



*Celebrating 30 years of supporting people into work*



STRONGER TOGETHER

# CONGRESS CENTRES NETWORK

Irish Congress of Trade Unions





## Congress Centres locations



Learning

CERTIFICATE

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PRACTICE



# Foreword

By Sylvia Ryan

Training and Development Co-ordinator of Congress Centres Network



The Congress Centres Network was established in 1985 when the Irish Congress of Trade Unions Youth Employment Committee and FÁS worked together to identify a method of response to mass employment,

This was a Trade Union response to the recession of the 80's but intended for involvement of the entire community. In 1987 Social Welfare schemes and labour activation courses offered by FÁS were promoted through the centres along with education services and recreational facilities.

The network has grown and developed and twenty six Congress Centres exist today throughout Ireland, both North and South.

We currently have a record number of 1.4M client users which reflects the economic downturn experienced from late 2008 to date.

There are approximately 700 participants on Community Employment schemes, 110 participants on Job initiative Schemes and 50 young people attending Local Training Initiatives. These Labour activation schemes are sponsored by the Congress Centres voluntary boards of management, who are also trade council members and nominated by different Trade Unions.

The Board of Management members are volunteers running not-for-profit Centres with the obligations of Employment Law, Health and Safety Law and are responsible for entering into contracts for leases on premises and government contracts.

Board of Management meetings promote collaborations between unions. This is where different union officials can learn and share information at the local level. Local issues are communicated to the Executive Council of ICTU and inform research. The Centres are the shop window for the Trade Union Movement and all the benefits of being a member of a union are promoted and offered within the Centre.

The Centres recruit over 400 people to join Trade Unions on an annual basis. Through CNN Trade Union officials are invited to speak with participants engaged in programmes and explain their rights in the workplace. Centres promote and deliver training offered by Trade Union Skillnets nationwide. Labour Market activation programmes that support trade union members and their families that are

experiencing unemployment are offered in most centres these include:

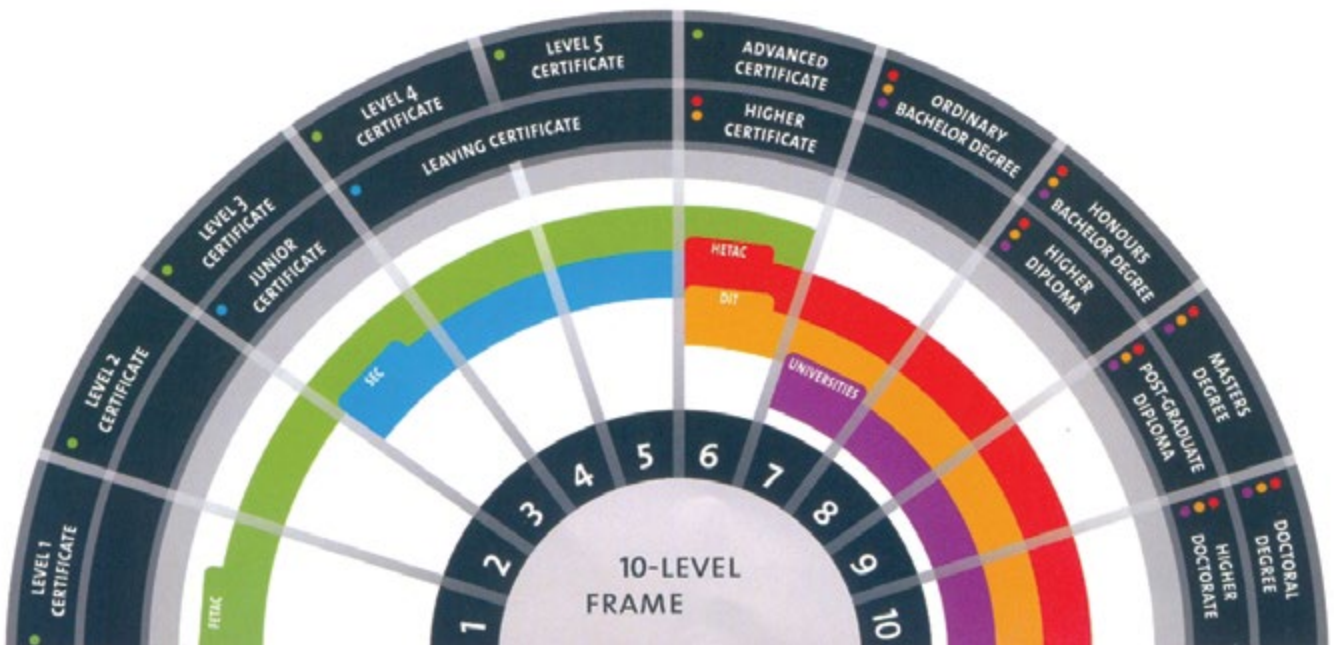
- Community Employment Schemes
- Local Training Initiatives
- Jobs Initiative
- Disability Activation
- Momentum
- Job Seeker Support Programmes
- Pre-Employment Courses
- European Mobility Programmes

Campaigns are supported by the Congress Centres for the Trade Union and Government Departments in a variety of ways i.e. by offering facilities to hold meetings and talks, speakers with experience of unemployed issues communicate with agencies, writing articles for and disseminating newspapers, leaflets. Centres have worked to support the following campaigns. 'Get up Stand Up, Decency at Work, There is still a Better Fairer Way, Yes for Equality, Dunnes Stores Campaign. A Living Wage, Respect Equality and Ethics at Work, Face Up to Racism, Changes to the One Family Payment, Youth Connect.

In 2006 Congress Centres Network established FETAC Quality Assurance Status. FETAC certified programmes offered in the Congress Centres have been designed and developed with the adult learner in mind and have gone through a validation process with QQI. Each minor and major award leads to certification and all are mapped onto the European Qualifications Framework.

The advantage of this status means learners can engage in pursuing their education and have their certification recognised throughout the world. On 6 November 2012, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) was established as a new integrated agency (replacing the Further Education and Training Awards Council, the Higher Education and Training Awards Council and the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland and incorporating the functions of the Irish Universities Quality Board).

QQI is responsible for the external quality assurance of further and higher education and training (including English language provision) and validates programmes and makes awards for certain providers in these sectors. QQI is also responsible for the maintenance, development and review of the National Framework of Qualifications. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions is represented on the Advisory Board of QQI Community and Voluntary Sector. For a list of courses see page 59.



The Board of Management and Staff of Congress Centres Network are offered Continuous Professional Development training annually to sometimes include a summer school hosted by similar organisation in the European Union.

This ensures we are constantly striving to maintain Best Practice standards while learning from our neighbours what the current skills demands are internationally. This training is certified by QQI and Europass and also gives the Board of Management and Staff an opportunity to develop relationships with organisations abroad and share knowledge.

The Congress Centres are open to all members of the public, both unemployed and those in employment. All interaction with the Congress Centres are confidential and independent of statutory agents.

Congress Centres are a 'One Stop Shop' for the unemployed and for those in training, assisting the unemployed and soon to be employed workers in the areas of career change, training, retraining, job search and enterprise opportunities.

The representatives working in the Congress Centres Network are aware of the strong, but understandable feelings of frustration, disillusionment and in many cases shock and anger that unemployed people feel.

Many of the representatives in the Congress Centres have experiences of unemployment first hand.

The client centred and holistic approach adopted by Congress Centres is evident throughout all labour activation programmes and training we offer and this approach has ensured our success over a twenty-five year period.

## What the participants had to say...



The **Fetac 5 Customer Care course** was a very positive experience. The tutors Ankush and Brian were very helpful and patient.

They listened to everyone and covered all aspects of the course very thoroughly in a user-friendly way. They got excellent group interaction right from the beginning.

The use of role play & video was definitely worthwhile even though everyone feared it. I got a lot from the course and I would recommend it to others.

*Margaret McBride-McKinley*



I have just completed 11 weeks of **ECDL training** under David Lewis and Clare Curran. Both trainers work on an ethos of 'Respect' which is widely displayed throughout.

With their encouragement and support I thoroughly enjoyed each week. I am delighted I took the opportunity to undertake the ECDL course here in the Centre.

The course exceeded my expectations in terms of both the content and quality of delivery.

The attendees were given support and encouragement throughout the programme and the training was delivered at a pace that worked for all participants.

*Olwyn Ryan*

During my time working in the Drogheda Resource Centre I have gained great experience working in administration, typing, computing and training, including **Train the Trainer**. More recently I have been working as an Information Officer at the front desk. I have made great friends and built up my confidence.

*Siobhan*

# Central Co-ordination Team

A Central Co-ordination Team was established in 2004 to ensure standards and professionalism would become a distinct feature of the Congress Centre Networks training provision and services.

In 2006, FETAC Status was achieved by head office and an additional eighteen centres. Each year 3000 FETAC certificates are awarded to learners through the Congress Centres.

All education provided by Congress Centres is certified and mapped to the National Qualifications Framework. AONTAS Star Awards have been won by many centres for their exceptional adult education programmes.

The Programme Manager seeks to secure necessary funding to support the ongoing work of the Congress Centres Network Central Coordination Team.

The Central Co-ordination Team at all times seeks to develop and implement services that adhere to best practice and policies promoted by Department of Enterprise Trade and Innovation.

It is also in a unique position to create and maintain a strong and effective network that works towards a common vision, of providing comprehensive and strategic labour activation training programmes across the community sector.

The Central Co-ordination Team plays a pivotal role in coordination and management of the national network and facilitates the development, best practice and standards in the area of vocational education and training with cost effective provision of services e.g. FETAC QA.

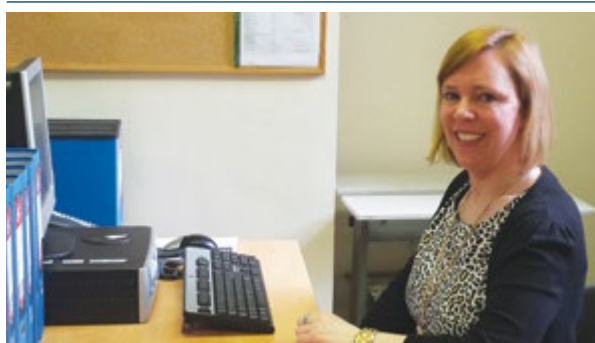
## Primary Aims of Central Co-ordination Team:

- Promotion of Best Practice and Quality Assured Training Provision
- Expertise and Support to Board of Management of Congress Centre Network
- Representing Congress Centres Network on National & International Boards
- First Point of contact for Congress Centres Network FAS / POBAL / DSP/CV Pillar and many other statutory bodies.
- Mechanism for policy formation testing and racking over time.
- Dissemination of Rights and Entitlements for the unemployed workers.
- Development of Redundancy Seminars and Job Search Training

- Accessing learners for labour activation programmes, re-training and career change training
- Identify funding streams for Congress Centres Network
- Continuous Professional Development for CE Supervisors, their staff and client users.

The Central Co-ordination Team represents the interests of Centres with statutory agencies and government. In addition to holding quarterly meetings for all CE Supervisors of the Congress Centres Network, the Co-ordinator and members from the Coordinator Network Committee represents the Congress Centres on various boards to ensure best practice and to marry top down decisions with bottom up experiences and ideas.

- CE Monitoring Committee
- EURES
- Advisory Group on Labour Activation Programmes
- Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Task Force
- POBAL Local Job Creation Project
- EU Advisory Committee on Social Security
- EU Advisory Committee on Workers Mobility
- Interreg Monitoring and Evaluation Committee
- Leargas Monitoring Committee
- National Executive Committee of the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed
- Community and Voluntary Pillar of Social Partnership
- TUS Skillnet
- Positive 2 Work Skillnet
- AONTAS Community Education Network
- Pobal
- European Anti Poverty Network
- Steering Group for "Towards 2016"
- National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)



*Far left: Louisa Gavin (Administrator), Congress Centres Network*



*Left: Joanne Brown (Project Manager), Congress Centres Network*



# TESTIMONIALS



I found the *DACT* course very beneficial. We had three FETAC Level 3 modules on the course including Computer Literacy, Personal and Interpersonal skills and Work Experience.

As I was out of work for a year beforehand I was low in confidence and found it difficult to apply for jobs as I would be anxious about an interview.

The Personal and Interpersonal skills module helped me to overcome these fears and helped me identify my strengths rather than focusing on my weaknesses.



**“The Computer Literacy course enabled me to develop my typing skills and my knowledge of computer software”**

The *Computer Literacy* course enabled me to develop my typing skills and my knowledge of computer software and health and safety. Class sizes were very small and the tutors were very helpful and patient throughout.

I am now beginning work experience in the Galway Peoples' Resource Centre and feel ready to apply me skills that I have learned during my time on the course. I now feel confident that my CV is up to date and feel more ready to seek suitable employment.

*Lorna Geraghty*

I joined the Congress Centre in Caherciveen in June 2013 on a Community Employment Scheme as a Training Co-ordinator. At the time I was unemployed and I was delighted to get the opportunity to take up this role and over the last two years I have had nothing but huge support from Mike Morris, my CE Supervisor.

He has sent me on numerous courses and the training I received was excellent. I was also encouraged in all

aspects of getting future employment, from starting my own business to applying for suitable job roles.

I completed my time on the Scheme this June and after 2 years I am leaving with new skills and have also been successful in getting a part-time employment. So many thanks to Mike and the Caherciveen Congress Centre CE Scheme.

*Marcia Evans*

Through the Congress Resource Centre in Letterkenny I have recently completed a 12 week *DACT* course in which I achieved three FETAC level certificates in Computer Literacy, Personal /Interpersonal Skills and Work Experience.

At first I did have my reservations about doing this course as it had been years since I had been in any form of education. However, from the beginning I felt at ease. I found everyone involved in the course to be very friendly and helpful.



**“The tutors were a great assistance to me in finding my work experience with a local business in the town”**

The tutors were all very approachable and I found that they made the course content easy to understand and follow, especially for someone like myself who has never used a computer.

It was also beneficial in teaching about the various interview techniques and skills required for the modern workplace, plus the tutors were a great assistance to me in finding my work experience with a local business in the town.

*Patrick Crossan*



# DACT



## The Disability Activation Project

The ICTU “Training Options” Programme is part of the Disability Activation (DACT) Project funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and is targeted at the Border, Midlands and Western region (BMW).

The target group for this funding is people with a disability, 16 to 65 years of age, in receipt of disability/illness welfare payments who reside in the BMW region. DACT aims to increase the capacity and potential of people on disability / illness welfare payments to participate in the labour market.

Congress plans to deliver education and training to enhance the competencies of people with disabilities in a range of personal development, Information Technology and work related programmes.

Officially announcing the funding on 25th October 2012, Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton TD,

stated “These projects will provide vital learning to my Department on how best to ensure that people with disabilities are enabled to avail of progression, education and development opportunities”.

Please do not hesitate to contact Sylvia Ryan, DACT Project Manager on 01-8897745 - email Sylvia.ryan@ictu.ie or Athena Kelly, DACT Project Administrator on 01-8897704 - email Athena.kelly@ictu.ie should you need further details.

Training Options Initiative was the largest of 13 Disability Activation Programmes funded by Department of Social Protection and the European Social Investment Fund. The programme was delivered in the Border Midlands and Western Region through the Congress Centres Network.

Twenty six courses accommodated 412 learners during April 2012-April 2015. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions has been working with and for people experiencing a disability for over twenty years.

The Congress Centres through their many Community Employment Schemes would have trained and provided work placements for many people. Training Options was our opportunity to enhance and fine tune our programmes.

After taking part in a Leonardo da Vinci Lifelong programme to Iceland in 2011 we researched a peer mentoring programme that was very successful with the RED Cross in Iceland and decided to add mentoring and peer support to our pre-employment courses. Mentors are trained in Career Guidance, supporting a learner and assisting with goal setting and pathways to work or employment. This person centred approach is key to alleviating fears and barriers people experience having been disconnected from the work place.



DACT participants at the Drogheda Centre with David Begg, General Secretary, I.C.T.U. (standing middle row third from right with Centre Co-ordinator Jacqui Taaffe on his right) at the awards ceremony



Building confidence can only happen when people have resources such as access to transportation and childcare to participate in programmes, this is a built in support on Training Options Programme.

Each learner has the opportunity to achieve 3 FETAC component Certificates, 10 days work placement, one to one mentoring and apply to be an mentor/Disability Champion working part-time in the Congress Centres Network.

Everyone will work with their mentor to complete their Individual learner progression plan and have a clear pathway to either further education and training or return to work options.

Workshops are provided by statutory agencies to explain all aspects of training and education available in the local area.

The objectives started off as follows:

- 390 learners
- 1170 FETAC Component Certificates
- 3900 work placement days
- 23400 Training days

This was an ambitious programme in the current economic climate and we worked with employers, Trade Union officials and healthcare workers locally to recruit participants and secure work placements that lead to employment for the learners.

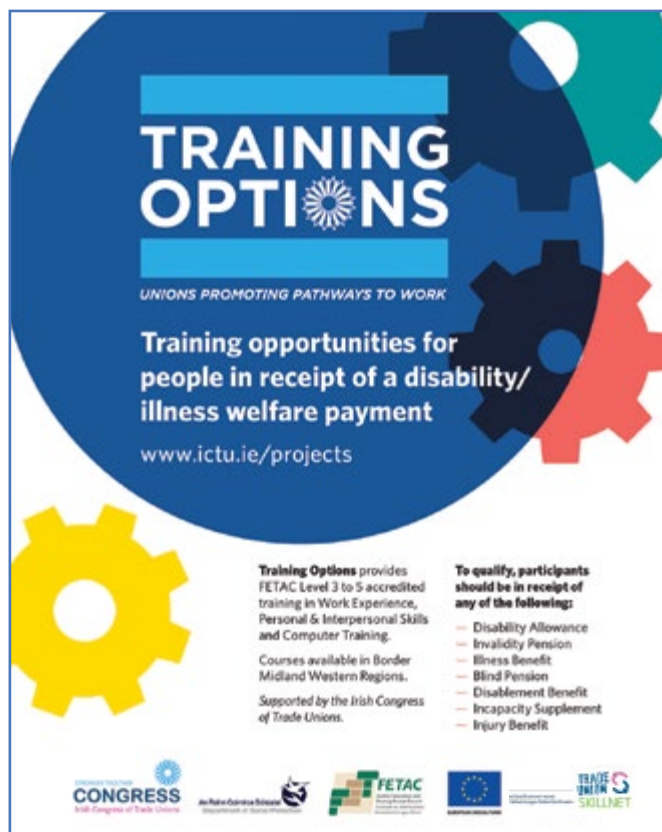
We take the opportunity to explain grants available to the employer and incentives available to our learners should they return to work. We also strive to train and retain Disability Champions in our organisation who will be a sustainable asset for the community and provide supports going forward.

We ask for the continued support of the Department of Social Protection in mainstreaming this programme and rolling it out nationwide.

On 28th of April 2015 the Closing Ceremony of the programme was hosted in the Employment Development and Information Centre Longford and this was our opportunity to see the initial objectives for the programme reach fruition.

To date we have 412 learners complete the process and 40 have trained as mentors. 125 employers offered work experience and 69 learners gained employment.

Thank you to all those individuals and organisations for supporting Training Options Today and we would appreciate your support should we be in a position to run this again.



Left: Taoiseach Enda Kenny, Sylvia Ryan (Programme Manager) and Pat Kellagher (Board Member of EDI Centre Longford) discussing the ICTU "Training Options Programme", 9th December 2013



# MOMENTUM

FOCUS YOUR TALENT



EUROPEAN UNION  
Investing in your future  
European Social Fund



Many Sectors of the Economy are growing and are in need of motivated employees.

MOMENTUM, a Solas initiative, is there to provide that workforce. The initiative funds the running of free education, training and work placement projects for those unemployed for over one year. Momentum is jointly funded by European Social fund, EU structural fund and Solas.

Up to 6,500 people in Ireland will go through the Momentum programme in 2014/2015. Approximately 30% of these will be under the age of 25.

MOMENTUM is supported by the Labour Market Education & Training Fund which is part of the Government's Action Plan for Jobs programme and is administered by SOLAS. This initiative is funded by the European Social Fund/European Structural Funds Programme 2014-2020.

Irish Congress of Trade Unions  
Momentum Looking Forward  
(Warehousing and Logistics)  
Programme

Looking Forward: (Including Forklift Driving Certification). This Unique Training programme will provide Learners with both the skills and supports for progression to employment through

career guidance, personal development, motivation and training,



After completion of 4 FETAC Level 5 Cert's in Customer Service, Personal Effectiveness in the Workplace, Business Computing and Work Experience, along with Certification in Forklift Driving, Manual Handling and Safe Pass each learner will be equipped with the skills and experience required for a range of employment in the Warehousing and Logistics Sector.

The course runs for 23 Weeks (30 Hours per Week) with an additional 4 weeks for under 25's. Included in these weeks learners will have 6/10 weeks full time Work placement. (10 weeks for under 25's).

Each Learner will have one on one mentoring on a weekly basis to help support them through the duration of the course and for a further 6 months when course ends to support them into employment. Recruitment Agencies are brought in to discuss current job availability and to encourage the learner to sign up with the Agency for future job opportunities.

Once the initial 23/27 weeks are complete the learners will take part in a number of jobs clubs for a further six months to further develop their interview and job searching skills.

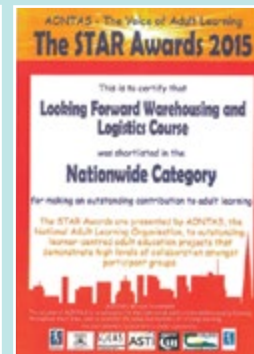
## The Programme's main objectives:

- Generate positive and sustainable employment outcomes for unemployed people.
- Introduce participants to the benefits of joining a Trade Union.
- The methods used during the programme will build the capacity of the participants to become effective communicators and confident goal-focused individuals.
- Develop the expertise of the participant to utilise their own "lived experience" and translate that effectively into the development and production of their own training methodologies, peer support and mentoring.



Peter Thornton, Dundalk class 2014 / 2015

- Assist statutory bodies to raise awareness of their programmes and CCN can offer additional capacity in areas of effective recruitment to further-education programmes.
- Introduce employers and participants to the JobsPlus incentives. JobsPlus is an incentive from the Department of Social Protection to encourage and reward employers who offer employment opportunities to the long term unemployed. Grants of €7,500 and €10,000 are available.



42% progressed onto either employment or further education. This programme was shortlisted for an Aontas Star award.

Looking Forward 2, 2014/2015 recruited 296 Learners in 10 locations. By May 2015, 154 will have either completed the programme or progressed into employment. The remaining 142 will finish September 2015.





# Momentum at Mullingar

6th October 2014 to 24th April 2015



**Above: Week 6 of the course, presenting the participants with their Healthy Eating Certificates. Pauline McEnerney (wearing white top, seated centre) delivered the Healthy Eating Programme to the participants.**



**Above: End of week 23 when the over 25 year old participants completed their course with Tutor Betty Beirne seated in the middle. Stephen Lytton is standing second from left.**



**Above: End of week 27 when the under 25 year old participants completed their course and we had a ceremony to present everyone with their Forklift, SafePass and Manual Handling certificates. Mullingar Congress Centre Co-ordinator Susan Bray is standing forth from left.**

## Stephen Lytton's testimonial, Mullingar

On starting the Momentum Looking Forward 2 course in Warehouse and Logistics, I was glad to return to an environment of learning and working with 17 new colleagues. It can be difficult when you have no routine, no social circle or nothing to be working on. But all of these needs were met when I began this Momentum class.

Our tutor, Betty Beirne, was one of the most pleasant and patient tutors I have met. She was very professional in introducing each module, presenting the tasks and ensuring that each person met the targets required by Fetac. The tutoring standards are obviously very high when it comes to Fetac courses.

The course contained material that was relevant to all aspects of the work environment. Communications, interpersonal skills and a basic understanding of how people 'tick' was very useful as a whole for those who didn't have much experience of the work environment as yet, and also for others who may have difficulty interacting with others.

From public presentations to video recorded interviews, the boundaries were pushed for each member of the class, and each person was successful in completing the tasks.

The course also involved two modules in forklift training, resulting in acquiring two separate forklift licenses, the Reach and the Counterbalance. Coupled with both a Safepass and Manual Handling qualification, this was a great advantage in boosting the chances of gaining future employment.

The course also involved a period of work experience in an actual place of business, which not only helped to increase our knowledge of the workplace environment but even had the potential to secure employment in that particular place of work.

To upgrade my skills and certificates was the primary goal of completing this course. But it was also great to meet and to get to know new people in the process. To engage in deep conversations and debates regarding many different work policies and life issues with a mix of humour and intelligence was an absolute pleasure, all of which I would include as an added bonus to the experience as a whole.

Between the tutor, the course material, additional teachers and instructors, and the rest of my class colleagues, the experience was one that I am very glad to have attended, and one I would also highly recommend to others.

Stephen Lytton

# Youth Guarantee



National Steering Committee of Youth Guarantee. In 2013 the EU adopted a Council Recommendation to member states on a Youth Guarantee. The aim of the EU-wide Youth Guarantee, supported by central EU funding of €6 billion, is to provide young people under the age of 25 with a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a short time of becoming unemployed.

- Pilot schemes took place across Europe in 2013 including one in Ballymun, Dublin that was one of the first to receive EU funding.

- In 2014 the Irish Government expects to provide a Youth Guarantee to around 30,000 young people who are at a very high risk of long-term unemployment. It is an ambitious programme that will take time to fully implement and will require ongoing investment and sustained effort by Government, employers and jobseekers alike.

- Jobseeker's Allowance is 30 percent lower for new entrants aged 22-24 and 23 percent lower for those aged 25.

- Department of Public Expenditure and Reform estimate that 32 million will be saved over the course of 2014.

- Options for young people seeking work are severely limited.

- Jobs Strategy is urgently needed to tackle the crisis of youth unemployment.

## Basic Premise of Youth Guarantee

- Long-term cost of youth unemployment and inactivity is greater than the cost of setting up a scheme.

- Activation tailored to the needs of the young people.

- Good Offer defined by offer of job, apprenticeship, traineeship, work experience or continued education.

- Excellent supports and career planning.

Improve their long term sustainability on the labour market and not merely the achievement of short term outcomes.

The unemployed are not a homogeneous group they are a complex group. Some unemployed have significant barriers to overcome including: low educational attainment, criminal records, addiction, disability, little or no social capital.

13.5% of the live register figure consists of people aged under 25 years. The national accepted poverty rate line dropped in 2014 to €10,612 for Ireland yet a social welfare rate of €100 per week equates to €5200 per annum which is less than half the poverty line. Young People aspire to live independently, have their own home and family. This is not achievable on this rate. The Pilot Programme in Ballymun took place from January 2014 to December 2014.

During this pilot programme we have seen innovative programmes meet people where they are at.

A community willing to offer second third or maybe fourth chances.

Partnership is so important. ICTU has worked with the unemployed for the last 30 years and the trade union movement has a role to play and seeks to achieve a just society for all. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions were very happy to be a part of the National Steering Committee and work in partnership with Statutory bodies and local Implementation groups.

- We had the hard conversations regarding Sanctions and sought out a transparent process.

- We implemented a work experience protocol that seeks to protect existing staff.

- Designed a Memorandum of Understanding for Employers with the assistance of the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed.

- Clarified the acceptable roles created for the participants of the Gateway Scheme.

Irish Congress of Trade Unions as a training provider offered 30 places on flexible 'Get Ready for Work' programme. Twenty four young people attended and six people accepted job offers at the end of the six weeks.

This programme offered taster sessions on a variety of career avenues that the learners expressed their interest in. Modules included Hairdressing, Childcare, IT and Construction. Two weeks work experience was included in a sector matching the learners chosen field.

This approach gave ownership of the programme to the learners from the outset. Mutual trust and respect was nurtured throughout the process with constant communication between all the stakeholders, coordinator, learner, mediators from jobs club, employers offering work experience and the Department of Social Protection.

The holistic, integrated approach resulted in positive outcomes for learners and stakeholders, pooling resources removed financial barriers for the learners. Access to the flexible fund allowed discretion to be applied by the training providers. A critical takeaway from this experience was that unless the subject offerings matched the learning outcomes valued by the young person they simply did not show up. Guidance, mentoring and intensive supports cannot be underestimated.





This six week programme is really a bridging programme that helps a young person navigate their next step. Investing in bridging programmes that are short and lead to work paths or education paths can reduce the revolving door experience for all parties, save time and money. Learners are far more likely to engage and complete when they own the decision, they need to have the option to self select a program and really understand the requirements.

The cost of mismatching is not only financial but can negatively impact on other groups of learners who cannot access places due to ring fencing and eligibility requirements. Providers of training are working with limited capacity and resources and must show outputs so it is unfair to all involved to get this part wrong. The trade union movement are employers and in their role as employers, two of our affiliated unions, IBOA and CWU, offered work experience on the ICTU programme. A thank you for their support and all the employers who assisted.

A collaborative decision was made by all stakeholders of the National Steering Committee to define the role of work placement. ICTU took on the role of designing the Memorandum of Understanding for Employers which is mutually beneficial. This was created to explicitly explain that a work placement should be a quality experience for the learner.

It must include a work plan that complements learning outcomes set out by awarding bodies such as QQI.

It is vitally important that work placements do not negatively impact on existing staff by either replacing staff or reducing their hours or opportunity to accessing overtime.

In addition the unemployed must be protected from being exploited in the workplace.

The role of the employer is crucial to learners in teaching them what is expected in the workplace. For this reason resourcing an employer liaison person is very welcomed development and we wish Gina well in her new position.

However, despite the process to date it is crucial we have a jobs strategy which will create sustainable work. According to an EU report by the commission in Feb 2015.

A worrying trend has arisen in the Irish Youth Labour Market which shows an increase in involuntary part-time work which stands at 41.4% of those aged 15-24

in temporary employment. This compares to 37.5% in the EU. This points to increasing labour market segmentation for young people. Young people on intermittent contracts are locked out of a living wage and job security. Employers need to understand the financial consequences to the employee when offering intermittent contracts, short hours over five days can lock people out of social welfare support. Somebody working a couple of hours out of a day or being sent home early unpaid are being penalised for taking the opportunity of work.

The DSP needs to review their systems of processing claims based on days worked as opposed to hours worked. We need to make work pay and support workers in their efforts.

To quote the Nevin Group: 'We always said work was the best way out of poverty, the evidence for this being the case universally is dwindling.'

We have learnt during this pilot that there needs to be a strategic response from the Department of Children in relation to supporting the Youth Sector and innovative programmes for young people.

The Department of Justice has a role to play in reviewing the longevity of criminal records for minor offences, if we are to overcome these barriers and allow young people gain entry to the labour market.

This Pilot was a success due to The National

Steering committee and the Local implementation group having the challenging conversations and understanding the amount of support and trust required to activate a learner. I'm talking about daily support, phone calls - phone calls with parents in the background often heard screaming 'get out of bed'.

It would be unrealistic to expect one state agency to do this alone. Without the synergy between the DSP and all the other organisations involved the success would not have been so evident. It takes informal chats and tea breaks to truly engage with another person and the process takes flexibility, time, perseverance and vocation. Resourcing community organisations that can access young people is crucial.

It is easy to say: 'it is not my problem', but we all need to look out for each others' children, have the difficult conversations and create sustainable jobs. Only then can we expect individuals to take their place in the workforce and be a contributing member of society.'



# Skillnet

**Trade Union Skillnet (TUS)**

**31-32 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1**

Trade Union Skillnet (TUS) is a new network comprised of affiliates of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions operating in the private sector. The new network is representative of a majority of sectors in the Irish economy.

## Courses

- Fair & Legal Series
- Fair & Legal: dealing with insolvency
- Fair & Legal: Evidence and Witness Procedures

## About us and our training programmes

Types of training provided (Training Networks Programme Main): Workplace Representatives Skills/ Trade Union studies, Women in leadership, IT skills, Technical/craft training, Health and Safety, Communication Skills/ Team-working, Personal Development, Language/Business language skills, Leadership and Strategic Management, etc.

## Subjects in which we provide training

Bullying and Harassment, Career Information, Communications, Customer Service, E-learning, Effective Meetings, Employment Law, English Language training, Equality & Diversity, HETAC Certificate in Trade Union Studies, Interview skills, Introductory course for women members, Leadership, Media, Negotiation Skills, Organising Skills, Pension Bargaining, Pension Trustees, Personal development, Preparation for Work, Professional development, Role of activist, Shop Stewards Advanced, Shop Stewards Introductory, Team-working, Technical courses (occupation specific), Train the Trainer, Union Learning Representative.

(Please note that the subjects listed do not reflect the exact training subjects covered by this training provider).

## Regions where we provide training

Carlow, Cavan, Clare, Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kerry, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Leitrim, Limerick, Longford, Louth, Mayo, Meath, Monaghan, Offaly, Roscommon, Sligo, Tipperary, Waterford, Westmeath, Wexford, Wicklow.

## Training experience and qualifications

Our tutors of Workplace Representative / Trade Union studies category of training courses will have a primary degree in Business Studies / Industrial Relations, or equivalent qualification or competence and hold a qualification in Training and Development.

For craft/technical courses – the trainers will be time served craft workers with a National Craft Certificate or equivalent, and will hold a qualification in Training and Development.

Trainers will have a minimum of 5 years' post-apprenticeship work experience in adult education and training.

## Previous clients and organisations to which we have delivered training

A range of Trade Unions and private sector employers.



**Ms Pauline Corr**  
(Network Administrator)

**Telephone number:**

01 889 7707

**Email address:**

pauline.corr@tuskillnet.ie

**Website:**

www.tuskillnet.ie

Training providers have chosen training subjects on our list of course categories to best match their training offer.

You should always check with the training provider which exact courses and training are on offer.

## Positive 2 Work Skillnet

The Positive2Work Skillnet is made up of small, medium and large companies from all sectors of the Irish Economy.

This Skillnet member companies have come together to explore how the intervention of effective strategies, supported by training solutions and people development, can positively impact on the quality of employees working lives and the competitive environment within which network member companies operate.

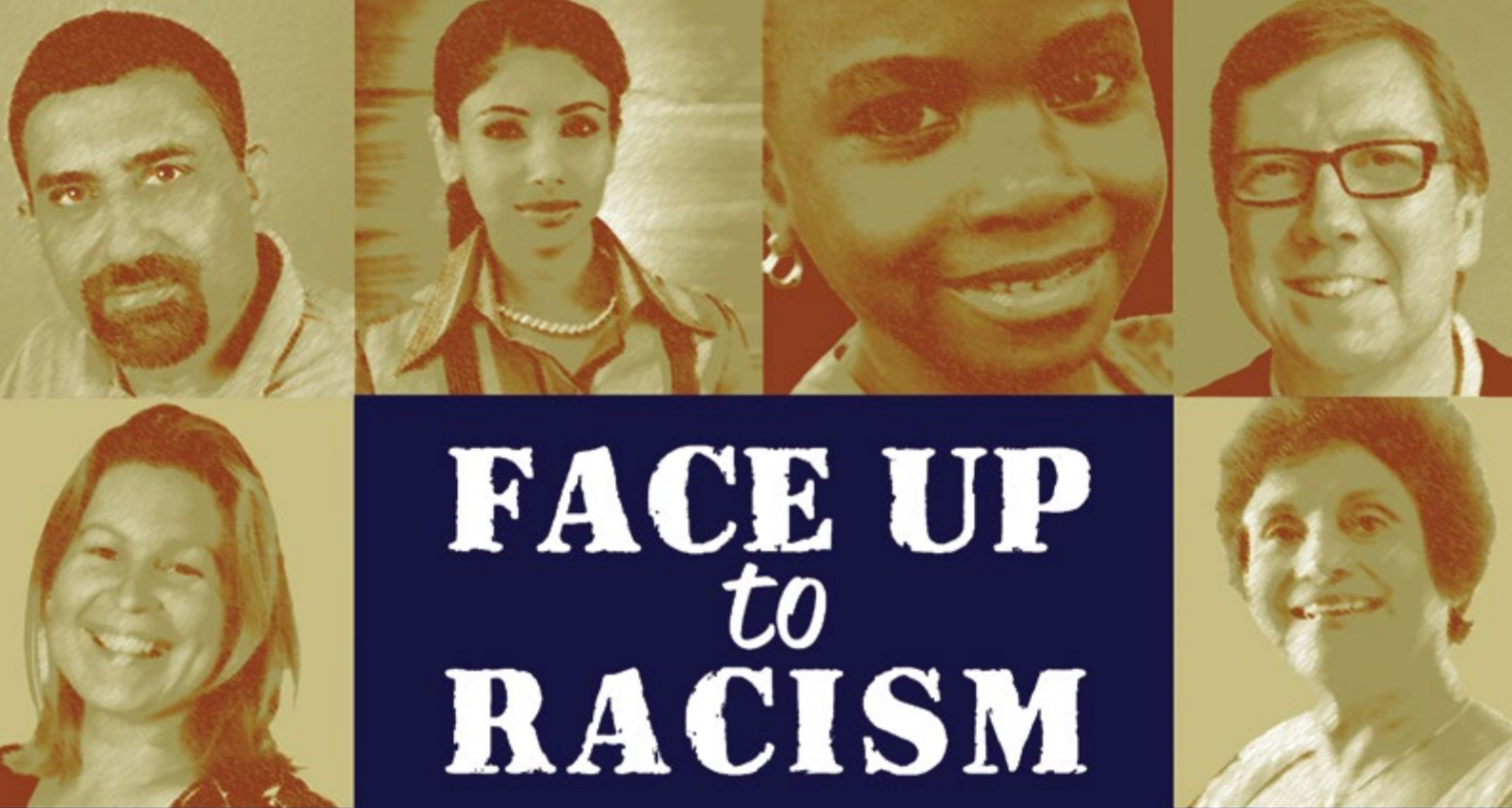
The aim of the project is to create a Positive2Work environment for all employees within the member companies of Skillnet.

## Other relationships

Although Congress Centres Network were unsuccessful in our bid to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation for the strand of funding in the Labour Activation Fund 2010, we played an active role in recruiting and screening learners and processing successful candidates through FETAC for other successful organisations such as Career Decisions and NALA.







# FACE UP to RACISM

**R**acism is one of the nine grounds of discrimination recognised in Irish Law. The other grounds are: gender, civil status, family status, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation and membership of the Traveller Community.

The Congress Centres network, working with European Network Against Racism Ireland and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Authority, have recently begun a dynamic new project, specifically designed to respond to racism.

The programme is called Face up to Racism, and is overseen by a small steering committee, including Sylvia Ryan, Programme Manager with the Congress Centres Network.

To date all Co-ordinators and their information officers have taken part in training about the programme and how to use the 'iReport' to capture incidents of racism nationwide.

ENAR is a national network of anti-racism NGOs, which aims to work collectively to highlight and address the issue of racism in Ireland through the promotion and monitoring of EU and global anti-racist initiatives. ENAR Ireland is the Irish National Coordination for the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) based in Brussels.

In March, 20 staff and volunteers from the Congress Centres attended a training session as part of Face up to Racism. The training focused on understanding racism-why it occurs, and what can be done to respond to the problem when it arises.

A key part of the work focuses on main streaming the use of [www.iReport.ie](http://www.iReport.ie) as a tool for monitoring racism.

The project enjoyed its national launch in April at a major event held in Buswells Hotel, Dublin, which was attended by Louise Gavin from ICTU. Emily Logan, CEO of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Authority launched the project.

Feedback from the project participants has so far been very positive.

ENAR and Congress centres will continue to work on the project together over the course of the coming months.

Look out for [www.ireport.ie](http://www.ireport.ie) and check out ENAR Ireland on Facebook and Twitter.



# BenefIT IIII

Benefit 3 and Benefit 4 have proved a very important capacity building and social inclusion tool opening a window of opportunity for people in rural Counties.

The chance to engage for the first time in a 'safe environment' with computer technology and the World Wide Web is key to the success of the programme.

ICTU has delivered basic computer training to 5100 learners over the past 3 years funded by the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources. Training includes using a computer from turning it on, setting up an email account, surfing the internet, uploading a photo and using Skype.

Participants are directed to the Trade Union web sites for the internet section and encouraged to connect in some way with the Trade Unions offerings e.g. training courses etc. The Congress Centres have processed the bulk of the training with Trade Unions also offering courses in their Centres.

In addition to promoting government web sites such as motor tax, revenue online, purchasing items on line such as bus, train, plane tickets and banking online, we also promoted the benefits of being a member of the Trade Union movement and the rich historic legacy of James

Larkin and James Connelly. 2013 was a very important year as it was the commemoration of the Lock Out 1913 and the Benefit 4 programme enabled the general public to be more aware of the calendar of events and participate in all the activities.

Many of our Benefit 4 participants were made aware of the Trade Union Skillnet suite of training courses and went on to participate in these. In conclusion Benefit 4 is an excellent vehicle to impact on an individual's life in all aspects.

This programme is very useful to members and their families. The Testimonial and 'Jobs' article (overleaf) are excellent indicators of the impact of the programme to date.

Benefit 4 enables unemployed people to grasp the skills of emailing an employer or HR department attaching their CV to the email in response to job advertisements. The previous paragraph is testimony of this.

Most of the participants are rural dwellers, many from the farming community, who would not have worked with computers or indeed have had a chance in the past to up-skill in this area. Indeed most people over the age of 50 years would not have engaged in computer technology as computers were not available in the mainstream educational system or in the world of work until relatively recently.

Then, unless trained in a work situation, many people in this age bracket would never have taken the step to up-skill by themselves. This is especially true in farm family situations

where most of our participants have engaged with the programme through our advertisements in the local livestock marts, through notes in the weekly parish newsletters, ICTU's lifelong learning promotions and vocational skills development advertisements and the all-important 'word of mouth' – our very functional 'bush telegraph'!



*Above: The Benefit 4 Group, May 2015 in the Letterkenny Congress Resource Centre with tutors Irene Franczak and Raymond Tighe standing at the back*

The first hurdle for many of our participants is getting them over the fear barrier; fear of failure, fear of ridicule from their peers, fear of breaking the 'machine', and these fears are addressed and alleviated by our team of focused, rural development orientated tutors concentrated on enabling, empowering and developing the potential of rural dwellers to self-develop and access opportunities and improve communication skills through digital technology.

The Benefit programme assists greatly in developing the potential to enable rural dwellers to access employment opportunities, and enhance entrepreneurial spirit which in turn contributes to fostering new economic opportunities in rural areas. Investing in the skills of rural people is also crucial in building their capacities to cope with crisis and confront social, economic and environmental challenges facing individuals and communities today. The core Benefit programme is tailored to address the specific needs of our target groups and has proved immensely popular and empowering.



# IT-4-2-DAY

## Trade Unions Supporting Learning

Alive and Clicking!



If you or a member of your family need a click-start in computer basics, then this 6-hour training course is ideal – and what's more, it's free!

During the sessions, you will spend 4 hours learning how to use a computer as well as simple online transactions.

You will also receive 2 hours of training on a choice of options – such as an introduction to digital photography - using the internet for voice or video - and the use of Government and other public services online.

There will be a maximum of 8 students per class.

To be eligible to attend one of these free courses you must tick one of the following:

- if you have **NO computer experience**
- OR
- if you have **NOT used a computer in the last 12 months**

In addition to the above, you must tick one of the following:

- Be **unemployed**
- Be without recognised formal education
- Have a **disability**
- Live alone
- Live in a **rural area**
- Be a **single parent**
- Be a **member of the travelling community**
- Be an **ex-prisoner**
- Be an **immigrant**
- Be over **55**

### Courses will be available in:

Letterkenny  
Galway City  
Manorhamilton  
Castlebar  
Ballina  
Sligo Town  
Dublin 1 & 3  
Dublin 12

Kildare  
Athy  
Leixlip  
Newbridge  
Kilkenny City  
Longford  
Dundalk  
Drogheda  
Athlone

Mullingar  
Wicklow Bray  
Ennis  
Kerry  
Caherciveen  
Killarney  
Tralee  
Limerick City  
Waterford City



This training project is led by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions with the participation of a number of trade unions (though courses are open to members of all Trade Unions) and NGO partners.

## Testimonial

Michael Lavin is a single man, approximately 60 years old, with a disability, living in a remote area of north County Roscommon. He had no knowledge of computer technology until his participation on the Benefit programme.

He is an accomplished writer with published pieces both in prose and verse over the past number of years. Michael's participation on the Benefit programme has resulted in him investing in a laptop.

Thus, Michael acknowledges that participating on the course has greatly enhanced his ability to communicate effectively through email and social networking with his many literary connections. Also, he is empowered with his new-found ability to managing his writings through creating files on his new computer.

Last week Michael won the coveted Co. Roscommon VEC/ETB Active Age perpetual trophy for Verse. Michael has accredited the Benefit 4 programme as a catalyst in taking him to a new level of writing.

## Jobs

To date 40 learners have completed the Train the Trainer programme FETAC, level 6. Twenty of our locations have up to 40 trainers working on this project. We have 15 of our participants in the Finglas, Dundalk and Drogheda region having secured employment and they are aged less than 25 years.

An additional 40 learners in the The Border, Midland and Western (BMW) region progressed onto further education, with 22 obtaining jobs and these participants would have disabilities.

3 participants in the Wicklow region from the travelling community progressed into employment with 1 going into self-employment. A number of participants have pursued community employment. In the Athlone region many of the participants are pursuing ECDL courses.

These outcomes exclude Irish Rural link outcomes as we also worked in partnership with them to train approximately 500 additional learners.

### Partner Organisations





# Antrim and Down

BELFAST UNEMPLOYED RESOURCE CENTRE

45/47 Donegall Street, Belfast, BT1 2FG • Tel: +44(0)28 90961111 • Email: info@burc.org • Web: www.burc.org



**B**elfast Unemployed Resource Centre continues to develop bespoke programmes with a community development and peace and reconciliation focus, with communities of interest and geographical communities, targeting hard to reach communities, including women, young people and ex combatants. We are currently involved in solas training and ETB's. Our Eures cross border work is continuing. Our welfare advice service continues to be busy.

**The Dalaradia** group is a group of ex combatants made up of members from the UVF ,UDA and Red Hand Commando's. They are focused on shared history as a pathway to peace and exploring community tensions through debugging the myths of the past. The group have an interest in the Ulster Scots tradition and got their name from a region in Antrim formerly known as Dalaradia. This area was linked to a region in Scotland also called Dalaradia.

This mixed group consisted of men and women from 3 different areas; Rathcoole, White-abbey and Carrick, all of whom have a shared interest in improving community relations within each area collectively. This has led to a mutual interest in developing a project, namely the 'Dalaradia Project', which was first developed in Scotland and has seen many benefits such as encouraging more visitors to enjoy the natural landscape and encourage more communities to come together in the development of the Dalaradia.

The group have since developed a booklet charting their personal journeys from combatants to community workers and continue to pursue the development of an Ulster Scots Trail in Northern Ireland.

**Parents Action Support Group** are a group of parents whose young people are involved in the juvenile Justice agency.

They set themselves as a peer support group to support their young people with mental health issues and accessing services. The group meet weekly. At this group they identify areas of skill and knowledge which they want to improve. These benefit are not just experienced by the Youth Justice Agency but also other agencies they are involved with such as; Ascert, Fasa, Opportunity Youth, Concensus. The group have developed a leaflet and are undertaking lobbying skills training and personal development. They have also facilitated a similar group to develop in Newcastle Co Down.

**EURES** has traditionally been a function of the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre's advice giving section. However, in line with the EURES Cross Border Partnership's 3 Year Plan, BURC has developed a number of community engagements to encourage integration and the development of relationships between cross border workers and service provision in the eligible cross border region, directly engaging over 130 participants in project based activities.

**BURC** have a working relationship with Solas and ETBs. We are on the Solas/ETB list of approved contracted training companies, the National Register of Contracted Training Tenderers List (CTTL) as a registered Solas/ETB training provider which means we are part of an extended network of certified training providers.



*Top photo: Aisling Cartmill, Centre Co-ordinator (second from left) with the EURES group. Above: Busy participants on the Momentum courses*

We specialise in working with long-term unemployed, individuals seeking to re-skill, up-skill and provide additional supports for clients and have expertise in working with businesses in addressing their training needs.

We were also successful in attaining three courses. Introduction to Tourism through the Momentum initiative which we are currently running in Dublin city centre, Dublin 12 and Sligo.

**Board Members:** Joe Bowers (Chairperson), P. Mackel (Treasurer), Laurence Galbraith (Secretary), Avril Hall-Callaghan, Anne Molloy, Kevin Doherty, Brendan Mackin, Noreen Moore, Mary Gray, Flo Wardle (Staff representative)



# Clare

CONGRESS INFORMATION & OPPORTUNITY CENTRE

**Connolly House, Unit 7A, Elevation Business Park, Clonroad, Ennis, Co. Clare**  
Tel: (065) 6841009 • Email: info@cioc.ie • Web: www.cioc.ie



The establishment of the Clare Unemployment Resource Centre in October 1991 resulted from the identification of the need for services to the increasing number of unemployed in County Clare.

The Clare Unemployment Resource Centre was unique in its establishment in close co-operation with the VEC. The Adult Education Office provided the necessary premises for the Centre to open in October 1991 to September 1996. The name of the Centre was subsequently changed to Congress Information & Opportunity Centre.

Over the years, the Centre has developed into an accredited Centre for Information Technology Training, which are of huge benefit to our Target Groups in their endeavour to improve their chances of getting gainful employment, or going on to further training and education courses.

The objectives of the Centre have continued since our establishment as outlined:

1. The provision of services to the Unemployed, low paid workers and other disadvantaged groups.

The provision of developmental and educational facilities including Information Technology courses i.e. ECDL, ECDL Expert, Computer Literacy FETAC L3, Introduction to Internet FETAC L3, Information Technology Skills FETAC L4, Computer Applications FETAC L4 and Reception Skills FETAC L5.

2. We are a FETAC Approved Training Centre.

3. Representation for the Unemployed/Unwaged in their relations with Department of Social Welfare and other State Agencies.

4. The protection and promotion of gainful employment for the Unemployed.

5. Highlight issues affecting the Unemployed, through the media and to Public Representatives and also through the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, our National Representative body.



Andrea Lynch,  
Co-ordinator

**Board of Management - Members and Contacts: Brian Higgins (Chairperson), Brendan Cunningham (Secretary), Seamus Ryan (Treasurer), Sinead Wynne (Board Member), Tommy Guilfoyle (Board Member), Tony Carroll (Board Member)**

## Services

- IT Training – FETAC, ECDL and ECDL Expert.

- Information Provision – Information Officer available for queries on Social Welfare entitlements, redundancies, etc.

- CIOC Jobs Club – FREE Service for CV Preparation, Interview Skills, Mock Interviews, Sourcing Training and Employment, Access to Internet and Email

- Special Initiative for Travellers - The Special Initiative for Travellers focuses on job-ready and supports their access into employment.

- FREE Bereavement Counselling Service, funded by the TUSAL.



River Fergus going through Ennis

- Counselling Service for Children of Separated Parents, funded by TUSLA .

- SOLAS Suicide Support – Group and One to One Counselling available for people whose lives have been affected by suicide or who may feel suicidal.

- Discount Card Scheme - A discount card for people on a Social

Welfare payment, which provides discounts with participating businesses around Co. Clare.

- Secretarial Service -A low cost Secretarial Service is available to the public for typing, photocopying, internet access, etc.



CIOC, Ennis





# Donegal



LETTERKENNY CONGRESS RESOURCE CENTRE

Pearse Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal • Tel: 074 91 28010  
Email: [coordinator.letterkenny@congresscentres.net](mailto:coordinator.letterkenny@congresscentres.net)  
Web: [www.resourcecentreletterkenny.com](http://www.resourcecentreletterkenny.com)



**Marie Slevin** (top)  
Centre Co-ordinator

**Veronica McElhinney**  
Centre Supervisor



**T**he Congress Resource Centre, Pearse Road, Letterkenny, was opened in November 1995.

It is part of the Congress Centres Network and is the only one in Donegal.

The Centre provides independent support and information services working to represent and further the interests of the trade union movement at local level.

### Values

We will strive to achieve social cohesion and social justice by upholding the values of solidarity, fairness and equality through training, education, advocacy and other services in communities.

### Services

The Centre provides a wide range of services for people who are unemployed, marginalised groups and for those in work:

- Welfare rights information
- Employment rights information
- Regional Employment Service (RES)
- Low cost computer training
- CV preparation
- Clerical services and access to telephone, fax and internet
- Graphic design and digital media creation
- Room hire

### Computer Training

- Basic Computers
- ECDL, ECDL Advanced Word, Excel, Access and Powerpoint
- FETAC Level 3 Computer Literacy
- FETAC Level 4 Information Technology
- FETAC Level 4 Computer Applications
- FETAC Train the Trainer Level 5
- FETAC Social & Civil Information Level 6



The President of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), John Douglas, was in Letterkenny 14 January 2015 to present certificates to those who had completed courses at the Congress Resource Centre.

Mr Douglas, who is also General Secretary of the Mandate Trade Union, described the local Centre as “very vibrant” and paid tribute to the staff involved and the recipients of certificates for their approach.

The courses included DACT 2 and 3, Communications, Train the Trainer, Computer Literacy, ECDL, and Customer Services. Also in attendance at the presentation function at the Public Services Centre was Sylvia Ryan, Programme Manager ICTU.

*Above: Training Options participants who completed the course. The management at the back row, from left: Mark Murray (Department of Social Protection), James McCauley (participant), Charlie Kelly (Company Secretary), John Douglas, Veronica McElhinney, John Quinn (Chairperson), Sylvia Ryan and Marie Slevin. Front row from left, participants Alice Moore, Anna Marie Meehan, Mary Gallagher, Brid McCallion and Paddy Walsh*





**The Co. Donegal Board of Management**

**Back row: John Quinn (CWU) (Chairperson), P.J. Hannon (SIPTU) (Board Member), Brendan O'Donnell (Board Member)**

**Front row: Fidelma Carron (SIPTU) (Treasurer), Michael Ferry (SIPTU) (Board Member), Ann Wilkinson (SIPTU) (Vice-Chairperson)**

**Insert: Charlie Kelly (Company Secretary)**



## Customer Service courses

The Customer Service courses in the Letterkenny Centre proved to be incredibly popular with the public. The courses were booked-out fast. The teaching responsibilities on the course were shared equally between Brian McArt and Ankush Shinghal.

Both men have a vast experience to draw from, Brian being involved for almost forty years in the retail and wholesale sector and Ankush having worked as a duty manager for almost ten years in one of the largest hotels in Co. Donegal.

Brian McArt: "Quality customer service is a very important part of any business venture and our course enables learners to develop

the necessary skills when dealing with the public at large at whatever level. We've had a very good response so far to the courses that we've run. We are confident that this course will go from strength to strength.

From the point of view of setting up a business or being involved in one, customer service plays a crucial role and these courses can ensure that you are fully prepared for that role."

The main modules of the course are:

- Customer Contact Skills
- Customer Focus
- Quality Service, Policy & Practice
- Dealing with Difference
- Consumer Legislation



**A light-hearted moment during the Customer Service course. Standing, tutors Brian McArt (left) and Ankush Shinghal**



*Together we can help*

**The RES staff (from left): Helen Clarke (Project Officer), Mary Higgins (Outreach Officer), Deirdre O'Donnell (Administrator)**

The R.E.S. provides a range of services to set you on the road to employment, improving those prospects every step of the way.

Run and managed by the Board of Management of the Congress Resource Centre, the R.E.S. was set up in Letterkenny in 1997.

Based at the Congress Resource Centre on the town's Pearse Road, its aim is to provide an independent, integrated and personalised service to meet the needs of the target groups who include long term unemployed, women in the home, and lone parents. The service helps them access meaningful employment and employment related opportunities - signposting those opportunities along the way.

These are just some of the services we offer:

- Put together a professional CV
- Fill out application forms
- Prepare properly for your interview
- Provide access to emerging job opportunities
- Provide details of the advantages of taking up employment

Personnel at the R.E.S. will outline the approach and procedures to help take that potential stepping stone into the workplace. There is also an outreach service that extends throughout the DLDC catchment area.

R.E.S. staff can provide a job match service for employers to ensure that only the suitable are put forward.



# Dublin



THE FINGAL CENTRE

5 Cardiffsbridge Road, Finglas West, Dublin 11 • Tel: 01 8845228 • Email: [director@thefingalcentre.ie](mailto:director@thefingalcentre.ie)  
Web: [www.thefingalcentre.ie](http://www.thefingalcentre.ie)



Aontas Star Awards 2015 in the Ballsbridge Hotel, Dublin on Monday 23rd February



Front row: Louisa Gavin, Sylvia Ryan and Joanne Brown (all Congress Centres Network)  
At the back: Debbie Delaney (Fingal Centre), Marie McCann (Fingal Centre) and Mary Sorohan



At the ninth STAR Awards ceremony, seven outstanding adult learning projects received an award in recognition of their work. The winning projects deal with a range of issues such as homelessness, drug use, disability, unemployment, upskilling and the isolation of older people. Dr. Tom Collins presented the winners with their awards at the ceremony in the Ballsbridge Hotel. Over 300 people representing 38 adult education groups were in attendance.



Far Left: The training room

Left: The Momentum Fingal Class of 2013 / 2014



Left: The Fingal Centre took part in 'The Pathways To Work' Employment/ Training and Guidance Event on Thursday 5th June 2014 in Asbourne Community Centre, Ashbourne, Co. Meath.

## Services we provide

- Employment support • Information/Advice
- Voyages programme • Momentum
- Benefit 4 • Tuning in programme
- Community garden • Heritage

At the Fingal Centre we also run a Free 8 Hour Training Course which consists of learning how to:

- Set up and use an Email account • Search Online
- Shop Safely Online • YouTube
- Skype • Book Flights and hotel accomodation





**Above: Marie McCann, the Fingal Centre Co-ordinator in her office**

**O**ur Progression Rates, from community employment to full-time employment / education, are excellent. On a yearly basis we continue to provide 85% to 90%.

**Voyages**

An education and training programme for adults who are stabilized or in early recovery from drug addiction. This programme runs for 26 weeks and is funded by Finglas / Cabra local Drug Task force.

**Momentum**

A warehouse and logistics programme aimed at long term unemployed. Participants receive 4 FETAC level 5 awards, 2 forklift licenses (counter balance and reach), Manual handling and safe pass, they also receive on the job work experience.

**Benefit 4**

The Fingal Centre provides free computer training to the community. This training covers e-mail, internet, social networking and Skype.

**Tunin Programme**

This is a family support programme that is in existence since 2011. The Centre works with young people at risk of early school leaving and their families.

**Heritage**

The Fingal Centre provides a Heritage walking tour. There are 12 key points of Historical interest in Finglas. This tour has proven to be very popular especially with the local schools.

**Employment support**

- One To One CV preparation • Job seeking skills
- Welfare rights information • Provision and assistance with form filling.

**Board of Management:** Odran Reid, Liz Clare, Mick Creedon, Paul Rogers, Patricia Tobin, Pat Mooney, Neil Flanagan, Larry Dooley, Joe Corr, Pat Carey, Liam Thompson

***The Fairlawn Prospect Hill Community Garden***

Through funding received from Dublin City Council we were asked to create a community garden in a derelict site between Fairlawn housing estate and Prospect Hill apartments. This site was creating huge problems for both sets of residents as it was attracting anti social behaviour.

The purpose of this garden was to develop a partnership within the local community to provide the necessary space and skills in order for the local community to grow their own fruit and vegetables and provide a focal point where the community can come together with a common purpose and a sense of belonging where they are always welcome and have a sense of ownership.



With the co-operation of all residents and the work of the Centre and Dublin City Council it is now a beautiful garden with 40 allotments that have all been tended to by the residents and are now in full crop.

Since the work has begun on the site there have been no reports of anti social behaviour and the garden has become a safe haven for residents to integrate with each other.

It was initially planned to create 20 allotments spaces but with the demand we have to provide 40 spaces and still have a waiting list.

We have provided two raised beds for wheelchair users and they have been allocated to the meeting place club a local organisation for children with disabilities.

# Dublin

THE DUBLIN 12 CONGRESS CENTRE

**New Grange House, 390 Clonard Road, Crumlin, Dublin 12**  
**Tel: 01 4926797 • Email: [coordinator.dublin12@congresscentres.net](mailto:coordinator.dublin12@congresscentres.net)**

**T**he Dublin Centre for the unemployed is a non-profit organisation. The centre was set up in 1999 by former trade unionist Mr Hugh Geraghty who sadly passed away in Feb 2007.

His main objective was to target the socially excluded and the marginalised in the Dublin 12 area, acting as the vocal point in the local community, providing a range of services utilising trade union and community developments principles.

The Centre has fifteen outreach Centres to whom we second 26 community employee's to local community centres, e.g. senior citizens day centre, youth centres, Irish Kidney Association, addiction response centres, after school clubs, elderly help line and outreach information officers.

The Centre is affiliated with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) and is an ICTU centre and FETAC approved training centre.

The Centre encourages participants to avail of all training which is offered to the individuals needs (among others FETAC / HETAC accredited certifications. They all have an individual

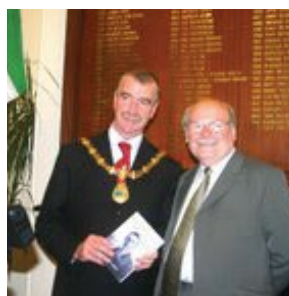
learning plan (ILP) which monitors their training and special awards.

An information officer on the premises the centre also provides confidential help with social welfare issues such as:

- Entitlements • Welfare to Work • Education Rights
- Labour Law • PRSI / Tax • CV services • Social issues

The Dublin 12 Congress Centre also provides a Jobs Club. This is an interactive two week course that covers:

- Effective Job seeking skills
- Interview techniques
- Mock interview
- Up to date CV's
- Social Welfare and
- Community Welfare Support
- Education and training
- supports available to adults thinking of returning to education
- Aptitude / psychometric test



**Above left: Margaret Fitzpatrick, Centre Co-ordinator and far right: Hugh Geraghty, Founder of the Centre**

The Dublin 12 Congress Centre is also the sponsor and the managing agent of the Job Initiative (JI) programme. They have 26 outreaches in the Dublin area.

**Assistant Supervisor:**  
**Yvonne Eccles**

**Board of management: Tom Redmond (Chairman), Susan Collins (Treasurer), John Lucas (Secretary), Eamon Devoy (Director), Frank Walsh (Director)**



## Services

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions ICTU Courses facilitated by the Dublin 12 Congress Centre provides funds for the following:

**Maximise Your Options: A six week course FETAC 3 modules and ongoing mentoring:**

- Career planning
- Personal and interpersonal skills
- Work experience

### World Irish ICANDO

A five day digital media skills course (includes 30 hours of work experience).

## BENEFIT 4 - First Steps to IT

Basic lessons in your first steps to learning computer skills. (Book airlines tickets / Online Banking Intro / Chat / Set up Email). Department of Social Protection DSP / Rathmines Pembroke Partnership provided funding for: Home repair and maintenances course FETAC level 4/5

- Plumbing • Basic electrical • Landscape construction
- Painting • Tiling • Safe Pass • Manual handling
- First aid / AED defibrillator • Home repair
- Wall / floor / tiling / landscape and construction maintenance (hard and soft landscaping) 4 weeks (covering same subjects as above).

They will provide all the secretarial, administration, advertising and support for this course.



# Dublin

TALLAGHT CENTRE FOR THE UNEMPLOYED LTD.

St. Dominic's Hall, Main Street, Tallaght, Dublin 24 • Tel: 01 4512983 • Email: [tcuinfo@eircom.net](mailto:tcuinfo@eircom.net)



**T**allaght Centre for the Unemployed (TCU) is a long established and well respected centre in the heart of Tallaght Village. A founder member of the Congress Network, the Centre officially opened in 1990, but has been in existence since the late 80's and the core purpose of the Centre has been to provide training, education, advice & information and support services to people in Tallaght and the surrounding area.

The Centre is located beside the ITT in Tallaght Village, adjacent to the High Street and The Square. We are open to

the public on a daily basis and we operate as a drop-in centre where members of the public can avail of the various services administered by the staff and management of the Centre.

### Mission Statement

Tallaght Centre for the Unemployed Ltd. is a people centred organisation which is focussed on the needs of the long term unemployed, unemployment and related issues.

The Centre is committed to protecting the welfare and rights of all individuals irrespective of background or culture.

**Centre Co-ordinator:** *Madeleine Moralee* | **Board Members:** *Cecil Johnston (Chairman), Jim Fay (Secretary), Harry Toher (Treasurer), Angela Pidgeon, Margaret Deaton, Dermot Richardson, Charlie O'Connor*

## Facilities and services

The Centre provides a wide range of facilities designed to satisfy the needs of the local community, but particularly those affected by multi-dimensional issues such as marginalisation within the community, unemployment or being socially excluded and economically disadvantaged.

Services are varied and include the following:

- Resource Drop-in Centre
- Advice and Information Service
- Typing and CV Service
- On-site Training Room
- Access to DSP, Intreo, Obair and other local employment services
- TCU Crèche
- Tallaght Men Shed
- TCU Staff



*The computer training room with full Broadband access*

Tallaght Centre for the Unemployed Ltd. sponsors Community Employment and Jobs Initiative programmes with 70 staff in total; the employees on the projects receive on the job training for their particular project as well as individual training to enhance skills and abilities.

The projects are:

- TCU Main Scheme: Madeleine Moralee (Supervisor).
- TCU Crèche: Helen Kelty & Marion Kearns (Supervisors Jobs Initiative), Betty Whelan & Helena Mullins, Team Leaders.

The Centre has a fully equipped computer training room with Broadband access and the capacity for 10 students. Numerous training programmes have been delivered over the years with many hundreds of students availing of training. The government sponsored Benefit programme has been in operation since its inception.

The Centre provides work experience opportunities to

individuals who are training or participating on programmes outside the Centre.

Tallaght Centre for the Unemployed Ltd. is committed to a universal workplace and treats all individuals equally. The Centre has a structured system that sets quality objectives which measures its activities against its vision, mission and ethos.

# Galway



GALWAY PEOPLES' RESOURCE CENTRE

St. Clare's Walk, Merchants Road, Co. Galway  
Tel: 091 564822 • Web: [www.gprc.ie](http://www.gprc.ie) • Email: [info@gprc.ie](mailto:info@gprc.ie)



**G**alway Peoples' Resource Centre, our information and training centre, is located in the heart of the city.

The G.P.R.C. has been working for and with the people of Galway since 1986.

In 2011, the Centre moved to its new premises on Merchants Road.

This new city centre location has a state of the art computer training room and en suite meeting room.

The Education Office runs a variety of quality assured FETAC accredited courses throughout the year, with an emphasis on practical job-centred skills and personal development.

Information on all educational and training options is also offered as well as assistance with application forms such as CAO and Maintenance Grants. The education office also collaborates with other service providers such as the Local Employment Service Network on training initiatives and is also a provider of Benefit 4 basic computer skills training.

The Welfare Rights Office provides information on welfare entitlements and /or secondary benefits. All enquiries are dealt with in complete confidentiality and advice is offered in a helpful and non-judgemental manner. The services provided by the Welfare Rights office include:

A comprehensive information service on all social welfare entitlements, tax matters, also full-time and part-time workers

rights, an advocacy service to research individuals' queries/complaints as required and to provide representation or referral for clients to appropriate bodies. This office has made successful appeals on behalf of numerous clients this year, with a great portion of these being in relation to disability allowance claims.



**Margaret Cullinane,**  
Centre Co-ordinator

The Equality Office provides information and practical help to refugees, asylum seekers, other minority groups and any resident wishing to initiate a complaint under Equality Legislation. Equality Legislation endeavours to protect the individual against discrimination based on gender, civil status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief and membership of the Traveller Community. There are three equality officers within the centre. All are trained to the highest level and all conversations are strictly confidential.

The equality office also provides an advocacy service to research individuals' queries or complaints as required and to provide representation or referral for clients to appropriate bodies.

Westword is the Centre's free magazine. Published every eight weeks, it is available in various libraries, post offices, CWO offices and shops around the city. Westword features up to the minute information on projects, services, events and festivals being run by voluntary and community groups.

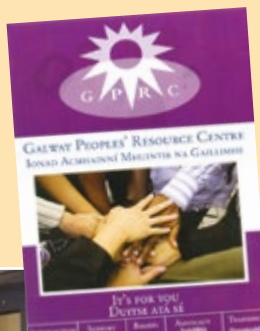
It details welfare entitlement changes and reforms when they occur and it also provides information on education & training opportunities and initiatives with a particular emphasis on information that is of relevance to the unemployed or those on a low income.

**Board of Management: Tom Browne (chairperson), John Carty, Sean Purtell, Mary Gibbons, Brendan Duffy, Mark Lohan, Val Coakley, Pat Hardiman, Margaret Cullinane**

## Services

- Computer Literacy (FETAC Level 3)
- Personal and Interpersonal (FETAC Level 3)
- Work Placement (FETAC Level 3)
- Computer Applications (FETAC Level 4)
- Computerised Accounts (FETAC Level 5)
- Reception Skills Course (FETAC Level 5)
- Train the Trainer (FETAC Level 6)
- Secretarial Services
- One-to-one tuition
- English to Foreign Students
- Personal Development
- Interview Skills
- Children's Computer Summer School.

- Introduction to Computers (not accredited)
- Stress management and Relaxation (not accredited)
- Arts and Crafts (not accredited)
- Computer Literacy (Fetac Level 3)
- Career Preparation (Fetac Level 3)



The G.P.R.C. is a fully accredited FETAC and FÁS registered Training Centre. The training room is available to rent on an hourly or daily basis.

Low cost Secretarial and Computer Services are provided in the centre also, these include help with compiling CV's, covering letters, as well as typing reports, theses and essays.

The Centre also provides a low-cost photocopying service, free computer access and low-cost employment related internet access.

Other Services Available in the Centre:  
JOBS CLUB - Develop practical job-seeking skills in a group setting - 091 566485.  
OBAIR L.E.S.N. - One to one career guidance and employment support sessions.



# Kerry

CAHERSIVEEN CONGRESS INFORMATION CENTRE

The Marina, Cahersiveen, Co. Kerry  
Tel: 066 9472866 • Email: [coninfcentre@gmail.com](mailto:coninfcentre@gmail.com)



Above: Angela Meade, receptionist

Far right: Centre participants on a Career Preparation Course in the Cahersiveen Congress Centre

Below: Mike Morris, Centre Co-ordinator



The Cahersiveen Congress Centre was established in 1992. It provides an information / representation service for workers and their dependents, for the unemployed, people with disabilities, lone parents, the elderly, employers and to anyone who wishes to avail of our services.

The enquiries to our Centre are mainly concerned with Social Welfare allowance, Health Board entitlements, Pensions, Housing, Education, Work permits, Lone Parents Supplementary Welfare, Employment Legislation.

The Centre in Cahersiveen was previously known as 'The Cahersiveen Centre for the unemployed' In June 2011 the name was changed to 'The Cahersiveen Congress Information Centre'.

The Centre has sponsored Community Employment Schemes for the past nineteen years and each scheme has been an outstanding success.



The Cahersiveen Congress Centre Organisation is available to support the community and voluntary groups. The objective of this Centre are as follows:

To ensure that participants in the CE project are provided with quality work experience and training opportunities thus promoting their progression.

To provide the local community with an Information and secretarial service so as to make these facilities available to everyone in the community.

To support the community and voluntary groups with participants placements from our CE scheme.

We liaise with the local Employment Service in running a Jobs Club in the Centre to help the unemployed get skills to get them employment.

To give every participant working through this Centre the opportunity to access good quality training courses.

To support the unemployed and any person seeking help or advice.

**Board Of Management:** Con Casey (Chairperson), Paul O'Loughlin (Secretary), Joseph McCrohan (PDO)

## Services provided by the Centre

### Secretarial services:

This service provides help with compiling CV's, letters, assignments, projects and all other typing requirements. This service also provides real work experience for CE participants. In addition to improving their skills, it also affords them the opportunity to meet and deal with the public, which in turn will enhance their confidence.

- Community Employment Schemes
- Job Initiatives • Local Training Initiatives
- Social Welfare Entitlements Redundancy Information
- Education & Training • Start your own Business
- Disability Rights • Childcare
- Advice on union Membership
- Education and Training courses
- Interview Skill Technique / CV Preparation

### Information we also provide:

The information office continues to serve the needs of the unemployed and others in the area. While the majority of information clients are social welfare recipients, some of the labour law queries have started coming from employers.

We can help with Information on:

- Social Media / Internet tools for job seekers
- Occupational First Aid FETAC
- Reception / Front line Office FETAC
- Landscape Gardening FETAC
- HACCP FETAC • Manual Handling • Fire Training
- Safe Use of Horticultural Equipment FETAC
- Computer Literacy FETAC
- Career Preparation FETAC



# Kerry



TRALEE CONGRESS INFORMATION CENTRE



Milk Market Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry • Tel: 066 7127617 • Email: [traleecongresscentres@gmail.com](mailto:traleecongresscentres@gmail.com)



In recent times there has been an increase in the level of unemployment and job insecurity with more jobs becoming part time or contract work.

The Centre assists people to participate fully and equally in the economic, social and cultural life in the Tralee area, Ireland and the European Union.

We can also refer you to the Tralee Local Employment Service officer, who will provide free, friendly and confidential advice assistance in exploring employment, training and education options, suitable courses and referrals information on job vacancies, community employment, community work placement, work placement programme, back to work incentives, back to education allowance, funding and starting your own business.

Kevin O'Connor, Mediator/Guidance Officer, Tel: 066-7180013

What can we do for YOU!

Are you unemployed?

Finding it hard to find work?

Do you know your Social Welfare entitlements?

**W**e support the unemployed and their dependants. We provide information and representation of your rights and entitlements in a non-threatening, friendly and confidential atmosphere.



Left: The Yes to Equality Campaign Bus visiting the Tralee Centre on Wednesday 13th May 2015

From left: Con Casey, Mary McDermot, Marilyn Bulman (Co-ordinator, Tralee Congress Information Centre) and Sue Griffin



Below: Lisa addressing the crowd (left) and the Lord Mayor of Kerry, John Brassil (right)





# Kildare



NEWBRIDGE RESOURCE CENTRE

Lower Eyre Street, Droichead Nua, Co. Kildare • Tel: 045 432763 • Email: [twc1@eircom.net](mailto:twc1@eircom.net)

LEIXLIP RESOURCE CENTRE

Unit 3, Lexlip Shopping Mall, Leixlip, Co. Kildare • Tel: 01 6242511 • Email: [leixlipresourcecentre@eircom.net](mailto:leixlipresourcecentre@eircom.net)



The Newbridge Resource Centre



**Theresa Whelan (top)**  
Co-ordinator, Newbridge Centre  
(Head Office)

**Pam Fleming**  
Co-ordinator, Leixlip Centre

**T**he County Kildare Resource Centres for the unemployed were founded in 1984 through Kildare Council of Trade Unions.

We were set up to offer support and training to those who were unemployed. Unemployment was at a very high level then, as it is now. It was not until 1986 we received official recognition.

With this recognition achieved we went on to open Centres in five locations.

Our first District Centre was opened in Droichead Nua followed by Centres in Athy and Leixlip, Naas and Kildare Town.

With the geographical spread being as large as it is, Newbridge Resource Centre became our head office with the administration of all the offices taking place from here. A supervisor was appointed in each of the five Centres with the Districts being independent of each other. Unfortunately since then we have had to close two Centres, Naas and Kildare.

We continue to have a presence in Kildare Town holding a clinic one morning a week.

This is expected to improve soon with the imminent opening of a new community Centre to house voluntary groups like ours.

The overall responsibility for the running of the five district Centres is in the hands of our Board of Directors.

The Centre in Newbridge consists of one IT training room with a facility of 8 computers with projector. The rent for the Newbridge Centre is €900.00 and the Centre is available after 5 each evening.

## Services

### Clerical

Typing up CV's / Documents / Thesis  
Binding / Laminating / Faxing / Internet / Photocopying  
Designing Brochures / Business Cards,  
Wedding Booklets and Personalised Invitation Cards

### We also provide information on:

- Social Welfare / Rent Supplement
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- One Parent Family Payment • Child Benefit
- Family Income Supplement • Disability Allowance
- Income Supports for older people

### Employment

- Minimum rates of pay
- Annual Leave / Maternity Leave / Retiring from work
- Public holidays • Redundancy Payments

- Starting a business
- Work Permit / Sick leave and sick pay

### Housing

Household Charge / Mortgage Interest Relief / Stamp Duty / Applying for Local Authority Housing / Tenant's Rights and Obligations / Housing Adaption Grant, Home Repossession Education and Training

Early Childhood Care and Education / School Terms.

We offer advice on Financial help with going to school, Special Needs Education, Leaving Certificate, Grants for Third-Level Students.

### Travel and Recreation

Applying for an Irish Passport / Full Driving Licence / Motor Tax / European Health Insurance Card / Change of Vehicle Ownership / Penalty Points / Disabled Person's Parking Permit.

# Kildare



ATHY RESOURCE CENTRE

The Manse, Woodstock Street, Athy, Co. Kildare • Tel: 059 863 8523  
Email: athyresourcecentre@eircom.net • Web: www.athyresourcecentre.ie



Athy Resource Centre, Duke Street, on a sunny day

**T**he Athy Resource Centre is one of three centres apart of Co. Kildare Centres for the Unemployed Ltd. It employs over 18 part time staff which consists of receptionists, information officers, computer operators and tutors. All of the Centre's operations are overseen by Mary Maguire, the Centre's Co-ordinator and the only full time member of staff.

The centre offers a variety of computer based and non-computer based training services for adults of all skills and backgrounds. The Centre is FETAC/QQI accredited to deliver training from level 3 through to level 6 and is also accredited by the Irish Computer Society to deliver the European Computer Drivers Licence (Syllabus 6) and ECDL Advanced.

We also provide special reduced rate services such as graphic design, business and personal printing, mono and colour photocopying, binding, laminating, faxing, emailing, internet access and typing (CV's, letters, projects, etc.).

Our information officers provide all our customers, free & easy to understand information on governmental and regional entitlements and regulations; from education, housing, grants, employment rights and everything in between.

Since 2013, the centre had moved to its new premises on Woodstock Street.

The new centre has larger size rooms, a fully kitted training room with training facilities, a meeting/board room, staff room, reception room, canteen, staff parking, and other amenities.

We also provide renting of our board room for business meetings or private functions that is spacious and competitively priced. Since the move the Centre has grown from strength to strength, even though austerity. This would

not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of all its staff members and the tireless work and vision of Mary Maguire.

As the centre continues to appeal to this generation and the next, a Facebook page was set up a number of years ago and had provided a very successful means of communication of events and services to the public, which has served as an invaluable marketing tool.

This year sees the launch of our own website with the goal of providing information of our courses and services to a greater number of online users with the option to contact us or to register for a course, all online. If you like to register for a course or avail of our services, please contact us today.



Above: Mary Maguire, Co-ordinator, Athy Resource Centre

**Co. Kildare Board Members:** Fr. Mícheál MacGréil, Peter Kennedy, Jimmy Kelly, Pat McCarthy, John Delmer, Marian Dillon, Sally Purcell, John Keenan, Catherine Murphy, Jack Wall, Miles Wickham, Willie Hamilton





Left to right: Theresa Whelan (Co-ordinator), David Begg (General Secretary, I.C.T.U.), Sylvia Ryan (C.C.N.), Dick Maher (Board Member)



Students of the 1st Momentum Programme at the Athy Resource Centre, 2015



David Begg addressing the Annual General Meeting of the Co. Kildare Centres for the Unemployed in Athy



Fr. Mícheál MacGréil (Hon. President) addressing the A.G.M. of the Co. Kildare Centres for the Unemployed



Joanne Brown (CCN) addressing students of the Momentum Programme held in the Centre



David Begg speaking at the 26th A.G.M. at the Co. Kildare Centres for the Unemployed in Athy

## Courses

Although the Kildare Centres offer a number of training courses at the centre, the most successful has been the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL). With the new version Syllabus 6, there is now more of a choice of what modules to study and there are also three ways to become certified:

- Full ECDL Certificate – Candidate must pass 7 modules out of a choice of 12.
- ECDL Start Certificate – Candidate must pass the 4 core modules.
- ECDL Component Certificate – Candidate must pass any 1 or more modules.

The new syllabus offers a wider variety of modules to choose from. Those are:

- Computer Essentials • Online Essentials • Word Processing
- Spreadsheet Methods • Databases • Presentations
- Online Collaboration • IT Security • Web Editing
- Image Editing • Project Planning • 2D CAD

We are one of a few established training centres to cover all modules in the programme. We also offer a walk-in test centre for learners not registered in our centre such as eLearning students.

For those who already have ECDL accreditation, the Centres now offer the ECDL Advanced certification. This course further advance on the existing knowledge covered in the ECDL and a certificate is awarded on completion of each module. There are 4 modules to choose from:

1. Advanced Word Processing
2. Advanced Spreadsheets
3. Advanced Databases
4. Advanced Presentations

Learners can earn the ECDL Expert Certificate by completing

any three of the four modules.

The Centres has run a number of government funded programmes designed to up-skill learners to begin using computers and to help gain employment for the unemployed.

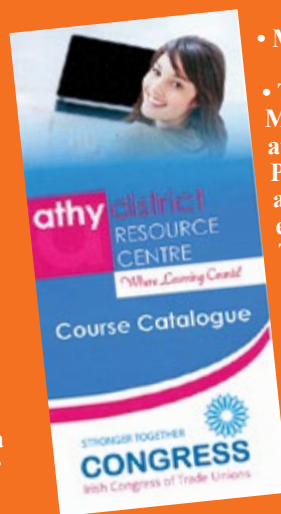
- Benefit 4 is a free programme designed to teach adults who never used a computer to be able to use the internet, email, skype and social networking sites. It has become more popular every year, in particular with learners of senior years.

- Maximise your options

- The centre also hosted a very successful Momentum programme for the first time this year at the centre. Funded by the Department of Social Protection, the programme is designed to educate and retrain young men to help them secure employment and/or to gain experience. This includes exercises such as teambuilding, communication, preparation of their CV's, manual handling, forklift training as well as work experience with the goal of leaving the live register and securing employment. FETAC / QQI

The Centres runs a number of popular FETAC/ QQI courses ranging from levels 3 through 6. Some of the more popular courses include:

- Train the Trainer (Level 6)
- Web Design (Level 5)
- Manual and Computerised Accounts (Level 5)
- Manual and Computerised Payroll (Level 5)
- Information Technology (Level 4)
- Basic Computers (Level 3)
- Text Production (Level 3)
- Computer Literacy (Level 3)
- Communications (Level 4)
- Work Experience (Level 4)



# Kilkenny



**NORESIDE RESOURCE CENTRE**

**3 Canice's Court, Dean Street, Co. Kilkenny  
Tel: 056 7762146 • Email: noresideresourcecentre@gmail.com**



**T**he Noreside Resource Centre for the Unemployed is in existence since 1987 and have been involved with Social and Community Employment since its inception.

A large number of people who have participated on these programmes over the years have in many cases found a purpose to their lives and have gone on to find full time employment. In terms of meeting the objectives of our project we would have to state that as providers of services to some of the most vulnerable members of the community our objectives are of necessity both recurring and ongoing.

We assist people in making their lives better whether it is by giving them social outlet to nurture their personal development, or the satisfaction that they got the job they wanted through their involvement as participants either at our Resource Centre or through our educational programmes at the Education Centre.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions along with the Network of Centres for the Unemployed are looking at new ways of servicing the changing needs of the public, taking into consideration the changing economy and increasing social abuse, ex-offenders and the increasing problems associated with asylum seekers.

### **Noreside Education Centre**

All successful organizations know that it takes more than a good plan to succeed in business. It takes an empowered organization, focused on realistic goals, with impassioned leadership. It takes vision. It takes consensus. It takes a sense of purpose! The Noreside Education Centre empowers people to learn new skills, interact with each other, become socially aware and become mature people within society.

Achieving personal development through giving people an opportunity to return to education and for them to understand that education is life-long learning.

The primary goal of our centre is to offer Computer Training to the public. We achieve this by delivery courses that needs of the public no matter how big or how small those needs may be.

The Noreside Education Centre is here to provide our region with effective and affordable computer application training in a friendly, state-of-the-art training facility.

We believe what makes The Noreside Education Centre special is the initiative and high calibre of our staff, our dedication to professionalism and quality in creating and supporting outstanding training and our team spirit.

We are committed to providing you with high quality tools and a learning environment conducive to learning. Most importantly, The Noreside Resource Centre wants to provide the public with the opportunity for growth.



*Yvonne Moriarty, Centre Co-ordinator*

We hope that you will find our courses challenging, interesting, and fun.

We are conveniently situated in the heart of Kilkenny City and our modern bright computer rooms create a nice relaxed atmosphere to study and learn.

We run numerous FETAC Accredited Courses suited to beginners' right up to experienced users, and we also provide courses in ECDL standard and advanced as well as one to one tuition at whatever subject/level is required.

Due to the numerous enquires we received as a result of limited internet access, we now provide an 'Internet Café' to the people in Kilkenny with a reduced rate for people receiving Social Welfare Payments.

**Board of management:** John Cooney (Chairperson), Margaret Butler (Secretary), Bernard Scott (Director), St. John Donovan (Director), Yvonne Moriarty (Director), Seamus Dowling

## **Services**

### **Computer Learning Centre**

The computer learning centre provides Book Keeping, Payroll, Communications, Customer Services, Desk Top Publishing, Reception, Retail Selling, Spread Sheets, The Internet, Word Processing, ECDL.

### **Secretarial Services**

The secretarial service is used by unemployed and employed persons, students and the general public. Those in receipt of Social Welfare payments are offered a reduced rate.

This service provides help with compiling CV's, letters, assignments, projects and all other typing requirements. This service also provides real work experience for CE

Workers. In addition to improving their skills, it also affords them the opportunity to meet and deal with the public, which in turn will enhance their confidence.



*Far Left: Train the Trainer-course*

*Left: Brian Cody visits our Momentum group*



# Leitrim

NORTH LEITRIM RESOURCE CENTRE

New Line, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim  
Tel: 071 9856029 • Email: [nlresourcecentre@eircom.net](mailto:nlresourcecentre@eircom.net)



Above: Gerry Cornyn, Centre Co-ordinator  
Left: The entrance to the Centre

**T**he North Leitrim Congress Centre is now in its nineteenth year of operation on the New Line, Manorhamilton.

The past few years has seen major increases in the activities and services of the Centre. Apart from the main Centre in Manorhamilton it has now thirty three participants actively involved in various community work throughout Leitrim and parts of Sligo. It works closely with local sub-sponsoring groups and community organisations.

Present areas of activity include citizens information, rural tourism, working with the committee of the local 'ballroom of romance', sports centres, community halls, the local credit union, a drop-in centre for persons in recovery from addiction and several environmental projects.

Extensive and various training courses are also sourced and provided to assist the participants in seeking employment, work experience and further education and training. The Centre is still sponsored by Sligo Leitrim Trades Council and is funded mainly by the Community Employment budget from the Department of Social Protection.

## Services

The secretarial service is used by unemployed and employed persons, students and the general public.

### Computer Learning Centre

The computer learning centre provides computer literacy FETAC Level 3, Computer Applications FETAC Level 4, Accounting - Manual and Computerised FETAC Level 5.

In addition to this we run ECDL and Advanced ECDL Word, Powerpoint and Excel.

### Information

The information office continues to serve the needs of the unemployed and others in the area.

While the majority of information clients are Social Welfare recipients, some of the labour law queries have started coming from employers.

A tracking system called Management Information System will be put in place to track all queries and activities that operate in the Centre on a daily basis.

This will eliminate the need for statistics to be returned to I.C.T.U. at the end of every month.



A view of one of the outdoor environmental sites

### Secretarial Services

The secretarial service is used by unemployed and employed persons, students and the general public. Those in receipt of social welfare payments are offered a reduced rate for typing.

This service provides help with compiling CV's, letters, assignments, projects and all other typing requirements. This service also provides real work experience

for CE Workers. In addition to improving their skills, it also affords them the opportunity to meet and deal with the public, which in turn will enhance their confidence.

# Limerick



LIMERICK RESOURCE CENTRE FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

9 Cecil Street, Co. Limerick  
Tel: 061 312718 • Email: [lrcu@eircom.net](mailto:lrcu@eircom.net)



**Padraig Malone,**  
Centre Co-ordinator

The Limerick Resource Centre for the Unemployed opened its doors for business at 33 Thomas Street, Limerick in January 1987 having been formally established by the Limerick Council of Trade Unions the previous year.

The premises in Thomas Street were made available to the Trades Council by Limerick City Council and the late Jim Kemmy, TD, along with others - including former TD and Councillor, Frank Prendergast who died in February 2015 - were instrumental in bringing this about.

The Centre remained there until 2004 when it moved into a converted factory in Hunts Lane under a lease from Shannon Development. The latter building was sold to a private company in June 2012 and the Centre was forced to relocate again when the new owners declined to renew its lease that was due to expire at the end of 2013. In January 2014 it re-opened at 9 Cecil Street.

From the very beginning of its existence, the Centre established a good reputation in the areas of welfare rights information and adult education and training - especially basic IT training and since 1999 it has been an ECDL Test Centre.

It also provides job-seeking supports such as CV typing and access to communications facilities such as phone, fax and internet.

Along with being a service provider, the Centre is also prepared to become involved in campaigns around issues of relevance to its client base.



**Above: IT-facilities at Limerick Resource Centre for the Unemployed**



**Above: Frank Prendergast (left) and Jim Kemmy**

The first Co-ordinator of the Centre was John Ryan who went on to become a Mayor of Limerick and he was followed by Joan Condon who held the position for twelve years from 1989 to 2001. Since 2001 the position has been held by Padraig Malone.

From the time of its establishment by the Trades Council in 1987, the Centre has maintained a strong association with the local trade union movement and is part of the Congress Centres Network. Many trade union stalwarts both past and present have served on its board of management - among them long-standing Trades Council President and SIPTU activist Bill Davoren who passed away in 2014.

It has also had a long and fruitful association with the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOU) - which also started in 1987 - and its current Co-ordinator is a National Vice-Chairperson of the INOU.

In 2012 Limerick Resource Centre for the Unemployed marked its twenty-fifth anniversary. It looks forward to at least another quarter-century of playing a significant and constructive role in the economic, social and community life of Limerick.

**Board of Management:** Albert Cullen (Chairperson, SIPTU), Peggy Hansberry (Secretary Mandate), Maura McKeown (Treasurer, SIPTU), Sean Treacy (Vice-Chairperson, TEEU), Maura Nash (Impact), Esther Dillon (Mandate), Ger Cowhey (TEEU), Terry Clancy (SIPTU), Patricia Hartnet (Independent), Frank McDonnell (SIPTU), Liam O'Meara (Mandate)





**Renata Jagodzinska  
at the reception**



## Re-Location of the Centre, 2014

In the middle of 2013 the Centre was informed by the owners of its premises at Hunt's Lane that they would not be renewing the lease, which was due to expire at the end of that year.

The Centre had been at this location since June 2004, having previously been forced to quit its original building in Thomas Street due to health and safety concerns.

The Board of Management were faced with the decision either of closing the Centre or finding a new premises with all the attendant costs and difficulties involved. It was agreed to seek a new building and in this quest matters soon took a somewhat fortuitous turn.

In looking at a building in Davis Street that had for many years been occupied by FAS, it was found that it was about to be taken over by the Red Ribbon Project – a community-based sexual health awareness group.

This in turn meant that the building in Cecil Street that the project had occupied for thirteen years was about to become vacant and this was an ideal location for the Centre.

In November 2013, a two-year initial lease was signed, which came into operation on 1st January 2014.

While the building was very suitable in terms of space and location it required considerable work to meet with the Centre's requirements, particularly the setting up of a training facility and providing IT connections throughout the building.

All this was very costly especially given the Centre's scarce financial resources. However, a determined and successful effort was made to raise the necessary finance from a variety of sources including fundraising and by the beginning of 2015 the cost of the relocation had been met with little or no bills outstanding.

Among the contributions towards this project was €10,000 from the J.P. McManus Benevolent Fund, generous grants from a number of trade unions and from the PAUL Partnership (the Limerick City Local Development Company).

The Centre has now settled into its new building and is looking forward to remaining there for many years to come.



**Above: Limerick Resource Centre for the Unemployed Welfare Rights staff at a DSP / Eures Jobs Fair in Limerick November 2014.  
From left: Anne Cremins, Martina Fitzgerald and Ann Vandehaegen**



**Above: At a CE Jobs Fair in May 2015, which was jointly organised by the Limerick Congress Centre, Limerick City CE Supervisors Network and PAUL Partnership with the support of the Department of Social Protection.**

**Left to right: Pdraig Malone (Limerick Centre Co-ordinator), Frank McGlynn (Assistant Principal, DSP), Lynda McAvinue (Centre Staff), Celine Alaoui (Centre Staff), Jim Lynch (Divisional Manager, DSP)**

## Services provided by the Centre

- Computer classes, including ECDL – registered Test Centre
- CV preparation and general typing service
- Photocopying and access to phone/fax/email
- Hire of IT Training Facility
- Welfare Rights Information



# Longford



**LONGFORD EDI CENTRE**

11A2 Mastertech Business Park, Athlone Road, Co. Longford  
 Tel: 043 3347515 • Email: [coordinator.longford@congresscentres.net](mailto:coordinator.longford@congresscentres.net)  
 Web: [www.edilongford.ie](http://www.edilongford.ie)



Above, left to right: Adrian Green (CEO Longford Community Resources Ltd.) (LCRL)), Rita Slevin (Mediator LCRL), Mary Smith (Co-ordinator EDI Centre), Pat Kelleher (Committee Member EDI Centre), Sylvia Ryan (Project Manager, Congress Centres Network), Eddie Higgins (Executive Director, EQUAL Ireland)

**L**ongford Employment, Development & Information Centre is a Resource & Training Centre for the Unemployed. One of 24 Congress Centres for the Unemployed affiliated to the Irish Congress of Trade

Unions. The EDI Centre in Longford was established in 1998 by Longford District Council of Trade Unions and Longford Community Resources Ltd.

### Objectives of the EDI Centre:

- To inform welfare dependent people of their entitlements and rights
- To provide practical services that will assist welfare dependent people to find employment
- To provide education and training at introductory, progressive and advanced levels

- To provide ongoing support in an environment that encourages continued participation and social interchange
- To campaign for change



The Catering / Lifeskills Programme presentation of certificates at the EDI Centre Longford on 6th September 2013.

**Back Row:** Donal Sheahan (Tutor), AnnMarie Butler, Helen McCormack, Melissa McTieman, Adam Mee, Symone Donnelly, Ewelina Pajak, Aisling Reilly, Sabrina Butler, Samantha Russell.

**Front Row:** Pat Joe McLoughlin (Board of Management), Serena Burke, Breda Greaves (Course Co-ordinator), Mary Smith (EDI Centre Co-ordinator), Terri Clarke (Senior Development Officer FÁS), Helen Masterson (Tutor), Michael Egan, (Board of Management), Jessica Shanley

### Catering and Life-Skills Project

The need was identified in 2007 for further training for unemployed youth. The catering sector was chosen as a suitable area to develop training as progression routes into employment and further training.

This LTI Programme commenced in July 2011 with a co-ordinator, an assistant co-ordinator and 16 trainees. They complete FETAC modules in: Cookery, Food Service, Maths, Communications, Career Preparation and Computers.



### Additional services

- Information provision
- Typing service for the public
- Computer Training
- Outreach support for men's group and women's groups
- Revamp Training Project
- Catering and Life Skills Training Project
- Pre-Employment and Pre-Development Programmes
- Mediation – A mediator employed by LCRL provides advice and support to encourage progression into further training / education / employment.





**Above left: Mary Smith presenting yew candle holders to Taoiseach Enda Kenny. The candle holders were made by local craftsman Sean Foghlu. The occasion was a presentation of certificates to participants of the Traditional Skills Training Programme**  
**Above right: The 1913 Lockout commemoration at the Longford Centre**



### REVAMP Training Project

Furniture restoration was identified as a viable carrot to attract trainees to broader training. FAS Local Training Initiative as established in Dec 2002, with 1 co-ordinator, 2 part time tutors and 16 trainees.

The programme provides FETAC accredited local training in: Upholstery & Furniture Repair, Tiling, Woodwork, Personal Development, Math, Computer Skills and Work Placement.

### REVAMP 3R Furniture Store

Revamp is a non-profit making Furniture Recycling and Reuse Project established in 2002 as a Social Enterprise to provide training for young people from a welfare dependent background and to reduce waste.

It provides free collection and delivery Service, furniture repair service and provides quality furniture at affordable prices.

Building on the success of the Furniture Recycling Project, Revamp have completed research and a business plan on White Good Recycling. A training programme in Appliance Repairs will commence shortly and will lead to further full or part time jobs.

The Disability Activation Project (DACT) aims to increase the capacity and potential of people on disabilities/illness welfare payments to participate in the labour market.

This project is jointly funded by the ESF and DSP and is targeted at the Border, Midlands and Western region (BMW). The plan is to deliver training and education to enhance the competencies of people with disabilities in a range of personal development, IT and work related programmes.

The Benefit 4 scheme is designed to provide basic IT training to those who may have little or no experience of computers. It provides confidence and helps to develop skills in using the Internet for a variety of activities.

The Momentum Programme is jointly funded under Labour Market Education & Training Fund, European Social Fund (ESF) and the Department of Social Protection (DSP). The programme includes Customer Service, Personal Effectiveness in the Workplace, Business Computing, Work Experience, Manual Handling, Safe Pass, Forklift Driver both Reach and Counter Balance.

### Staffing and Trainees

Centre co-ordinator with 18 Part time CE Staff, and a part time administrator Local Training Initiatives – 2 co-ordinators, 1 full time trainer and 8 part time plus 32 trainees

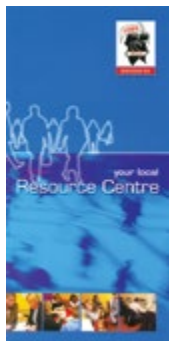
3R Store - Manager, 4 full time and 4 part time staff  
 The Centre accommodates contracted training providers, with approx 130 attending training daily.  
 Over 500 people have completed training in the past year.



**The Longford EDI Centre supporting Decency for Dunnes Workers campaign, April 2015**

**Board of Management: Anthony McCormack (Chairperson), Michael Egan (Secretary), Pat Joe McLoughlin (Treasurer), Bernie Nolan (Treasurer), Pat Kelleher, Rita Slevin, Edel Kelly, Bee Hughes, Mary Walsh, Frank Horne, Padraic Gallogly, Vera Kiernan, Michael Wall, Niall Phillips, Bernard Cox (Committee Members)**





The economic downturn of the 1980's was a time of high unemployment throughout Ireland. In Drogheda, a number of high profile company closures threatened to turn the town into an unemployment blackspot.

In response to this situation, the Drogheda Resource Centre was established in 1988 to campaign for the rights of the unemployed, the marginalised and the excluded.

The Centre was one of the earliest in a network developed by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions with the support from FÁS.

While the Trade Unions movement had for many years defended the rights of workers, the new network of centres began to identify and meet the needs of those who were out of work. The Drogheda Council of Trade Unions, quickly became a focal point for those seeking support.

The front desk, originally designed to provide information about social welfare entitlements, has adapted with the needs of its target group.



Snapshot from the Momentum course and right: Co-ordinator, Jacqui Taaffe



Front Desk staff now supply detailed information on topics as diverse as employment law and adult education, while continuing to act as an interface between the public and various social service departments.

In addition to information and training, the Resource Centre provides a range of other services.

A well-equipped and professionally staffed crèche offers affordable childcare. The Centres snack bar offers light meals and refreshments and has become a popular meeting place for many local people. Secretarial services are also available on site, where jobseekers are supported to develop effective CV's and application letters.

On 15th May 2014 the Drogheda Resource Centre was awarded a Corporate Social Responsibility Award Certificate of Recognition from Supported Employment Malta Services Drogheda.

This Certificate was awarded to the Drogheda Resource

Centre for "creating a workplace that values and respects people from diverse backgrounds and the unique combination of talents, experiences and perspectives of each member of the team.

**Assistant Co-ordinator:** Bernadette Dowd | **Board of Management:** Seamie Briscoe (Chairperson), John King, Danny Churchill, Phil Conyngham, Sean Fay, Brian Hoey, Jim Moore, Martin Walsh, Tracy Osment, Paul Henry

## Services

**Information/Advice:** On Social Welfare and Employment Rights. Providing and supplying social welfare booklets and forms, Health Service Executive Forms, and Revenue Claim Forms. We also offer a service to fill out these forms and a referral to the relevant organisation.

**Typing services:** Compiling and typing CV's, projects, assignments, college thesis', reports and letters. We also offer a very competitive rate for our photocopying service.

**Crèche facilities:** Fully supervised morning and afternoon sessions for children aged from two to five years of age. (Toilet Trained) Fully qualified and experienced ECCE for the morning sessions. Also sessional afternoon places for children aged two years upwards.

**Snack bar:** Various menus, sandwiches, scones, snacks, tea and coffee.

**Room hire:** Rooms available to hire at very competitive rates.

**D.T.I. (Drogheda Training Initiative):** A programme to target young unemployed men between the ages of 18 and 25 years to train and enhance their work skills.

**BENEFIT 4:** A free basic computer training course which consists of 8 hours computer training delivered over two days.

**DACT (Disability Activation Project) or Training Options:**

The Centre ran 3 DACT Programmes in the past year. Each course took place over a 12 week period with 15 participants per course. The programme offers three FETAC Level 3 modules comprising – Computer Literacy – Personal/ Interpersonal Skills/Work Experience. The DACT 1 participants were presented with their certificates by David Begg, General



Joan Burton, Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection with DACT participants

Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions at an award ceremony in the D Hotel in Drogheda.

**Momentum:** The Centre ran one Momentum course last year and a second one is currently running.

The target group for the Momentum Project is for those in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance or Jobseekers Benefit or signing for credits for the last 12 months.

**Work Experience:** Throughout the year the Drogheda Resource Centre facilitates students with work experience placements.



# Louth

DUNDALK RESOURCE CENTRE

30 Clanbrassil Street • Tel: 042 933 8820 • Email: supervisor@drcu.ie • Web: www.drcu.ie



Staff at the Centre with Eileen Doohan, Centre Co-ordinator, front row, second from left

**W**e provide Welfare Rights information and advocacy services to: Individual unemployed people, people in receipt of Social Welfare payments, individuals, organisations and groups working with people facing social exclusion.

The aim of our service is to ensure that unemployed people, and those in receipt of Social Welfare payments seeking to return to employment, have access to comprehensive Welfare Rights information and advocacy services.

As part of our service we provide:

- Information supports by telephone and email
- Direct advocacy services for individuals when dealing with the Department of Social Protection
- Assistance in preparing Social Welfare Appeals
- Referrals to other organisations and groups
- Assistance in filling out official forms
- Providing information on all Social Welfare Entitlements, Consumer Rights and Taxation, etc.

**Board of Management: Frank O'Brien, Jim Byrne, John Callan, Isabelle Murphy**

## Clerical services

- CVs Prepared • Cover Letters • projects typed and printed • letters • emails • posters

We provide Welfare Rights information and advocacy services to:

- Individual unemployed people
- People in receipt of Social Welfare payments
- Individuals, organisations and groups working with people facing social exclusion.

The aim of our service is to ensure that unemployed people, and those in receipt of Social Welfare payments seeking to return to employment, have access to comprehensive Welfare Rights information and advocacy services.

As part of our service we provide:

- Information supports by telephone and e-mail.
- Direct advocacy services for individuals when dealing the Department of Social Protection.
- Assistance in preparing Social Welfare Appeals
- Referrals to other organisations and groups
- Assistance in filling out official forms

- Information on all Social Welfare Entitlements, Consumer Rights and Taxation, etc.

Our Training Department provides people with training courses that are Accredited by FETAC, from Level 3 to Level 5. Some of these courses and programmes include:

- DACT • Momentum • IT Skills

Other courses include Benefit 4 aimed at people with little or no computer skills and ECDL training and certification.

We run a Second Hand School Bookshop, which opens from June to September every year. We take in old schools books (Primary and Secondary) that are in good condition and are on the current curriculum.

Books can be purchased at a reduced rate.

The Centre has two computer training suites:

Suite 1 to accommodate 15 learners

Suite 2 to accommodate 20 learners

Both suites are fully equipped with computers, printers and have overhead projectors.

Both have canteen facilities. Suite 2 is at ground level and has full wheelchair access, including to the toilet facilities.

This also has an integrated classroom.





# TESTIMONIALS



My name is Mary Daly and I participated in the *DACT Training Options 2 Course* at the Mullingar Congress Information and Development Centre under the direction of Centre Co-ordinator Susan Bray from February to May 2014.

Due to a life crisis my world had turned upside down two years previously and with that my confidence in myself and with life was at an all-time low. Training Options could not have come at a better time.

The first day, under the leadership of the course tutor Betty Beirne, a whole new world opened up to me and since then I have gone from strength to strength. The ethos of the Centre is "no judgement" and the emphasis on mental health is priority, which I loved.

The class were from all various backgrounds and we all became friendly as we got to know one another. In the first few weeks of the course our tutor Betty brought in a birthday cake to one of the girls who lives thousands of miles from home and she was in tears with joy that people actually cared. As the course progressed and with the



**“Training Options’ could not have come at a better time”**

gentle encouragement and persuasion of Betty my confidence in myself and that of life slowly but surely restored. I discovered that I would like to go down the road of tutoring. As a result of the course an opportunity for a position on a CE scheme in the Centre became available for which I applied and was successful.

I have since completed the *Trainer the Trainer*, Fetac Level 6 and have completed *Computer Applications*, Fetac Level 4 and *Manual and Computerised Payroll*, Fetac Level 5. I have shadow tutored classes and I am presently delivering Benefit 4 classes (Computers for beginners). I have applied to do the JEB course which is a Teacher/Trainer Diploma in IT Skills. This will allow me to be on the National Register of Trainers.

A million thanks to Mullingar Congress and course tutor Betty Beirne for rescuing me from the dark days and restoring my confidence in myself and life again.

Mary Daly

I undertook the challenge of the *Train the Trainer Course* back in November 2013 and having completed it, I thought I'd give my experience of the course:

Recently the course structure has changed. When I completed the course it was done over a four day period. It was manageable but at the same time it was a little on the stressful side having to get the presentation prepared.

I think with the new structure anybody who wants to do this course will find it a less stressful experience because it will be taught over a period of time.

I found the course fun, interesting and very educational. I had never considered the skills required to teach and especially in adult training. It's very different to teaching young people. Adult training is more based on interaction rather than dictation. This becomes quite clear early in the lesson.

Watching our trainer, Amanda, inspired me to think on a broader aspect of how to get across the information that I should be giving people that I would be teaching.



**“I found the Train the Trainer course fun, interesting and very educational”**

There are so many different levels on which to approach lessons and lessons plans that I got a real confidence in my own abilities.

I feel now, that if I had to teach a class that I would be able to incorporate all the different types of learning into the module I would be teaching.

The classes prepared me well for my presentation and on the day everything ran smoothly. I had no nerves delivering my presentation and equally all of my classmates gave very clear and precise presentations.

It was very enjoyable and I learned a lot from what the others gave in their presentations. I was pleasantly surprised and even though I was second last to give my presentation, I felt like the time had flown.

If anybody was looking to undertake Train the Trainer, I would recommend it because you can learn a lot from it and it is a skill that will stand you well in the future.

Oliver McBride,  
Former website and newsletter editor  
with the Congress Resource Centre





# Mayo



MAYO CENTRES FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

*Teeling Street, Ballina • Tel: 096 70885 • Email: cfuballina@eircom.net*  
*Tucker Street, Castlebar • Tel: 094 9027684 • Email: cfucastlebar@eircom.net*  
*Coordinator.mayo@congresscentres.net • www.mayocentresfortheunemployed.com*

**I**n 1986 The Mayo Centres for the Unemployed was set up in response to the high unemployment rates in the Mayo region, with particular focus to the unemployment black spot of Ballina.

A committee formed under the auspices of the Trades Councils in Ballina and Castlebar sponsors a Community Employment Scheme that is funded by the DSP Employment Services.

We have two offices in Mayo, one in Ballina the other in Castlebar. This scheme allows for the day to day staffing of the Centres and the secretarial and office services that are provided to the community.

The scheme has employed an average of 20 to 30 local people per year. In addition to the practical skills the participants gain in running the centre and its secretarial service each participant receives customised training each year.

At present the centre offers a drop in service to the public with specific focus on the Unemployed. People can access information on Social Welfare queries as we provide booklets



*Lucy Cunningham (top) and Deirdre Carroll Centre Co-ordinators (Jobshare)*

and forms on all relevant entitlements and discuss their concerns privately and confidentially with our Information Officer.

They can also receive basic computer training on a 1:1 or small group basis (6 max.). Information is also provided on Job seeking Skills such as CV Preparation and Interview techniques and a notice board of current job vacancies is updated daily with facilities available for clients to apply for these jobs online.

In 2012 we launched our website which contains helpful links, tips and templates to make our service accessible to more people. We also maintain a presence on Facebook (Unemployed Ballina) or Twitter (cfuballina).

In 2010 the Ballina office moved to a larger centrally located office (the old FBD offices at the Font). We now have the space to provide training and meeting access to larger groups and our ground floor premises ensures access to all people in the community.

In 2012 our office in Castlebar moved to a more central location in Tucker Street.

In 2014 5755 individuals utilised our information service in the Ballina office alone with a similar volume in Castlebar.

**Board of Management:** *Eddie Lavelle (Chairman), Trevor Ardill (Treasurer), Cathy Blake (Secretary) Mary Clarke, Matt Farrell, Joe Hennigan, Sean Moran (Board Members)*

## Services

Queries were not restricted to Social Welfare entitlements. A general breakdown on the queries received were:

- Counselling • Community Employment / Job schemes
- Classes / Courses / Training • Education • Employment Support • Farmers Support • Assisting with Form Filling
- Housing • Facilities • Health Labour Law • Social Welfare
- Legal and Taxation.



In accordance with our policy of working with other service providers in the county we had over 300 referrals to other organisations.

To assist our clients we now have a computer in reception to allow them search for and apply for jobs online. We also have a printing service with a free (subject to fair usage) facility for people to print out their CVs or job related research.

For the last few years we have been very happy to provide training under the Benefit4 programme through ICTU.

This 8 hour training on accessing the web is free to those Unemployed, over 55, Living Alone or Living remotely.

We encourage anyone interested in this training to contact us and we will do all in our power to facilitate them.



# Roscommon

NORTH ROSCOMMON CENTRE FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

Arigna, Co. Roscommon

Tel: 085 1376500 • Email: mary.guihen@gmail.com



Centre Co-ordinator  
Mary Guihen

In 2011 the North Roscommon Centre for the unemployed and underemployed was established to build the capacity and resilience of disadvantaged and socially excluded individuals in North County Roscommon.

The Centre was pioneered in answer to the emerging unemployment and underemployment situation developing as a result of the

economic decline manifesting with the closure and downsizing of business in the area. Many low skilled manual workers were losing jobs or having to move to short-time contracts as a result.

Many of these workers were anxious for their future and in serious need of assistance in the areas of CV preparation, interview skills, career guidance, and computer literacy programmes. This deficit coupled with low self-esteem meant that individuals were, for various reasons, slow to seek help with agencies outside of the local area.

The problem was recognised locally and volunteers tentatively offered help with CV preparation initially at weekends and time-off from college/work etc. Many users of the service had left school early and were at a very vulnerable juncture as immigration or migration would be problematic at this stage in their lives.

This bespoke assistance added a new impetus into the community slowly initially and received its first support from Roscommon LEADER Partnership through space in the Partnership office. Thus many practical supports, which would not otherwise have been accessed from mainstream sources, were provided to vulnerable people at a local level.

## Centre Development

Slowly the Centre has grown with local volunteers coming on board and eventually in 2013 the Centre applied for and was granted a Tús worker to help with the growing service. Many professional volunteers give of their time freely adding value and expertise to the advice and guidance service.

The Centre has now progressed to accommodate the Arigna catchment area with service users from a wide hinterland incorporating areas north of Boyle in Co. Roscommon Geevagh and beyond in County Sligo and Drumshanbo, Drumkeerlin and on to Dromahaire in Co. Leitrim and into County Cavan. A replacement Tús worker has come on-board in 2014.

There are a dedicated group of volunteers involved in the Centre who regularly give of their time unselfishly. Employment and education/training advice and guidance is provided in a confidential, relaxed and homely atmosphere as per the ethos of the centre.

One of the hidden difficulties which has manifest in the area is a literacy and numeracy problem among a significant cohort of people who have attended the Centre. Many are unwilling to discuss the issue. (The problem was initially identified by one of the volunteers who is also a trained literacy tutor with ETB).

The Centre also promotes computer literacy classes and have found that people do not have a difficulty with admitting computer literacy problems. Thus the Centre has assisted with the roll out of a computer literacy programme in the area. This has provided an opportunity to people without computer expertise to gain training. It has also given an opening to people with literacy problems to avail of training and this opportunity has been taken-up and utilised by many.

It has become evident that people are slow to seek assistance with basic literacy problems. However, computer literacy, on the other hand, does not evoke the same perceived stigma. As a result a new-found confidence has manifest in attendees with many rural dwellers completing basic computer classes and willing to go further. These classes have helped some people to seek further literacy assistance.

*Below: The Momentum Roscommon Class; A day out at the Arigna Mining Experience to showcase to the participants a very challenging work environment, which closed relatively recently, and its association with the ITGWU (now Siptu). The participants saw at first hand how all conflict had to be put aside unconditionally to survive in the underground dangerous workplace - a lesson worthwhile for employed and unemployed alike.*





One defined group of people who can be identify as service users of the centre are socially isolated rural dwellers especially men, many single, in the area. The computer classes, where class-mates are all from similar backgrounds has developed as a social gathering with a tutor who is familiar to the group and accepted with a general consensus from all of being in a “safe place”.

**Current Progress**

At the AGM in January 2015 the Centre was renamed the East Connaught Further Development Centre to reflect the current capacity building work across the catchment area. The name change was to reflect two things:

The geographical hinterland of the Arigna catchment area encompassing distinct adjacent communities across adjoining counties.

The reach of the Centre can be recognised as encompassing the wide area base historically associated with Arigna and its mining history

The ethos of the Centre servicing unemployed and underemployed people has evolved into a rural support centre for local predominantly rural dwellers in a disadvantaged socially isolated area. While assisting people who are unemployment and underemployment is a big part of what the centre does it also looks at areas where the lives of socially isolated and excluded people living remotely in the catchment area can be enhanced.

The Centre recognises also the horrific devastation causes by suicide across the country. This area has experienced more instances than most and therefore promotion of health and

welfare issues including safeguarding mental health is a vital consideration also.

The Centre founder is currently conducting an elective college group project on the attitudes and understanding of GP’s and Medical students of suicide.

The Centre is a flagship for volunteerism, community development, social responsibility and community partnership.

Issues of isolation, inequality and disadvantage are addressed using a community development approach thus building the strength, knowledge and capacity of people in one of the most disadvantaged areas of County Roscommon and its environs.

The foot fall through the centre are representative



*Out supporting the Dunnes Stores workers in Roscommon Town*

of union members many of whom are now unemployed as a result of the economic downturn.

Promoting the ethos and importance of the trade union movement has always been part of what the Centre promotes. As the Centre progresses people into employment and assists young people in career choices etc. this ethos will be embedded further in service users of the centre.

The Centre recently supported the Dunnes Workers in Roscommon Town in their quest for equality and fairness. The Centre is a proponent of fairness, dignity and respect for workers employed and part-employed - the underemployed. The Centre also extends a beacon of light to socially isolated and excluded, hard to reach people in our society.

**Members of the Roscommon Centre: J. Tansey, M. Earley and Mary Guihen (CWU). The centre is affiliated to the Roscommon Leader Partnership where the ICTU Representative is Seamus Campbell**

*Below: The Food Hub Training Centre, Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim with the Nutrition and Healthy Options FETAC Level 3 course. This course was organised by the Roscommon Centre and 90% of the participants on the course had also participated on the DACT programme. This course promoted independent living and assisted with the social integration of the participants.*





# Westmeath

DR. STEVENS RESOURCE CENTRE

Dr. Stevens Resource Centre, First Floor, Block A, Irishtown Central, Athlone, Co. Westmeath  
Tel: 09064 73001 • Email: drstevensresourcecentre@eircom.net • Web: www.drstevenscentre.ie



**D**r. Stevens Centre's Mission Statement is to provide quality services to empower individuals and communities to become caring, competent and responsible for their own well-being through education, training and self-esteem.

The Centre was established to meet the specific needs of unemployed people and other marginalised groups (Asylum Seekers and Migrant Workers) and is committed to providing high quality services in information, training/education and career development.

The success of the project can be evaluated in terms of progression of its participants into employment or education and also its

effectiveness in addressing the needs of its clients.



*Bernie Mannion, Co-ordinator*

The Dr. Stevens Resource Centre was established in 1992 by the Athlone Council of Trade Unions in co-operation with FÁS and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. The purpose of the Centre is to assist the unemployed and their dependants, as well as promoting their social, personal, economic and cultural interests. We provide an information service for Community Employment workers and full time workers.

We are a non-discriminatory organisation and welcome people regardless of sex, race or religion. We are not affiliated to any political parties.

**Board Members:** Mr. Cyril Dully, Mr. Brendan Grehan, Mr. Joe Lacumbre, Mr. Denis Rohan, Ms. Teresa McCourt, Ms. Bernie Mannion, Ms. Helen Rohan (Staff Representative)

## Services we offer

### 1. Personal Development

From previous experience the Dr. Stevens Resource Centre is aware of the positive effect Personal Development has on participants. The case studies that we undertook showed that the Personal Development Module is an effective way of building self-esteem, confidence, goal setting skills and motivation. In addition it broadened many participants horizons and the result was that they undertook interventions e.g. computer classes, mediation/job seeking skills which they otherwise would not have.

### 2. Career choice evaluation/mediation

Career Guidance

At Dr. Stevens we now offer a career guidance service.

If you are a leaving cert student we will work with you to:

- Find the career options that are most suitable for you.
- Make the correct course choices when completing your CAO form.
- Put a plan in place to ensure you get the career you want.

If you are looking to change job or career we can help you to:

- Explore what type of work will give you better job satisfaction.
- Find the career options that are most suitable for you.
- Put a plan in place to make your career change happen.

Our career guidance consultant is a fully qualified coach and psychometric tester.

### 3. Computer Learning Centre

As a result of being out of the labour force, unemployed people generally have a skills deficit in computer literacy. For this reason all participants will be encouraged to undertake a computer course. These courses are ECDL, ECDL Advanced, Basic Computers (FETAC Level 3), Intermediate Computers (FETAC Level 4), Internet (FETAC Level 5), Data Entry (FETAC Level 4) and Digital Camera.

Participants progress from Basic Computers right through to ECDL and Advanced ECDL, thus ensuring they have a widely recognised certificate.

The success of the interlinking of Personal Development and Job Seeking services with the computer module has been reflected in the high pass rate achieved by clients who have sat computer examinations at the Dr. Stevens Resource Centre, i.e. 95% success.

### 4. Information

The information office continues to serve the needs of the unemployed and others in the area. The Information Workers have built up a solid network of contacts with I.N.O.U., I.C.T.U., Comhairle, C.I.C. and the Dept of Social Protection.

### 5. Education

In addition to computer services, the Centre offers courses in Personal Effectiveness (FETAC Level 3), Communications (FETAC Level 4), Reception (FETAC Level 5), Occupational First Aid (FETAC Level 5), Safe Pass, Bookkeeping Manual and Computerised (FETAC Level 5), Payroll Manual and Computerised (FETAC Level 5), Job Seeking Skills and teaching English to foreign students.

### 7. Second Hand Bookshop

The Dr. Stevens Resource Centre has for the past 19 years operated a second-hand schoolbook shop where clients can both buy and sell schoolbooks at a fraction of the new cost. This provides a major source of additional resources for the Centre. The book scheme is staffed by a combination of Supervisor and Community Employment workers from the Centre.

### 8. Secretarial Service

This year the secretarial service was used by unemployed and employed persons, students and the general public. Those in receipt of social welfare payments are offered a reduced rate for typing. Because of low income, many social welfare recipients lack access to the resources needed for job seeking or contact with statutory organisations etc. The secretarial service to some extent compensates for this by the provisions of CV's, letters, assignments, projects and all other typing requirements. This service also provides real work experience for CE workers. In addition to improving their typing skills, it also affords them the opportunity to meet and deal with the public, which in turn will enhance their confidence.



# Westmeath



MULLINGAR CONGRESS CENTRE

Unit B, Harbour Court, Friars Mill Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

Tel: 044 9345060 • Email: congresscentre@eircom.net • Web: www.mullingarcongress.com



The Mullingar Congress Centre has built a strong presence in the community and has well established links.

We are recognised for providing quality services, information and support to Mullingar and the wider region.

It is a drop-in centre for all your information queries and we offer cut price services to the unemployed. In particular, we excel in the areas of IT training, up-skilling / re-skilling and job seeking supports.

unemployed / migrant workers and marginalised groups of Mullingar and the most rural parts of Co. Westmeath.

The Centre's ability to change and adapt to changes in the local and national economic climate is to the advantage of our clients. The centre is involved with WCDL disability working group and organises the disability events throughout the year and plays a major part in decision making on local disability service funding.



Susan Bray  
Centre Co-ordinator

### Holistic Approach

We also believe in a more holistic approach to unemployed people. Your health is your wealth and sometimes the focus can be only on employment.

With this in mind we offer a lot of social classes at a very low cost because we believe it is important to look after your mental health and physical well being while waiting for employment or further education / re-skilling.

It is important to have something to look forward to every week and regardless of the class it is a way to stay in touch with the wider community and to stop the feelings of isolation.

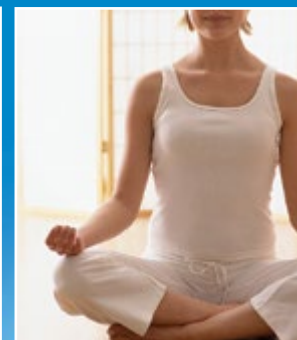
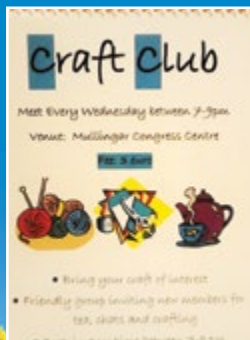
We are a recognised FETAC training centre and so our standards in training & development are very important to us. This year we have provided funding through Skillsnet for IT, Interpersonal Skills and Work Experience Courses. We also provide funding, through Skillsnet, for Security training for local unemployed Men in Door Security Procedures, Retail Sales & Stadium Security. Mentoring for unemployed people is provided by a team of qualified mentors.

After fifteen years in existence the service has now established itself as an integral part of the supports available to the

Board of Management: Des Sheridan (Chairperson), Patrick Collins (Treasurer), Sheamus McNamee (Secretary)

### Low cost secretarial services

- CV preparation / guidance, CV typing & mentoring
- Free Information to inform people of their welfare rights & entitlements
- Training courses for the unemployed. Training for those in employment but wishing to up-skill for promotion prospects
- Courses with ECDL & FETAC that cover a wide range of accredited courses such as Payroll, Train the Trainer, DACT, Momentum, Benefit 4, Computer Applications, Security, Personal Interpersonal Skills, Reception Skills, Work Experience and many more
- Social courses with our 'Widen Your Horizons Programme' – This includes Yoga, Tai Chi, Meditation, Arts & Combined Painting, Knitting, Embroidery & Crocheting, Pilates, Digital Photography & Stress Management
- Free one day Beginners Computer Classes
- Next Steps follow on Computer Classes
- Photocopying, Emailing & Faxing
- Laminating & Printing
- Rooms for hire for training or conferences
- Information officers available on a strictly confidential basis
- Presentations and seminars delivered on a wide range of topics (Free of charge to community groups)
- Second Hand School Book Shop every year 8 June - 24 to September (buy books at a fraction of the cost and sell your old ones)
- Low cost councillor
- Low cost therapies with Acupuncture & Massage
- AWARE (group meetings for people with depression)
- Over-eaters Anonymous Meetings
- Children's Classes in Computers, Yoga, Tai Chi, Glee Kids dance classes, Creative Writing



Left: Some of the many activities on offer at the Mullingar Congress Centre, reflecting the focus on individual health and growth

# TESTIMONIALS



Francis Wynne is a single man, living alone yet close to his extended family in Leitrim. Francis is a wheelchair user and a very charismatic, sociable, well known and well-loved character in the local mainly rural community and beyond.

Francis grew up in a time where presenting with a disability was an especially difficult situation for families to cope with resulting in Francis not having progressed through education in the conventional manner - leaving school after primary level.

Francis had never used a computer until participating on a *Benefit 4* course. Francis is now honing and refining his new-found knowledge and is preparing to help people especially farmers in his locality to place ads on sites like DoneDeal, eBay etc.

These are but two of comprehensive list of further individuals who have an equally intriguing story to tell with regard to engagement with computers for the first time through Benefit 3/4.



Teresa Gilmartin from Arigna, Co. Roscommon (right) with Roscommon Centre Co-ordinator Mary Guihen

They range in age up to 85 years, with Teresa Gilmartin, one of our most senior participants, communicating with her daughter in Switzerland, her son in New York and her many grandchildren all over the globe through Skype.

Teresa came to the course completely new to computers and having been given a tablet with which to be part of her grandchild's christening in New York as she felt unable to make the journey.

This she accomplished and she is making weekly Skype dates with her family since.

I am doing this course called *Looking Forward to Warehousing & Logistics*. Since I have started this course I have gained so much in experience and most of all in my confidence. I would never stand up in front of a class and talk before.

I would feel sick in my stomach. Now I can do it and I still feel I need to work on my confidence but I have come on so much since joining the course.

I also have made great friends with all the lads in the class. I got the opportunity to sit my Forklift Driving Licence before Christmas before Christmas and I passed both the Reach and the Counterbalance test.

I am hoping that having this licence together with my Fetac Courses will help me get a job in the Warehousing area.

*Martin Lynam (Mullingar)*



I had previously worked for years as a manager in one of the local clothing shops so I had already a good experience in dealing with customers on a daily basis. However, having a certificate to show is always a plus in seeking new employment. The *Fetac 5 Customer Care* course was just what I was looking for.

Our tutors had a lot of client experience themselves to share with us and many new details emerged which I had been unaware of before, for example in consumer legislation.

I had no problem with the role-playing. It was good fun, it taught us how tricky situations with the public sometimes can be and brought the group more together.

The Customer Care course is an extremely beneficial course, not just if you want to work in, say, a shop or at a reception, but it will be useful in almost any kind of work-situation because it teaches you a lot about interaction between people in general.

I can truly recommend this course to anyone.

*Brid McCallion*

“**Having a certificate to show is always a plus in seeking new employment**”



# Wicklow

WICKLOW TRADE UNION CENTRE

97 Main Street (Rear), Bray, Co. Wicklow  
Tel: 01 2866730 • Email: bray@congresscentres.net • Web: www.ictu.ie



At back: Marion Cushen (DSP). Front row from left: Dairine Moran (tutor), Gary Connolly (tutor), Sylvia Ryan (Manager of the Congress Centres Network), Patricia Shortt (Co-ordinator, Wicklow Trade Union Centre), John Douglas (President Irish Congress of Trade Unions), Dermot Tobin (Board of Management), Joanne Brown (ICTU)

The Centre recently celebrated 21 years of providing a service to County Wicklow.

The Centre has gone from strength to strength and in 2014/15 the demand for services required that we explore ways of expanding to meet these demands.

2014 saw the opening of the new training room which allows us to accommodate 26 Learners. The room can also be used for meetings.

This extra capacity meant that we were able to facilitate Momentum and Maximise Your Options.

The Centre staff saw this as an opportunity to revamp and rearrange the offices and moved the 'hub' of the Centre to a lower floor and this in turn led to the installation of a jobs board catering which is available to people using the Centre and the learners attending classes.

The Centre has 19 Community Employment staff, receiving

internal training in Accounts, Reception, Information provision, Tutoring, Canteen Management, Public Relations and Administration.

The Centre continues to run the ECDL and Equal Skills and can run courses for women on the Equality for Women, at present a FETAC Level 5 Computerised and Manual Payroll.

The Information Section has been increasingly busy and have brought cases to the LRC regarding redundancy Matters and have 100% success.

The Secretarial Service offers a CV preparation and guidance service which the DSP sent people to avail of. This coupled with the Jobs Board has proved very successful.

The Training the Centre provides are accredited, FETAC and ECDL / Equal Skills, Payroll Computerised and Manual, Book-keeping Computerised and Manual.

The facilities of the Centre include 2 training /meeting rooms, car parking, canteens, photocopying and typing service.



Top photo: Centre recently refurbished and presentation of 'Maximise your Options' which were presented by John Douglas, General Secretary of Mandate.

Above: Snapshot of the computer facilities in the Centre

**Sponsor Committee Members:** George Sheehan (Chairperson), Dermot Tobin (Treasurer), Derek Casserly (Secretary)

Below: Quiz night held for Wicklow Trade Union Centre





# Ethics in the Workplace

Speech by President Michael D. Higgins, Liberty Hall, 30th April 2015

Dear friends,

It is a great pleasure to be here in Liberty Hall to hear and share with you all some of the fruits of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions' "Ethical Workplace Initiative."

May I thank Patricia King for her presentation to me, on behalf of Congress, of this beautiful handcrafted box, enclosing as it does a valuable treasure – the voices of hundreds of workers on what an ethical workplace means to them.

"The Ethical Workplace Initiative" is the trade unions' response to "The President of Ireland's Ethics Initiative", which I launched over a year ago with a view to encouraging debate across all sectors of Irish society on the values and principles we deem fundamental to our living together in harmony and cohesion – values and principles around which a consensus might emerge, of an inter-generational kind. It was, and remains, my belief that such a reflection on ethics must constitute the base – the necessary groundwork – for any serious reconstruction of our economy and society, in the wake of what was not only a dire financial, economic, social and political crisis, but also a moral one.

The question of what we consider as decent work is, of course, absolutely central to such a reflection. Work, involving as it does the expression of the energy of mind and body in differing degrees through the life-cycle, is an intrinsically human activity. What we experience, define, or even recognise, as work takes place in contexts of power, as conveyed in gender relations, in conditions of hierarchy and sometimes in an atmosphere of authoritarianism.

Our definition of the rights and obligations of employers and employees towards one another as well as towards society; the manner in which we conceive of and cultivate the relation of work to human flourishing – these are issues that are essential, not just to our present coexistence as citizens, but to the type of society we will hand down to future generations.

I am very happy, therefore, that ICTU and its 44 affiliated unions embraced the opportunity afforded by this National Initiative to spark discussions amongst their members on ethics in the workplace. The words of the men and women captured in the film we saw earlier, and the postcards and other messages shown in this exhibition, all point to a vision of labour that is so much more than a tradable commodity, a resource amenable to the fluctuating needs of the market; these words sketch out a conception of good work that goes way beyond material survival. As philosopher Simone Weil put it: "To strive from necessity and not for some good – driven not drawn – in order to maintain our existence just as it is – that is slavery."

The voices of workers convey a rich and holistic understanding of work as a source of personal dignity and freedom, family stability, prosperity in the

community, democratic flourishing, and solidarity with other workers, in Ireland and abroad.

The terms "respect", "equality", "trust", "honesty", "transparency", "security", "effort" and "creativity" recur in many of the collected messages, outlining a vision of the good workplace as that where workers are enabled to pursue their material well-being and personal development in conditions of dignity, economic security and equal opportunity, and also that where workers are enabled to participate, as citizens. Such a sense of well-being and involvement is to the benefit of society as a whole, and thus it is also, in a broad sense, highly productive.

Trade unions have an essential role to play in defending and advancing such a conception of the good workplace, in a global context characterised by a huge and increasing concentration of wealth in the hands of financial capital, and an overwhelming tendency to measure the worth of large companies primarily in terms of their ability to maximise shareholder value.



**General Secretary Patricia King with President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina Higgins**

These shareholders, whose interests are defended by executives, usually incentivised and rewarded by bonuses, are often removed from the workforce. Tracing decision-making and achieving accountability in such a context become labyrinthine.

The task facing trade unions, then, is far from an easy one. Nor is it a task for which they alone can or should take responsibility. The state and our democratically elected representatives have an important role to play in ensuring that citizens can earn a decent living wage, and that no company can overtly or covertly feel

justified in shifting its social responsibility onto the state's welfare system.

Ultimately, these issues have an intrinsically political dimension and should be treated as such, rather than as some inexorable consequence of the natural order of "The Market." By saying so, I am not disputing the relevance of the market per se, a social institution which long predates contemporary capitalism. Rather, I am seeking to address the assumptions associated with a specific brand of economics that recast "The Market" – with a capital M – as a general principle for regulating the economy, treating labour, land and money as if they were pure commodities. I am also suggesting that the scope, reach, and processes of today's market should be made transparent.

Accordingly, if I may highlight just one dimension amongst the many challenges facing collective action today, I would emphasise the urgent need for widespread economic literacy amongst our citizens. Indeed I believe that, just as surely as modern democracy needed literacy to be experienced by all for its promises to be vindicated, today economic literacy, supported by a pluralist scholarship, is essential if we are to move beyond the illusions at play in so many parts of the worlds of production, consumption and finance.



In order for labour to organise itself in the face of the heady pace of global production, trade and financial speculation, workers must first feel confident that no financial or economic matter is ever so complex as to be lifted out of the frame of democratic debate and public understanding. Workers must be enabled to apprehend with clarity the new world of work of which they are part.

I understand that several Irish trade unions have been running training courses in political economy so as to equip their members with a conceptual framework allowing them to grasp more clearly power dynamics and the increasing inequality, throughout our world, in the division of wealth and resources.

That is a valuable contribution to active citizenship. I was also delighted to learn of a very popular training course on global finance and banking, which shows, for example, how processes such as 'creative accounting' or 'securitisation' directly affect workers' wages.

Another important development has been the establishment, by Irish trade unions, of the Nevin Economic Research Institute, where I was invited to give the inaugural lecture in May 2013. The Nevin Institute has become a respected voice in the Irish economic debate – a voice that enriches the public discourse by outlining alternative perspectives and economic policy options geared towards the achievement of a more just society.

All these developments form a very positive movement, which, I hope, will continue to grow as we craft, together, a new era for human work. It is a

movement that can be an important element in a wider, comprehensive strategy enabling workers – including the mass of the precarious workers, those who are not members of trade unions, and the unemployed – to be part of the economic discourse, gain control over their professional lives, acquire social and economic security and access a fairer share of vital social assets.

It is also my hope that ICTU's "Ethical Workplace Initiative" can be a meaningful step in the trade unions' wider endeavour at seizing back the lead in the debate on what constitutes decent work. I understand that ICTU intends to build upon this Initiative by drafting an "Ethical Workplace Charter" over the next year or so. The 'raw material' presented in today's exhibition thus constitutes the genesis of this Charter, and it will be interesting to see how the voices of the workers find their way into the final text.

May I thank all of you, once again, for your contribution to the "Ethical Workplace Initiative", and wish you all the very best in your future endeavours. I look forward to the rest of today's programme: what better way to celebrate work, as defined in its broadest and most creative form, with its rich connections to all the other spheres of human achievement, than through poetry, music and song!

*Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir*

**Michael D. Higgins**

*For further information on 'The President of Ireland's Ethics Initiative' please visit [www.president.ie](http://www.president.ie)*

## Did you know...

*that employers issuing redundancies in the workplace are obliged to give employees time off to search for employment and training opportunities?*

## Did you know...

*that employees receiving redundancy can claim back part of the tax they pay on their redundancy sum?*

The Congress Centres Network has developed a service for Union Officials, Union Members and employers faced with a redundancy situation and unemployment due to the recent economic downturn. These seminars are very successful with both employer and the employee finding the information very helpful as redundancy is a complex issue.

We offer seminars for the unemployed, employees in their workplace and trade union members and provide an information pack covering the following areas:

- Social Welfare rights
- Employers' obligations
- Maximising your options
- Job seekers benefit / allowance
- Law and redundancy
- Redundancy payments
- Curriculum Vitae sample
- Questions and answers

Our centres are situated throughout the country and can service both rural and urban areas.

We are available to provide this service to any of your members if they wish to avail of it at a small charge to the employer to cover the costs of materials.

Seminars for Union Officials will run monthly in Congress and Head Office.

If you or your members require this service please contact me at: 01 8897745 / 087 0557025 or email [sylvia.ryan@ictu.ie](mailto:sylvia.ryan@ictu.ie) to make further arrangements.

Kind regards,  
Sylvia Ryan  
Training and development Co-ordinator





Intreo is a new service from the Department of Social Protection which will help jobseekers with employment and income support services needs. Intreo will provide a personalised service, based on individual needs including: advice on education, training and personal development opportunities, job search assistance as well as information on and access to our range of income supports.

Speaking at the launch, Taoiseach Enda Kenny stated that:

“Intreo is an important step in transforming the way income and employment supports are provided. It is a key element of the Government’s response to the employment crisis and supports the objectives set out in the Government’s Action Plan for Jobs and the Pathways to Work initiative. It links the payment of income supports to the task of supporting people in their pursuit of employment and improving their life chances.”

### What services and supports are provided by Intreo?

- Employment services and income supports available in one place.
- Expert assistance and advice on employment, training and personal development opportunities.
- A focus on jobseekers individual needs to assist these enter the workforce.
- Self-service facilities to provide jobseekers with information and guidance on employment and training opportunities.
- Access to information on job vacancies through [www.jobsireland.ie](http://www.jobsireland.ie).
- Information on the full range of income supports provided by the Department of Social Protection, for example:
  - Jobseeker’s Payments
  - Back to Work and Back to Education payments
  - One-parent family payments, pensions and others

Also, any queries in relation to jobseekers or one-parent family payment will continue to be dealt with by the team in the local Intreo Centre.

Intreo was formally launched in the Intreo Centre, Sligo on the 15th October 2012.





# Will we take this opportunity?

## A New Course for New Times Conference of ICTU 11 April 2015 (Abridged)

by Tom Healy

"Ireland has many opportunities to break free from the failed Anglo-American model of capitalism by moving closer to a European norm of public goods and taxation – if it wishes. Ireland is faced with many threats – not least the prospect of long-term climate change and environmental damage.

Key to a new strategy that works, I believe, will be the following six critical areas of public policy:

1. A new banking system that works for households and enterprises.
2. Adequate levels of taxation to pay for excellent public services in a reformed and accountable government system at local and central level.
3. Reform of our health and education systems to make them accessible to all and to raise, further, the quality of their outcomes.
4. A national investment strategy to rebuild and renew Ireland's infrastructure especially in the areas of social housing, early childhood care and education, renewable energy, retro-fitting, water and broadband.
5. A strengthening of collective bargaining rights and employment protection to tackle the economically and socially damaging area of low-pay and precarious work.
6. A gradual movement towards a decarbonised economy through appropriate investment and shifting of taxation to 'bads' allied to an adequate living income for all.

In regards to taxation I am deeply worried that the calls for tax cuts will be acted on. How can anyone talk of tax cuts when our public services are grossly under-funded in key areas of human need?

We cannot have a European style public service without European norms of taxation including social insurance and local taxation.

Without a re-structured and cleaned up banking system we will not see the speed of economic recovery needed to bring about full employment. I would suggest a Banc Glas – a new Green Bank formed as a separate commercial entity from AIB and BOI, publicly controlled and accountable and competing

in the market for enterprise lending, small to medium-sized saver deposits and investment in 'green technology'.

Such a bank could work in tandem with the European Investment Bank and help rebuild the damaged areas of our economy.

In regards to the immediate task before us I suggest the following:

- The best way to reward work is to pay decent living wages.
- The best relief to give hard-pressed working families is to stop cutting further into education, health and welfare which only impact disproportionately on poorer households.
- The best way to ensure greater social equality is to increase Ireland's 'social wage' by way of a proper employer and employee-funded social insurance system – this will pay for education, health and income during periods of learning, unemployment, sickness or retirement.
- The best way to tackle poverty is to create decent jobs that pay, not welfare-dependent households which must rely on a fragmented combination of tax reliefs and welfare payments.
- The best way to create employment is through enterprise – public, private and voluntary/not-for-profit and not excessive reliance on large footloose multinational companies (welcome as they are).
- The best way to fix our public finances is to grow the economy – not to continue cutting our way out of a deficit.
- And the best way to raise levels of happiness and well-being is by economically empowering individuals and communities so that they can live lives of worth and mutual support and caring.

It is time to break free and face the future with a new vision for this Republic.

It is time to break free and face the future with a new vision for this Republic."



Tom Healy (Director of the Nevin Economic Research Institute)

## Nevin Economic Research Institute

31/32 Parnell Square,  
Dublin 1, Ireland  
Tel: +353 1 8897722

Carlin House  
4-6 Donegall Street Place  
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Tel: +44 28 902 46214

Web: [www.nerinstitute.net](http://www.nerinstitute.net) • Email: [info@NERInstitute.net](mailto:info@NERInstitute.net)



# LEONARDO DA VINCI

## Trip to Patras, Greece



In February 2012 an application was made to Leargas under the Vocational and Training Professionals (VETPRO) category by Congress Centres Network to travel to Greece and visit training facilities and projects that facilitate unemployed learners similar to CCN unemployment centres.

In June 2013 the funding was secured to take a group of 13 coordinators and tutors from the CCN to Greece and the University of Patras kindly offered to be a partner and host the visit. We arrived in time to celebrate the 50th birthday of the University of Patras.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions had developed a relationship with Sofia Kasola during a Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation Project 'REVOW' in 2010-2011. Sofia Kasola works as an International Co-Ordinator and researcher with University of Patras. Sofia and her colleagues Professor Yannis and Professor Professor Hatitantis worked on the REVOW project that focused on Recognition of Work Place Learning and creating a mechanism to capture the skill set of workers without formal qualifications.

The initial idea was to go to Greece and to observe and learn about their systems of education, childcare, grassroots organisations and innovative techniques when working with the unemployed. Exchanging information and bringing ideas back to Ireland and using new techniques to improve aspects of our training provision.

One objective of the trip was to exchange ideas and experiences in relation to vocational education and training provision. The aim of the project is to identify possible innovations in the area of service provision and delivery in the community services relevant to unemployed people in Ireland.

Everyone on the trip got on well and enjoyed the experience. All participants felt it was fantastic to see how another country operates the positive interventions for the unemployed and different pedagogies applied in the area of childcare. This exchange also gave the participants the time to reflect and appreciate the good services we are offering within the local community throughout Ireland. How to ensure we stay abreast of new research and implement proven techniques into our practice.



**Professor Haritantis, Professor Karalis and Mr. Antoniou (University of Patras) with Aileen Morrissey (Mandate)**

The Congress Centres Network together with the host University of Patras organised and devised a five day programme for the group in Greece. The programme comprised of visits to the unemployment centres, Euroteam offices that design and develop current programmes and vocational training centres that deliver skills based learning.

We also attended workshops on topics including the Barriers to Education for adults, European Qualification Framework and the Greek social welfare system and the Trade Union Movement response to assisting the unemployed by offering basic education.



# - VETPRO MOBILITY



The University of Patras



The group learned that unemployed people can receive up to €400 per month with over 3 million not in receipt of any financial support. Teachers spoke to us about the difficulties they encounter motivating students to persevere with education and keep hope that the employment opportunities will improve.

The main concern is that all people learn to engage with society in a positive way from a young age and solutions are found to assist Greece create employment and have a bright future for all their citizens. It was a brilliant learning curve and the groups were overall extremely impressed with the Greek way of offering free education as is protected in their constitution. The Trade Union movement has got involved in offering supports to the unemployed by means of providing free education and second language classes.

There was also a visit to the Greek Confederation of Workers to discuss vocational education & training for the unemployed.

There was no hiding the significant challenges being encountered by the Greek people, face with up to 40% cuts to salary, long hours and low pay in a stagnated economy, Greece has one of the highest unemployment rates throughout Europe.

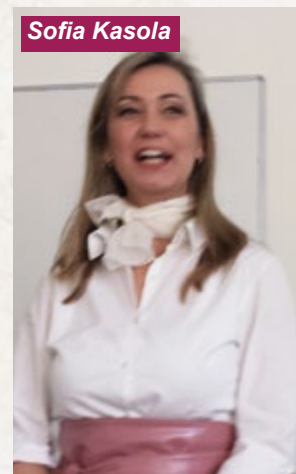
The Irish Congress of Trade Unions will sustain the relationship established with our Greek fellow European citizens and hope to work together in the future. This trip took place in May 2014 and all participants completed two FETAC Level 5 minor awards and will also receive a Europass Mobility Document.

The Congress Centres Network strives to encourage the continuous professional development of all the members of the network while building relationships and networking with similar organisations internationally.

The project overall was hugely successful and the Congress Centres Network hopes to run one again in the future.



Sylvia Ryan with representative of GSEE (General Confederation of Greek Workers)



Sofia Kasola







# EIRCODE®

## Let's get ready



Ireland is introducing postcodes this summer and an outreach programme is in place to ensure that no one is left behind. Dónall Geoghegan, Programme Manager for the Eircode Community Outreach Programme explains:

An Eircode is a smart location code for all Irish addresses. Unlike other countries, where postcodes define clusters or groups of addresses, an Eircode will identify an individual address – rural or urban – and help show exactly where it is located. This means every residential address and business will receive a unique Eircode.

There are numerous benefits to introducing Eircode into Ireland. Not only will it make the delivery of services and goods to households easier, but in the case of a medical emergency, being able to accurately and quickly identify an address can save valuable minutes.

This July, all residents and businesses will receive a letter notifying them of the Eircode for their address. Addresses will not be changing; an Eircode will simply be added to current addresses.

The Wheel, working closely with Irish Rural Link, are leading a nationwide effort to reach out to people who may get left behind when Eircodes are introduced.

There are 23 'Outreach Champions' leading the drive throughout the country to reach these people and offer them basic information and reassurance on the change.

They are getting in touch with volunteers in community and voluntary organisations right around the country, asking them to reach out within their own community to ensure that nobody gets left behind.



We are particularly concerned that people reach out to people they know, friends, family and neighbours, who are older, isolated or vulnerable and may not understand or may become confused by what this change means.

Could you help out? Could you hold an event this summer to reach some of the target group in your area? Could you get the word out through your local organisation? We'd love to hear from you.

See [www.wheel.ie/eircode](http://www.wheel.ie/eircode) for the contact details of the 'Outreach Champion' for your area, or email Dónall Geoghegan at [donallg@wheel.ie](mailto:donallg@wheel.ie) or ring me at 087-222-5691.

*Dónall Geoghegan (Programme Manager)  
Eircode Community Outreach Programme  
The Wheel*

## How Eircode Works

### Eircode

**A 6 5 F 4 E 2**

Each Eircode is comprised of seven characters that are unique to each mailing address. The seven characters are divided into two parts – a Routing Key and a Unique Identifier.

**A65 F4E2**

### Routing Key

**A 6 5**

The first three characters of Eircode, called the "Routing Key" are designed to benefit the parcel/postal industry. It is not directly linked to counties, towns or geographic features.

### Unique Identifier

**F 4 E 2**

The second part of the Eircode, called the "Unique Identifier," is comprised of four characters drawn from a carefully selected set of letters and numbers that identify each individual address.

The characters are displayed as UPPER-CASE with a space between the Routing Key and the Unique Identifier.



**Further general information on Eircode is available at [www.eircode.ie](http://www.eircode.ie)**



# Jobseeker's Allowance (JA) Transitional Arrangement

The JA transitional arrangement, which was implemented in legislation in the Social Welfare and Pensions (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2013, caters for One-Parent Family Payment (OFP) recipients who lose their entitlement to the OFP payment from July, 2013, onwards, who have a youngest child aged under 14 years, and who are entitled to the JA payment.

These customers are exempt from the JA conditions that require them to be available for, and genuinely seeking, full-time work, and also, from having to prove unemployment. They can work part-time without restrictions and still receive the JA transitional payment – subject to a means test. They also have access to the Department's 'Intreo' process and to related supports to enable them to become job-ready and/or to find employment.

The exemptions from the full JA conditionality remain in place until their youngest child reaches the age of 14 years – at which point, should they continue to claim the JA payment, they are subjected to the full JA conditionality.

The JA transitional arrangement is a special provision that is designed to assist former OFP recipients to make their transition onto the JA scheme. This is required as the OFP scheme has limited conditionality associated with it whereas the JA scheme has considerably more conditionality.

The JA transitional arrangement caters for the caring responsibilities of former OFP recipients with young children (up to the age of 14 years) who move to the JA scheme when their entitlement to the OFP payment ceases. The arrangement exempts these customers from the JA criteria that recipients must be available for, and genuinely seeking, full-time employment. These criteria would be difficult for lone parents with young children to meet. As such, without the scheme, it is likely that many former OFP recipients would not be able to qualify for a JA payment as their caring responsibilities would prevent them from being available for, and genuinely seeking, full-time work.

Significantly, the JA transitional arrangement links these customers to the Department's 'Intreo' process – with which all JA recipients are required to engage. As part of this process, lone parents have a one-to-one engagement and are encouraged to develop a personal development plan in conjunction with their Case Officer.

This personal development plan will subsequently identify suitable education, training, and employment programmes that will enable them to improve their skills set and make them more employable. As such, lone parents are obliged to engage in education, training, and employment programmes in order to retain their social welfare income support payment.

Recipients of the JA transitional arrangement must continue to parent alone.



*The Benefit of...*

# Community Employment



It is regarded as an invaluable stepping stone to employment or further education and can, and does, open up career opportunities for participants.

For anyone stagnating in the cess-pool of the jobless market, Community Employment undoubtedly offers viable alternatives as anyone who has been involved in the schemes can readily testify.

Participants are employed to work part-time in their own community on a yearly contract by community groups. In the Congress Resource Centres, which are sponsored by the local District Trade Union Councils, participants have the opportunity to work in the Centres and to retrain and learn new skills while also gaining experience in the job sector.

“Staff in our centres know well what it’s like to be unemployed and they understand the problems and difficulties that many people experience because of unemployment. We provide a confidential and independent information service to the local community with our trained staff.

We also offer a range of accredited training courses from basic to advanced computers, FETAC Customer Service, Level 5 to Train the Trainer, Level 6.

These courses are available to our CE workers and also to the local community,” Co-ordinator of the Letterkenny Centre, Marie Slevin reveals.

Anyone working on a Community Employment Scheme will tell you they are just 20 euro a week better off for working nineteen and a half hours a week. But the benefits far outweigh any financial drawbacks – with the support of Community Employment, you get to meet new people, to learn new skills, and build confidence in your own ability to do a good job.

“For many people who have been out of work for a while, it’s the confidence gained in getting back to work that is the most important part of Community Employment. People often say it’s the support, help and friendships from their co-workers, the feeling that you have helped others and that you have done a good job.

As a result of the training and the work experience gained on Community Employment, it’s great knowing that you have the skills that employers are looking for and that you are ready and confident to apply for that job and get it.” Participants on C.E. schemes are eligible to take up other part-time work during their placements.



*Group of participants completing the popular ECDL course mid-June, 2015 at the Letterkenny Congress Resource Centre.*

*Back Row: Irene Franczak, Damir Knezovic, Raymond Tighe.*

*Middle row: Anne Boyce, Ann Doherty, Olwyn Ryan, AnnMarie Carroll, Michelle Lam*

*Front row: Nessa McGahey, John Doherty, Aidan Boyle*



# Experiences from some of our CE participants

As part of an IT Support FÁS course I was scheduled to undertake six months work experience. I had tried a couple of places until one day I was walking past the Congress Resource Centre in Letterkenny and called in to see if anything was available.

The Centre Supervisor, Veronica McElhinney offered me work immediately and I started doing two days a week in reception.

I got chatting to Marie Slevin and Brian McArt about getting further part-time or full-time work and I was put in touch with a few people. As a result I started a part-time job at the Radisson Hotel in Letterkenny waiting on tables.

It was thanks to the Resource Centre that I got this work. The Centre has been very beneficial to me and I really enjoy my time working there. The staff there are very friendly and there is always a great atmosphere.

*Robert Egan*



I Started my CE Scheme in the Congress Resource Centre September 2013 till September 2014.

It was great for me as I had been out of work for 2 years and needed to find some way of getting back into Employment and had handed out CV's left right and centre and heard nothing back.

In this time I worked with the Regional Employment Service and found it very Interesting plus I was learning a new skill myself as I had never done office work. There is also plenty of courses to do while in the Centre. I completed a Information/Social Course where I achieved a Merit and a Distinction which I have never thought I could have achieved.

Everyone in the Centre were very friendly and I still pop in to say hello and I have made some very good friends. If I had not joined the centre I would have never heard of applying for Public Jobs which I got a 6 months Temporary Contract out of. It has now been extended for another 8 months.

*Tanya Storey*



I have just finished and completed my 5th DACT Training Options in Letterkenny Congress Resource Centre. I taught Work Experience and Personal and Interpersonal Skills. Each and every time I delivered the modules I got so much out of it.

All learners were very different and diverse in each way which made the DACT programme more interesting and challenging. Everyone really enjoyed their time spent on the course. It gave each of them such purpose, and structure to their day which they haven't had for a long time.

I learnt so much from many of my students. It has been a very rewarding and gratifying time for me as I have seen each of the students' confidence and self-esteem grow and develop immensely from the 1st day we met, which was particularly rewarding for me. It gave me a deeper in-site to everyone on the course. We had lots of fun as we all got to know each other very well.

I believe that we worked well together in securing future progression after the courses were completed. 98% of all students progressed onto further education, CE Scheme or full time job.

*Julie Gavigan*



My first contact with the Congress Resource Centre, Letterkenny was in early 2013 when I attended an Advanced Word ECDL course. My job had been made redundant the previous September and the course was suggested by the DSP. Initially I did have reservations about going into a classroom environment again but the Tutors and indeed the staff in the Centre soon alleviated any concerns I had.

Later in the year CE Scheme placements in the Centre was advertised, I applied and was lucky enough to get accepted.

Since then I haven't looked back. I had enjoyed my time at home but felt that it was time to get back to the real world. The Centre has given me the opportunity to explore other avenues of possible employment and acquire new skills that I might not have thought about otherwise.

The ongoing support and encouragement that is given here is brilliant. It has given me structure to my days, improved my confidence and motivation and as an added bonus I have made great friends.

*Anne Boyce*



# Centre snapshots



Left: The Fingal Centre held a hugely successful and entertaining 'Stars In Your Eyes' fundraiser on Saturday 16th November 2013

Below: Brian McCart and AnnMarie Carroll in the Information office at the Letterkenny Centre under the cool gaze of George Clooney



Right: The 'Vote YES' campaign bus visits the Letterkenny Congress Resource Centre



Left: Congress Centres Network Magazine 2015; compiled, illustrated and designed by Christopher Ammentorp (Letterkenny Congress Resource Centre)

Above: The YES campaign supported by the Centre Management



Level	Component Title	Code	Target Major Award
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## Level 3 Validated Modules

Level 3	Art and Design	3N0608	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Breakfast Cookery	3N0895	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Cake Baking and Decoration	3N0539	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Career Preparation	3N0896	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Communications	3N0880	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Computer Literacy	3N0881	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Craft - Sewing	3N1035	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Digital Photography	3N0791	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Floor and Wall Tiling	3N0523	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Health and Safety Awareness	3N0532	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Internet Skills	3N0931	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Managing Personal Finances	3N0921	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Mathematics	3N0929	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Office Procedures	3N0888	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Personal & Interpersonal Skills	3N0564	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Work Experience	3N0587	General Learning Major Award 3M0874
Level 3	Bread, Pastry and Desserts	3N0522	Culinary Skills 3S0924
Level 3	Culinary Operations	3N0549	Culinary Skills 3S0924
Level 3	Nutrition and Healthy Options	3N0887	Culinary Skills 3S0924
Level 3	Digital Media Skills	3N0552	Information and Communication Technologies 3M0877
Level 3	Restaurant Service	3N0577	Restaurant Skills 3S0686
Level 3	Tourism Awareness	3N0579	Restaurant Skills 3S0686

## Level 4 Validated Modules

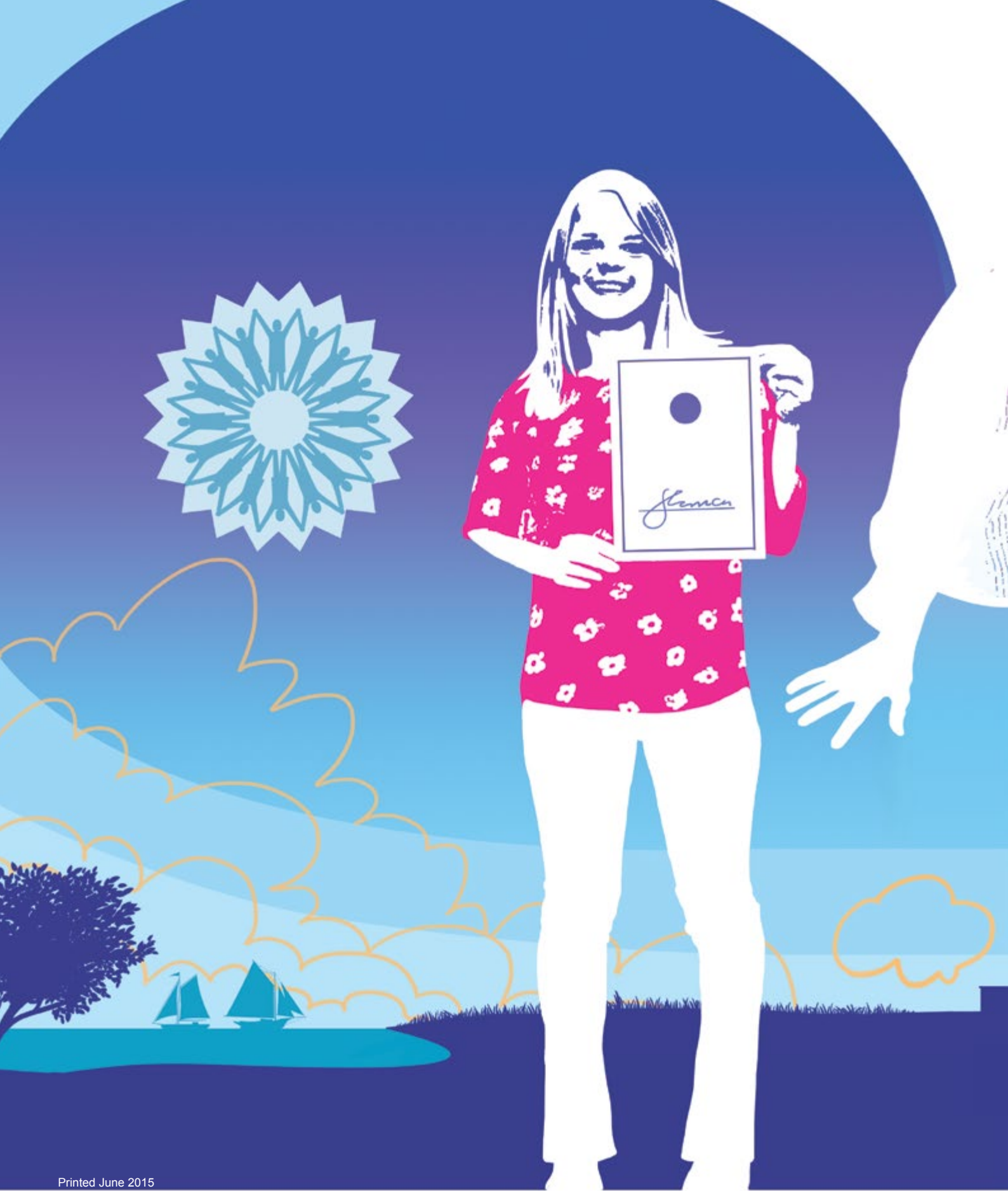
Level 4	Communications	4N0689	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Customer Service	4N1989	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Data Entry	4N1113	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Functional Mathematics	4N2138	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Home Repairs and Maintenance	4N3774	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Information Technology Skills	4N1125	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Reception Skills	4N1867	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Retail Sales Techniques	4N1183	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Stock Control	4N1184	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Teamworking	4N1169	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Word Processing	4N1123	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Work Experience	4N1168	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Workplace Safety	4N1124	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Personal & Interpersonal Development	4N1131	General Learning Major Award 4M2010
Level 4	Career Planning	4N1109	Employment Skills 4M0857
Level 4	Computer Applications	4N1112	Information & Communications Technology Skills 4M0855
Level 4	General Office Skills	4N1116	Office Skills 4M2070

## Level 5 Validated Modules

Level 5	Bookkeeping Manual and Computerised	5N1354	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Communications	5N0690	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Customer Service	5N0972	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Desktop Publishing	5N0785	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	eBusiness Studies	5N1369	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Payroll Manual and Computerised	5N1546	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Reception and Frontline Office Skills	5N1407	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Retail Selling	5N1619	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Spreadsheet Methods	5N1977	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Start Your Own Business	5N1418	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Teamworking	5N1367	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	The Internet	5N1611	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Web Authoring	5N1910	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Word Processing	5N1358	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Work Experience	5N1356	eBusiness 5M0828
Level 5	Contact Centre Skills	5N1361	Contact Centre Operations 5M2071
Level 5	Occupational First Aid	5N1207	Healthcare Support 5M4339
Level 5	Union Organising Skills	5N5328	Trade Union Studies 5M5165

## Level 6 Validated Modules

Level 6	Global Development	6N4126	Trade Union Studies 5M5165
Level 6	Training Delivery and Evaluation	6N3326	Training and Development 6S3372
Level 6	Training Needs Identification & Design	6N3325	Training and Development 6S3372



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STRONGER TOGETHER  
**CONGRESS CENTRES NETWORK**

An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí  
Department of Social Protection  
[www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)



**ECDL**



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Comhionannais agus Gaeltachta  
Department of Community, Equality  
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NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Ireland's EU Structural and  
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