

# National Youth Assembly of Ireland

## An Overview of 2024



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth

# Introduction

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth established the National Youth Assembly of Ireland in 2022 to meet a commitment from the Programme for Government 2020. The DCEDIY collaborates closely with other government departments on convening Youth Assemblies on specific topics. Recommendations from Assemblies are intended to inform Government policy on areas such as climate, digitalisation, rural development and other issues of importance to young people.

The DCEDIY's National Participation Office (NPO) manages and coordinates the activities of youth participation structures, including the National Youth Assembly of Ireland, Comhairle na nÓg (Youth councils), Dáil na nÓg, the National Executive and other related youth participation initiatives and structures on behalf of the DCEDIY.

The National Youth Assembly of Ireland is based on the approach of participation with purpose, established on the principle of Article 12 of the UNCRC, where children and young people are facilitated to exercise their right to express their views and to have their views given due weight. The structure and proceedings of the National Youth Assembly is based on the Lundy Model of Participation in which children and young people are given:

**Space: Safe, inclusive opportunities to form and express their views**

**Voice: Facilitation to express their views**

**Audience: Their views are listened to**

**Influence: Their views are acted upon, as appropriate**

The National Youth Assembly delegates are nominated from a wide range of organisations, in 2024 we had delegates (sitting and guest) from 78 youth groups, Comhairle na nÓg and community groups. Delegates were involved in much more than Assemblies, a number of delegates were part of Youth Advisory Groups (YAG), invited to a wide range of events, conferences and meetings. Delegates have represented the National Youth Assembly on a local, national and international level





# Meet our Youth Advisory Group



## Our Year

*"The Youth Advisory Group for the Assembly is made up of 14 delegates. The YAG met up for an in-person meeting at DCEDIY in Dublin earlier this year. We discussed what we'd like the Advisory Group to look like and what we'd like our role to be. Amongst many other discussions, we came up with the idea of training days and a communications platform. We worked with the NPO Communications Officer, Sinead and set up an Instagram page and a Linked In profile! The YAG have met up regularly online throughout the year and have worked on a number of initiatives. Our main focus was:*

- Transport - This has been the most raised topic over all assemblies to date.*
- Social Media Presence - When we joined the Assembly the lack of social media presence was noted.*
- Delegate experience - What could make the delegate experience better and what would support new members to the Assembly.*

*In July, the Youth Advisory Group wrote to the Department of Transport to request a National Youth Assembly on Transport. We acknowledged how transportation is a vital aspect of daily life, influencing everything from accessibility to sustainability, and recognised the need for youth voices to be heard on matters concerning transport policy and infrastructure development. We have received confirmation that the first National Youth Assembly on Transport will be happening next year. This assembly will serve as a platform for young people across Ireland to come together and have conversations which could shape the future of transportation in our country. We are really proud of putting this together and cannot wait to see the work that next year's cohort of delegates will do on this important topic."*

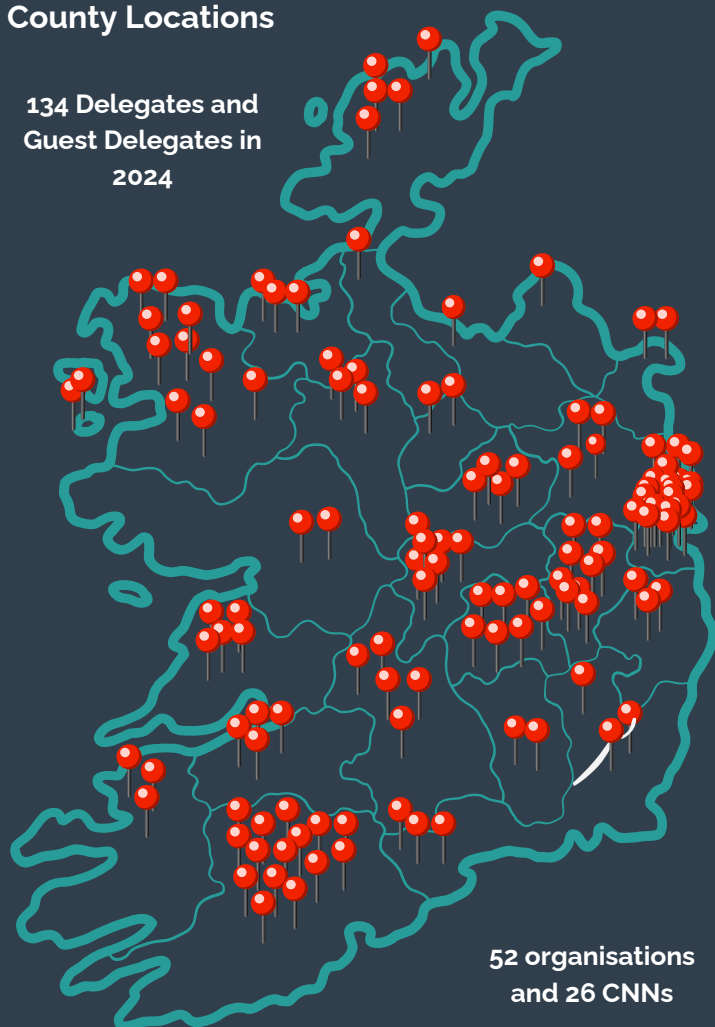
### **National Youth Assembly YAG 23/24**



# National Youth Assembly Delegates and Guest Delegates 2024

## County Locations

134 Delegates and Guest Delegates in 2024



52 organisations and 26 CNNs

## Organisations

- Ashbourne Youthreach
- Ardee Youthreach
- An Taisce Environmental Education
- Amnesty International, Ireland
- An Taisce Climate Action Programme
- An Cosán, Foróige
- Ballyhaunis Family & Community Resource Centre
- Balbriggan Foróige
- Belong To Youth Service
- County Sligo Youth Theatre
- Crumlin Youthreach
- Dunmore Foróige Club
- EIL Intercultural Learning
- Eco UNESCO
- Ecollective - Foróige
- EU Youth Dialogue - Young Voices
- Foróige Reference Panel
- Foróige Club at the Deck
- Foróige Connect
- Foróige Youth Council
- Feach
- Feachtas Balbriggan
- Gaisce Presidents Award
- Girls Friendly Society
- Irish Girl Guides
- Irish Girl Guides, Rathfarnham Senior Branch
- InSync Youth & Family Service
- Irish Second Level Students Union
- Irish Refugee Council
- Jigsaw
- Lus na Greine FRC (LWCYPSC)
- Limerick Clare ETB
- LOETB
- NYCI
- Ógras
- Ombudsman for Children's Office
- Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre
- Roscommon Youth Service
- Sancta Maria College- Reps from Clare Island
- Spunout
- Scouting Ireland
- Tallaght Foróige
- TENI
- TENI Transformers
- TENI Transcend
- The Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- Unity Youth Hub, Silver Arch FRC
- UNICEF
- Whitechurch Older members Foróige Club
- Youth Work Ireland
- YMCA Ireland
- Youth Integration Project
- Carlow Comhairle na nÓg
- Cavan Comhairle na nÓg
- Clare Comhairle na nÓg
- Cork County Comhairle na nÓg
- Cork City Comhairle na nÓg
- Donegal Comhairle na nÓg
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Comhairle na nÓg
- Fingal Comhairle na nÓg
- Kerry Comhairle na nÓg
- Kilkenny Comhairle na nÓg
- Kildare Comhairle na nÓg
- Laois Comhairle na nÓg
- Leitrim Comhairle na nÓg
- Limerick Comhairle na nÓg
- Louth Comhairle na nÓg
- Longford Comhairle na nÓg
- Mayo Comhairle na nÓg
- Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg
- Meath Comhairle na nÓg
- Offaly Comhairle na nÓg
- Roscommon Comhairle na nÓg
- South Dublin Comhairle na nÓg
- Sligo Comhairle na nÓg
- Tipperary Comhairle na nÓg
- Waterford Comhairle na nÓg
- Wexford Comhairle na nÓg



# National Youth Assembly on Climate 2024

The National Youth Assembly on Climate 2024 convened on Thursday 11th April 2024, from 11am to 4pm. 67 youth delegates (aged 12 to 24) from across Ireland gathered at the DCEDIY offices, Miesian Plaza, Baggot Street, Dublin 2. The Assembly was opened by members of the Youth Advisory Group and a pre-recorded video welcome from Minister for the Department of the Environment, Climate, and Communications was shown to the assembly. Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth of Ireland, Roderic O'Gorman also addressed the Assembly during this opening.

An interactive workshop took place in groups that included discussion about who could be engaged in climate action, how to engage people, and the challenges to engagement on climate issues. Delegates then created pen pictures of three types of individuals – those not engaged in climate action, those somewhat engaged with climate action and those very engaged with climate action. The delegates then took part in a World Café session which explored what the Government needs to do to engage the public on climate action. Following this session the Assembly reviewed the recommendations made during the World Café and voted on recommendations to Government. Delegates from the Assembly presented their draft recommendations to Dr. Robert Mooney (DECC) who then addressed the Assembly. Closing remarks were provided by the Youth Advisory Group. United Nations Youth Delegate for Ireland Mohammad Naeem attended the assembly as an independent observer to ensure that it was facilitated according to best practice in terms of youth participation.

On May 2nd 2024, following the confirmation of the delegates recommendations, an interactive webinar attended by Minister Ryan was convened. At this event, delegates presented the assembly's recommendations directly to Minister Ryan. Following the presentation of recommendations Mr. Ryan and key policy stakeholders across DECC, DCEDIY and the Department of Education responded with their views on the recommendations. At the end of the webinar, Minister Ryan opened the forum to a range of questions from delegates.





# National Youth Assembly on Climate 2024



## National Youth Assembly on Climate 2024 RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Youth Assembly on Climate represents a delivery of the commitment under the Programme for Government and constitutes the medium through which young people can guide the direction of the National Climate Action Plan through the National Dialogue on Climate Action.

The third annual National Youth Assembly on Climate took place on the 11th April 2024. 67 youth delegates aged 12-24 from across Ireland attended, representing youth organisations, Comhairle na nÓg (Youth Councils) and other interested organisations. The delegates attended a preparation session in advance of the Assembly and then took part in a day of discussions. They have produced nine key recommendations for the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications and The Government to consider. These are outlined below.



### Education

The Government should make sure that **everyone has access** to the same services and information about **climate change**. Climate change, sustainability and climate action should be **actively taught** in CSPE classes.



### Engagement

The Government should provide opportunities for those who are engaged in **climate action** to have an influence at a decision making level. All people should have an **equal voice** in decisions. In order to keep people engaged in Climate action there should be initiatives, careers and **reward systems** in place.



The Government should provide easily accessible **funding** given through youth organisations and NGOs for local youth-led climate initiatives.



The Government should publish accurate and relevant **information** about Climate Change and the **real people** being affected by it.



Involve local **stakeholders** in the process of developing programmes and initiatives in their area that address their **climate needs** e.g. tidy town committees



Introduce less taxation on **eco-friendly items** or more taxation on non-eco friendly items.



### Transport

Improve transport in Ireland:

Introduce a universal, nationwide **travel card** that works like a leap card, which covers the whole island and all forms of transport.



Prioritise more money and investment into **public transport** e.g. from infrastructure, climate and Nature fund bill.



Improve accessibility of public transport to **people of all backgrounds**, needs and abilities e.g. more systems like quiet buses.



Invest in more **electric power** and EV within the public transport system.



Improve bus timetables, availability and **rail infrastructure**, with a focus on rural and smaller towns, and standardise pricing countryside on buses.



The Government should provide **accessible grants** for first time car buyers on eco-friendly cars. The cost of driving lessons should be reduced.



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

## Meet the Delegates

# Aisling Maloney

**Nominating Organisation:  
Youth Work Ireland**



### **Why did you join the Assembly?**

I heard about the Assembly from friends who were delegates last year. I loved the idea of having a group of young people from different backgrounds come together to discuss important topics over a fixed term, so I wanted to get involved and have my voice heard as well.

### **What was your favourite thing about being part of the Assembly?**

I really loved getting the opportunity to present our recommendations to the relevant Government Ministers. Not many people get those kind of opportunities, so it was incredible to be in those spaces and have those conversations

### **What advice would you give a new delegate?**

Take every opportunity that comes your way. The time goes by so quickly, so use every moment you have. You never know where it might lead!

### **Is there anything else you would like to share?**

I'm so incredibly grateful to the National Participation Office, DCEDIY and other departments which were involved in the planning and running of the different assemblies. You helped make our voices heard.



# National Youth Assembly on Gender Equality 2024

The National Youth Assembly on Gender Equality convened on Wednesday, 25th September 2024 from 10am-4pm at the Decorative Arts and History Museum, Collins Barracks, Dublin. This assembly, jointly organised by the DCEDIY and a Youth Advisory Group, gathered 45 young delegates from rural and urban regions across Ireland to address ongoing issues of gender inequality. The assembly was specifically designed to provide young people with an opportunity to discuss how gender inequality affects their lives, explore solutions, and make recommendations that could be integrated into national policy. Attendees represented a wide range of geographic, socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds, ensuring that a diverse range of experiences were captured in the consultation.

The Assembly was opened by members of the Youth Advisory Group and Minister Roderic O’Gorman received the recommendations and closed the Assembly. The delegates engaged in multiple rounds of group work, where they discussed barriers to equality, proposed solutions, and formulated final recommendations. The first activity of the assembly was a moving debate. This activity aimed to spark conversation by asking delegates to respond to five statements designed to explore common stereotypes and assumptions about gender equality. Next delegates mapped out their views of gender equality across different stages of life, ranging from childhood to early adulthood. They used the following age ranges to frame their discussion: 4 to 12 years; 13 to 16 years; 17 to 20 years and 21 to 24 years. The final set of activities involved categorising issues into key themes and then discussing these themes in depth through a carousel format. Delegates rotated through stations that focused on the following six themes:

- 1. Women in leadership, politics, and jobs**
- 2. Sport and leisure**
- 3. Health**
- 4. Language and stereotyping**
- 5. Gender-based violence**
- 6. Education**

Each station included discussions on why these issues exist and what potential solutions could be implemented to create meaningful change. Delegates produced a series of actionable recommendations, which were later reviewed and voted on. These recommendations will form a central part of the strategy to be presented to the government.

An Infographic and a report from the Assembly will be available in early 2025.





# Meet the Delegates

## MJ

**Nominating Organisation:  
Youthreach, Ashbourne**



### **Why did you join the Assembly?**

I heard about the assembly during my time attending Youthreach and I put myself forward because I felt this was a good opportunity to have my voice heard, and also to uplift the voices of other people I knew who don't have the courage or strength to speak for themselves.

### **What was your favourite thing about being part of the Assembly?**

Being able to speak to people from all across the country with a wide variety of viewpoints and life experience, and being able to come together and come up with ideas and solutions to problems we all face in spite of our differences.

### **What advice would you give a new delegate?**

Don't be afraid to participate and speak up if you have something to say, even if it's small. People are nicer than you think, and every voice matters.

### **Is there anything else you would like to share?**

I could not have asked for a more friendly and welcoming environment. I struggle a lot with anxiety and large groups of people, but each assembly I was treated with so much respect and compassion that I was able to break out of my shell, even if just for the duration of the assembly, to share my views and work with others. There were also a lot of wonderful opportunities shared while I was on the assembly, and if I had the confidence earlier on, I would have gone for them.

# National Rural Youth Assembly 2024

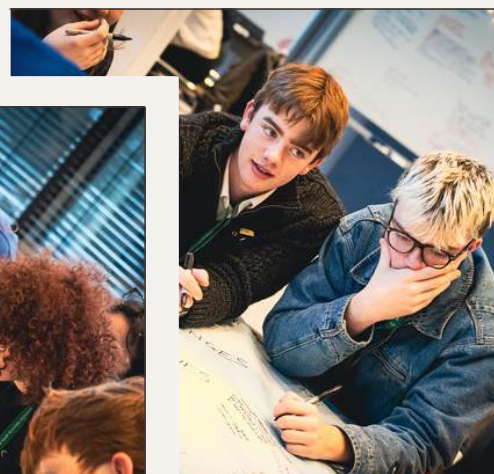
The National Rural Youth Assembly convened on Wednesday, 27th November 2024 from 10am-4pm at Miesian Plaza, Dublin. This assembly, jointly organised by the Department of Rural and Community Development, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the National Youth Assemblies Rural Youth Advisory Group, gathered 50 youth delegates from rural and urban regions across Ireland to address ongoing issues for rural young people. The assembly was specifically designed to provide young people with an opportunity to discuss how rural issues affects their lives, explore solutions, and make recommendations that could be integrated into national policy. Attendees represented a wide range of geographic, socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds, ensuring that a diverse range of experiences were captured in the consultation.

The delegates and Youth Advisory Group identified a list of themes in advance of the Assembly. These were voted on by the delegates and the top theme selected was 'Learning in Rural Ireland'. The department of Rural and Community Development selected the theme of 'Living and Working in Rural Ireland'.

Twelve recommendations were created under these themes and presented to the Department of Rural and Community Development.

An infographic of recommendations and a report will be shared in early 2025.

**Watch a short video of the Rural Youth Assembly [HERE](#)**





# Representatives on Forums and Advisory Groups

Throughout the year delegates from the National Youth Assembly are invited to sit on various external forums and advisory groups. These are voluntary positions and the delegates are supported by Assembly staff to attend these. The contributions to the various forums and advisory groups by the delegates have ensured that young people have a voice in different areas that affect them and their peers.

## Young Ireland Advisory Council

Young Ireland is the new policy framework for children and young people, published in November 2023. It envisages an Ireland in which all children and young people have their rights realised. Young Ireland is focused on tackling the biggest challenges that affect children and young people in Ireland today. The Young Ireland Advisory Council will give independent advice and support on policies that affect children and young people. Its members include members of civil society and independent experts, with experience of the issues that Young Ireland is trying to address, through their work, their lived experience or both.

The Advisory Council is made up of 16 members including three members from the National Youth Assembly of Ireland. Mateusz, AJ and Marwa are the nominated delegates who will sit on the Advisory Council going forward. They will link in with the rest of the Assembly delegates over the next two years.



## Online Health Taskforce

On 4 September 2024, the Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly established an Online Health Taskforce to develop a public health response to harms caused to children and young people by certain types of online activity. The Taskforce is being chaired by children's rights advocate Jillian van Turnhout. It has been set up in recognition of a growing body of evidence from Ireland and internationally, showing the link between online activity and physical and mental health harm including anxiety, sleep deprivation, eating disorders, self-harm and suicide ideation.

The National Youth Assembly were invited to nominate two delegates to be part of this taskforce. Brianna and Donnacha have taken on this role and will sit on the taskforce until the report is delivered. They will liaise between the taskforce and the Assembly. An Assembly will be held on the topic of this taskforce in 2025 and Brianna and Donnacha will be key advisors on convening this Assembly.



# Delegates representing on forums and advisory groups

## Road Safety Authority - Youth Forum



Katy and Daniel joined a number of other young people aged 12-25 from across Ireland on the Road Safety Authorities Youth Forum. The forum aims to start a conversation and provide a safe space for young people to discuss their common road safety concerns.

## Education for Sustainable Development Youth Advisory Group

This year six members of the National Youth Assembly joined a number of other young people from Comhairle na nÓg who formed a Youth Advisory Panel for the Ninth National Forum on Education for Sustainable Development Forum. Naomhán, Alana, Aifric, Aodhán, Stuart and Ash sat on the YAP and this was a year long commitment for the delegates. They worked with the organisers of the event to organise an intergenerational panel discussion on ESD led by Professor Laura Lundy.



*"I was part of the YAG of the ESD forum. It was a great experience that focused on the sustainable development goals and how they should be implemented beyond traditional education"*

**Stuart - Assembly Delegate**



# Meet the Delegates

## Olivia

**Nominating Organisation:**  
**InSync Youth & Family Support**



### **Why did you join the Assembly?**

I heard about the assembly through Kildare Comhairle na nÓg. They had explained a bit about how they were a safe space for young people to voice issues, and to feed back into the government. I knew right away I wanted to take part in this, as it had had been something I was so interested in.

### **What was your favourite thing about being part of the Assembly?**

This one is a hard one. Definitely between interviewing Roderic O Gorman, all of the friends I made. When we had smaller meetings online and in person, you become so much closer with the people. The amount of memories i've made with some of the people are ones i'll cherish forever.

### **What advice would you give a new delegate?**

Please please please take full advantage of the opportunities you are given. Being part of the Assembly is one of my proudest achievements, and is one I will never forget. Don't be afraid to voice what you think, don't be afraid to talk to the people you don't know, don't be afraid to stand in front of a room and talk, and most definitely, don't think your idea is ever ever stupid.

### **Is there anything else you would like to share?**

You are going to grow so much as a person from the Assembly. I started the Assembly thinking I had really silly ideas, thinking I was alone with them, when in reality, it's the opposite. You are going to gain so much confidence by speaking about these things, and by not being afraid. Please enjoy every single moment!

# Events attended by Delegates in 2024

Throughout the year delegates are invited to attend and take part in many different, events, committees and conferences. All opportunities are shared with the delegates, they voluntarily put themselves forward and a random selection takes place. The delegates commit to this as an additional extra on top of their Assembly duties and are supported in their roles by the Assembly staff.

## An Introduction to Children and young people's participation in decision making workshop

In June of this year Hub na nÓg and the National Participation Office jointly planned and delivered four two hour workshops. As part of the workshop two delegates from the National Youth Assembly Alanna and Jack presented on their experiences of participation in decision making and their membership of the Assembly.



## National Climate Stakeholder Forum

On the 28th February, 3 members of the Youth Assembly attended the 5th National Climate Stakeholder Forum. Rocarya, Jack and Molly were active participants at the event which took place in the Convention Centre in Dublin. On the day there were many presentations from both Government and Non Government Organisations talking about progress and projects in Climate Action. One presentation talked about Irish attitudes and beliefs around Climate Change. The Climate Change in the Irish Mind 2023 report was very interesting and the delegates at the upcoming National Youth Assembly on Climate will be discussing the importance of engaging with people on this topic



## Youth At the Table Event



Six representatives from the Assembly attended the 'Youth at the Table: Youth Engagement and Dialogues Shaping Public Policy' event hosted by the Dutch Embassy on the 30th October. MJ, Mateusz, Jace, Alana, Marwa and Roisin heard from Irish and Dutch youth representatives and discussed issues facing young people on a national, european and global basis.



# National Sustainable Mobility Forum - Portlaoise

*'On the 23rd of May, Jack, Aisling and I attended the National Sustainability Mobility Forum in Portlaoise. The event kicked off about nine o'clock where we were treated to a panel discussion on the new Sustainable Mobility Framework. After a quick break, Aisling and I presented along with three other youth delegates about what the future of sustainable transport looks like from our perspective. We did a Newsflash style presentation to give both a utopian and dystopian world looks like depending on what decisions we make over the coming years. Following on from the successful presentation we then sat on a panel to answer audience questions where we were delighted to welcome questions from many of the participants present, the Minister along with other key figures in the National Transport Authority, advocacy groups and non-for-profits engaged in this discussion. I was especially happy to meet my local councillor and exchange viewpoints about my local area. To wrap the day up there was a final discussion from experts in areas of infrastructure, management and from people doing the on the ground work about what we need to be focusing on at the moment. It was altogether a highly rewarding experience and I can't wait to see some of our contributions being published in the report coming out soon.'*

**Caoimhe - Assembly Delegate**



*"The National Sustainable Mobility Forum was particularly meaningful for me as it addressed urgent issues in transport policy. The sessions highlighted the need for accessible, inclusive, and community-driven transport systems. I was especially inspired by the youth session, where we advocated for rapid implementation of sustainable transport projects and raised critical issues such as safety and accessibility. The live illustrations added an engaging and creative dimension to the forum, making it a standout event. Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan took the time to chat to us afterwards, making our voices feel heard by the decision-makers."*

**Aisling - Assembly Delegate**



# National Economic Dialogue - Dublin Castle

The National Economic Dialogue is the principal institutional forum for public consultation and discussion on the Budget. This annual stakeholder engagement event is hosted jointly by the Department of Finance and the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform. The Dialogue provides a deliberative forum for stakeholders to participate in an open and inclusive exchange on the competing economic and social priorities facing the government. The National Youth Assembly were delighted to receive six invite to the National Economic Dialogue. Seanán, Sarah, Natasha, Ash, Jack and Roisin attended on the 27th May in Dublin Castle



*"The NED was a really interesting event to attend. The overarching theme of the event was 'A more shock prone world: challenges and opportunities for Ireland'. An Taoiseach Simon Harris made the opening address. He told those in attendance that Ireland has a record number of people at work. Pascal Donohue, Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, stated that the dialogue is a really important stage in the budget process. We are in a more shock prone world and our economy needs to be strong so we can tackle any challenges. He said its not just why we are spending money, its how we're spending it and what we are spending it on. I really enjoyed the day and was delighted to get the opportunity to meet some of the government politicians at the event"*

**Sarah - Assembly Delegate**

*"It was a privilege to be one of six young people from the National Youth Assembly to be invited to the event. This dialogue shapes Budget 2025 and informs public expenditure for the future in Ireland. To quote An Taoiseach in his opening address - 'We will make Ireland the best country to be a child' I can confidently say that the interests and voices of young people in Ireland were heavily considered by the Taoiseach Simon Harris, the Minister for the Environment Eamon Ryan and the Minister for Public Expenditure Paschal Donohoe. A special recognition to An Taoiseach's encouraging words about migration and the economic benefit migrants bring to this nation. I look forward to seeing the effects of our contributions at the Dialogue reflected in the Budget for 2025."*

**Natasha - Assembly Delegate**

*"I really enjoyed my time at the national economic dialogue 2024. The group I was apart of was focusing on the topic of building for the future. I was interested in this because I am looking into a career on this topic. We talked about the housing crisis, inflation, student accommodation and more. We also met the Taoiseach, the minister for public expenditure and the minister for climate and transport Eamon Ryan. We listened to different organisations talk about their purposes and what they'd like to see in the budget 2025"*

**Jack - Assembly Delegate**

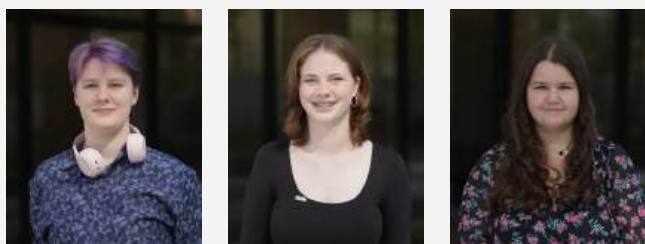


# Roscommon Rural Youth Assembly

In September the National Youth Assembly were delighted to be invited to speak at the Roscommon Rural Youth Assembly which took place in Kilbride Community Centre. Abby, a delegate with the Assembly presented to the young people and adults present about the work of the National Youth Assembly and of the annual Rural Youth Assembly. She shared some of the common challenges for rural youth as well as the positive aspect of living in a rural community.



# Youth Homeless Strategy Youth Advisory Group



Three delegates, MJ, Maebh and Aisling from the Assembly joined other young people to form a Youth Advisory Group for the Youth Homeless Strategy. This YAG were formed by the National Participation Office, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. This YAG worked to guide the development of a consultation for the Youth Homeless Strategy with a particular focus on LGBTI+ young people.

# National Human Rights Commission Conference - Taiwan

The Assembly were delighted to continue their relationship with Taiwan in 2024. We received an invitation from the National Human Rights Commission in Taiwan to present at their conference in August. Three members prepared and recorded two presentations on the National Youth Assembly of Ireland. The first shared the background of the Assembly and where the Assembly has influence. The second looked at the processes used and where the recommendations are shared. Well done to Aisling, Alfie and Caoimhe for all their hard work on this project.





# Delegate Day

The National Youth Assembly YAG held a Delegate Day in July. This was an opportunity for delegates to get to know each other outside of a busy Assembly day. It also provided an opportunity for the delegates to raise topics they felt passionate about and discuss these. The YAG also invited a number of people to take part in a Human Library. Dr Niall Muldoon the Ombudsman for Children, Vivienne Parry head of Advocacy and Child Rights with UNICEF, David Kavanagh Jigsaws Youth Voice Engagement Manager and Aidan O'Hara, Civil Servant engaged with the delegates and answered lots of questions.

## Human Library



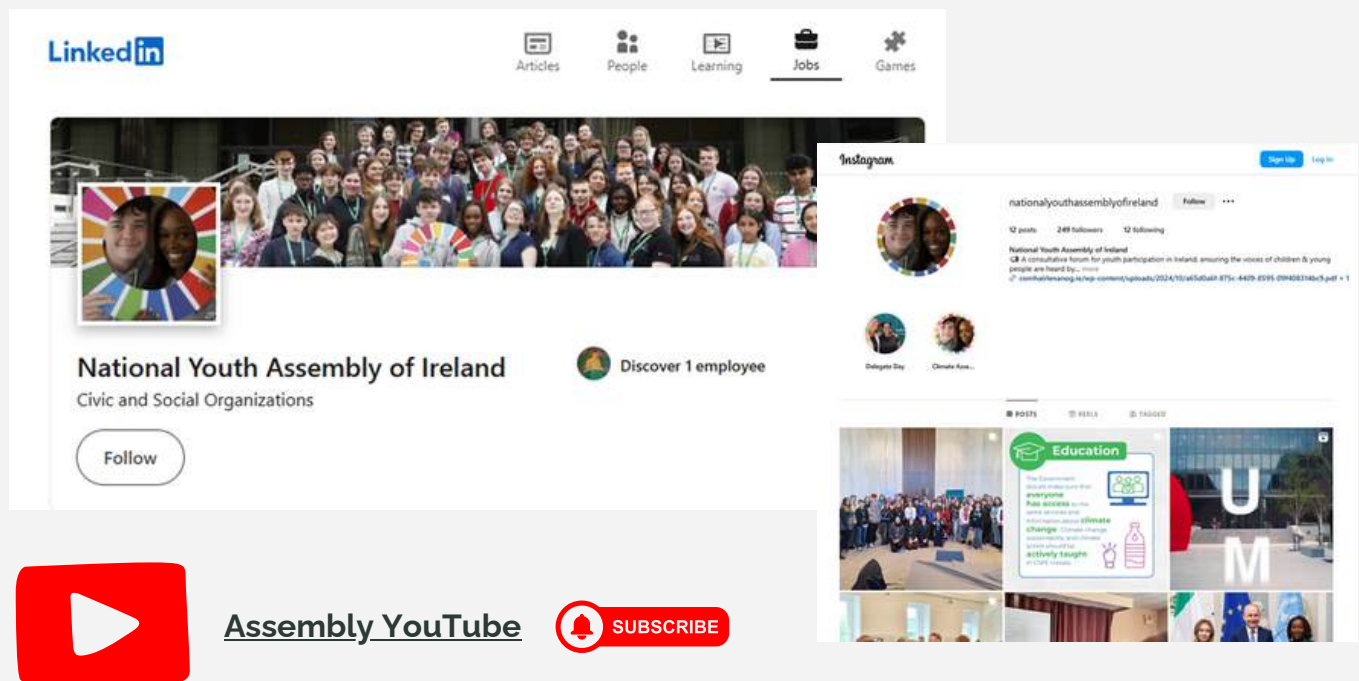
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# Social Media

At the beginning of 2024 the Youth Advisory Group made it a priority to establish a social media presence for the National Youth Assembly. The group worked closely with our communications person to launch a new Instagram page and a LinkedIn profile. These have been steadily growing throughout the year and the aim is to increase our following next year!

At Delegate days and at Assemblies delegates form a social media team themselves where they plan and manage creating content on the day.



# Meet the Delegates

## Eoin

**Nominating Organisation:**  
**Mayo Comhairle na nÓg**



**Why did you join the Assembly?**

I first heard about the Assembly through a friend in my local Comhairle na nÓg who had participated in a few sessions. Their experience really inspired me, and it sparked my interest in joining. I was really eager to use my voice to contribute and help shape recommendations that can reach the government.

**What was your favourite thing about being part of the Assembly?**

Meeting new friends and all the opportunities you get out of it

**What advice would you give a new delegate?**

Go for any opportunity that interests you, you never know how far it might take you!

**Is there anything else you would like to share?**

I've never once regretted signing up for the Assembly. The experience, friendships, and opportunities it has given me have led to some amazing moments, and I'm incredibly grateful for it all!



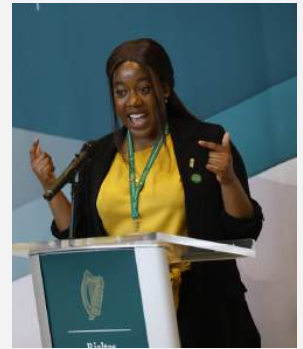
# Assembly Youth Advisory Groups

The role of the Youth Advisory Groups or YAGs cannot be underestimated in success of the National Youth Assembly of Ireland.

There have been four YAGs this year. These meetings take place online in the late evenings once the delegates are home from school, college or work. There is a strong level of commitment from the young people to attend these meetings with competing priorities of school work, college work and even just getting their dinner!

However alongside lots of work, the YAGs are a great opportunity for the delegates to get to know each other.

- **National Youth Assembly YAG:** This YAG is an oversight group for the Assembly as a whole. They review the Assemblies together to identify gaps and best practices. This YAG can identify areas that they wish to progress based on their knowledge and previous evaluations from past Assemblies. This YAG meet regularly with the Play and Participation Unit of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.
- **Climate YAG:** This group worked on the planning and preparation for the National Youth Assembly on Climate. The delegates met with representatives from the Department of Environment, Climate and Communication at the beginning of the year and alongside Assembly staff assisted with the planning of the Assembly, including identifying guest speakers, testing methodologies and hosting the Preparation Session and the Assembly itself.
- **Gender Equality YAG:** The Gender Equality YAG convened in early 2024 to assist with the planning of the first National Youth Assembly on Gender Equality. This Assembly was different in that Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth wanted to hear from the delegates in order to inform the successor strategy to the Strategy for Women and Girls. The Assembly would identify themes on this topic which were of most importance to young people. This YAG worked a lot on deciding which methodologies would work for this purpose.
- **Rural YAG:** The final YAG of the year was the Rural Youth Advisory Group. This YAG worked on identifying a theme for this years Assembly along with the Department of Rural and Community Development. There was a priority in accessing rural youth voices for this Assembly and the YAG worked with Assembly staff on the best processes to use to ensure these young people were identified.



# Assembly Preparation Sessions

Each Assembly begins a few weeks in advance with an online preparation session. At this meeting the delegates hear from guest experts on the themes and topics which are up for discussion.

The Assembly team would like to extend a sincere thank you to all our guest speakers this year.



National Youth Assembly on Climate Preparation Session - Lisa Fingleton 9th March 2024





## Meet the Delegates

# Catriona

## Young Voices EU Youth Dialogue



*Hello everyone, my name is Catriona and over the past year I have been given the amazing opportunity to be apart of the National Youth Assembly as a representative of Young Voices – EU Youth Dialogue. I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about what this has meant for me. As we all know the National Youth Assembly organises meetings and events where young people are given the opportunity to speak about important issues, work on projects, speak to politicians and more. Young Voices does similar work, the only real difference being that they do it at a European level as well as a national one. Getting to be apart of the NYA meant that I was able to hear the opinions of more young people, by passing on this information to Young Voices some of this information could be used at a European level, therefore amplifying the voices of young Irish people even more. Many of the topics discussed as NYA assemblies have been very similar to those discussed by the Young Voices. For example, this year there has been lots of conversations surrounding homelessness and youth homelessness in both spaces. As well as assemblies and meetings also in both spaces around the topic of transportation and lack of facilities for public transportation. Being a part of both the NYA and young voices has given me so many wonderful opportunities this year.*

*My personal favourite NYA moment was actually our first welcome meeting over a year ago now. Getting to speak to everyone about what Young Voices is and the opportunities it brings, as well as meeting so many new enthusiastic young people all in one room was fantastic. The Young Voices have also provided me with so many incredible opportunities to engage with young people from all across Europe and hear about the work they are doing to inspire change. Most recently this April I was given the chance to attend the LevelUp! Conference in Belgium. This was a three-day conference where we learned important skills such as leadership, public speaking, advocacy and more. It was a truly incredible experience where I learned so many new skills. The EU Youth Dialogue (Young Voices) is beginning a new cycle in January. The theme of this new cycle is Connecting EU with Youth. The focus of this cycle will be all about getting young people involved in the EU in a meaningful way. It will also touch on other elements such as increasing the budget and impact of EU youth programmes. If any NYA member (past or present) would like to have their voice heard on a European level, please come along to our next Young Voices events, watch out for the calls on [Young Voices - National Youth Council of Ireland](#) or sign up to the [Clar newsletter](#) on [Home - National Youth Council of Ireland](#), we would love to have you all!*

**Catriona, Youth Assembly Delegate**





# Assembly in Numbers

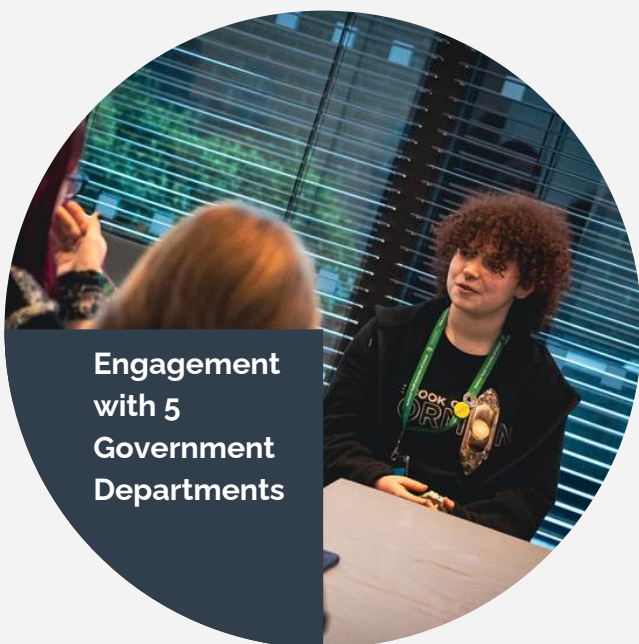
134 Delegates  
and Guest  
Delegates



33 Youth  
Advisory  
Group  
Meetings



Engagement  
with 5  
Government  
Departments



3 Assemblies plus  
Prep sessions,  
Evaluation and  
Review sessions



Countless  
laughs and  
selfies!



# 2025 Plans

The National Youth Assembly of Ireland has a busy 2025 planned. A call out for new delegates will open on the 6th of January for three weeks, closing on the 27th January. Please find more details [HERE](#).

As well as welcoming our new cohort of delegates we are planning to host four Assemblies in 2025 including our two annual Assemblies on Climate and Rural Issues and two new Assemblies on the topics of Online Health and Transport.

Our delegates will continue to sit on advisory groups and taskforces and attend conferences and events as the year progresses.

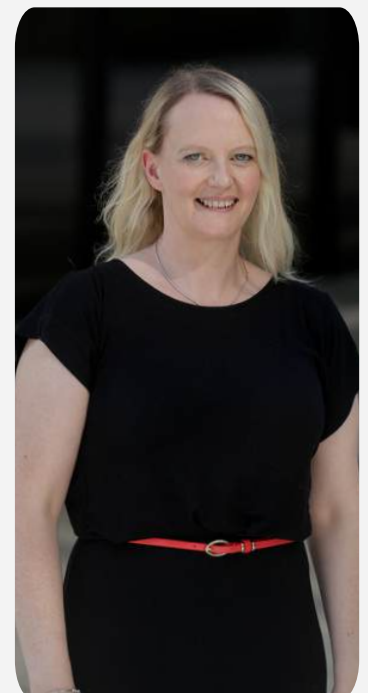


***"The Participation, Play and Recreation Unit would like to congratulate delegates on all their achievements in 2024, and on their entire term with the National Youth Assembly. We wish the current delegates well in their future endeavours and we look forward to seeing how the next set of delegates build on great work that has already been carried out"***

*As 2024 draws to a close it is a good time to pause and reflect on the year that the National Youth Assembly had. It has been a very successful twelve months, mainly due to the dedication and hard work by all the delegates, both sitting delegates and guest delegates. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with you all and I would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of the young people who have given their time and energy over the year, often going above all expectations with their goal of ensuring young people's voices are heard and listened to in decision-making processes.*

*I thank the parents and guardians who have supported the delegates in their attendance at online meetings and in-person Assemblies. I do not underestimate the challenges that this can involve and we are very grateful for your ongoing support. I would also like to thank the nominating organisations for their support throughout the year and I look forward to continuing to engage with you all in 2025.*

**Stephaine**  
**Senior Youth Participation Officer**  
**National Youth Assembly of Ireland**



# National Youth Assembly of Ireland

## An Overview of 2024



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth