

Welfare Schemes: Between precarity and workfare

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Outline:



1. Schemes & schemers: Governing the labour market
2. Qualitative Interviews
3. Set-Cia

Schemes & Schemers:

Governmentality and the Labour market



(iv) For the Tax-Payer

To ensure that each person in receipt of job-seeker payment fulfils their personal responsibility to engage fully with the employment and training supports provided by the State, as a pre-condition for receipt of their welfare payments.

This will contribute to the Department of Social Protection meeting its target of achieving control savings on expenditure on welfare payments of which a significant proportion is expected to be in respect of working age payments.

Together with the 'Action Plan for Jobs' the achievement of these 'Pathways to Work' goals will form a vital component of our national effort of getting Ireland, and its people, back to work.

Societal involvement in the scheme

Rebranding Offices

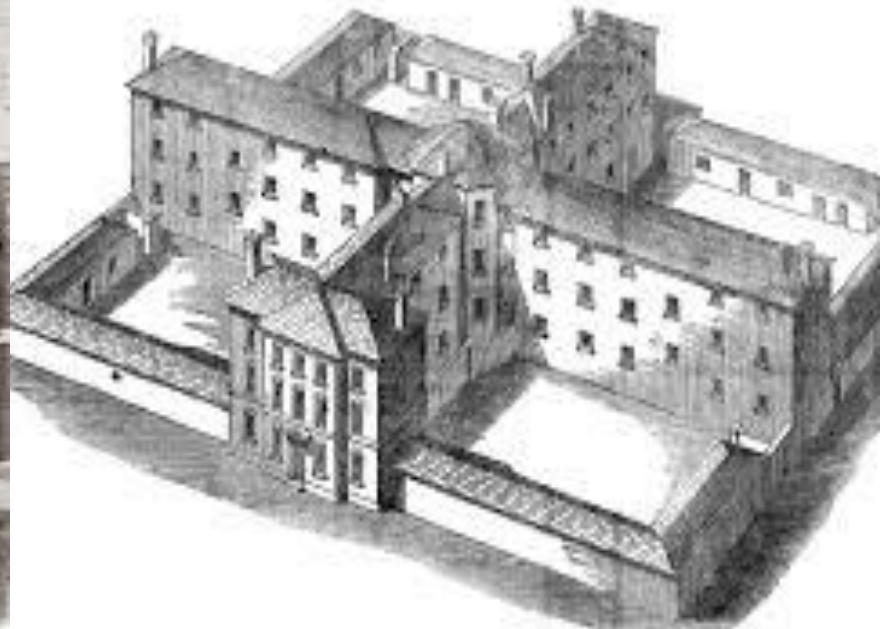
&

Rebranding individuals

The experience of unemployment is governmentally produced by institutions & discourses; turning citizens into 'jobseekers'



Governmentality: Emergence of modes of knowing and shaping the population in states and disciplines, oriented to (re)constituting society in powerful ways. Institutions for surveillance and Discipline, but population wide focus also.(Foucault & co)



Markets are governmentally constituted as spaces of exchange; that is, 'free' choice is permitted and required only within highly organised and regulated zones

Economics considers market activity a ***'mode of veridiction'***, i.e. a way of defining the value of a product or person.

Market activity, however, is shaped by state regulations...



Record of Mutual Commitments

Between: Department of Social Protection and _____ PPSN: _____

The Department of Social Protection is committed to providing comprehensive employment support and income support services to our clients. Our goal is to help our clients in two ways: firstly by providing income support during periods of unemployment; secondly by helping clients to find work. In return we would like you, our client, to commit yourself to work with us as we work to help you. This document records our mutual obligations to each other.

Our Promise to You	Your Promise to Us
<ul style="list-style-type: none">We will do all we can to process claims as quickly and as efficiently as possible.We will pay income support payment(s) as provided for in legislation in an efficient and timely manner.We will work to identify suitable employment, work experience or training/education/personal development opportunities for you.We will work with you to help you prepare your Personal Progression Plan to assist you to take the right steps to employment.We will monitor and review progress against this plan with you.We will meet with you by appointment and give you fair notice of all such appointments.We will treat you with dignity and respect and honour the confidentiality of our relationship with you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I will work to secure employment at the earliest possible opportunity.I will work with the Department to agree my Personal Progression Plan.I will attend meetings to which I am invited by the Department.I will follow up all suggestions and take up any work placement, work experience and/or training/personal development places notified to me by the Department.I will inform the Department immediately if I find work, or if I am no longer available for work.I will treat the staff of the Department with dignity and respect and honour the confidentiality of my relationship with the Department.I will provide the Department with all information requested to assess any claim for income support.I will abide by the Declaration in my Jobseeker's Allowance or Benefit Application Form.

For and on behalf of the Department of Social Protection.

I understand that failure to adhere to my promises above may result in the reduction or withdrawal of any income support payments which would otherwise be due to me and that I could be prosecuted for making a false declaration or withholding information in relation to my claim.

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Your Promise to Us

- I will work to secure employment at the earliest possible opportunity.
- I will work with the Department to agree my Personal Progression Plan.
- I will attend meetings to which I am invited by the Department.
- I will follow up all suggestions and take up any work placement, work experience and/or training/personal development places notified to me by the Department.

Record of ‘Mutual Commitments’:

Shift from ‘market worth’ to institutional coercion and state as handmaiden of employers.

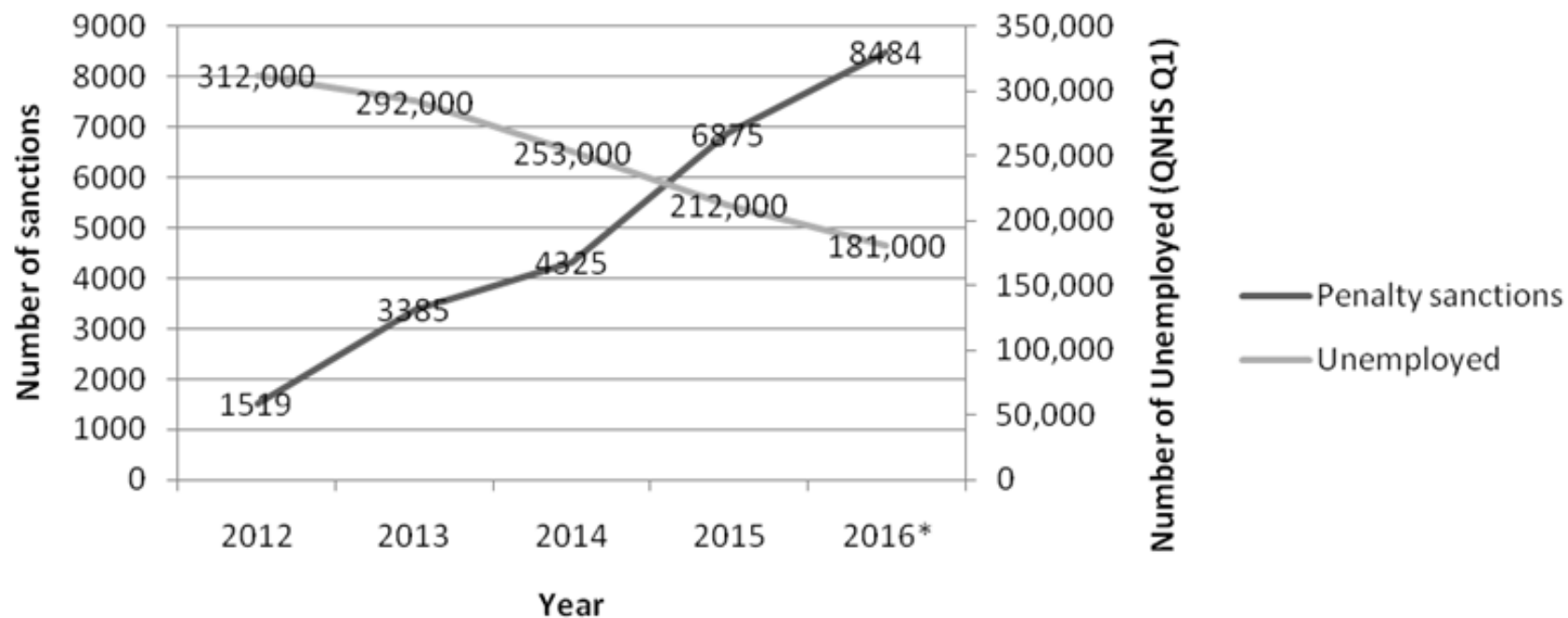




Waterford Un/Employment Research Collaborative

Year	2012	2014	2016
Interviews	16	14	25

Number of unemployed and number of sanctions



Monitoring

Oh yeah, chasing work all the time, and you wouldn't be getting a letter back every time you put in an application for a job, and then the social would be getting on to you , you know, why aren't you applying for jobs and you'd say I applied for this job, this job this job, and they'd say where's your proof, you know. And I don't have it you know.

Before I felt like I was just looking for a job, but now I feel like I'm working for the social welfare officer.

Sanctions & Threats

Well, they funded me for a bit, but then they cut me off for months, and it's only that I went to MABS and MABS got my money re-instated. They cut me off for ages.

Anything that would get you off their register. Some of them don't care obviously what your future is. They're just like well no but you need to be working

I was obligated to go to this interview for a receptionist position like I had to go. Like they told me that eh there's a receptionist interview go to this or we will stop your job seeker benefit or whatever

Un/employment

Int: You said you're not technically unemployed, but then are you really unemployed?

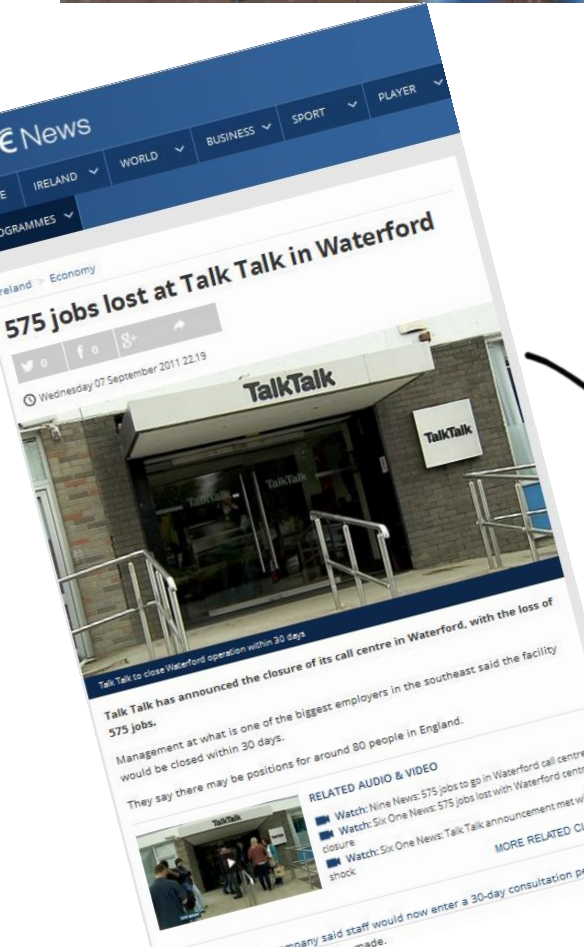
Res: No...no I'm not, I'm not really employed at all. The thing about it is it's quite demoralizing 'cause you're up in the morning and you're waiting for the phone to ring, hoping that a teacher will be absent and the phone will ring at half 7 or 8am. Or 8.30 or 8.45am

Push to precarity

- It was only when a contract came up working with one specific person up there that I was able to apply for that job. But even still today, they still have relief workers with zero hour contract hours.
- You can decide to take the shift or not but if you don't take the shift then you don't get in with the people then if you don't get in with the people or if some of them don't like you then you won't be getting calls very much unless they are desperate and they need you.

Perpetual Schemes

- I worked on that scheme for four and a half years and afterwards I still did not have a job. That was being with an organisation for approximately nine years and at that stage I still didn't get a job.
- I'd have to do 19 and 1/2 hours work every week for an extra twenty quid on top of your dole...and it was...like it was never stated explicitly but you got the impression that you had to do this, you know



State orchestrated enterprise



Narrative:

“we started with 'nine people and a kettle’

“ we had great support because we were doing things... the minister took a personal interest”

“we have almost 680 people in three sites after 2 ½ years”

“Salaries are commensurate with the market rate, in the region of €20,000”

€9.15 p/h, €9.62 after 6 months

Or minimum wage & moving sales bonus targets

“Ais-Witz” > large turnover.



“we think there is a great pool of talent here and there is a great infrastructural set up around the site”

Young jobseekers on €100 pw, (15.5% + ILO rate)

Job dowry, €9,000 per head an open secret,



Ireland follows UK policy...

Rate of sanctions as percentage of ILO measurement of Unemployment (Webster 2016)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Ireland	1.16%	1.71%	3.24%	4.69% *	?
UK	22.02	23.46	18.50	10.58	?

*projected figures.

Consequences?:



Normalisation of precarity

Cascade of schemes

State captured by employers

Distrust of welfare services

Spill-over into health, housing

Scarring of younger workers

Poor fiscal return to state