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## YOUTH POLICY IN INDIA AND IRELAND: THROUGH THE ANALYTICAL LENS OF IAN GOUGH'S FIVE I'S



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### ABSTRACT :

Contemporary policy discourse about young people is frequently trapped in the dichotomous paradigm of simplistically portraying them as either 'a problem' or a 'human resource'. This broadly applies both in Europe and in Asia. However, while significant comparative research on youth, youth work and youth policies has been done within Europe, there is very little research which compares the European and Asian contexts, and there is none to date specifically comparing Ireland and India. Based on recently completed PhD research, this paper explores and compares the youth policies of Ireland

and India through the analytical lens of Ian Gough's (2008) "five I's": industrialization, interests, institutions, ideas and international environment. It examines the major 'factors and actors' that have influenced the historical development of youth policies in both countries and situates these in their broader regional contexts.

**KEYWORDS:** *Youth, Youth Policy, Youth Work and Comparative Research*



### 1. INTRODUCTION :

Young people today live in a globalised society characterised by a wide array of prospects and problems, innovations and challenges, promise and despair. They are confronted with unprecedented progress in connectivity and communication brought about by the Internet revolution, globalisation, new ideologies, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic exchanges between countries and within public and private sector institutions. Poverty and misery in a world of plenty, dependencies of various kinds including Internet addiction, deplorable human rights violations, disaffections and depressions arising from raised expectations and frustrated hopes are distinctive of this age. Young people are a vulnerable

global majority who are influenced by these rapid developments. Their life situations and lifestyles are deeply affected by the various demographic, economic and social changes in the dominant society. This changing pattern among youth generates an intricate and at times conflicting relationship with other members of society, as well as with the state.

In this study, I set out to answer the following research question: What are the similarities and differences between Irish and Indian youth policies and how can these be explained in a socio-scientific context? There are obvious and significant connections between the two countries, stemming not the least from their common colonial experiences. While significant comparative research has been done at the European level in relation to youth, youth work and youth policies, there is very little research that compares the European and Asian contexts, and none specifically pertaining to Ireland and India. It is hoped that the inquiries made through this thesis will raise challenging questions and issues which can be further addressed in both Irish and Indian youth policy contexts and development.

India and Ireland have a long history of political, social, and economic relations. On 26 January 1950, Éamon de Valera was asked to be the guest of honour at a reception in Birmingham to celebrate the declaration of India as a Republic and the organisers' (somewhat emotive) explanation for such an invitation was:

We and the Irish had strong ties of friendship. We suffered under the same tyranny for many centuries. They had the Black and Tans; we had the massacre of Amritsar. They had de Valera and Casement and MacSwiney; we had Gandhi and Nehru and Bose. They had Sinn Féin; we had our National Congress. They had the IRA; we had the INA. It is not only for the smile and the shamrock we know Ireland. It is for the toughness of their leaders and for the rebellion in their hearts (O'Malley, 2010: 10).

The Indian constitution was influenced by the Irish constitution and many of the provisions of the Irish Constitution were incorporated into the new draft (O'Malley, 2011: 149). For example, the Irish Constitution lists the Directive Principles of Social Policy in its Article 45, 45.1 and this provision was reproduced in Article 38, 37 of the 1950 Indian Constitution:

Article 45 of the Irish Constitution stressed: the principles of social policy set forth in this Article are intended for the general guidance of the Oireachtas exclusively, and shall not be cognisable by any court under any of the provisions of this Constitution. The Indian Constitution followed this formula in its Article 37: The provisions contained in this part shall not be enforced by any court, but the principles therein laid down are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the state to apply these principles in making laws (Keane, 2011: 199-200).

In the Indian Yearbook of International Affairs in 1952, O'Normain (1952: 160) wrote that 'perhaps the Irish Constitution's greatest claim to future fame will depend on the extraordinary influence which its Directive Principles had on the Constitution of India'. In the nineteenth century, Ireland and India, though not technically defined as colonies, were both treated as such by Britain. Since the Act of Union of 1800, Ireland was de jure a part of the imperial power, but was de facto a colony and thus simultaneously both the colonised and the coloniser. The concept, developed in the 1860s, of 'governing Ireland according to Irish ideas' was influenced by Indian practice (Foley and O'Connor, 2006: xiii). O'Malley (2011: 145) states that 'Ireland and India had established a mutually beneficial, anti-imperialist relationship during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, one based on their shared colonial histories within the British Empire'. The Ireland-India Council (2010) also asserts that

Irish-Indian relations were mostly built and established during the freedom struggles of the respective countries against a common imperial empire, the United Kingdom. Political relations

between the people of these two countries have largely been based on socio-cultural and moderate political ties; although, since last decade economic ties have also helped to build stronger relations in the present time. Indo-Irish relations were greatly strengthened by luminaries like Jawahar Lal Nehru, Éamon de Valera, Rabindranath Tagore, W. B. Yeats, James Joyce, and, above all, by Annie Besant and Mother Teresa.

Ireland and India have a rich tradition and history related to the development of young people. Though there are geographical, cultural, social and economic variations, this research strives to present a clearer understanding and growth of youth policy development in both countries. Another reason to undertake such a comparative study is, as Hantrais (2003: 8) states, 'to find out more about other cultures, to broaden perspectives and advance knowledge about other systems' and in this case about youth policies in the two countries. As already stated, the central research question for this thesis is as follows: 'What are the similarities and differences between Irish and Indian youth policies and how can these be explained in a socio-scientific context?' The question has been addressed using a combination of key informant interviews and documentary analysis in both Ireland and India.

The present demographic, political, ideological, economic and social changes around the globe affect the life situation, wellbeing and lifestyles of young people in every country. They live in a prolonged and complex period of transition from childhood to youth and to adulthood. Young people need to cope with a longer period of financial dependency and uncertainty over the suitability of their occupational choice in relation to whether it will provide them not only with an income but also full social recognition as an adult member of society (Biggart and Walther, 2006: 41). In general, young people are trapped in the dichotomous paradigm of being simplistically portrayed either 'as a problem' or 'as a human resource'. It is often stated that young people's opinions are overlooked in the public policy sphere. Often, because their voices are not heard, the concerns or opinions of youth never reach the top of the political agenda (United Nations, 2004). A greater knowledge and understanding of present-day youth and youth policies are of paramount importance for researchers, policy makers, practitioners and others who work for and with young people.

## **2. Conceptual Framework: Comparative Youth Policy**

A major objective of international comparative studies is to discover the differences and similarities in issues concerning youth within societies, cultures or social systems. A further aim is to acquire a better knowledge and understanding of one's own society and culture by taking an 'external' reference point. Many governments have engaged in joint efforts to improve young people's lives and to involve them at all levels of decision-making on issues that impact on them. There is, for instance, a continuous struggle in Europe and in Asia to develop and to identify youth-related indicators that may become the subject of comparative studies. However, comparing youth policies in Europe and Asia is very challenging because of the immense diversity in culture, political systems, conditions of young people, concepts of youth and conceptualisation of youth policy. This chapter seeks to define and to contextualise the youth policies of Ireland and of India by offering a comparison between the two countries.

Ian Gough's model of social policy-making, based originally on a study of the revenue system in welfare states, provides a useful conceptual framework for pursuing a comparative study on the youth policies of India and Ireland. A detailed study of the "five I's" model will therefore be presented in this chapter, with a specific focus on youth and youth policy.

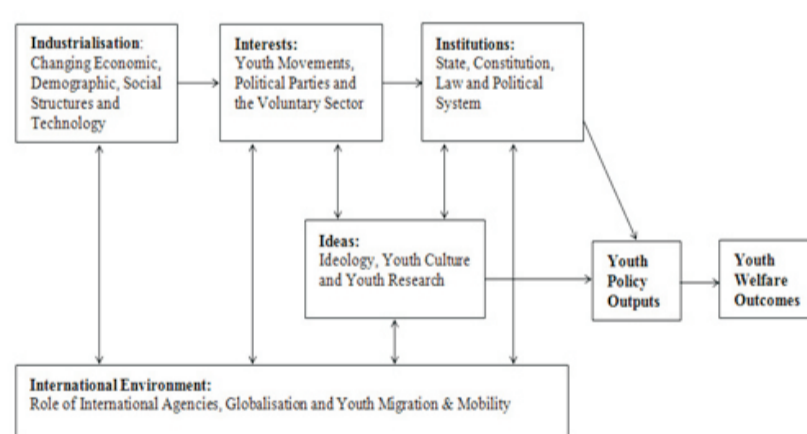
**Ian Gough's "Five I's" and the Youth Context**

The "five I's" Gough (2008: 44) included in his social policy-making model are as follows: industrialisation, interests, institutions, ideas and international environment. Youth policy comes under the broad umbrella of social policy and therefore Gough's model of social policy-making is used as a conceptual framework to compare youth policy in Ireland and in India. The uniqueness of my research is that in drawing on Gough's "Five I's", along with some additional sub-categories that are used as an analytical lens to look at the factors and actors that influence youth policy in Ireland and in India, Gough's model moves beyond the European context and is, therefore, highly suitable for my research.

The reason why I chose this particular framework is because in the course of my research I discovered many different models used for comparative study including Esping-Andersen (1990) whose welfare regime model (liberal, conservative, social democratic) is applicable only in the European context. Based on his approach, Walther (2006), Pohl and Walther (2007), Wallace and Bendit (2009) and the Instituto di Ricerca (IARD, 2001) report on the 'state of young people and youth policy in Europe' identify different youth policy regimes which are also used in the European context. These welfare regimes may be re-labelled according to the most important characteristics of youth policies such as the universalistic model, the community-based model, the protective model and the centralised model.

Gough's framework is not used to prove or test any theory but is rather used as an analytical lens for comparative purposes. The sub-categories under each of the "Five I's" are not exhaustive and additional ones may be added. As shown in the figure below under each of the "five I's" the sub-categories are only minutely modified from their original formulation. All of the "five I's" are interrelated and influence each other as indicated by the arrows. These different factors and actors influence the institution (state) to formulate policies and legislation (output) and to create a better and safer environment for the well-being (outcome) of the young people. An adapted version making reference to youth policy is provided in Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1: A Simple Model of Youth Policy Making**



Each dimension in this model is discussed in more detail below.

The research is a descriptive and explanatory study which utilizes a qualitative method to gather in-depth information about the understanding of youth policies of Republic of Ireland and Republic of India. This method has proved to be appropriate for this research to address the research question. It

helped to compare the factors and actors that influence the youth policies in Ireland and India. It should be noted that there is very little comparative study done on youth policy between Ireland and India. In this comparative research, the researcher does not attempt to measure or count but rather attempts to explore the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of (Berg and Lune, 2012: 3) youth policies of Ireland and India.

### Measures and Methods

In order to achieve the objectives of the research, the following leading question is posed: 'What are the similarities and differences between Irish and Indian youth policy and how can these be explained in a socio-scientific context?' To realise the objective of the main question, it is further split into nineteen sub-questions under "five I's". For the purposes of this study, I have selected the qualitative research approach. This approach does not commence with a prior hypothesis to be tested and proved but with a focus of inquiry that takes the researcher on a voyage of discovery as it takes an inductive approach to data analysis, and research outcomes are not broad generalizations but contextual findings; qualitative researchers tend to speak of 'transferability' (from context to context) rather than generalizability.

In this comparative research, the researcher does not attempt to measure or count but rather attempts to explore the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of (Berg and Lune, 2012: 3) youth policies of Ireland and India. Qualitative research is preferred for the following reasons: it provides the researcher with in-depth knowledge; although this is usually not generalisable, it is more useful for exploring phenomena in specific contexts, articulating participants' understandings and perceptions and generating tentative concepts and theories that directly pertain to particular environments (Schulze, 2003: 12).

This research attempts to find the similarities and differences in youth policy by analysing the data gathered through face to face interviews and the comparison and thematic analysis of documents from both countries. The primary data analysed for this study include (a) the transcripts of 22 key-informants' interviews from India and Ireland and (b) youth policy documents from both countries.

I set out to select a sufficient number of key-informants to ensure that all major constituencies within youth sector in each country were included in particular policy makers, NGO representatives, practitioners and educators of those who work with young people. However, it was also important that the individual participants had sufficient expertise to speak authoritatively on the research topic. I also thought it important that, as far as possible, the sample would have gender balance. As a result of taking the above factors into consideration, researcher achieved a purposive sample of eleven key-informants for each country. There was also a snowball sampling element in my selection of key-informants because some respondents recommended other possible interviewees.

The primary policy documents selected for analysis in this thesis are those which specifically address the needs and circumstances of young people in Ireland and India. These are expressly named as such and are presented in the table below. In the case of Indian national youth policy, my analysis was initially of the draft version published in 2012. The final version which included number of changes was published in 2014.

**Table 2.1: The Primary Policy Documents: Ireland and India**

Irish Policy Documents		Indian Policy Documents	
<i>Year</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Description</i>
1977	A Policy for Youth and Sports	1951	First Five Year Plan (1951-1956)
1980	Development of Youth Work Services in Ireland	1975	Fifth Five Year Plan (1975-79)
1983	Shaping the Future: Towards a National Youth Policy - A Discussion Paper	1980	The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85)
1984	National Youth Policy Final Report	1985	Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90)
1985	In Partnership with Youth: the National Youth Policy	1988	National Youth Policy 1988
1977	A Policy for Youth and Sport	1997	Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002)
2001	The Youth Work Act	2002	Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007)
2003	National Youth Work Development Plan 2003-2007	2003	National Youth Policy 2003
2006	Report on the Youth Justice Review	2012	Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12)
2010	National Quality Standards Framework (QSF)	2012	Exposure Draft National Youth Policy
2013	National Quality Standards for Volunteer-led Youth Groups	2014	National Youth Policy 2014

The secondary materials analysed are books and articles related to the topic. In this study the researcher analysed the data in order to come up with findings that meet its objectives. In this study the emphasis was not just in what key-informants were saying but in the way that they were saying it. Judgement and interpretive skills were used throughout the whole process of interviewing. Policy documents also were considered as an important source for the qualitative data analysis. The document analysis involved 'skimming (superficial examination), reading (through examination), and interpretation' (Bowen, 2009: 32). In this research youth-policy documents have gone through the above mentioned three steps to answer the research question. The data from interviews and documents were analysed together, which helped in the emergence of themes. In this research documentary evidence is combined with the interviews 'to minimise bias and establish credibility' (ibid: 38).

### 3. Comparing and Contrasting Youth Policy in Ireland and India

Young people are an integral part of society, a major resource and a key agent for social change, economic development and technological innovation. Their imagination, ideals, energies and vision are essential for the continuing development of the societies of which they are members. Youth workers, social scientists, educationists, policy makers and NGOs have an important role in enabling young people and creating an environment for active participation. There is a need to continue to create a space for all those who work with young people, and who take decisions affecting young people's lives, to be more reflective in their approach and to challenge themselves to involve young



people actively in all areas of social life. The formulation and implementation of integrated, cross-sectoral youth policies with a long-term vision developed in collaboration with young people is an indispensable task for every country. Young people can only commit themselves to active participation and full integration in society when they find 'enabling' environments for the fulfilment of their civic potential and when their actual needs and conditions are taken into account. It is hoped that this exploratory comparison of India and Ireland can help to throw some light on the ways in which youth policies have evolved in different contexts and on how they might best develop in the future.

Using Ian Gough's "Five I's" as a lens to analyse youth policy development in the two countries under consideration, this section summarises the main points of comparison and contrast under each of the five headings. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 present these points in more condensed form.

Figure 3.1: Factors shaping Irish youth policy

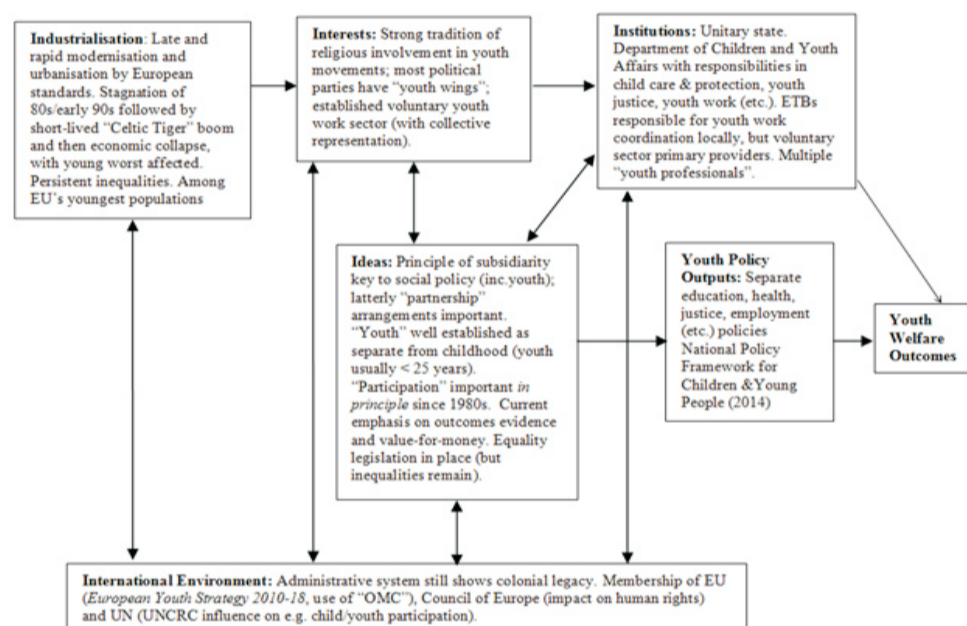
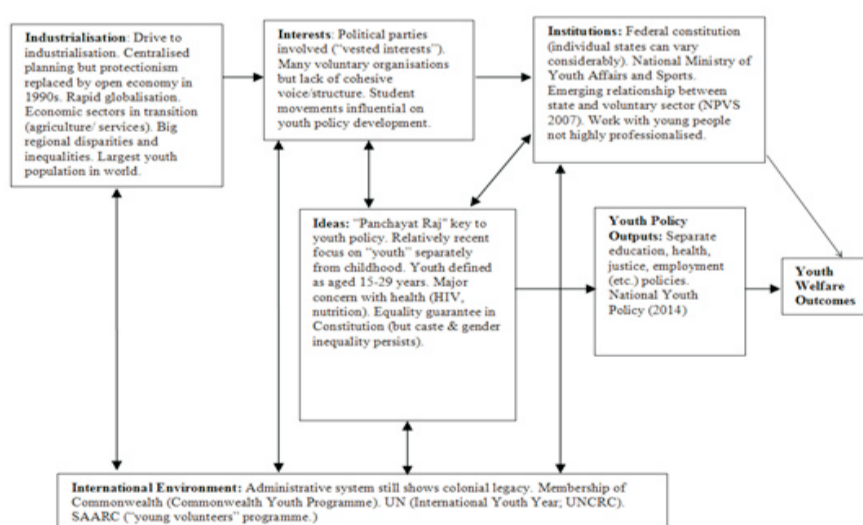


Figure 3.2: Factors shaping Indian youth policy



### Industrialisation

Despite obvious differences of size, culture and location, it can be seen that India and Ireland have both undergone very significant economic transitions in recent decades. Ireland's period of 'modernisation' is generally said to have decisively begun only in the late 1950s – later than most of western Europe - with an opening up of the economy to international investment and global trade. Implications for the education system and therefore for young people's position in society followed immediately after, and along with economic trade came increased cultural exchange and a marked increase in diversity. When economic success finally arrived in the 1990s with the 'Celtic Tiger', young people acquired greatly enhanced opportunities in education, employment and leisure, but when that success proved to be short-lived and was followed by economic collapse, young people paid the highest price. As in previous recessions, the impact has been particularly severe on some young people. Clear patterns of class inequality remain and in some cases have worsened, while gender inequality also continues but has a more complex character (showing improvements for young women in some respects). Throughout recent decades, Ireland's youth population was high by European standards: in the 1980s half of the population was under 25 and the country continues to have one of the youngest populations in the EU. In the event that economic success returns this may prove to be a 'demographic dividend', but one way or the other the link between economy and demography has been an important influence on Irish youth policy for several decades, and will continue to be.

The same is true of India, which has the largest youth population in the world. India embarked on a drive to modernise and industrialise after independence, but with a centrally planned economic model (partly Soviet inspired) and, like Ireland, a protectionist and isolationist approach for many decades. The move to an open economy in 1991 was akin to Ireland's in 1958 and the consequences were similar in terms of a massive increase in the globalisation of Indian society, reflected among urban youth in particular. India is still very much in transition economically, as Ireland was some years ago, with more than half of all workers still employed in agriculture and related occupations but with the services sector already accounting for more than half of GDP (up from 15% in 1950) (Quandl, 2013). There have also been enormous developments in the Indian education system in line with the changes in economic policy, and as in Ireland the place of the English language within the education system and in society more broadly has been key to attracting foreign capital. But while the vast majority of children of primary school age are enrolled in school, second level enrolment remains at less than 50% and progression to third level is about 20%. When we compare these figures with Ireland, which has more than 90% completing second level and almost 60% attending third level, it is clear how the structure of youth transitions remains different in the two countries. The differences are even greater when factors such as caste, gender, region and religion are taken into account. While child poverty remains a serious concern in Ireland, the extent and severity of child poverty in India is much greater, and child labour is also still widespread. All these matters are in turn reflected in the priorities identified within youth policies.

### Interests

Given their shared historical link with the British Empire and their experience of colonisation, it is not surprising that in both India and Ireland nationalist ideas, and nationalist political movements, have had an impact on youth movements and youth policies. Major religious denominations have also been important interest groups in shaping debate about youth and responses to young people's needs, although the religious diversity has been much more marked in India than in Ireland. In both cases too, religion and political 'interests' have frequently overlapped.

The voluntary or non-governmental 'youth sector' has been a key interest group, particularly in the field of youth work, and particularly in Ireland where the voluntary organisations come together under an umbrella body (National Youth Council of Ireland) that gained formal recognition as a representative voice for the sector under the Youth Work Act 2001 (religious and political organisations are among its members but there are many other generalist and specialist youth organisations). India also has a Committee of Youth Organisations (ICYO, with almost 400 members) but it does not have the formal recognition or role that NYCI does. This reflects the more general fact that the idea of 'civil society' is less well developed in India than in Ireland. The Indian National Youth Policy 2014 itself describes the non-governmental stakeholders in youth policy as 'small and fragmented' (Government of India, 2014: 16).

### Institutions

An obvious difference between the two countries is that while India has a federal constitution with 28 states (each with its own government) and seven union territories, Ireland is a unitary state. This means there is much more variability within India in all areas of social policy and administration than there is in Ireland. Also because of the massive difference between the two countries in population and territory, there is a difference of scale in how all institutions operate. Therefore, while there is a national ministry responsible for youth in both countries, there is a difference in the extent to which its policies or plans might be expected to be implemented at local level. Also, while in the case of India youth affairs shares a ministry with sport, in Ireland there is now (since 2011) a full Department of Children and Youth Affairs overseen by a full cabinet minister and intended to integrate a wide range of policies and services for children and young people (early years; child care, protection and welfare; youth justice; educational welfare; family support; child and youth participation; youth work and others). This move towards integration can clearly be seen in the fact that the review and extension of the National Children's Strategy has resulted in the first ever National Policy Framework for Children and Young People (Government of Ireland, 2014), designed not just to include the responsibilities of the DCYA but to apply on a 'whole-of-government' basis.

As stated earlier, a National Youth Policy has also been published in 2014 by the Indian Ministry for Youth Affairs and Sports, with five major objectives and eight priority areas. However it recognises that 'keeping in mind the diversity of the country...each state should also enunciate its own State Youth Policy' and it goes on to say that 'consistent with the suggestion made in earlier Policy documents...[it] advocates the establishment of a coordinating mechanism at the Centre and state levels' (Government of India, 2014: 76). The Irish Policy Framework, on the other hand, sets out such a coordinating mechanism from the outset. Whether the policy actions and objectives are pursued and implemented in practice, however, remains to be seen in both cases.

An important institutional difference is the role of the voluntary sector, already referred to above. Because of the history of the principle of subsidiarity in Irish social policy, which subsequently evolved into a 'partnership' approach (recently under pressure) in a range of areas of social and economic policy, the non-governmental sector has always had a strong role in the Irish context. In the case of youth work this is enshrined in the legislation in the definition of voluntary organisations as the 'primary providers' of youth work, with the support of the state. The voluntary sector is much less institutionalised in youth policy and provision in India.

Finally, we have seen that youth work is more institutionalised in Ireland in another sense. It has professionalised much more than is the case in India, as reflected in the number of paid full-time jobs, the increasing number of education and training programmes at third level and the growing demand

from employers that job applicants have a youth work qualification (although this is not a legal requirement). Furthermore, youth work is just one of a number of 'youth professions', or occupations concerned with young people for which staff have been professionally trained, which also include teachers, social workers and care workers, probation officers, adolescent health professionals and so on. India has not travelled so far along this road, which can be related to the point made earlier that 'youth transitions' (associated with mass participation in second-level and increasingly third-level education) have not as yet developed in India to the extent that they have in Ireland and elsewhere in Europe (although they are developing in that direction).

### Ideas

The principle of subsidiarity has already been referred to above as a central principle of Irish social policy, drawing on Catholic social teaching. As discussed earlier in this thesis, the Indian principle of Panchayat Raj can usefully be related to that of subsidiarity, and it too can be seen to have been influenced by Pope Pius XI's Encyclical 'Quadragesimo Anno' as well as Mahatma Ghandi's 'Village Swaraj'. In the 73rd Amendment to the Indian Constitution in 1992 the government made Panchayats (villages) the third tier of the political system after the two-tier system of India: the union government and the state governments (Singh and Goswami, 2010: 3). Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in his Address at the Chief Ministers' Conference on Panchayati Raj on 29 June, 2007, stated that 'the transfer of responsibilities should be on the basis of subsidiarity theory'. Subsidiarity is therefore common to both countries, in the sense of the lower level being supported or 'subsidised', rather than supplanted, by the upper level. However the application has been different in each case. In Ireland subsidiarity in practice meant that voluntary associations and organisations (often affiliated with one or other church) came to play an active part in social policy at both local and national level, and over time contributed to the development of civil society as a partner of government (although not necessarily an equal partner). In India the Panchayats have been, as stated above, a 'third tier' within the political system and it could be argued that this has limited their capacity to develop a strong partnership role (but this is a matter that requires further research).

Also at the level of ideas, there appears to be a difference in the extent to which 'youth' itself has been seen as worthy of separate attention from childhood and adulthood, and separate policy and provision. In Ireland such attention seems to go back further than in India (for example the first explicit statutory intervention in youth work or 'youth welfare' in Ireland dates from the 1940s). Again it is likely that is related to the different patterns and stages of social and economic development in the two countries. The cases of India and Ireland bear out the suggestion that youth as a subject of social and governmental intervention and 'control' is associated with processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and modernisation, and that historically as well as chronologically it follows childhood in this respect.

Other differences in the ideas associated with, and influencing, youth policy in India and Ireland reflect the realities of young people's lives in the two countries. For example there is a more urgent emphasis in India on certain aspects of children's and young people's health (HIV, TB, nutrition). The fact that there are cultural similarities but also differences is reflected in the regular references to substance abuse in policy documents in both countries but far fewer references to alcohol abuse in India than in Ireland. The variability in definitions of 'youth' itself can be seen in the most recent policy documents (an upper age limit of 25 in the case of the Irish Policy Framework, of 29 in the Indian National Youth Policy, and this is down from 35 in the Indian policy of 2003). These differences are broadly in keeping with different approaches to, and definitions of, youth in the northern and southern hemispheres (Tyyskä, 2005).

Finally there are different approaches to equality in the two countries and this has a bearing on the situation of different groups of young people, and policies that impact on them. India has had an 'equality guarantee' in its Constitution since independence which includes 'religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth or any of them'. As the European Commission has observed, 'while this is unique in covering caste, notably absent from this list are disability, sexual orientation and age' (European Commission, 2012: 6). There have been conflicting legal decisions in India in recent years with regard to whether sexual orientation should be covered by the equality provisions. In Ireland, the constitutional provisions on equality are relatively non-specific (Article 40.1 says that 'all citizens shall, as human persons, be held equal before the law') but Equal Status legislation since 2000 has prohibited discrimination on nine grounds which include all the above mentioned categories except caste and place of birth. Significantly, however, its age ground does not apply to persons under 18. In any case, regardless of 'ideas' about equality in constitutional provisions, laws or policy documents, in practice inequalities continue to affect young people in both India and Ireland, in ways discussed above and returned to briefly below.

#### International environment

The fact that the political and administrative systems of both India and Ireland continue to display aspects of their colonial legacy is one way in which they have been influenced by the international context. In the case of India the link with the British Empire continues through its involvement in the Commonwealth of Nations, which has a very active youth programme. It is also part of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The SAARC year of youth was commemorated in 1994. As a result, a youth resolution was adopted with the aim of advancing the overall development of youth in the region through the SAARC Ministerial conference on youth, youth camps and SAARC youth awards. A "youth volunteers' programme" was initiated to enable exchange of volunteers within the SAARC region.

Earlier sections of this thesis indicated how Ireland's membership of a number of international bodies has had an impact on social policy, including youth policy. The most significant current example is perhaps the European Union's 'youth strategy', the Renewed Framework for Cooperation in the Youth Field 2010-2018 (Council of the European Union, 2009), which involves use of the 'open method of coordination' (OMC) to encourage EU member states to set common objectives and work progressively towards their achievement. Among other things this includes a 'structured dialogue' with young people, which the DCYA is now implementing. It is also likely that the youth-specific measures implemented under the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020 will take account of the EU youth strategy. Separately, Ireland's membership of the Council of Europe and the fact that it is subject to the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights has had an important impact on Irish policy and legislation in a range of areas, and on the lives of Irish people of all ages.

Finally, while they are associated with different regional groupings, both Ireland and India are members of the United Nations. This has made a difference in a range of aspects of policy and politics. As in the case of the Council of Europe, the human rights dimension has been a vital consequence of membership. Specifically, the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) are relevant in the current context and the inclusion of youth participation as a key policy objective in India and Ireland, including in the most recent major policy documents, is at least partly attributable to article 12 of the UNCRC. However it is also evident from this research that in practice too many young people in both countries have little or no opportunity to participate in making decisions that affect their life. Many are not even aware of those rights, or the policies and programmes available

to them.

### CONCLUSION

India and Ireland have important things in common. Their shared colonial experience means that there are significant constitutional, political and administrative similarities between the two countries. They have both experienced rapid social, economic and cultural change in a relatively short period of time, meaning that young people are coping with considerable volatility and instability in their lives, which calls for a range of responses in policy and practice. Ireland has travelled further along the road of 'development', but its relatively recent transformation from a primarily agrarian and rural society to an urban and (post) industrial one means that there is still a strong affinity between the two. India contains extraordinary contrasts between subsistence ways of life that have changed little in centuries and hi-tech 'lifestyles' in urban centres that are in the vanguard of cultural and economic globalisation (these contrasts are frequently the subject of popular entertainment in fiction and film). India has always been strikingly diverse; Ireland has never (or not for centuries) been entirely monocultural but the extent of diversity has increased enormously in recent years. Both countries have persistent inequalities, India with a caste system that is notoriously rigid and with gender inequalities that have recently been manifested in ways that are so shocking that they have made headlines globally. Ireland, after years of slow economic growth or stagnation, had a 'Celtic Tiger' boom followed by a profound economic crisis but the nature and extent of socio-economic inequality has remained remarkably entrenched throughout. The discrimination experienced by Travellers appears at times as rigid as the caste system and recent experiences of Roma people in Ireland provides further evidence of deep-seated racism.

Youth work and youth policy have been concerned with addressing some of the most negative features and consequences of such inequalities. There are some strong similarities between the values and ideas that underpin youth policy (and other social policy) responses in the two countries. The role of the voluntary sector is key in both. This thesis has suggested that a fruitful comparison can be made between the principle of subsidiarity in Ireland and that of 'Panchayati Raj' in India, although the latter applies more within the sphere of government (as a 'third tier'). This may be partly why in India there is less emphasis on the role of 'civil society' and no formally recognised forum for youth NGOs to come together whereas 'social partnership' has been central to Irish social policy since the 1980s (although it has recently been undermined). A crucial difference is that youth work in Ireland, despite the continuing contribution of very large numbers of volunteers, has professionalised to a much greater extent than in India and is one of a number of 'youth professions', although not yet perhaps recognised as an equal of the others. The situation regarding professionalisation is itself related to the different patterns of, and stages of, socio-economic development in the two countries as well as to cultural differences. Overall, this thesis suggests that these patterns, and the broader cultures in which they are located, both overlap and diverge in significant ways, and that young people, youth workers and youth policy makers in India and Ireland would have much to gain from further mutual exploration and collaboration.

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