

Youth Work Ireland

Voices of Youth Poll

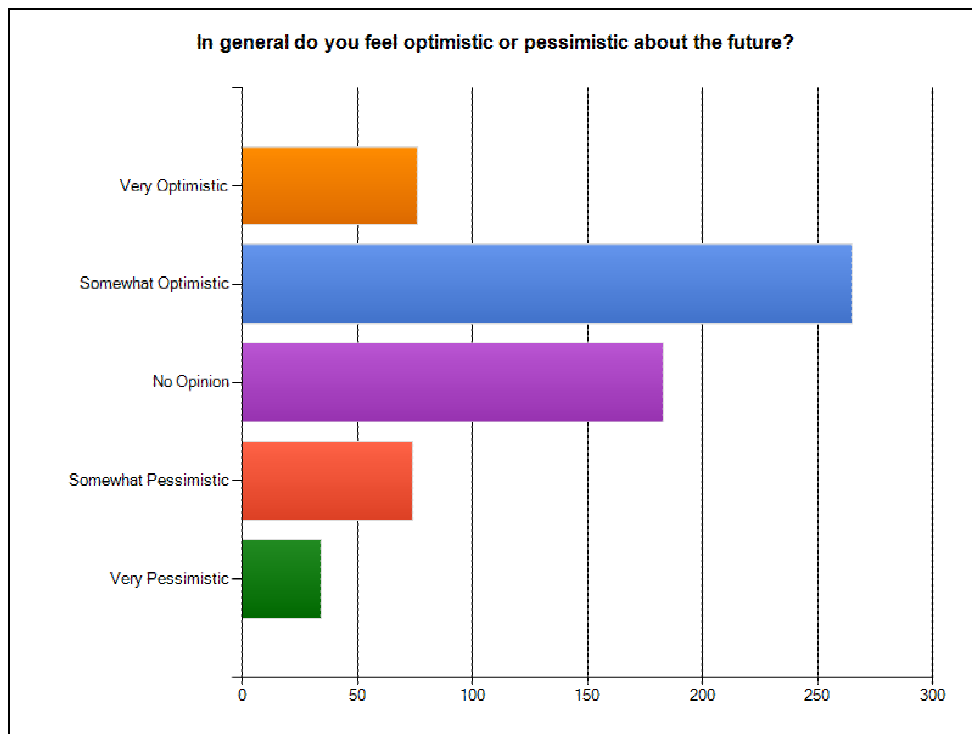
Why a Youth Poll

Everyone is used to debate and discussion about "the current economic climate". In such debate we often hear about the needs of future generations about how decisions made to day will affect those in years to come. However we rarely hear directly form young people about what they think. This poll is a join venture between Youth Work Ireland and Voices of Youth, a youth led media group which we facilitate.

The poll attempts to address the absence of young voices form the economic debate to some degree. The Poll was designed in consultation with young people and they have also contributed to the process and are available to comment on it. We surveyed xxx young people between the ages of 12 and 18 all around Ireland. These are their views!

General, Confidence & Trust

In general those surveyed felt more optimistic (54%) than pessimistic (17%) about the future, while 29% had no opinion. A small majority say that they have not been affected by the current economic crisis. Young People were almost evenly divided about their future job prospects with 50% expressing confidence in this area. Marginally more of those surveyed felt confident about their future quality of life (55%).

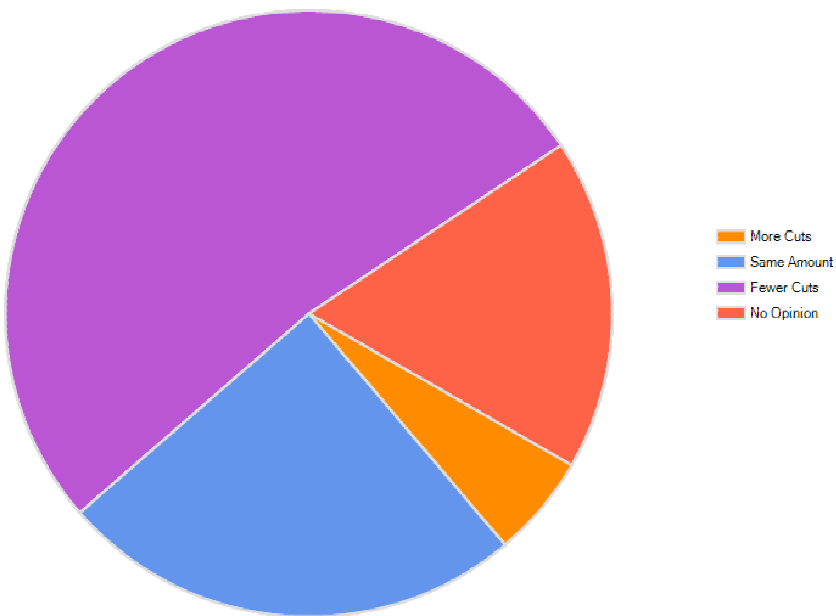


However politicians and the Government receive a huge vote of no confidence with over 83% saying they did not trust politicians with their future and nearly 74% saying they did not feel the Government cared about young people or their future

Cuts

Fifty two per cent of those surveyed want fewer cuts for young people and nearly 70% of young people feel they are taking more than their fair share of cuts. 80% oppose the re-introduction of third level fees.

Do you think that there should be more, less or the same amount of cuts for young people?



Over 78% feel there are fewer opportunities for them in the recession with nearly 85% feeling there are less apprenticeship opportunities and nearly 82% work experience opportunities. Just under 65% feel there are more opportunities to volunteer however.

Just over 50% have been directly affected by cuts in education, approximately a third have been affected by cuts in housing. Nearly 44% have been affected directly by unemployment in their family and 18% by emigration. Just under 30% have lost a temporary or part time job while over 60% cannot get one. Some 44% have experienced the closure of a facility for young people in their area.

Over 50% report fewer opportunities for sports and recreation in their schools and over 41% less opportunities for ICT work in school. Thirty seven and 38% respectively report less subject choice and less maintenance of schools.

Needs and the Future

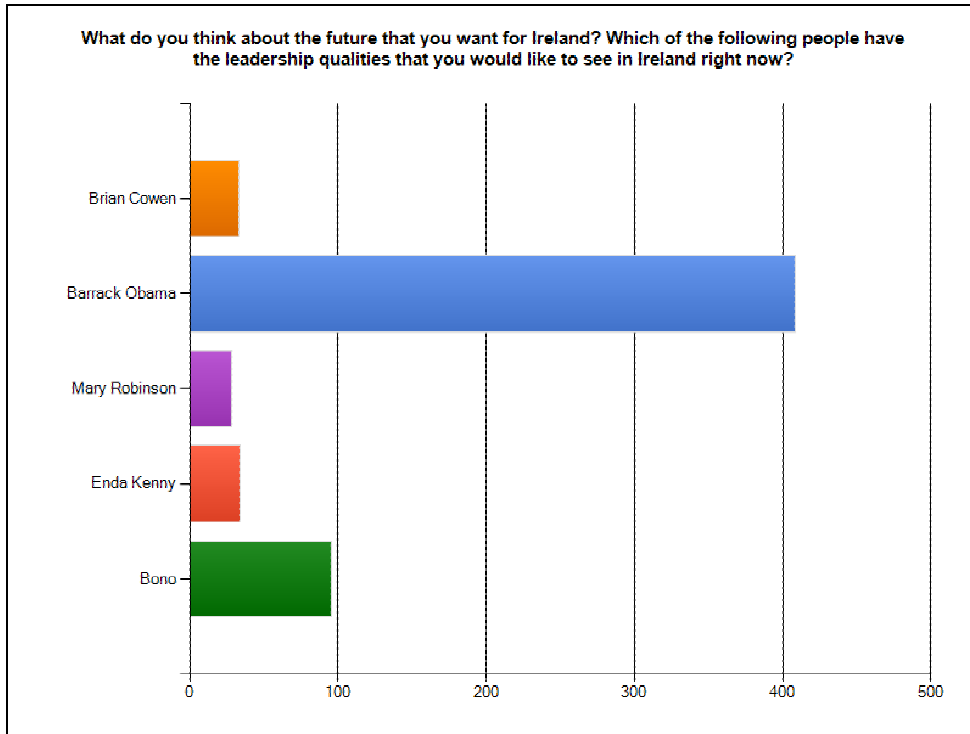
When given three options about their own needs the following were the views of those who expressed an opinion

The young people surveyed saw an increased need for a range of services particularly advice and information on jobs, training and education (over 90%) Those who saw the need for the same or increased services came to over 85% for all the options including youth clubs, drop in centres and counselling.

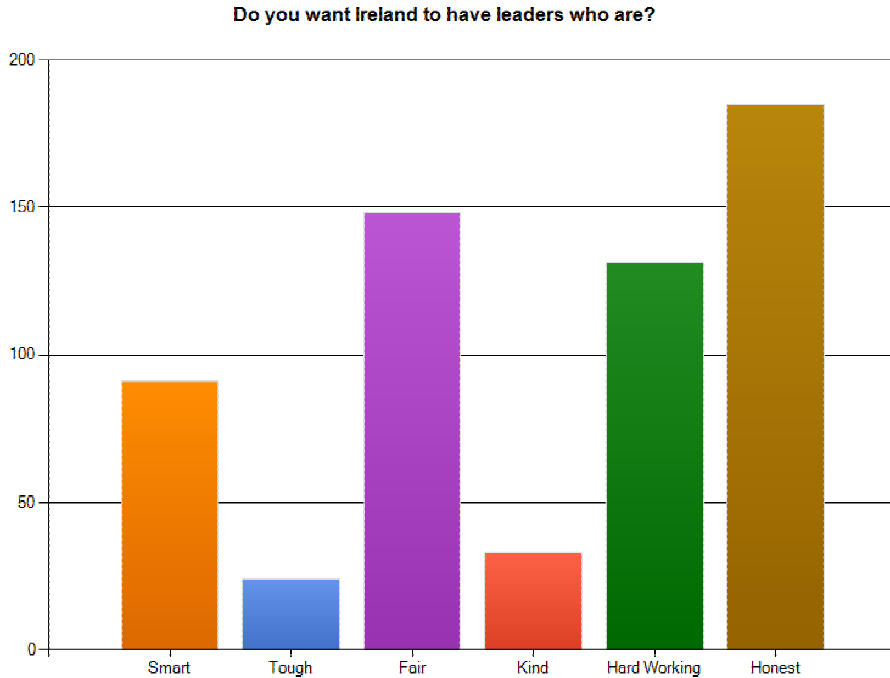
Those surveyed were asked about how the economic situation would affect their future plans. Just over 55% said it would impact on their future plans with just over 50% saying they would stay in education longer and 46% reporting they would change the type of course or education they would undertake.

Over 58% expect to experience unemployment in their future with 49% envisaging emigration. Only 26% say they will not be affected in any way.

We asked the survey group about the type and style of political leadership needed to get Ireland out of its problems. Firstly we asked about the leadership qualities displayed by named figures. When given three options about their own needs the following were the views of those who expressed an opinion



Honesty (30.2%) was the characteristic most sought in a leader with toughness (3.9%) least



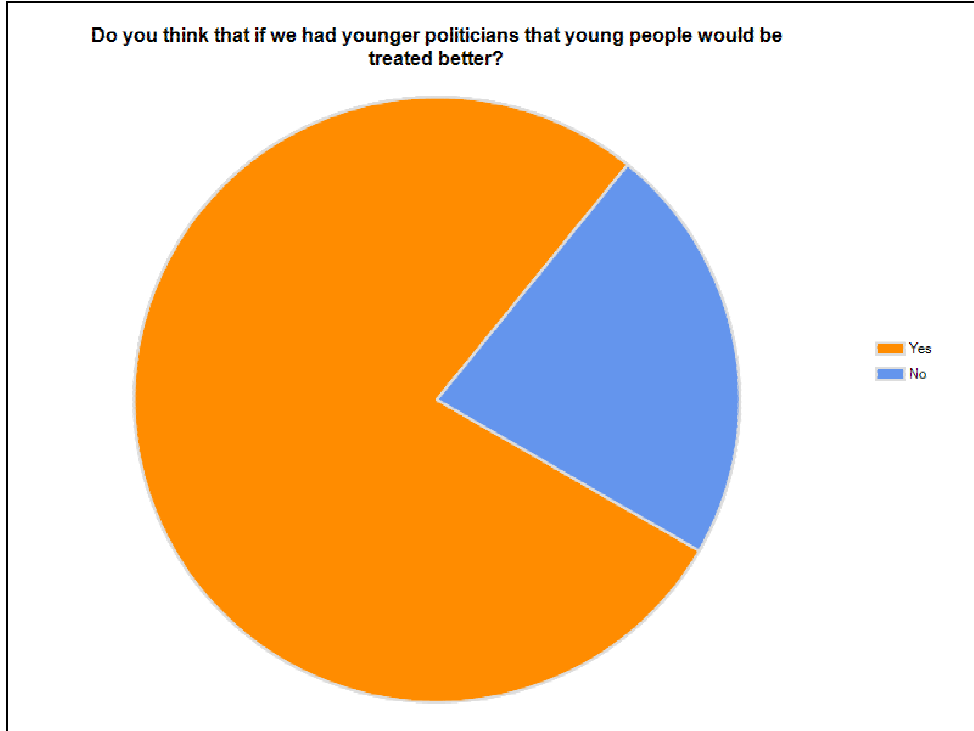
Asked to rank various statements on a 1-10 basis of importance, the following were the general feelings on the future of the country;

Future Country...	% Low Importance	% Medium Importance	% High Importance
Highly educated	8	14	79
Equitable - wealth evenly distributed	14	19	68

Lot's of money - not necessarily shared	47	26	28
A Good Environment	9	19	72
Rich in Culture and Arts	15	30	56
Healthy	6	8	86

This question shows a very strong importance attached to health and education.

Over ¾ of the young people surveyed do not feel their voice is heard by government and an even higher amount (77.5%) feel their voice would be better heard if there were more young politicians.



We then asked our survey group to rate the influence on Government policy of a number of groups in society;

Group	% Believe Low Influence	% Believe Medium Influence	% Believe High Influence
Teachers	24	38	38
Business	12	28	60
Voluntary Groups	46	28	26
Young People	55	19	26
Farmers	37	33	31
Property Developers	16	30	54
Unions	12	25	63
The Banks	12	12	76

Those surveyed saw voluntary groups and young people as having low influence and banks, unions and business having high influence.