



**IRISH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK**

Promoting and supporting the work of Local Development Companies in Ireland

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***LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE (LES) OFFERS EXCELLENT VALUE  
TO THE UNEMPLOYED, EMPLOYERS AND THE STATE***

Irish Local Development Network has welcomed the finding of research commissioned by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection (DEASP) that the not-for-profit Local Employment Service (LES) is successful in achieving full-time employment placement for 28.8% of those referred to them annually.

In addition, whilst working with those with lower qualification levels and most in need of employment supports, the LES has progressed the majority of its remaining caseload to part-time jobs and other pathways to work such as further training and employment schemes.

The research also found that a very high proportion of LES clients who responded to Indecon's research "indicated that their attendance with a Local Employment Service had been beneficial, with 75% stating that their engagement had motivated them to find work or to undertake further education or training."

The service also received significant endorsement from the employers who engage with it, with 89% of respondents indicating that their engagement with an LES had helped them to find suitable candidates for available jobs, while 83% of employers stated that the LES provided an efficient recruitment service for their organisation.

Irish Local Development Network (ILDN) represents Ireland's 49 Local Development Companies, many of whom deliver the Local Employment Service on behalf of DEASP. Chairperson, Marie Price Bolger, described these findings by Indecon International Economic Consultants as a significant demonstration of what is achievable when jobseekers have access to employment supports in community settings,

"The LES approach is serving jobseekers and the state well. At this time of welcome falls in unemployment, there are still many who need significant support to achieve

job-readiness and access the labour market. We work intensively with these people in their local community, helping them to address any barriers to employment including skills needs, mental health issues, self-esteem and personal discipline.”

“Placing almost 30% of referrals into full-time employment is a significant achievement but it must also be recognised that for many of the today’s jobseekers, progression to a part-time job, internship, employment scheme or further training are valid pathways to full-time employment and career development.

“The cost per full-time employment placement is €2544 and this reduces significantly when part-time positions are taken into account. The savings to the state in welfare payments as well as the transfer to the state in new tax income are considerable. In this context, the figures represent excellent value for money and demonstrate the benefits of collaboration between the state and not-for-profit community organisations.”

At present, the Public Employment Service (PES) is delivered either by the Department’s own Intreo service or by private contractors through Jobpath or by community-based, not-for-profit companies operating the Local Employment Service (LES) and Jobs Clubs.

The Indecon Report heralds a reconfiguration of these services in 2020. Whilst preparing to respond to the upcoming changes, Irish Local Development Network’s Marie Price Bolger cautions on the lessons from other sectors that followed a privatisation route,

“The value of community-based, not-for-profit employment services must be protected in any reconfiguration of Public Employment Services. They give an efficient, accessible service to jobseekers, they give transparency and value-for-money to the taxpayer, they give the greatest level of control and agility to the funder, and their track record is endorsed by employers. Whilst all services need to continually adapt to changing circumstances, these key advantages must be safeguarded in any reconfiguration.”

ENDS

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