



2018 Internship Blog

I was presented with the opportunity of applying for the Department of Finance competition in February 2018. From an initial essay submission surrounding the consequences of Brexit on Ireland followed by an interview, I was selected for the internship. Following my completion of an undergraduate in Economics in May, I was excited at the prospect of gaining experience in an economist role and to work alongside likeminded colleagues who shared an enthusiasm and passion for the study of economics.

I was working alongside the economic strategic research department who engage in a range of macro and micro economic research including topical issues such as the property market and the threat of Brexit. Therefore simply through my discussions with colleagues, who were natural experts in their field, I was exposed to the recent developments in their respective areas.

Throughout my time with the department I was presented with varying roles and assignments. My main area of research related to undertaking an analysis of the Irish housing market. More specifically it involved a detailed examination of housing demand and the workforce supply needed to help accommodate housing pressures. Detailed analysis was required when reading various reports and publications from numerous groups in regard to the amount of housing needed to ease these pressures. Following this, I undertook further examination on whether the figures provided could be facilitated with current labour force statistics. Using analysis on unemployment trends, migration over recent years, apprenticeship figures and the projected population growth, I was able to provide feedback on whether the proposed increase in housing numbers were feasible by an accommodating construction workforce supply. Additionally I further examined methods of increasing workforce supply, accompanied by measures introduced worldwide which have helped increase construction productivity and applied these to an Irish context. These include recent developments in areas such as offsite construction, 3-D printing, modular construction, Building Information Modelling (BIM) and possible alternatives to Ireland's housing options. The project involved frequent communication amongst colleagues and outside bodies as part of a quality assurance process.

In addition to this I partook in the preparation of submissions to the Minister for Finance on recent developments in Ireland's external trade figures and the Residential Property Price Index and provided commentary on the observed changes. I provided the Minister with feedback in relation to any questions he may have surrounding the submissions. I also worked on a commuter project which involved analysis of the 5 major cities in Ireland - Dublin, Galway, Limerick, Cork and Waterford. It comprised of a breakdown of unit



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completions over the last number of quarters. Furthermore I provided a detailed breakdown of the Irish finance and exchequer accounts from 1970-2016.

Throughout my time in the Department of Finance I attended events such as the National Economic Forum held in Dublin Castle. This was an interesting event to attend as it discussed various economic concepts and forecasts from experts and representatives across their respective fields. Additionally social events such as the Summer Party and IGEEES party were organised which helped me to socialise across various government sectors.

Overall I would like to thank the Department of Finance for the opportunity provided. My time in the department has been a truly enjoyable one. Albeit relatively brief, it has been a rewarding experience which has allowed me to heighten my knowledge in my field of economics. Furthermore it has been intriguing realising the work which gets undertaken by economists. I have no doubt that the skills I obtained will stand to me for the rest of my career.

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