Donegal
Youth Service
Youth Work Ireland

Annual Report

2024

Youth Work Ireland

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DYS in Numbers

2024

19136
Young People Engaged

32
Youth Clubs

416
Volunteers

1097
Young People Trained

216
Adults Trained

2094
One To One Hours

Mission Vision & Guiding Principles

Vision

"A society where every young person is safe, fulfilled and reaching their full potential."

Mission

"To engage young people in a process of learning and development where they are valued and supported to be the best they can be."

Guiding Principles

Donegal Youth Service ...

1. Works to the guiding principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
2. Creates youth friendly services, keeping voluntary engagement at the core of what we do.
3. Keeps young people and the adult volunteers that support them central to the work we do.
4. Treats young people with respect, dignity, empathy and unconditional positive regard.
5. Builds and maintains partnerships that address the needs of young people.
6. Provides an accessible, inclusive and integrated service.
7. Continues to develop supportive relationships that nurture meaningful engagements and outcomes for young people.
8. Values flexibility, innovation, creativity and supportive learning environments.
9. Advocates on issues that impact on the lives of young people.
10. Adopts best practice, gathering data and critically reflecting on our work.

CEO & Chairperson Address

Lorraine Thompson & Marina Carlin

Joint CEO and Chairperson Report - 2024

2024 was a year of ambition, resilience, and renewal for Donegal Youth Service (DYS). As we reflect on the past twelve months, we are proud to highlight the tireless work of our team, the creativity and courage of the young people we serve, and the deepened partnerships that continue to support our shared vision.

Over 18,000 young people engaged with DYS this year across more than 17 projects countywide. From community-based youth clubs and drop-ins to targeted interventions for early school leavers, LGBTQ+ youth, and young people affected by trauma or marginalisation, DYS delivered meaningful, high-quality youth work rooted in care, innovation and inclusion. Our staff and volunteers worked across evenings and weekends, in schools, clubs, hubs, and homes - wherever young people needed them most.

Key highlights of the year included the annual Party in the Park, our largest drug and alcohol-free family festival, which drew over 2,500 people. Our international collaborations flourished with Erasmus+ exchanges, Atlantic Area projects like ATLIC, and the launch of PEACEPLUS programmes such as OUR Generation and Youthscape+. Locally, new clubs emerged, mural projects transformed towns, and young people took centre stage—whether performing at the Irish Youth Music Awards or co-creating resources on internet safety and civic engagement.

Mental health remained a central focus, with Youth Talk CBT and one-to-one supports reaching hundreds of young people facing anxiety, trauma, and social exclusion. We are also proud of our progress in addressing inequality, from our Traveller and Ukrainian youth supports to the success of initiatives like Elevate55, Daybreak, BreakOuT, and Youthscape+.

This impact would not be possible without our committed team of staff, volunteers, and partners. In 2024, over 120 adult volunteers contributed their time and energy, while our staff benefited from clinical supervision and professional development. Governance and safeguarding remained strong, with continued compliance and training at all levels of the organisation.

Looking ahead, we are energised by what lies before us. The upcoming launch of the IGNITE Community programme, further expansion of youth projects and youth supports, and growing cross-border collaboration reflect our commitment to innovation and inclusion.

In closing, we offer our sincere thanks to the funders, partners, families, and most of all, the young people who make Donegal Youth Service what it is: a safe, inspiring and empowering place for youth.

Lorraine Thompson CEO

Marina Carlin: Chairperson

Board of Directors

2024

Chairperson: Marina Carlin
Vice Chairperson: Stephen O'Donnell
Secretary: Ciaran Maguire
Treasurer: Aoife Louise McCullagh
Tussie McFadden
Suzi Roarty
Behinn Mullins
Shaun Dorrian
Frank Dooley
Maire Donnelly
Davin Crawford

DYS BOD Attendance 2024

MC: Marina Carlin; CM: Ciaran Maguire, SOD Stephen O'Donnell; TMCF:Tussie McFaddan,SR: Suzi Roary, BM:Bebhinn Mullins, SD: Shaun Dorrian, FD; Frank Dooley, AMCC;Aoife McCullagh, MD; Maire Donnelly DC; Davin Crawford

JANUARY NO QUORUM NO MEETING
*SEPTEMBER AGM
*AUGUST NO MEETING

*	Present
A	Apologies
X	Absent
L	Left
M	Maternity
/	No Meeting

DYS BOD ATTENDANCE 2024

Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	*May	June	July	*Sept	Oct	Dec	Nov AGM
MC	/	*	*	*	*	*	A	*	*	*	*
CM	/	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	*
SOD	/	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
TMCF	/	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SR	/	A	*	*	*	*	A	*	*	*	*
BM	/	A	*	*	*	A	A	A	*	A	*
SD	/	A	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
FD	/	A	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
AMcC	/	A	A	*	*	M	M	M	M	M	M
MD	/	/	A	*	*	*	*	*	A	*	*
DC	/	/	/	/	/	/	*	*	A	*	*

DYS Staff

Donegal Youth Service
Youth Work Ireland

Lorraine Thompson
Regional Director

Charlene Logue
Outreach Manager

Gareth Gibson
Information Manager

Frankie McGreevy
OG Manager

Maria Crossan
Finance Manager

Lee Stephenson
CE Supervisior

Michelle Sweeney
Administrator

Dominic McGlinchey
Youth Worker

Sinead Murray-Lynch
Youth Worker

Laura Byrne
Youth Worker

Pauric Bell
Youth Worker

Ruairí Campbell
Youth Worker

Aideen Shiels
Administrator

Elaine Begley
Youth Worker

Megan Rushe
Youth Worker

Bernie Cunningham
Youth Worker

Karolina Olchowska
Youth Worker

Darrell Law
Youth Worker

Shauna Spence
Youth Worker

Billy Banda
Youth Worker

Katarzyna Kurzeja
Youth Information Officer

Eve King
Youth Worker

Pearl Johnston
Youth Worker

Fadl Mustapha
Youth Worker

Yvonne Tilley
Youth Worker

Mark Reader
Youth Worker

Adrian Begley
Youth Worker

Michelle Wylam
Youth Worker

Helen SImms
Youth Worker

Jackie Ferry
Youth Worker

Sean McCluskey
Youth Worker

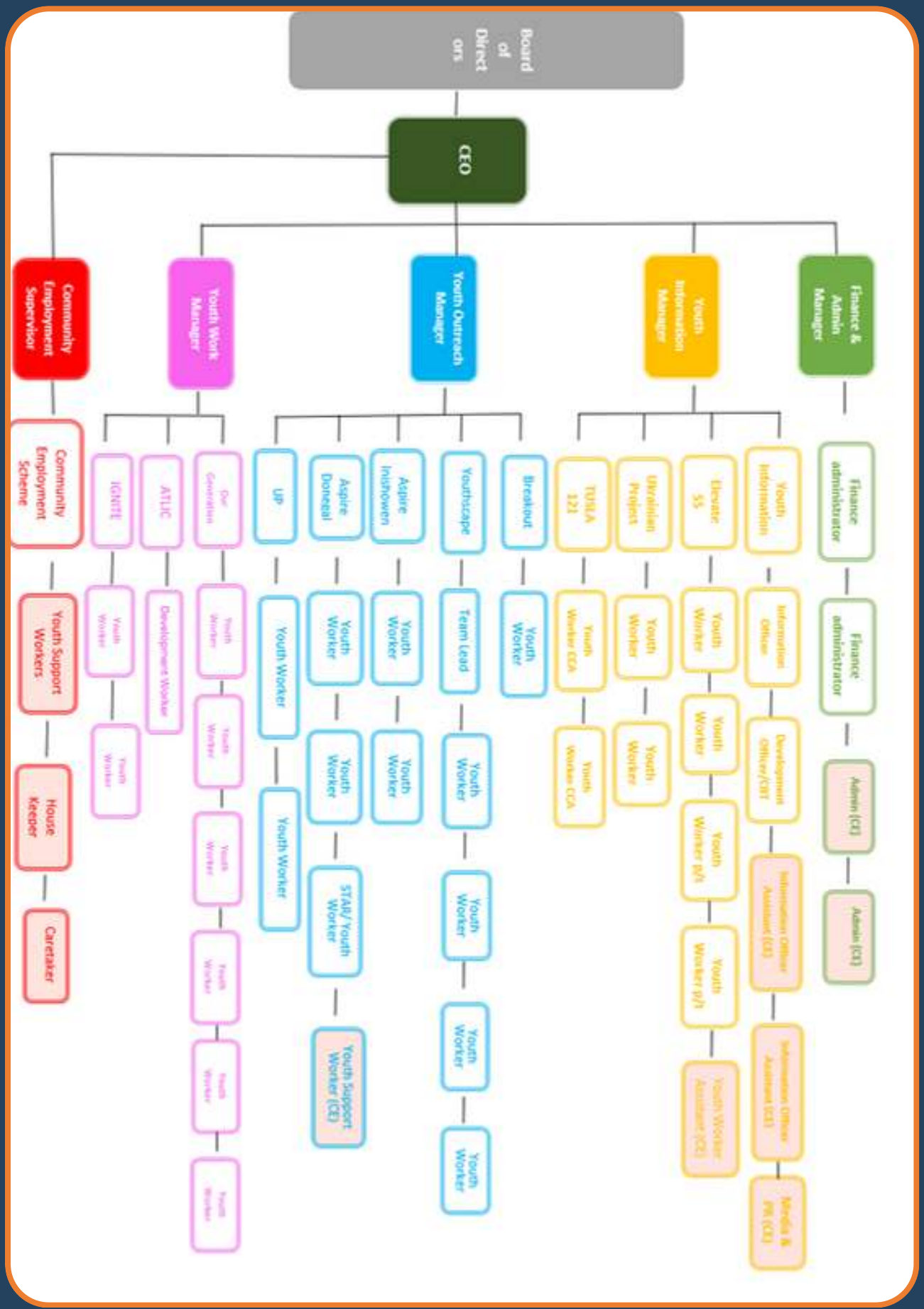
Lauren Waters
Youth Worker

Áine Bogle
Youth Worker

Conor Malone
Youth Worker

Polina Pakhomova
Youth Worker

Organogram


Board of Directors
CEO
Finance & Admin Manager
Youth Information Manager
Youth Outreach Manager
Youth Work Manager
Community Employment Supervisor
Finance administrator
Finance administrator
Admin (CE)
Admin (CE)
Youth Information
Information Officer
Development Officer/CBT
Information Officer Assistant (CE)
Information Officer Assistant (CE)
Media & PR (CE)
Elevate 55
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
Youth Worker p/t
Youth Worker p/t
Youth Worker Assistant (CE)
Ukrainian Project
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
TUSLA 121
Youth Worker CCA
Youth Worker CCA
Breakout
Youth Worker
Youthscape
Team Lead
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
Aspire Inishowen
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
Aspire Donegal
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
STAR/ Youth Worker
Youth Support Worker (CE)
UP
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
Our Generation
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
ATLIC
Development Worker
IGNITE
Youth Worker
Youth Worker
Community Employment Scheme
Youth Support Workers
House Keeper
Caretaker

ATLIC
ATLANTIC INNOBLUE COMMUNITIES

WHAT?

ATLIC is a joint funded Interreg Atlantic Area project aimed at creating a new approach to youth innovation and entrepreneurship in the development of the Atlantic Area's blue economy.

WHERE?

Co. Donegal

WHEN?

October 2023 to September 2026

WHY?

Using open innovation labs, knowledge transfer, capacity building, and supporting networks, the project will work to help young people aged 16-30 to develop market solutions to common challenges faced in the Atlantic Area region of Ireland, France, Portugal and Spain. The legacy of the project will be an 'Atlantic Innovation Blue Community' made up of young people from across the Atlantic Area.

STAFF?

Frankie McGreevy, Adrian Begley

FUNDERS?

Co-funded by the European Union

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Throughout 2024, the ATLIC project, delivered in Ireland by Donegal Youth Service, made significant strides in empowering young people to develop their entrepreneurial skills. The year began with the national launch of the ATLIC Project in Dungloe, County Donegal, which brought together over 90 attendees, including students, educators, business leaders, and local authority representatives. This was followed by a two-day National Creative Jam, where over 50 young participants tackled challenges in the local blue economy, collaborated with mentors, and engaged in workshops and site visits.

In March, DYS facilitated a week-long trip for ten young people to Lugo, Spain, for the first ATLIC International Creative Jam, where they participated in a three-day hackathon alongside peers from across the Atlantic Area. June saw Donegal Youth Service host an Interreg event at ATU Letterkenny, connecting young people from Donegal with their counterparts in Portugal, France, and Spain in a European Commission consultation on cross-border cooperation post-2027.

In November, ATLIC was recognised as one of the most successful Interreg Atlantic Area projects at an annual event in Bordeaux, France. That same month, DYS attended the ATLIC dissemination event in Portugal with two young participants, where they engaged in panel discussions, workshops, and project presentations alongside 30 young people from across the Atlantic Area.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

During the International Creative Jam in Lugo, Spain, Donegal Youth Service staff played an active role in supporting young participants and volunteer mentors at the event. They delivered a workshop on community development and stakeholder engagement, equipping attendees with valuable insights into community collaboration and social impact.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

Donegal Youth Service staff engaged in various meetings and events throughout 2024 to support the ATLIC project, including discussions with Údarás na Gaeltachta on the Empower Programme for female entrepreneurs and participation in both national and transnational roundtables, where they presented findings from the ATLIC national survey. They also attended online quarterly partner meetings, focusing on project progress, communication, PR, and planning for key events such as the ATLIC dissemination event and the 2025 ATLIC International Creative Jam in the Azores. The project is run in tandem with our 8 ATLIC partners and continues to engage locally with local authority, state agencies, educational bodies and SMEs.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: QUALITY GOVERNANCE

Throughout 2024, project staff and management held regular monthly supervisory meetings to ensure effective planning and execution of ATLIC's activities. Frequent communication, online meetings and in person meetings at transnational events were also maintained with project partners, with monthly updates shared during DYS staff meetings.

Through these initiatives and efforts, the ATLIC project strengthened its partnerships and advanced its mission of fostering youth entrepreneurship, developing skills in young people, and promoting social innovation.

Go Green

WHAT?

Go Green aims to develop an interactive and non-formal learning model called the Pyramid of Learning (PoL).

WHERE?

Co. Donegal

WHEN?

October 2024 - October 2026

STAFF?

Úna Quinn

WHY?

This model will use a hackathon-style approach to engage young people in green entrepreneurship. The young people will be further supported in building skills and competencies through the development of a non-formal education toolset for youth workers. The aim of developing these resources is to empower youth with diverse social and geographic backgrounds to solve real-life environmental challenges through developing widely adaptable social competences. This project will also support the development of sustainable youth-led initiatives in local communities.

FUNDERS?

Co-funded by the European Union

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

In the first few months of the project, Go Green has been engaging with young people across Co. Donegal in order to gain insights into their understandings, perspectives and experiences of green entrepreneurship and sustainability. By undertaking this initial engagement, this ensures that the Go Green team can work to develop projects with our young people at the centre.

To support this, an in-depth analysis of existing green entrepreneurship opportunities available for young people, including educational programmes, training sessions, workshops, and local and regional initiatives was undertaken.

By bringing together the insights of local young people and the existing landscape of support, the PoL model will work to address and bridge the gaps identified. This includes emphasising the social mission in entrepreneurship; to lessen competitive pressure; to further investigate effective design of resources for youth workers; to emphasise non-formal delivery formats; to make resources relatable to the young person and to focus on the development of soft skills.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

The first stages of the project included stakeholder engagement to support the background research into green entrepreneurship activities for young people in Co. Donegal. This involved meeting with educators and youth workers currently involved in green entrepreneurship initiatives in Co. Donegal through discussions, interviews and focus groups. This revealed insights into how supports, resources and training for youth workers needs to be designed in such a way that they are useful, impactful and work towards targeted achievable actions. The accessibility of activities has been recognised as a priority to encourage participation from young people from diverse backgrounds

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 : QUALITY GOVERNANCE

The Go Green team works to ensure that the research undertaken and resources created are constructive and worthwhile. The background analyses and research into youth engagement with green entrepreneurship work to support this. In particular, emphasis has been placed on the participation of young people and youth work stakeholders in the work undertaken to date. The Go Green team ensures that information created is peer-reviewed and assessed by each of the partner organisations involved.

CLYP - Civic labs for young people

WHAT?

CLYP is a European multi partner project to design and develop a programme/toolkit for youth workers to encourage and assist young people to engage with civic and community activity.

WHERE?

Donegal

WHEN?

2024 to 2026

WHY?

The CLYP objectives are to provide and equip youth organisations with the framework, methods, and tools for starting Civic Labs for Young People, and to promote and support the development of young people's self-confidence and resilience for civic and social engagement and the young people's civic engagement and social entrepreneurship initiatives, through programmes to experiment, fail, and grow.

Staff?

Frankie McGreevy, Adrian Begley

FUNDERS?

Co-funded by the European Union

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

The CLYP project made strong progress in 2024, enhancing youth participation through local and European collaboration, engagement tool development, and targeted research. Highlights included two summer workshops held with ATU Letterkenny involving 17 young people discussing their goals, as well as case study interviews on initiatives like Young Carers and ATLIC. End-of-year efforts focused on advancing Work Package 4 through partner meetings, finalising Engagement Stars interviews, & preparing for cross-country thematic analysis. The project tested existing card packs as development tools, with initial trials conducted with 16 Transition Year students on Arranmore Island.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

In 2024, DYS hosted CLYP partners for a 3-day visit, including a trip to Arranmore Island, where young people, local leaders and volunteers involved in a social entrepreneurial project shared their experiences with community engagement & explored ways to enhance youth participation in civic activities. In summer 2024, 5 "Engagement Stars" were interviewed & valuable insights were gathered from volunteers and committee members that will inform the programme's materials and design.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

1hroughout 2024, DYS e maintained strong collaboration with its six CLYP project partners from Ireland, Romania, Norway, the Netherlands, and Greece through online project development meetings and engagement with secondary schools to assess the effectiveness of activity cards in workshops. In early 2024, preparations for the CLYP partners' visit to Donegal were finalised, featuring workshops and visits to rural communities, along with a three-day programme design meeting. In September, DYS traveled to Romania for CLYP development workshops.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 : QUALITY GOVERNANCE

Regular monthly supervisory meetings were held between the project staff and management as the year progressed, ensuring successful planning and execution of the research activities of CLYP. Regular contact and online meetings were also held between the project partners with monthly updates being delivered at the staff meetings.

ELEVATE 55
POWERED BY THE LOFT

WHAT?

The Elevate 55 Youth Project is a support service for young people aged 8 to 21, to engage in activities and personal development programmes, to overcome difficulties in their lives. Within Elevate 55, young people may partake in group work programmes, one-to-one youth work, advocacy services, youth drop-in space and seasonal activity programmes

WHERE?

Letterkenny & North Central Child & Family Support Network, Donegal

WHEN?

Monday - Saturday

WHY?

To give young people a safe space to socialise and connect with other young people. To support and encourage young people to reach their full potential through various programmes, group work and one to one support

STAFF?

Gareth Gibson, Pauric Bell, Laura Byrne, Billy Banda, Elaine Begley, Ruairi Campbell

FUNDERS?

TUSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Elevate55 had a very successful year in 2024 supporting young people in the North Central CFSN area. There were 6,922 engagements with young people throughout the year. This was achieved via our 3-pronged approach:

1. Targeted youth groups, 2. One to one support, 3. Universal drop in provision.

In 2024 a total of 12 weekly groups ran with a total of 4,222 young people engaged. A highlight was the return of the Irish Youth Music Awards to Donegal Youth Service. This group gave 21 young people the opportunity to develop their musical abilities via workshops and live events with the programme culminating with a group trip to the RDS in Dublin for the national event where 2 young people from the Donegal group were provided to perform live on stage. We extended the work we do with the "Our Group" forming a junior group to work with young people aged 8 - 12 years. Summer was again a busy one within the Elevate55 project with camps running for 7 weeks over the summer months. Activities included: art, cooking, music and multi activity camps being provided throughout the region. A group of young people had an opportunity of a trip to the Aviva stadium in Dublin to watch Ireland play Finland. One to one work went from strength to strength this year with 22 young people availing of the service with a combined total of 252 hours being provided. Issues we offered support on included anxiety issues, school avoidance, await neurodiverse assessment, family supports etc.

Weekly drop in service on Fridays and Saturdays were again very popular throughout the year with 2600 engagements taking place. We seen a return to a dedicated monthly gig night which is held on the last Friday night of the month providing young musicians the opportunity to perform live in a fun safe environment.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

Throughout 2024 we had 15 volunteers who assisted us with the running of our weekly groups. All of these volunteers were provided the opportunity to complete Child Protection training and were also offered the opportunity to register for an Open College Network Level II in Youth Leadership. Additionally, we offered an opportunity to 6 students from ATU Letterkenny to complete year 2 and year 3 student placements within the project. These students were provided hands on experience in youth work. We also had TY students from a number of local secondary schools complete their work experience with us.

"I am so thankful to be given the opportunity to improve my knowledge of the music industry and get the opportunity to perform in a venue like the RDS" Rachel

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

In 2024 we had a number of strategic partners that allowed us to collaborate to provide the necessary services to the young people of the North Central region of Donegal. Our partnerships with Mevagh FRC in Downings and the Gallowglass Hall in Milford allowed us to provide more services in these areas which meant more young people could attend as the lack of transport was no longer a barrier. Through our Ukrainian Integration Project work we were able to partner with local accommodation centres to offer these young people much needed social interaction with their peers with a large number of them partaking on our summer programmes. 2024 also seen us partner with Bonn University in Germany to participate in the "Children in the climate" project which is a Erasmus project that allows young people to explore the ongoing climate change crisis in the world. In 2024 through this project we were able to offer 6 young people the opportunity to travel to Fraga in Spain to participate in workshops and another 6 young people were able to travel to Tallinn in Estonia.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 QUALITY GOVERNANCE

Staff have been able to avail of monthly supervision with their line manager. Alongside this all staff who are providing 1:1 support are offered the opportunity to attend monthly external supervision. Regularly staff meeting are held. Staff have been trained in Meitheal training to allow them to provide the best support available to young people they are working with.

Community Employment Project

WHAT?

A training programme for long term unemployed people to gain work experience and training, building confidence and employability skills to enter mainstream employment or further education.

Each participant has an Individual Learning Plan tailored to their needs and supported by the CE Supervisor to develop and enhance their employability.

WHERE?

Club Oige Pobail Le Cheile, Falcarragh.
Raphoe FRC, Raphoe.
St. Bridget's YC, Clonmany.
Planet Youth, Ballybofey.
Manorcunningham Resource Centre
Youth Information Centre
Elevate 55
Donegal Youth Service

WHEN?

8.30 - 5 DYS Office
All CE staff have varied working hours depending on the needs/opening time off the Clubs/projects.

WHY?

To help people to gain work experience and training to progress into employment while at the same time providing support to young people and the community.

STAFF?

Lee Stephenson, Angela Boyce, Denis Whoriskey, Hugo Wallace, Niamh Murphy, Olivia Cole, Paul Anderson, Frank Hicks, Bola Oloruntola, Joseph McBride, Elaine Gamble, Julia Galimuk, Madalina Iordache, Matina Doohan, Vladyslav Pakhomova, Uliana Hrynyshya, Liudmyla Paleichuk and Svitlana Nyrka.

FUNDERS?

An Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta agus Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

Highlight of the year:

During the DYS CE Project 2023-24 the DSP targets set for participant's progression into employment and Full Time Education were achieved. 5 Participants left the Project, 1 is Unemployed, 1 went into Full Time Education and 3 went into Employment, which equals an 80% progression rate.

The DYS CE participants completed 91 training courses/workshops exceeding the target for attending training courses set by the DSP.

Testimonials

'During my time on the DYS CE Project I have completed many QQI Level 5 modules and I'm working my way onto a QQI Level 5 Youth Work Major Award with Youth Work Ireland Midlands. My time here has been eye opening into the world of youth work and youth information. I've worked alongside some groups here and helped out in many Youth events. While experiencing a new form of Information Delivering Through the ESC and YI Chat and delivering Internet Safety courses to schools. I have developed a lot of amazing new skills thanks to the opportunities here and the support given to me.' - Adam

I have been working with the DYS CE Project as the CE Administrator for one and a half years. As the administrator I have gained valuable work experience and new skills in office work including payroll, accounts, revenue returns, reception and general office duties. I have received practical in house training and I am currently on my 6th QQI Level 5 module towards completing a QQI Level 5 Business Administration Major Award. I am really enjoying my time on the DYS CE Project and my confidence has improved through the support / training I have received. My future goal is to move into full time employment in administration / office work. Joseph

Our Generation

OUR generation
Growing Up Better, Together

WHAT?

Our Generation a cross-border project delivered in partnership with 7 regional partners that aims to reach 35,000 young people and adults who support them during the life of the project. The Our Generation programme promotes the personal development and positive mental health of young people through programmes that address emotional resilience and social action. The project also offers training for young people and key contacts, including teachers, with an emphasis on trauma informed practice and peacebuilding.

WHERE?

Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan

WHEN?

Monday - Friday depending on delivery location

WHY?

To promote the personal development and positive mental health of young people and to build emotional resilience.

STAFF?

Frankie McGreevy, Aideen Shiels, Fadl Mustapha, Sean McCluskey, Lauren Waters and Eve King.

FUNDERS?

PEACEPLUS Northern Ireland - Ireland
Co-funded by the European Union and UK Government

Special EU Programmes Body
Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE
Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projecks

THE OUR GENERATION PROJECT IS A PEACE PLUS PROJECT DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE MENTAL HEALTH RESILIENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE SO THAT THEY ARE BETTER EQUIPPED TO ENGAGE IN PEACE BUILDING

Donegal Youth Service hosted its annual youth festival 'Party in the Park' in July in collaboration with Earagail Arts Festival with approx. 2,500 children, young people and adults in attendance. As always, it was a drug & alcohol-free event funded in part by Northwest Regional's Drug & Alcohol Taskforce. It proved a fantastic family day out with face painting, games on the green, art workshops and of course live music from local artists, intercultural dance performances and much more. This year, the Donegal Youth Service specially dedicated their main stage at the Party in The Park to the memory of the late Paul Mooney, paying tribute to the former participant of the Loft Youth Project.

In November 2024, Donegal Youth Service celebrated the official launch of the SEPUB-funded Peace Plus 'Our Generation' program in Belfast alongside the project partners. Since September 2024, Donegal Youth Service have been rolling out Our Generation 'Healthy Me' pilot workshops to 110+ children across Donegal. 120+ teenagers and 25+ Key Youth Workers across Donegal have also partaken in Our Generation pilot 'Provoking Thought' programs, all of which focus on mental health awareness, resilience strategies, coping skills and wellbeing.

In Sligo, 17 8-12 years old at Tubbercurry Family Resource Centre After School Group completed the Our Generation 'Healthy Me' pilot workshops.

In Louth a group of young people from ESLO took part in the DRAWDA Urban Art Trail, Drogheda.

IGNITE COMMUNITY

WHAT?

Ignite Community (IC) is a social innovation programme supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

WHERE?

Donegal & Sligo

WHEN?

In the Development phase. Official Launch February 18th 2025.

STAFF?

Frankie McGreevy, Roisin Gallager, Riana Mallon.

WHY?

The purpose of this innovative programme is enabling young people outside the main education system to drive and own innovations that will make a real difference in tackling inequality and creating new connections across communities.
These new connections will deepen links through the development of cross-border and cross-community relations within groups of young people from diverse backgrounds and communities co-creating solutions to social and environmental issues that impact upon them and their communities. We will use social innovation as the linchpin to empower communities of young people to co-design and launch new and innovative solutions.

FUNDERS?

PEACEPLUS Northern Ireland - Ireland
Co-funded by the European Union | UK Government

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Having developed a 6 hour taster programme we rolled this out with four different groups over three weeks in two hour sessions. The programme included a detailed introduction to social innovation, looking at our community and what the Ignite Community Programme involves. Within this programme we also included wellness and resiliency through the 'GLOW' workshop and a creativity and imagination activity called 'Dream Big'.

Developing the programme we ensured we covered the key elements of the course but also wanted to combine fun and interesting activities. The aim of this taster programme was to get feedback to bring back to the other local leaders and developers of Ignite Community.

The taster programme was held in 4 locations with 4 groups of young people in St. Brigids Youth Club, Youthscape Letterkenny, Youthscape Ballybofey and the Monday 'Our Group' at DYS.

A 6 hour taster programme was also delivered over 2 days on Arranmore Island with TYs (Atlic).

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

During the development stage in 2024 we gauged interest and created awareness of the IC Programme in advance of engaging and training volunteers for the programme launch. This involved networking and reaching out to various community organisations and youth workers. There is future training arranged for youth workers/volunteers wanting to facilitate the programme. This training takes place in Feb and April 2025 with further training sessions happening as the need arises thereafter.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

Meetings attended with all partners including YSI, Kippi, Arts Care, Hipani
Ongoing engagement with Ignite partners and preparation for the Launch in February. Great support and collaboration within DYS. Looking forward to building further partnerships in the new year.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 QUALITY GOVERNANCE

Staff attended the Child Protection Awareness Training 21/10, YSI Online Training 17/10, Supervisory meetings, one-to-one training, team meetings and FAS awareness training.

Letterkenny Youth Information Centre

WHAT?

Letterkenny Youth Information Centre provides a free, confidential information service for young people and those who work with them. The Centre is managed by Donegal Youth Service and is the only one of its kind in Donegal and it operates a one stop shop approach where all the information is available under the one roof. We also support parents/guardians seeking information and support for their young people.

WHERE?

Letterkenny drop-in centre: Monday-Friday. YIChat live chat service - www.spunout.ie Outreach: Information provided at various locations throughout Donegal.

WHEN?

YICentre 10am - 6pm Monday to Friday YIChat 4-pm - 8pm Monday to Friday Tailored Groups and Workshops after 6pm

WHY?

To provide free access to unbiased, non-judgmental, reliable information.

STAFF?

Gareth Gibson, Kasia Kurzeja, Eve King
CE workers: Frank Hicks, Adam Leonard, Paul Anderson

FUNDERS?

etb
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
Donegal Education and Training Board

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

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

2024 was another successful year for Letterkenny Youth Information Centre (YIC) with the team processing almost 8000 queries. The most popular queries related to accommodation and employment themes with 19-21 years olds accounting for 26% of queries. Interestingly we had a return user rate of almost 97%
The topic of Internet Safety continued to be in high demand, with the staff team facilitating 2-3 workshops weekly during the academic year with Primary & Secondary School Pupils, teachers and parents across the length and breadth of Donegal.

Our staff continued to represent us on the National Youth Information Chat service in partnership with Youth Work Ireland, Crosscare, YMCA and Spunout. In 2024 the service was online an available for over 940 hours and we had 1,901 conversations with people about the issues that mattered to them, with an average wait time of just 41 seconds.

The YIC team continue to embrace a wide variety of methods to disseminate information in an engaging manner. Our approach incorporates face to face, outreach, online and interactive/innovate delivery methods.For example, in partnership with Leargas, we organised an event as a part of this year's European Youth Week. It was all about the upcoming European elections, and the set up was a virtual airport. The event was buzzing with excitement as the TY students from international background gathered to learn about the importance of voting. The Letterkenny Youth Information Centre team did a fantastic job of creating an atmosphere that was both informative and fun, making sure that everyone had a great time. Young people received their boarding passes and passports, and once they crossed the security check line, they had to go through different stages of their journey: check-in, where they had a chance to register to vote or check their eligibility to vote, then they moved to lounge area where they could learn about the Eurozone, the European Union pioneers and take part in a flash quizzes. Later they started moving toward the gates: EU elections, European opportunities for young people, and the final one - a big quiz about the European Union. The whole event finished with the lunch available from the food hall at the airport.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

Letterkenny Youth Information Centre continue to support the local community by enabling student work placements, allowing them to achieve their potential and develop life skills. The European Solidarity Corp (ESC) is also on the radar of the YIC with staff providing predeparture and ongoing support during their involvement with European Volunteering projects.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

Our annual Time To Move (TTM) event happened in October in partnership with Eurodesk and the Europe Direct Information Centre (EDIC) in the central library. The information event saw over 80 young people obtain valuable information on various opportunities available to them in relation to Tavel, Study and Working abroad. Letterkenny YIC continued our partnerships with many key agencies. For example we worked closely with CYPSC Donegal and were able to produce the 2nd Edition of "A Parents Guide to Device Safety 2.0" and published 5000 copies for circulation across Donegal

We are also active participants with the Donegal Road Safety Working Group, an interagency group consisting of Donegal County Council, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, An Garda Siochana, Road Safety Authority, Donegal Youth Service, Donegal ETB, Foroige, An Taisce. The Group work tirelessly to promote road safety awareness and education and oversee the implementation of the Road Safety Plan

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 QUALITY GOVERNANCE

With regard to providing youth information we ensure a quality service by adhering the Youth Information Charter produced by the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA) and are proud holders of the ERYICA Quality Label.

"I like to come here because it is a way to interact with people, and I like to play pool, and I quite enjoy coming in to see the workers and having a chat with them". Laura, 21

YouthTalk CBT Project

WHAT?

This service is part funded by a Tusla Service Level agreement and by the Dormant accounts fund this year a total of 107 Young people from across Donegal have used our Youth Talk CBT service in 2024.
These young people often referred by social work, CAMHS, Jigsaw, School completion, parents or self-referral have reported an increased ability to manage their negative thought patterns and have reported improved overall mental health.
Young people have increased their ability to overcome anxiety and depression by following the CBT protocol as measured by the BAI and BDI measurement tools routinely filled in pre and post therapy. Young people have developed critical thinking and problem- solving skills.

WHERE?

Work takes place countywide according to where the need is.

WHEN?

We meet the young people when it suits them most often after hours and on weekends

WHY?

One of our main service performance indicators is to create a positive rapport and working alliance with young people that can assist them in achieving their own personal and social development goals.
Relationship skills have been improved for young people.
Increased resilience skills for young people post therapy
Exam stress and other specific life stressors such as family breakdown have been addressed and reduced.
Our aim is to pass lifelong problem- solving skills to young people so that at the end of any Youth Talk session young people are empowered to solve their own problems.
We check that these performance indicators are present via: Positive Feedback from Young people, parents and external agencies. Regular attendance at therapy sessions. Regular attendance and engagement at clinical supervision by our counsellors. Positive clinical supervision reports from clinical supervisors detailing issues addressed and attendance.

STAFF?

Our 7 CBT therapists have all received external support and clinical supervision on a monthly basis enabling them to process the issues they are dealing with and effectively manage the impact of the work on themselves as therapists.

FUNDERS?

TUSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

A total of 139 young people received support from Youth Talk in 2024, which was delivered through 1.456 sessions.
We receive funding from the Tusla Child and Family Service and the Dormant Accounts fund.

Within Donegal Youth Service we have Cognitive Behaviour Therapists offering their services and all receive therapeutic supervision from a qualified clinical CBT supervisor.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 : QUALITY GOVERNANCE

All our therapists are members of the National Council of Psychotherapists NCIP and follow their governance guidelines.

Unlocking Your Potential

WHAT?

Personal Youth Development Programme

WHERE?

Letterkenny, Ballybofey, Stranorlar, Raphoe, Convoy, Castlefin, Ballyshannon

WHEN?

Monday-Friday plus on-call support out of hours and weekends.

STAFF?

Charlene Logue, Michelle Wylam, Helen Simms.

WHY?

The 'Unlocking your Potential (UP) 2 project targets a small cohort of 16-25 year olds not currently in education, training or employment, who are vulnerable to polarisation, come from complex and difficult backgrounds, and therefore are most at risk of marginalisation, disadvantage and affected by the "Troubles".

The aim of the project will be to initially build on participants' personal development, resilience and coping skills and when appropriate provide training options to promote employment or further education opportunities.

FUNDERS?

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

In 2024, the Unlocking Your Potential (UP) project continued to provide highly individualised one-to-one support for young people based on their specific needs. The project focused on building life skills such as budgeting, job readiness, appointment management, and applying for housing supports like HAP. Emotional and practical support was offered to vulnerable participants, including a young mother facing mental health and financial difficulties and a young person on the Child Protection Register recovering from abuse and neglect. The project also helped participants access financial support for driving lessons and collaborated with various strategic partners to ensure holistic care.

Mental Health remained a core component of the UP project, with staff using their CBT training to support participants with anxiety, mood disorders, and diagnoses such as bipolar disorder, ODD, and autism. Referrals and signposting to specialist services were provided as needed. The project also supported three young men reintegrating into the community after incarceration, addressing complex issues including addiction, housing, emotional regulation, and probation compliance. Education and training achievements were notable, with several participants completing or engaging in courses ranging from Leaving Cert and QQI Level 5 programmes to university access studies and youth work training.

The UP project's commitment to building good relations was evident in a series of workshops, cross-community visits, and cultural heritage trips, including a mural project, diversity workshops, and collaborations with historical societies. The Girls Group, a focused support group within the project, saw great success in personal development and awareness around issues such as peer violence and online safety. Their activities concluded with a celebratory trip to Shrek: The Musical, marking a positive end to a year of strong growth and engagement.

Young People Engaged - 28 young people engaged on the UP project
One to One Hours - 476 hours (435 sessions)

Star Youth Project

WHAT?

The STAR project is to support young people from the Creeslough area and surrounding areas aged 8-21. The project works in Creeslough Youth Club, Mulroy College,Creeslough Community and in the Creeslough Hub

WHERE?

Creeslough Hub
Creeslough Youth Club
Mulroy College
Creeslough Community

WHEN?

The "Stuff Group" Tuesday evenings in the Creeslough Hub Creeslough Youth Club Wednesday evenings when required.
Mulroy college on various days with different year groups.
"All In Group" Saturday afternoons

WHY?

The STAR Project supports young people who have been affected by the Creeslough Tragedy and the wider community. This is achieved through group work and one to one listening ear.

STAFF?

Charlene Logue, Gareth Gibson, Jackie Ferry, Conor Malone, Áine Bogle

FUNDERS?

TUSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

There was a Graffiti camp held in Mulroy College funded by VHI on the 18th and 20th of June. It was supported by a STAR worker, SCP and UV Arts. There were 15 young people in attendance, they designed and created 4 boards to be displayed in the canteen/stage area of the school. A plaque has also been ordered to credit the funders and young people. The Group attended the Wild Atlantic adventures camp on the 19th June. They were assisted by SCP Mulroy and a Star worker. They had Lunch followed by a beach walk. These activities were funded by VHI.
A group of 30 young people accompanied by 7 adults attended Belfast Zoo on the 14th of July. The group had a fantastic day, on the way home they stopped in Dunsilly Hotel for a meal.
Talks were held in Mulroy College about Vaping Awareness. They were given to groups of 2nd years. Resilience talks were also given to 2nd years, these talks were delivered by Elevate 55 and Our Generation. There is currently a plan in place to work with the LCA groups on a Thursday and Friday and there is an after school programme starting on a Thursday evening in 2025.
The Stuff group participated in many different activities , these included arts and crafts, games and sports. In March they had a Trip to Century Cinemas provided by Stefania from the Thinking Changes Project, to watch a film followed by food afterwards.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

The Star projects works hand in hand with the volunteers of Creeslough youth club and provide any support they might need.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

The STAR project works with many Partnerships. The Creeslough Hub, where "the Stuff Group" takes place every week. We support Mulroy College where we help with a listening ear service and help deliver programmes to different year groups. This year, a new group formed, known as: "The All In Group". We support the Creeslough Community and Creeslough Youth Club, we are on hand to offer support whenever they may need it, through arts and craft workshops or through one to one listening ear service. We work with the partner and funders such as: Tulsa, VHI, National Lottery and theIrish Youth Foundation.

ASPIRE Donegal

WHAT?

33 youth clubs across the county and Daybreak Letterkenny

WHERE?

County wide

WHEN?

Staff are availble from 9am- 10pm Monday-Friday and 2pm- 6pm on Saturdays. Youth Clubs have their own set opening hours.

WHY?

To help promote and support quality youth work provision and informal education opportunities across the county of Donegal

STAFF?

Pearl Johnston, Megan Rushe, Áine Bogle, Bernie Cunningham, Jackie Ferry

FUNDERS?

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Under Strategic Goal 1 , 2024 was a dynamic year across programmes and youth clubs. The Daybreak programme supported 15 Early School Leavers through a combination of academic work and afternoon sessions focused on personal and social development, covering topics like budgeting, Sexual Health, and meal preparation. Key supports included collaboration with the School Completion Project and visits to the North West Regional College. One-to-one work with NEET young people continued through the ASPIRE Donegal Programme. A wide range of youth club workshops and events were delivered, including art, first aid, science-based activities like Kinia's Hydro Grand Prix, Road Safety training with UPS Road Code, stop-motion animation, and sports. Events such as the ASPIRE Quiz, end-of-year trips, and themed parties further promoted engagement and inclusion.
New clubs were welcomed in 2024, including Creeslough Parents Inclusive Association and YOUTHLAND Bundoran. Cross-border work was a major highlight, with the Planet Youth group in Ballybofey linking with New Buildings Youth Club in Derry to foster understanding between communities. Meanwhile, Erasmus+ activities brought powerful cultural exchange opportunities, with young people participating in trips to France and hosting a French youth group in Gartan. These exchanges offered transformative experiences in identity, community, and teamwork. Overall, the breadth of activities—from creative arts to outdoor adventure and international collaboration—reflected the organisation's commitment to meaningful engagement and development for all young people.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

ASPIRE Donegal engaged directly with 95 Adult Volunteers and 349 Youth Club Volunteers.
Staff carried out Youth Club support visits as well as delivering various programmes in the Youth Clubs throughout 2024
ASPIRE Donegal delivers Open College Network Level II Youth Leader Training annually. In 2024, 13 Volunteers participated in the training over a 10 week period.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

The project worked with over 20 strategic partners including the following;
NCCFSN
SDCFSN
CYPSC
Youthscape (SWC/TT/Cedar Foundation,SLM ETB)
JIGSAW & Daybreak workshop plans
Rosses Community College H&W event to promote DYS
LCDC/LAG with Donegal County Council
SEUPB Youthscape - South West College (SWC), Tides Training Belfast, Sligo/Leitrim/Mayo ETB
Donegal County Council (DCC) - LCDC/LAG/LECP
SEUPB Riverine
JIGSAW
IFI
iScoil
School Completion & Schools
Tusla
Education Welfare Officer

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 QUALITY GOVERNANCE

Briefing for Board of Directors was carried out and staff were notified of their legal responsibilities as 'Mandated Persons' under Children First requirements.
7 Child Protection Awareness Programmes were delivered to 95 Volunteers in 6 Youth Clubs and DYS Volunteers/CE staff.
247 Garda Vetting Forms were processed for local Youth Clubs and Projects.

Ukrainian Integration Project

U-HORIZONS

WHAT?

To support youth organisations and youth clubs to support young people who have fled from the war in Ukraine during 2024

WHERE?

Kilcar, Carrick, Clonmany, Kilbegs, Ballybofey, Bundoran, Buncrana, Ballyshannon, Rathullan, Carndonagh, Glenties, Letterkenny, Milford, Movile, Ballindrait & Castlefinn

WHEN?

January 2024- December 2024

WHY?

Support interventions for young people who have fled from the war in Ukraine as they integrate into Irish society.

STAFF?

Charlene Logue, Gareth Gibson, Fadl Mustapha, Polina Pakhomova , Karolina Olchowska

FUNDERS?

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

etb
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
Donegal Education and Training Board

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Thanks to DCEDIY funding in 2024, the New Horizons Project was initiated. During the year, staff worked across the county to recruit adult volunteers and deliver youth work programmes for young Ukrainians/IPAS young people living in accommodation centres in Donegal. The grant covered working directly with Ukrainians to deliver quality youth work programmes, activities, trips, refreshments, equipment & materials. Young people aged 10-18yrs participated fully in all activities and used the opportunity to improve their English as well as meeting other young people from different areas.

Activities included:

Fit for Life, Century Complex Letterkenny (Golf and movie), Arena 7, Art classes, Halloween Parade Derry, Halloween Art Party, Harry Potter Quest, Bowling, Fun English classes, Santa's Grotto, 'Mafia', Mental arithmetic, Jailbreak Adventure at Lifford old Courthouse, Tropical world, Letterkenny Park, Waterpark Bundoran, Party in the Park, Summer Camps with: Bush-craft activity in the forest, Pizza, Art and Quiz Day, Picnic on the Beach in Rathmullan, Lifford Cinema trip (food and film), Culture Night Event with a collaborative painting, Professional Art Workshops led by an award winning artist, Christmas gift giving at the Cinema.

Strategic Partnerships: Parent Info Meetings, Ukrainian Independence Day, School visits, Family Resource Centre visits, IPAS/Emergency accommodation visits

CFSNs and New Community meetings

STATEGIC GOAL 3: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Parent info meetings, Ukrainian Independence Day, School Visits, Family Resource Centre visits, IPAS/Emergency accommondation visits, CFSN'S and new community meetings.

ASPIRE Inishowen

WHAT?

Working with young people aged 10-24 yrs across four clearly defined areas of Inishowen (Buncrana, Carndonagh, Clonmany & Moville). Specifically targeting LGBTI+, Early School Leavers, Young Travellers & the Underemployed.

WHERE?

Buncrana - Buncrana Youth & Community Club
Carndonagh - Spraoi Agus Sport
Clonmany - Clonmany Community Centre
Moville - Moville Family Resource Centre

WHEN?

Monday - Friday plus out of hours support for young people evenings and weekend

WHY?

So young people in the 4 areas of Inishowen can have access to Youth Services to support their potential as they transition from childhood to adulthood

STAFF?

Charlene Logue, Yvonne Tilley, Mark Reader, Polina Pakhomova

FUNDERS?

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

UBU YOUR PLACE YOUR SPACE

National Lottery

etb Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Dhún na nGall Donegal Education and Training Board

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Intensive 1 to 1 in all four areas with participants is ongoing and at times requires a waiting list. Carndonagh evening group 21 participants. Referral meetings
Transition programme delivered to four different National Schools across 4 key areas of Inishowen

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

We have 2 regular volunteers. They both participated in Youth Leadership Training, and assist the project

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

Schools - Crana College, Scoil Mhuire, Carndonagh Community College, Moville Community College
CAMHS
TUSLA
SCP
HSCL
An Garda Siochana

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 QUALITY GOVERNANCE

Team meetings There were 11 team meetings held in 2024
Supervision for 2 staff is also carried out on a monthly basis.
Staff also receive monthly clinical supervision to provide support with one to one work.
We attend monthly DYS staff meetings and have 4 Advisory group meetings per year.

Tusla Intensive One to One

WHAT?

The Creative Community Alternatives (CCA) programme provides intensive one-on-one support for young people involved with Children in Care (CIC) and those transitioning to independence after care. CCA focuses on offering alternative solutions for children and young people who are either on the brink of entering care or currently in care due to complex issues such as abuse, neglect, parental separation, attachment difficulties, substance misuse, mental health challenges, and economic hardship.

WHY?

- To support the young person to remain in their care placement.
- To integrate young people into the community, support engagement in positive programmes and activities identified by them.
- Help young people in care to communicate how they feel with the hope they will be better equipped to manage their care placement and challenges they may be facing.

WHERE?

Cases are located countywide according to need

FUNDERS?

TUSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

WHEN?

Monday - Saturday

STAFF?

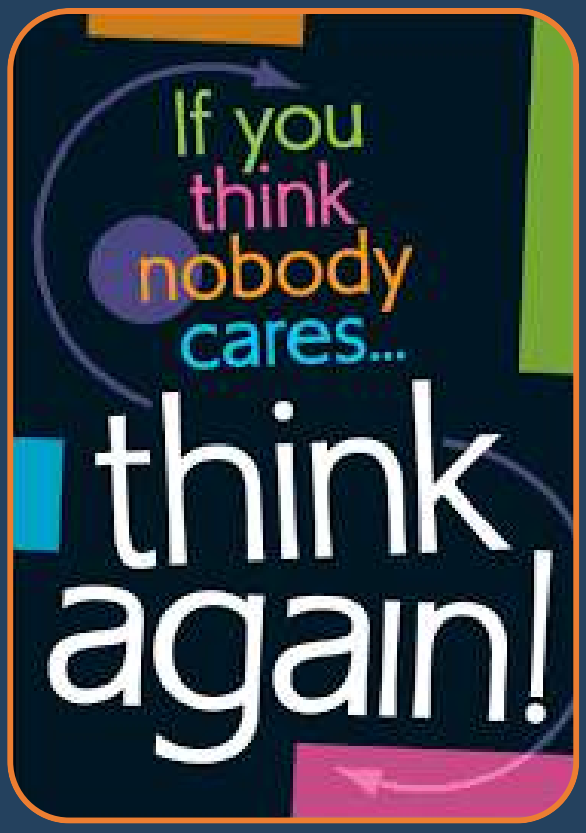
Lorraine Thompson, Gareth Gibson, Sinead Murray Lynch, Dominic McGlinchey,

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Creative Community Alternatives:
462 sessions facilitated
23 Young People Participated
879 hours of engagment

Children In Care
43 sessions facilitated
2 young people invloved
79 hours of engagement

Leaving and After Care
85 sessions facilitated
1 young person
200 hours of engagement



Breakout

WHAT?

BreakOuT provides a safe, non-judgemental and fun youth work service to LGBTQ+ young people and their non LGBTQ+ friends. The service offers support for young people from 12-25 years old. Supporting individuals through a one to one listening ear service as well as providing a drop-in service in Letterkenny & Raphoe. The project worker also provides support to professionals, parents & teachers to guide them with best practice in dealing with young LGBTQ+ people. The project worker delivers LGBTQ+ awareness training to young people and adults.

WHERE?

BreakOuT is a countywide service.

WHEN?

LK Study Group Donegal Youth Service 4pm - 7pm Fridays
LK U18's Donegal Youth Service Saturday 2pm - 4pm

STAFF?

Charlene Logue, Megan Rushe

WHY?

To provide a safe space where young LGBTQ+ can come and be themselves each week. BreakOuT provides a voice for young people empowering them to realise they have the potential to effect change.

FUNDERS?

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

belong TO

CYPSC
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEES
Donegal

HSE

hi
Éire Shláintiúil

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

BreakOuT had an incredibly active and impactful 2024, supporting 93 young people through a wide range of programmes and events. Regular activities included a weekly drop-in and Study Group every Friday, one-to-one support, and numerous youth events. Highlights of the year included a residential trip to Gartan packed with kayaking, rock climbing, teambuilding—and even a few ghost sightings! BreakOuT proudly participated in several Pride parades, including leading the Dublin Pride parade with other LGBTQ+ youth groups. Festive celebrations like Halloween and Christmas parties, along with an LGBTQ+ youth disco in Sligo, brought plenty of joy and connection. BreakOuT also supported the launch of Donegal's first parent/guardian support group for families of trans youth. The group showed a strong commitment to social justice, contributing to a podcast on LGBTQ+ experiences and collaborating with the Loreto Convent LGBTQ+ committee and ATU Student Union to address discrimination in schools. A group of members also enjoyed an unforgettable Erasmus+ cultural exchange trip to France. 2024 was a standout year for connection, advocacy, and empowering LGBTQ+ young people and their families.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

BreakOuT works with a local volunteer who is a member of the LGBTQ+ community. The project has supported this volunteer through his OCN Level II in Youth Leadership, which he enjoyed immensely and has made plans to pursue his Level 3. Many of our young people have expressed a desire to become volunteers when they turn eighteen, a goal which we wholeheartedly support and can't wait to help them pursue.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

Breakout supports multiple strategic partnerships: HSE, BeLonGTo, TENI, Donegal Youth Council. Breakout staff attended three National Network meetings with BeLonGTo staff and engaged with events organised by fellow network members, as well as achieving the BeLonGTo Rainbow Award. Breakout also liaised with TENI throughout the year in order to best support our young people who identify as transgender. Finally, two members of Breakout were elected to represent the group as members of Donegal Youth Council and we couldn't be prouder!

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 QUALITY GOVERNANCE

Breakout staff underwent monthly supervision in a 1:1 capacity with management, as well as monthly external supervisions in a group setting, team meetings, review meetings and steering group meetings throughout all of 2024.

Youthscape Plus

WHAT?

Youthscape+ is a dynamic youth development programme designed to support young people aged 14 to 24 years who are not currently engaged in full-time education, employment, or training. The programme aims to help participants build essential life skills, such as confidence, resilience, and leadership, through a variety of fun and engaging activities.

WHERE?

Youthscape+ is a cross border PEACE funded programme that runs across two sites in Donegal, Planet Youth in Ballybofey and Letterkenny in Donegal Youth Service with partners in Northern Ireland, Sligo and Leitrim.

WHEN?

Youthscape+ runs on Tuesdays, Wedensdays and Thursday's in Letterkenny and Ballybofey.

WHY?

Youthscape+ focuses on addressing challenges like social isolation, mental health struggles, and barriers to education or employment. By offering a safe and supportive environment, the program empowers young people to overcome these obstacles and unlock their potential.
The programme includes a range of activities, such as outdoor adventures, creative projects, and Community Impact initiatives, all designed to foster personal growth and development. Participants also have the opportunity to earn qualifications, OCN (Open College Network) certification, while enhancing their teamwork, communication, and leadership skills.

STAFF?

Charlene Logue, Bernie Cunningham, Elaine Begley, Karolina Olchowska, Darrell Law and Shauna Spence

FUNDERS?

Special EU Programmes Body
Comhlacht na gClár Speisialta AE
Special EU Skemes Boadie

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Youthscape+ got off to a great start in 2024 with Cohort 1 and 2 taking part in cross border trips with our partners SWC, TIDES, Cedar and Sligo-Leitrim ETB. These trips were part of Cultural Hosts Days with the groups taking part in various fun and educational activities to promote Interpersonal skills and Good Relations. The young people achieved three OCN qualifications and engaged in one-one support to re-enter into education or employment. Youthscape+ also took part in surfing lessons, cooking lessons with an emphasis on food hygiene and tours of the Peace Walls in Derry as part of Good Relations. Staff organised a trip to NWRC, Youthreach and ATU to offer the young people the opportunity and support to achieve their full potential following the Youthscape programme. Staff work closely with the families and other external organisations such as Educational Welfare Officers to ensure the young people are being supported in a multi-disciplinary approach.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

Youthscape supports CE staff in Ballybofey and provides the opportunity for training and best practice in Youthwork.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS.

Youthscape is a cross border programme with South West College, The Cedar Foundation, Tides Training and Sligo Leitrim ETB. The Youthscape Team works very closely with Tusla, Educational Welfare and all Local Community hubs.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 QUALITY GOVERNANCE

Youthscape staff attend monthly supervision in a 1:1 capacity with management, as well as monthly external supervisions in a group setting, team meetings, review meetings and case conference meetings throughout all of 2024.

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Donegal Youth Service
Youth Work Ireland