

Majority of Young Irish Concerned Over Housing and Cost of Living, NYCI Report Finds (<https://www.activelink.ie/node/107642>)

Half of 18 to 29-year-olds have low mental well-being

A new report published by the National Youth Council of Ireland(<https://www.youth.ie/documents/state-of-our-young-nation-a-report-into-the-lives-of-irish-18-29-year-olds/>) (NYCI), conducted by IPSOS B&A, reveals that the most pressing concerns for young people in Ireland are housing and the cost of living, with 67% and 62%, respectively, citing these issues. The research offers an in-depth look at the challenges facing 18 to 29-year-olds, including accommodation difficulties, financial strain, and low mental well-being.

The study highlights that nearly half (48%) of young people are dissatisfied with their current housing situation, and more than half of those with rental or mortgage payments have seen costs rise in the past year. Additionally, 44% feel financially 'worse off' than the previous year, and over one in five (22%) have 'skipped meals due to cost'.

One young participant in the study shared her difficulties in the property market: "I never thought about leaving the country until last year, and now me and my partner have decided to go to New Zealand. The housing situation is so bad here I have had a lot of friends leave. I didn't think we would be next, but unfortunately we are." (Female, 27-29, Cork).

1 in 5 have skipped meals due to cost

Paul Gordon, NYCI Director of Policy and Advocacy, commented: "This report's findings are alarming and should serve as a wake-up call to Government to address some basic unmet needs for young people. Young people's fear of being worse off than their parents is real, driven by housing challenges and economic precarity. More than half live with family, one in two have experienced rent increases in the past year, with some facing rises of up to 30%, and this is pushing aspirations of home ownership further out of reach. Shockingly, one in five young people have skipped meals due to cost.

Half of 18 to 29-year-olds have low mental well-being

"Despite reporting a strong connection to Irish culture and to their communities, many of this generation feel like their lives are being put on hold and this is manifesting in a very concerning finding that half of 18-29-year-olds have low mental wellbeing*," continued Mr Gordon.

Young women worse off

One of the most striking aspects of the research is the gender difference in responses, according to Mr Gordon: "Compared with young men, women reported worse mental and financial wellbeing, lower satisfaction with pay and conditions, were coping worse with the cost-of-living, are more likely to feel they are worse off than their parents' generation.

"In response, we are calling on Government to take a far more coordinated approach to tackling the economic and social challenges facing young people by moving quickly to establish a Cabinet Sub-Committee on Young People."

Calls for response

The NYCI report recommends a wide range of actions in response to these challenges including:

- **Tackling housing and accommodation issues** via short-term measures like rent caps and long-term solutions like increasing social and affordable housing supply.
- **Improving employment conditions** by abolishing sub-minimum wage rates for under 20s and promoting flexible working environments.
- **Addressing gender inequality** through strategies focused on young women's needs and reducing the gender pay gap.
- **Alleviating the cost-of-living impact** by reducing education fees and enhancing rural public transport.
- **Fostering cultural and community engagement** increase access to quality facilities for young people to foster connection, through infrastructure investments in youth work and boosting funding for community cultural and leisure amenities.

Mr Gordon concluded: "The findings paint a picture of a generation for whom the basic social contract appears broken, with hard work no longer a guarantee of security. Our recommendations aim to restore hope and support for young people, many of whom are despondent about their future."

Download the complete report State of our young nation: A report into the lives of Irish 18-29-year-olds (<https://www.youth.ie/documents/state-of-our-young-nation-a-report-into-the-lives-of-irish-18-29-year-olds/>) .

Region

Nationwide

Download the complete report (<https://www.youth.ie/documents/state-of-our-young-nation-a-report-into-the-lives-of-irish-18-29-year-olds/>)

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