

## Press Release

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### **Junior Chamber Calls on Young People to come out on June 11th**

The Irish Branch of the World's Largest Leadership Development Organisation for young people, Junior Chamber International (JCI), is calling on the young people of Ireland to execute their democratic right and make their vote count in the forthcoming Local and European Elections.

“Young people need to engage their local politicians and express their concerns on the issues affecting them” says JCI Ireland President, Eugene Garvin. “If they don't vote, they will be leaving the electoral outcome to party political and dedicated lobbying interests. The lack of participation by young people in the electoral process is creating a democratic deficit that must be addressed.”



At their annual spring meeting held at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, the National Presidents of Junior Chamber International in Europe expressed their concern at the lack of participation of younger people in the political process. The Junior Chamber organisation in Europe is now urging Governments and European Institutions to undertake concrete action in order to increase the involvement of young people in the political process.

“This is a pan-European phenomenon but the nature of our demographics in Ireland means we have a disproportionate number of young voters relative to our European neighbours. It is critical that our young people recognise the need to participate in the decisions that will determine their future.” Garvin adds “I would also ask those young people who have strong party allegiances to take the time out to make their opinions known to their candidates. Let them know that they can't take your vote for granted – engage them now and make sure they listen to you”.

The Junior Chamber message to the politicians is to take the time to listen and to understand. “We live in a very uncertain time for young people with regard to affordable housing, the environment and global economic and political instability. Quality of life is being sacrificed in the pursuit of continued economic growth and expansion. Let's make sure we are making decisions for the general good and not merely to satisfy minority commercial or ideological agendas”.

As a voluntary and non-political organisation itself, Junior Chamber is asking for young people to:

- take the time out to review their local and European candidates,
- understand their policies and what they stand for,
- engage the candidates on the doorstep or at their clinics and express your views and concerns to them,
- based on your informed judgement, make sure to cast your vote on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

“It’s your vote so make sure you use it and use it well.”

Junior Chamber International Ireland is part of the largest personal and leadership development organisation for young people in the age group of 18-40 in the world - Junior Chamber International. It is a voluntary, non-political organisation that fosters a spirit of entrepreneurship and social responsibility through it's range of activities and projects throughout the country. Further information is available at [www.juniorchamberireland.org](http://www.juniorchamberireland.org).