics/epic-submissions/>

Picture your Rights: <https://www.unicef.ie/wp-content/themes/iboot-child/micro-sites/pictureyourrights/pdf/UNICEF-Ireland-Picture-Your-Rights-2015.pdf>

* **Are you aware of policies and programmes aimed at supporting young people to realise their rights? If so, please describe them**

**Better Outcomes Brighter Future** (2015 – 2020) – a whole of Government Approach: <https://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/cypp_framework/BetterOutcomesBetterFutureReport.pdf>

**National Youth Strategy -** <https://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/publications/20151008NatYouthStrat2015to2020.pdf>

**National Strategy on Children’s and Young People’s Participation in Decision Making -**

<https://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/playandrec/20150617NatStratonChildrenandYoungPeoplesParticipationinDecisionMaking2015-2020.pdf>

**The National LGBTQI Youth Strategy**

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs together with youth organisations and young people published the world’s first National Strategy for LGBTIQ+ Young People in 2017

<https://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/publications/20171208LGBTIConsultationStrategyReport.pdf>

**National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017 - 2020**

<http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/National_Strategy_for_Women_and_Girls_2017_-_2020.pdf/Files/National_Strategy_for_Women_and_Girls_2017_-_2020.pdf>

**Irish Aid Development Education Strategy** –

<http://www.youthdeved.ie/sites/youthdeved.ie/files/IA-DevEd-Strategy-English.pdf>

* **How are youth organisations or youth-led structures involved in developing, implementing, monitoring and/or evaluating policies and programmes on youth in your country?**

A National Youth Strategy for Ireland was launched in 2015. There was a national consultation in advance of this, which involved young people. The National Youth Council of Ireland looked for and got an online consultation/feedback element. As per strategy itself, consultation with 4,600 people of whom 4,000 were young people (P18). See consultation process set out in appendix 3.

<https://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/publications/20151008NatYouthStrat2015to2020.pdf>

Report from Consultant on consultation events:

<http://childrensdatabase.ie/documents/research/20150908NatYouthStratReponStakeholderEvents.pdf>

The **National Youth Council of Ireland** (membership organisation for 50 youth organisations in Ireland) has a youth policy group supporting the youth sector in Ireland to engage with policy and programmes on youth. NYCI makes submissions to and meets with legislators, policy makers, politicians and others to ensure youth issues are acknowledged and addressed.

NYCI also produces resources on the Sustainable Development Goals and youth rights issues to support increased knowledge, skills, and engagement on local, national and global issues - <http://www.youthdeved.ie/publications>

NYCI are members and part founders of Coalition2030 and collectively, over 100 organisations are working with government departments to raise awareness about sustainable development, seeking engagement through a civic dialogues structure and empowering young people to own the goals and to take action <http://www.youth.ie/nyci/Alliance-leading-civil-society-groups-call-national-action-plan-ambitious-global-targets-end>

<http://www.intercultural.ie/8steps> (NYCI work supporting youth organisations respond to and achieve national quality standards in youth work)

The **Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission** is rolling out Public Sector Duty in Ireland <https://www.ihrec.ie/our-work/public-sector-duty/> NYCI would be advocating this model for an international recommendation – i.e. all publicly funded bodies (including youth work as its publicly funded) have a duty to uphold peoples’ rights and tackle discrimination. Its focus is on pro-action rather than the ‘we won’t discriminate’ rhetoric which has been the situation to date and that hasn’t actually fought discrimination.

**Young Voices – Structured Dialogue**

<http://www.youth.ie/youngvoices>

Young voices is part of European Structured Dialogue.

***A space for young people and decision makers to discuss and feed into youth policy at national and European level together.***

Structured Dialogue is a tool to ensure that the opinion of young people is taken into account in defining youth-related policies of the European Union. To achieve this, the structured dialogue brings together young people, youth organisations, youth representatives and policy-makers across the EU to jointly discuss issues affecting young people and feed into youth policy at national and European level.

The Irish consultation process on social inclusion and quality youth work was named: **‘Young Voices, Have Your Say’** in order to encourage as many young people as possible in the country to take part and have their voices heard.

***Young People are consulted on issues affecting them.***

The aim of Structured Dialogue is to ensure that policy that affects young people meets the needs and expectations of young people across Europe. The Structured Dialogue process is also a space to examine the priorities and implementation of a co-ordinated youth policy across Europe.

Each National Working Group submits a **National Report** with the results of the consultations to the European Steering Committee at a deadline agreed upon in the Committee. The **compilation** **of National Reports** constitutes the main background document for discussions at the EU Youth Conference.

**What happens to the results?**

The Presidency country will usually promote the recommendations of its EU Youth Conference and present them to the Council of the European Union to ensure they are reflected in Council Resolutions or Conclusions adopted by EU Youth Ministers.

The conference recommendations are also used by the European Commission to inform its future policy development.

For more information on the structured dialogue process, see the European Youth Portal at [**http://europa.eu/youth/IE/takink-part/structured-dialogue\_en**](http://europa.eu/youth/IE/takink-part/structured-dialogue_en)

The implementation structure of Better Outcomes Brighter Futures (BOBF) Whole of Government Strategy for Young People is an achievement, where young people, through the EU Structured Dialogue National Working Group (including the National Youth Council of Ireland and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs) have access to the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium

**Youth Check**

Youth Check is an impact assessment tool designed to consider the impact on young people & children of any new Policy or Legislation that is relevant to them.

<http://www.youth.ie/sites/youth.ie/files/Youth%20Check%20Report%20for%20web_0.pdf>

NYCI together with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and young people from the EU Structured Dialogue process in Ireland are working to implement a Youth Check system for policy makers.

More information on the work of NYCI: <http://www.youth.ie>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalYouthCouncil/>

Twitter: @nycinews

* **What measures at international level would facilitate/support the realisation of young people’s rights**

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Greater focus on and linking of Human Rights, Development/Global Citizenship Education and the Sustainable Development Goals is hugely important. SDG4.7 specifically states:

*ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development*

If the world is to achieve the envisaged level of public engagement and involvement in the SDGs, a broader public education and outreach plan is essential. In order to achieve behavioural change, a deeper engagement through public education is required. This needs to be delivered through formal, non-formal and informal education. Ireland has a very strong track record in this area, and our work in Development Education/Global Citizenship Education has been acknowledged internationally. This gives Ireland an untapped strength to enable us to make the SDGs a whole of society achievement. There should be an emphasis on public understanding of the SDGs and engagement with the SDGs.

Important that there be a global, national and local media campaign around any new resolutions focusing on young people. We must ensure greater awareness of the international laws and resolutions in place to support young people to claim their rights. It is up to international structures as well as those of us at national level to ensure young people and those working with young people are informed.

Greater support for engagement by young people in local, national, and global structures would be welcome and give young people greater ownership, knowledge and skills to participate in society. Greater engagement by Ministries and global leaders on youth rights issues would support greater engagement at all levels throughout the world. Opportunities for young people and organisations to get together, share knowledge and skills and to collaborate would strengthen youth rights.

* **Any other issue you would like to share with OHCHR**

Thank you. Look forward to engaging more with the OHCHR

Thank you for holding this consultation. We look forward to the results.