

INNOVATION AND GOOD PRACTISES
FÁS EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
IRELAND

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FÁS

- Employment Services
- Training Services
- Community Services
- Services To Business
- Corporate Services

Budget circ. €800 million

Staff circ. 2400

ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

- Last Decade: Ireland's GDP almost doubled
- Between 1995-2000: Annual average growth rate was 8.5%
- Unemployment fell from 15.7%(1993) to 3.7% (2001)
- Growth rate was unsustainable
- Short term outlook: Modest growth rate
 - Current Growth levels 1.5% (ESRI) to 2% (Central Bank)
 - Predictions vary from 3% (ESRI) to 3.5%(Central Bank)

Medium Term: More positive

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

- Growth in Labour force participation slowed dramatically between 2000-2002
 - Reduction in women returning – younger age groups
 - Reduction in inflows from education
 - This trend set to continue
- Immigration has increased
 - 40,000 work permits issued in 2002
 - Will continue
 - Need for more targeted immigration policy

UNEMPLOYMENT

- 1993: Unemployment rate 15.7%
- 2001: Unemployment rate 3.7%
- 2002 (Dec): Unemployment rate 4.6%
 - Average monthly increase was 700
- 2003 (Dec): Predicted Unemployment rate 5.2%
- 2007: Predicted Unemployment rate 4.5%
- Live Register Composition:
 - 40% Less than 3 months
 - 27% over one year
 - 13% over three years
 - 80% receive payments, 20% credits/review
 - 60% males

BARRIERS

- LTU remaining more difficult to place
 - LTU since 1993 fell from 10% to 1.2%
- Lack of relevant work experience
- Low self esteem/confidence
- Literacy Numeracy difficulties
- Health Related Problems
- Negative attitudes
- Comfort Zones
- “Perceived” small financial gain

EMPLOYMENT ACTION PLAN (EAP)

- Introduced in 1998 as a preventative measure
- Managed jointly by DSFA/FÁS
 - Under 25, approaching 6 months on LR
 - Over 25/under 55 approaching 9 months on LR
- Interviewees receive comprehensive guidance
 - Each client has 5 interventions on average
 - Offers of jobs/training/schemes made within 6 weeks
- Since 1998:
 - 115,000 were referred by DSFA
 - 81,000 were interviewed by FÁS
 - 65% left the live register
- During 2002 outcomes were less favourable with those leaving the live register reducing to 56%

EMPLOYMENT ACTION PLAN (EAP)

- Full roll-out to begin in Dublin in April 2003
 - Those over 6 months on live register
 - 12,000 (Dublin), 45,000 (nationally) will be referred
- Full roll-out piloted in Ballyfermot, Kilkenny, Clondalkin and Galway
- Similar outcomes emerged proving that active engagement works
- Experience of Pilots:
 - Clients more difficult (*long term unemployed, health problems*)
 - Greater number of males
 - Require more time

SAMPLE CASES

	Welfare UB	CE	Training (18+)	Working Min wage 12mth unemployed
Single Person	€124.80	€143.20	€124.80	€239.90
Married + 2	€241.20	€255.50	Matches Welfare Payment	€331.09 Inc.Fam.Inc.Supp. Payment (Min wage €6.31 per hour)

INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS

Employment Supports:

- Back to Work Allowance

Provides a financial cushion to help Social Welfare recipients return to work. Retain 75% of social welfare payment year one, 50% year two, 25% year 3 also retain secondary benefits subject to certain conditions.

- PRSI Exemption Scheme

No employers PRSI contribution for first two years when taking on new or additional workers. Employee can receive Back to work Allowance if eligible for that scheme.

Training Supports:

- Mainline Training

- Customised Training

A flexible training fund used by employment services officers to provide a fast response to NEAP or Special Needs Clients training needs. Up to €635 per client

- Core Skills

Modular training programme which is developed to meet clients needs and is mainly used in the area of soft skill development.

INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS

Net College

- Services consist of web based training and supportive learning systems.
- Community Based Training
 - Local Training Initiative
 - Community Training Workshops
 - Community Response

INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS

Supports for Special Needs Clients:

- Employment Support Scheme assistance where persons whose productivity levels are between 50 and 80% of normal performance
- Supported Employment Programme Job Coach or Buddy Type system
- Job Interview Interpreter Grant Interpreter support for person with speech or Hearing impairment
- Personal reader Grant for persons who are blind or visually impaired
- Work Equipment Adaptation Grant Supporting any additional costs to an employer in employing or retaining an employee with a disability

Employment Programmes:

- **Community Employment** Part-time community based supported employment
- **Job Initiative** Full-time community based supported employment for over 35's over five years unemployed

INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS

Employment Services Supports:

- Guidance & Career Path Development
 - Providing individualised career path planning and development support
 - Training and Employment guidance and support
- High Support Process
 - A flexible process providing funding to assist in the removal of employability barriers.
 - Pilot programme aimed initially at final phase job Initiative and NEAP participants.

CURRENT SITUATION

Unemployment Figures Increasing

Certain Support Options Decreasing

Community Employment

2001	2002	2003
30,809	24,979	20,000

Adult Training Places

2001	2002
45,170	47,149

CURRENT SITUATION

Back to work Allowance

Qualification 2002

Qualification 2003

12 mths. Unemployed

60 mths. Unemployed

Inflows in 2002=10,000

Projected inflows in 2003=500

Individual retains Social Welfare Benefit 75% year 1

50% year 2 + secondary benefits

25% year 3

Employer

PRSI Exemption (2 years)

Inflows in 2002=5000

Sharp drop in 2003

NEW INTERVENTIONS

- High Support Process
 - Flexible approach to removing employability barriers
 - Networked Approach
 - Individual needs addressed
- Core Skills
 - Modular flexible soft skills development programme
 - Aimed at NEAP clients who need soft skills training in a flexible structure to assist them in returning the the world of work.

GATEWAY

Develop

Single “Gateway” to FÁS Services

Employment Services to become access point to all services

Need for a more Targeted Approach focusing services on specific groups.

LTU

Clients with Disability

Company Closures

Early School Leavers

ICT CAPABILITIES OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE IMPROVED

- Integrated Call Centre to be progressed
- A browser-based system to be developed with I.T. to integrate client caseload systems
- Increase the number of WATIS self-service machines including printers
- Contribute to the development of the new course recruitment system

SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

- Promote, develop and engage in meaningful services to employers to attract and increase the number of vacancies

NATIONAL SKILLS GAP

- Further develop and organise a number of employer-led European recruitment events to meet national skills gaps

THE IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY INTERVENTIONS

- Quality of Guidance process
 - Cert in Adult Guidance
 - Diploma/Higher Diploma in Adult Guidance
 - Average 50 Graduates per year (*mostly in Certificate*)
- Developing a single National Quality System
 - Integrating Regional Systems
 - Introducing redeveloped Q-Mark