A summary of the views of children and young people on their vision for Ireland
Achoimre ar thuairimí leanaí agus daoine óga ar a bhfís d’Éirinn

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) conducted consultations with children aged 8–12 and young people aged 13–18 on the theme ‘Imagining Our Future’, as part of the Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme. 215 children and young people from around Ireland took part in the consultations during 2015. In selecting children and young people for the consultations, DCYA worked with the Irish Primary Principals Network, Comhairle na nÓg, and organisations that represent seldom-heard children and young people.

Chuaigh an Roinn Leanaí agus Gnóthai Óige (RLGÓ) agus an Roinn Ealaíon, Oideachta agus Gaeltachta (REOG) i gcomhair leis an leanaí idir 8 mbliana agus 12 bliain d’aois agus daoine óga idir 13 bliana agus 18 mbliana d’aois faoin téarma ‘Ár dTodhcháil a Shamhiltú’ mar chuid d’Éire 2016: Clár Comórtasa Céad Bliain. Oírléac 215 páiste agus duine óg as gach ceann d’Éirinn páirt sa chomhairliúcháin le linn 2015. Agus iad ag roghnú leanaí agus daoine óga le haghaidh na gcomhairliúcháin, doigh RLGÓ le Lionra Príomhoidi Bunscolle na hÉireann, Comhairle na nÓg, agus eagraíochtaí a dhéanann ionadaíocht do leanaí agus daoine óga nach fhaisgheann éiseacht i gcónaí.

At the consultations, the children and young people were asked to discuss the things they like about Ireland, the things they dislike, and the things they would like to change. They also gave their views on how to commemorate the children who died in the 1916 Rising. They were informed that their views would be compiled in a report presented to the President and representatives of Government at today’s event.

Creative and age-appropriate consultation methods were used so that the children and young people could freely discuss their views. At the end of each consultation, they voted on their top likes, dislikes and changes.

Sna comhairliúcháin, iaradh ar na leanaí agus na daoine óga plé a dhéanann ar na rudái is maith leo faoi Éirinn, na rudái nach maith leo, agus na rudái ar mhaithe leo a athrú. Thug siad a dtuairimí freisin faoin mbéalach leis na leanaí a fuair bás le linn Éirí Amach 1916 a thabhairt chun cuímhne. Cuireadh in iúl dóibh go gcuirfí a dtuairimí san áireamh i dtuarascáil a thabharfar don Uachtarán agus d’iondaidh na Rialtais ag ócáid an lae inniu.

Baineadh úsáid as modhanna comhairliúcháin a bhí cruthaitheach agus oiriúnach d’aois na rannpháirtithe lonas go mbeadh na leanaí agus na daoine óga in ann a gcuid dearthai a phlé go hoscailte. Ag deireadh gach comhairliúchán, vótáil siad do na rudái is mó a thaitin leo, nár thaitin leo, agus a bha mhaithe leo a athrú.
Top issues from the consultations

In discussing what they like about Ireland, both the children and the young people spoke of their pride and love for Ireland – its beauty, language, history, culture, sports, dancing and the warmth of its people. Both age groups like the inclusivity and the sense of community that they experience living in Ireland. The younger children also like that Ireland is a free and equal country with a green environment.

On the things they dislike about Ireland, younger children spoke about drugs, alcohol abuse, smoking, racism, suicide, bullying and toxic waste. The stereotypical image of Ireland abroad was also a top dislike.

Teenagers most frequently disliked aspects of the education system, including the Leaving Certificate points system and exam pressure. They also strongly disliked the negative stereotyping of teenagers, discrimination, inequality, homophobia and bullying. They spoke about the poor supports for mental health and called for an end to the level of suicide.

The top things that both children and young people want the government to change include homelessness and poverty. Younger children also voted for the need to do something about racism, bullying, obesity and smoking. Teenagers are very unhappy with the Leaving Certificate points system, which was described as putting pressure on young people and forcing them to make career choices at a very young age. They also spoke of the need for the government to address the lack of facilities for physical and mental health.

Below are quotes on the top likes and top changes voted by children and young people who took part in the consultations.

Ar na rudai is mó atá leanai agus daoine óga ag iarraidh ar an rialtas a athrú tá easa díline agus an bhochtaineacht. Vótálaí na leanai níos óige freisin go ndéanaf rud éigin faoi chinnios, bulalocht, otracht agus caimeann tobac. Tá déagóirí an-mhíshásta le córas pointí na hArdeistímiseachta. Dúirt siad go gcuireann sé brú ar dhaoine óga agus go dtugann sé orthu cinnti a théannaimh faoina ngairm ag aois an-óg. Luaidh siad freisin gur gá don rialtas aghaidh a thabhairt ar an easpáálseanna don stáitínte húsiciúil agus mheabhrach.

Seo thios roinnt tuairimí faoi na rudai is móis is maith leis an leanaí agus na daoine óga a ghlac páirt sa chombhairlíucháin, agus na rudai is mó a ba mhaith leo a athrú.
**WHAT WE LIKE ABOUT IRELAND**

- We like that all children in Ireland can go to school.
- ’Is maith linn gur féidir le gach leanbh in Éirinn freastal ar an scoil.’
- We love that our culture is very strong.
- ’Tá lúcháir orainn go bhfuil cultúr lídheir againn.’
- Old, empty houses should be fixed up — could be used to help homeless people.
- ’Ba chóir go mbeadh ni os lú riomhairí agus idirliomhann agus ni os mó ac a chlochta.’
- ’I’d like to change obesity in Ireland — there should be less computers and internet and more getting active.’

**WHAT WE WANT TO CHANGE ABOUT IRELAND**

- We want to change smoking — there should be certain outside places where people can smoke because it can kill! Not everybody likes smelling your smoke!
- ’Ba mhaith liom dá bhfeadh sibhce Nhàití a bhí i gceann dhá chuid an chéad domhain, a bhfuil go leor leor bainte amach aici.’
- ’The air is fresh and safe to breathe. We have a green environment.’
- ’Tá an t-aer agus sábháilte. Táimpeallacht ghlas againn.’
- ’Stop poverty and homelessness by creating more jobs for people with no college education.’
- ’Cuir deireadh le bochtaineacht agus as an easpag díothu, trí tuleadh poist a chruthú do dhaoine gan oléidh, has triú leibhéal.’

**NA NITHE IS MAITH LINN FAOI ÉIRINN**

- ’In 100 years we have come from so little to a huge world country that has achieved amazing things.’
- ’Le 100 bliain arna duine d’aois díth a bhí ar an mbeagán go féidir le cumhacht agus go leor bainte amach.’
- ’In Éirinn táimid slán ó chogaidh.’
- ’We are the first country to vote for gay marriage.’
- ’Is muid an chéad tír a nóilte ar son phósadh ’omnghnés.’
- ’Everyone is friendly.’
- ’Tá daoine cairdeilte.’

**TUAILRIMÍ Ó PHÁISTÍ IDIR 8-12 BHLIAIN D’AOIS**

- ’The air is fresh and safe to breathe. We have a green environment.’
- ’Tá an t-aer agus sábháilte. Táimpeallacht ghlas againn.’
- ’Stop poverty and homelessness by creating more jobs for people with no college education.’
- ’Cuir deireadh le bochtaineacht agus as an easpag díothu, trí tuleadh poist a chruthú do dhaoine gan oléidh, has triú leibhéal.’

**RUDAÍ AR MIAN LINN A ATHRÚ IN ÉIRINN**

- ’I’d like to change smoking — there should be certain outside places where people can smoke because it can kill! Not everybody likes smelling your smoke!’
- ’Ba mhaith liom dá bhfeadh sibhce Nhàití a bhí i gceann dhá chuid dhá chuid domhain, a bhfuil go leor leor bainte amach aici.’
- ’The air is fresh and safe to breathe. We have a green environment.’
- ’Tá an t-aer agus sábháilte. Táimpeallacht ghlas againn.’
- ’Stop poverty and homelessness by creating more jobs for people with no college education.’
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**TUAILRIMÍ Ó PHÁISTÍ IDIR 8-12 BHLIAIN D’AOIS**
WHAT WE LIKE ABOUT IRELAND
- QUOTES FROM 13-18 YEAR-OLDS
NA NITHE IS MAITH LINN FAOI ÉIRINN
- TUAIMI Ó DHEÁGOIRÍ IDIR 13-18 MBLIANA D’AOIS

‘We like Comhairle na nÓg and organisations involving young people in events that affect them, where our voices are appreciated and listened to.’
‘Is maith linn Comhairle na nÓg agus eagsúleacht a thugann díos do dhuine óga bheith pháirtíochta in imeachtaí a bhaineann leó, éit a n-áisteoir lenár dtuaismithe.’

WHAT WE WANT TO CHANGE ABOUT IRELAND
- QUOTES FROM 13-18 YEAR-OLDS
RUDAÍ IS MIAN LINN A ATHRÚ IN ÉIRINN
- TUAIMI Ó DHEÁGOIRÍ IDIR 13-18 MBLIANA D’AOIS

‘There is too much focus on the academic, and the points system puts too much pressure on young people, and SMs choices are made very young.’
‘Tá barrachtaí focail ar chuíreáil acadúil, agus cuireann córas na bpointí barrachtaí bru ar dhuine óga, agus dántar cuínt Nóin SMG ag sois an-óg.’

‘We are proud that we have our own unique language and culture – accents; Gaeilge; Irish dancing; Irish music; bands/sports and GAA; agriculture; humour; food; people; arts; literature; games.’
‘Is cuí bród duine é go bhfuil ar dteanga agus cultúr uathúil féin aigeann – tuinseanna caite ar Ghaeilge; damhna Bealcha has ciúil/benáció san spirtiachta Ghaeilge agus CLG; tábhachtach; greann na daoine na haela; litriocht; cliúcha.’

‘Poverty and homelessness need to be addressed.’
‘Ní mór aghaidh a thabhairt ar an mbochtaisneacht agus easpa chiúin.’

‘More DARE opportunities (Disability Access Route to Education) are needed.’
‘Tá gá le tuilleadh deiseanna DARE (Baisceacht Ríoga ar Cídeachas do Dhaonáisi do Mhíchuiséal).’

‘Mental illness needs to be treated like a physical illness. There should be free facilities, free treatments and free counselling.’
‘Ní mór caithseadh le meabhairghalar ar nós tínnis fhísiciúil. Be cheart go mbeadh éiseanna, cóireal agus combhríocaireacht shaor in aice ar fail.’