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**CONGRESS**  
Irish Congress of Trade Unions



2005 - 2007

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL





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# Executive Council 2005-2007

**1 Brendan Mackin**  
AMICUS



**8 John Carr**  
INTO



**2 Peter McLoone**  
IMPACT



**9 Shay Cody**  
IMPACT



**3 Joe O'Flynn**  
SIPTU



**10 John Corey**  
NIPSA



**4 Mick O'Reilly**  
ATGWU



**11 Eamon Devoy**  
TEEU



**5 Larry Broderick**  
IBOA



**14 Jim Dorney**  
TUI



**6 Catherine Byrne**  
INTO



**15 John Douglas**  
MANDATE



**7 Rosheen Callender**  
SIPTU



**16 Eric Fleming**  
(Trades Councils)





**17 Brendan Hayes**  
SIPTU



**25 Jack O'Connor**  
SIPTU



**18 Noirín Green**  
AMICUS



**26 Paddy O'Shaughnessy**  
BATU



**19 Amanda Allaway**  
NIPSA



**28 Clare Tracey**  
INO



**21 Patricia McKeown**  
UNISON



**29 Owen Wills**  
TEEU



**22 Jim Moore**  
UCATT



**31 Rosaleen Glackin**  
CPSU



**23 Dan Murphy**  
PSEU



**33 Louise O'Donnell**  
IMPACT



**24 Patricia King**  
SIPTU



**34 Linda Tanham**  
MANDATE



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John White (ASTI)  
Barney Lawn (PCS)

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affordable home  
option?



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(these are approximate limits only - lower and higher limits may apply)

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# Introduction

For those who follow these things closely, the Executive Council Report to BDC 2005 turned out to be an accurate forecast of the challenges we would face in the period under review. The strains and pressures inherent in matching high levels of economic growth with adequate infrastructure and public service provision have become acute.

Within months of the Belfast conference, we saw employers exploiting migrant workers and initiating a race to the bottom – this was a challenge Congress had to confront head on.

But we have, at very least, held our own in this difficult environment. In fact, there is every reason to believe that the standing of the trade union movement was bolstered considerably by the stand we took on that key issue, providing leadership at a time of huge uncertainty.

Crucially, Congress has put a strategic shape on its activities and this should equip us to deal with whatever challenges emerge in future.

## Northern Ireland

The historic political settlement in Northern Ireland is an achievement that many of us who lived through 38 years of violence and strife never thought we would see. The tedium of negotiations that never seemed to end should not blind us to the significance of what has actually occurred. The hope now must be that economic progress will follow political progress to make a better life for all. In this regard, the climate may be such as to facilitate a greater North/South dialogue. Congress negotiated an All Island dimension in ***Towards 2016***, which was in turn reflected in the National Development Plan.



Congress President Peter McLoone and General Secretary David Begg lay a wreath at the Irish International Peace Park, Messines, Belgium, November 11, 2005



## The Economic Climate

### The International Economy

The global economy remains strong and this is important to Ireland given the very open nature of our own economy. However, global imbalances that particularly affect the US and the Far East are a threat. The US economy grew at an annual rate of 2.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2006. For 2006 as a whole GDP is estimated to have grown by 3.3 percent. This growth is largely driven by domestic consumption rather than exports. In effect this consumption is supported by the willingness of foreigners to invest in the US and this is causing the global imbalances referred to. At the moment it looks as if this pattern of consumer spending will continue due to reduced unemployment and some wage growth. Some weakening of the dollar in the early months of 2007 has caused competitiveness problems for Irish manufacturing.

### The Eurozone

The pace of growth accelerated in the final quarter of 2006, with the rate of expansion picking up in the four largest economies, particularly Italy and France.

According to Eurostat, GDP grew by 0.9 percent in the fourth quarter of 2006, up from 0.6 percent in the third quarter. It rose 3.3 percent on an annual basis. Household final consumption expenditure increased by 0.6 percent in the final quarter, following 0.7 percent growth in the third quarter.

Investment also rose in the fourth quarter, up 1.2 percent on a quarterly basis. Exports also picked up considerably, expanding by 3.7 percent in the fourth quarter, compared to 1.8 percent in the previous quarter, while imports increased by 1.9 percent, down from the 2.2 percent growth seen in the third quarter. Overall, GDP in 2006 increased by 2.7 percent, compared to 1.4 percent growth recorded in 2005.

### The UK Economy

The UK economy expanded by 2.7 percent in 2006, up from 1.9 percent in 2005. Manufacturing has undergone something of a recovery, with the 2007 performance the best on record since July 2004.

## The Irish Economy

The Irish economy saw 'unbalanced' growth of 5.75 percent GDP and 6.25 percent GNP in 2006. A similar performance is expected in 2007. The growth is unbalanced insofar as it is driven by domestic demand – primarily the construction sector – while export growth has declined. Business complains that manufacturing competitiveness is being adversely affected by the weak dollar, poor infrastructure and higher costs.

While employment growth remains very strong (90,000 to 100,000 new jobs each year), the loss of manufacturing jobs due to businesses relocating to low wage economies is a matter of major concern. The construction industry is likely to remain strong because there is a huge volume of infrastructural work to compensate for the housing slowdown.

In February, inflation fell to 4.8 percent but rose again to 5.1 percent in March & April and the annualised rate is expected to be 4.6 percent in 2007. (See also Section 5)

## Industrial Relations

On one level, industrial relations can be said to be good if the low level of industrial disputes is used as an indicator. At another level the picture is more disturbing.

The period under review was characterised by some very bitter disputes, Irish Ferries and An Post for example, and by the refusal of a number of large employers to use either the National Implementation Body or the Labour Court. This was particularly evident in strategic disputes such as those relating to pension schemes. This calls into question the viability of a voluntarist system of industrial relations and suggests a move towards a more legally-based system is inevitable.

However, the recent Supreme Court judgement in relation to Ryanair would appear to say that the right to collective bargaining cannot be legislated for. If this is so, then any legally based system of industrial relations would not rest on solid foundations.

Notwithstanding the difficulties mentioned above the National Implementation Body has assumed an increased importance as a forum for engaging with complex disputes. It cannot, and does not, seek to replicate the work of the Court or the LRC but rather tries to create a road map towards resolution of disputes using existing procedures.

## Organising & Recruitment

BDC 2005 was a platform for raising consciousness amongst unions on the need to recruit new members. It is a concern for many unions today and a lot of effort and resources have been put into this work – but not enough. The core mission of the trade union movement is to work for social justice by organising workers and ensuring they receive a fair share of the wealth generated in the economy. Congress will be unveiling some further initiatives on this theme, at BDC 2007. (See also Section 2, chapter 2.)

## The National Economic and Social Council (NESC)

The main tasks of NESC according to its Constitution and Terms of Reference shall be to analyse and report on strategic issues relating to the efficient development of the economy and the achievements of Social Justice. Congress representatives on NESC are: Peter McLoone, Sally Anne Kinahan, Manus O’Riordan, and David Begg.

In the period under review NESC published a number of major reports, viz:

- NESC Strategy 2006: People Productivity and Purpose;
- The Developmental Welfare State;
- Migration Policy
- Managing Migration Policy in Ireland: A Social and Economic Analysis.

These reports, individually and collectively, have informed the negotiation of Towards 2016 and have provided much of the intellectual basis for it propositions.

## Looking to the Future

In the two years since we last met in Conference the pace of globalisation has accelerated. While the process is capable of creating great wealth, it is also generating huge inequality.

The addition of China, India and Eastern Europe to the global economy has added 1.5 billion people to the global workforce. In characteristically brutal

fashion, the integration of the global labour market has conferred disproportionate power on capital and placed tremendous downward pressure on wages.

Everywhere, developed countries struggle to maintain their social provision and protection with constant pressure from business for lower taxes.

The EU would also attempt to change its social model, if it could get away with it. For example, a recent Green Paper on Labour Law effectively sought to undermine employment security. In addition, social policy is relegated to the task of facilitating labour force participation, for many at minimum wage rates, and providing a safety net for those who cannot participate. In Ireland there is a danger that, with a population likely to increase to 5.5 million in the next 20 years, this minimalist approach to social policy will become more prominent. It is a trend which must be fought because good quality social services will only be sustained if they are used by everybody, not just the marginalised. The socially excluded do not have political power. Conversely, they will remain marginalised unless they can access good quality public services. The downward pressure on wages, for the reasons outlined above, will make it even more difficult to lift the lower paid out of poverty other than by complementing industrial trade union work with social policy leverage. It is the rationale for Social Partnership.

But whatever the mode, the conditions for success lie in the organising strength of the movement. That’s our core activity, our raison d’etre. It must be our first and last priority.

**David Begg**  
General Secretary



Assistant General Secretary Sally Anne Kinahan and President Peter McLoone.

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# Summary

## Negotiating a New Deal – Towards 2016

### Background

Negotiations on the 7th in a series of Social Partnership agreements concluded in June 2006 and the new deal – **Towards 2016** – was ratified by a Special Delegate Conference on September 5, 2006. The invitation from the Taoiseach to participate in discussions on a new agreement was actually received in September 2005 but a very difficult industrial relations environment involving disputes in Irish Ferries and An Post prevented the Executive Council from immediately accepting the invitation. The commencement of formal negotiations was preceded by three months of explanatory talks to establish whether the political will existed to reform the labour market in a manner necessary to meet the challenge of large scale immigration. A basis for starting negotiations was reached and is recorded in a statement from the National Implementation Body, dated December 4, 2006.

**Towards 2016** differs significantly from its predecessors in a number of ways:

- It acknowledges that at this stage of our development, social progress is as important to Ireland as economic progress;
- It recognises that many of the 'big ticket' policy issues cannot be dealt with in a short timeframe, so the agreement is for a ten year duration; and;
- That the principal social and economic objectives are to be achieved in an All-Ireland context.

The National Development Plan 2007-2013 (**Transforming Ireland – A Better Quality of Life for All**) was published in January 2007 and reflects the key themes agreed in **Towards 2016** and commits €184 billion to their attainment over the next seven years. Specifically recognising that economic and social progress are interdependent, almost half the total funding commitment is destined for social infrastructure and social inclusion measures. Whatever the ultimate outcome or impact of **Towards 2016**, few will disagree that it is as close to a social democratic programme as has ever been achieved before.

With respect to pay, the terms of the agreement are:

- 3% of basic pay for the first 6 months of the Agreement as it applies in each particular employment or industry;
- 2% of basic pay for the next 9 months of the

Agreement as it applies in each particular employment or industry – except for those employees on an hourly basic rate of €10.25 per hour or less on commencement of the second phase, where a 2.5% increase will apply;

- 2.5% of basic pay for the next 6 months of the Agreement as it applies in each particular employment or industry; and
- 2.5% of basic pay for the next 6 months of the Agreement as it applies in each particular employment or industry.

Congress secured an adjustment of €1 per hour in the minimum wage, via the Labour Court. A strong bias in favour of the lower paid will remain part of our wage determination policy, but it is important to realise that the key to eliminating poverty is good quality public services.

The increases achieved under **Towards 2016** translates into an annualised pay increase of 4.6 percent. At the time the agreement was negotiated official forecasts for inflation were in the region 2.7 to 3 per cent, although our own economists were forecasting a slightly higher figure. The outturn for 2006 will be 3.9 per cent. The ESRI is forecasting that inflation will peak at 6 per cent in early 2007, falling gradually as the year progresses to 2.5 percent. This would give an annualised figure of 4.6 percent for 2007.

The main cause of inflation is interest rate increases which have, up to February 2007 anyway, accounted for half of the increase in the CPI. The hotel and restaurant component accounts for 16 percent of the increase. Energy has accounted for 4 percent but the wash through of electricity and gas price increases will push that slightly higher. Overall, however, the countervailing tendency of petrol pump prices to come down will neutralise this effort. The balance of the increase in the CPI arises from the indirect tax measures in the budget, mainly cigarette price increase.

The problem is that this leaves very few available levers for reducing inflation. Congress has lobbied – through the anti-inflationary task force provided for in **Towards 2016**, and directly with the Energy Regulator – for the introduction of a primary fuel variation charge. Correspondence exchanged with the regulator is set out below. We did have some success from this endeavour as the initially advised gas and oil price increases were scaled back. But ultimately the fuel variation charge and smart metering would be the best option. We will continue to pursue this. It needs to be said also that there is a general misconception that lack of competition in the electricity market is the cause of high prices. Ironically the opposite is the case. The ESB would

accommodate a fuel variation charge but the other providers oppose it, so keeping prices higher.

**20 September 2006**

*I am directed by the Executive Council of Congress to write to you concerning the recent increase in electricity prices.*

*While there is a broad understanding of the rationale behind the decision, people find it difficult to understand why there is no apparent allowance for the possibility of falling fuel prices. It has been noted that in the last few weeks the cost of Brent crude has fallen from over \$72 a barrel to \$62. This volatility in the primary fuel source would seem to suggest that some more flexible system for price variations would be better. In the past, the concept of a fuel variation charge was adopted by ESB. It has the advantage of being fair to the electricity producer while being transparent to the customer.*

*I am to request that you give some consideration to rescinding your earlier decision and replacing it with the suggestion outlined above.*

*You will appreciate that in putting forward this suggestion Congress is motivated by a concern that the value of the recently negotiated pay increases under Towards 2016 could be undermined by a steady increase in the cost of living of which energy prices are a part. The danger is that this could erode confidence in the social partnership process and make it difficult to negotiate a replacement when the time comes in 18 months time.*

*I look forward to receiving your observations at your convenience.*

*Yours sincerely*

### **Reply from the Energy Regulator:**

**10 October 2006**

#### **Re Increase in Electricity Prices**

*Thank you for your submission in relation to the proposed increase in ESB PES (Public Electricity Supplier) tariffs for 2007. The Commission published its decision on the tariffs for 2007 on 10 October 2006 (CER/06/206).*

*It is correct that the price of oil and gas on international markets has fallen since the Commission published its original consultation paper (8 September). Indeed in order to ensure that we made the correct decision in light of these falling prices, we asked ESB to carry out a full assessment of the impact of the current prices on their estimated fuel cost. We have determined that overall the 2007 fuel cost to be recovered by ESB would not change substantially. There would be a decrease of about €9 million out of a total bill of €495 million for 2007. There are two key reasons for this:*

- *Coal prices have increased significantly in the past month to 6 weeks. A significant volume of ESB's generation is produced from coal. The price of coal has increased from \$63 per tonne assumed in the original tariff calculation to almost \$71 per tonne now.*
- *There remains an outstanding fuel bill of €150 million from 2005 and 2006 that must be recovered by the ESB. This deficit occurred as the price of fuels in each of these years increased beyond expectations. ESB were unable to recover the additional cost in these years as the tariff charged to customers was fixed for the full year. Therefore a price lag built up. The CER believes that it is appropriate to recover all of this €150 million in 2007, in order to avoid carrying any of this under-recovery into the new Single Electricity Market (SEM) for the island of Ireland. This market will go-live on 1 November 2007.*

*You may be aware that in our decision on ESB's tariffs for 2007, we committed to re-examining the possibility of introducing a fuel price variation mechanism into tariffs, following a number of representations received from customers and industry representatives. I can confirm that we will publish a consultation paper on this topic before the end of 2006.*

*The Commission has consistently favoured the introduction of fuel variation mechanisms in tariffs. We believe that such mechanisms allow electricity prices to track market trends throughout the year, thereby avoiding the possibility of price lags or deficits building up. However, when we consulted on this topic earlier this year, all responses that we received indicated a definite preference for fixed annual tariffs. Customers who*

*responded to the Commission's consultation stated that a variable element in the tariff would lead to a lack of certainty and make annual budgeting extremely difficult. The Commission's consultation paper is available on our website (www.cer.ie) published on 26 July (CER/06/144). We intend to publish all of the 14 responses received to the consultation in the coming weeks. The CER's decision on this issue is included as part of our Direction on Ending Tariff Regulation for Large Energy Users (CER/06/167). However as indicated above, we have taken into account the strong views of a number of parties in recent weeks and have committed to reopening this topic before the end of the year.*

*The Commission is available to meet with you at your convenience should you wish to discuss these issues further and I look forward to hearing your views when we publish our consultation on fuel variation.*

*Yours sincerely*

## Summary of the main terms of Towards 2016:

### Part 1

### Macro-economy, Infrastructure, Environment & Social Policy

This is the architecture for a ten year agreement. It is based on the NESC Strategy Report (**People, Productivity & Purpose**) and on the core proposition that social and economic progress are complementary. It also sets the agreement in an All-Ireland context. As has by now been widely acknowledged in the media it represents a new paradigm for Social Partnership.

#### Macro-economic Policy

- **Towards 2016** accepts our analysis about sustainable development;
- **Contentious Areas:**
  - Tax harmonisation;
  - Semi-states, further investigation (see page 9, **Towards 2016**))
- **Positives:**
  - Investment in human capital/upskilling: process to target low skilled;
  - Manufacturing: high level group reporting to partnership process;
  - NDP affirms commitments on social infrastructure especially eldercare/childcare;
  - PPP's: Trade Union reps on board of NDFA;
  - Housing: 17,000 affordable home completions

- between 2007-2009, 27,000 social housing units to be commenced. In total – 66,000 households to have needs catered for through variety of means 2007-2009;
- Commitment to 0.5% Overseas Direct Aid in 2007, 0.7% in 2012.

#### Lifecycle Framework

- 50,000 new childcare places – 10,000 pre-school, 5,000 after school - €2.65bn National Childcare Strategy 2006-2010 – 17,000 training places;
- Review to determine follow-on programme;
- Education outcome for children:
  - Absenteeism – 100 posts for NEWB and psychological service;
  - 1000 Youthreach places by 2009;
  - Schools to publish admission policies;
  - 550 language teachers;
  - Pupil, teacher ratio – 27:1 in 2007/8;
  - Adequate laboratory provision for science/technology.
- Programme for recreation, sports, arts and culture;
- Maternity/paternity leave – as in budget but to be reviewed again before end of 2008;
- Focus on “employability of people” – flexibility and security – achieved through upskilling (Life Long Learning);
- Back to Education initiative to be expanded by 2000 places, by 2009;
- McIver Report on PLC sector to be implemented through discussion with unions;
- National Employment Action Plan referral to apply earlier than current 6 months;
- Additional investment in Community Employment (CE) in 2006;
- Lowest social welfare rate of €150, in 2002 terms, by 2007. Thereafter to be maintained at this level. Effective (but unstated) linkage to 30 percent of Gross Average Industrial Earnings;
- Commitment to removal of current backlog of cases before Equality Tribunal;
- **Health:**
  - Expansion of primary care – 300 teams in 2008, 400 by 2007 and 500 by 2011. Review in 2008;
  - No public patient to wait longer than 3 months;
  - HSE to re-look at acute beds requirement.
- **Older People:**
  - Cross reference to pensions in Part 2;
  - €150m to palliative care, €150m to day care in 2006/7;
  - 2000 home care package by end of 2006;
  - National standardised care needs assessment;
  - Health Bill 2006 – Inspectorate for nursing homes;
  - €2m to fight elder abuse;
  - Structured consultation with Social Partners on long term care issues for older people.



- People with Disability – roll out of National Disability Strategy, all Government memoranda to take account of impact on people with a disability.

## Part Two

### Pay, the Workplace, Employment Rights & Compliance

#### Background

Congress entered negotiations with the clear aspiration to construct and deliver a new paradigm of social partnership. It was and remains our strong belief that the old model - which focused on a trade off between tax rates and wage rises – was no longer appropriate.

The new model would see a wage settlement being complemented by improvements in the ‘social wage’ and stronger, enforceable employment standards. In short, people should see improvements in both quality of life and standard of living.

Over recent years, it has become demonstrably clear that long-term policy goals could not be achieved within the short timeframe of the standard social partnership agreements. Thus, ***Towards 2016*** encompasses a 10 year framework, punctuated by shorter-term pay agreements and reviews.

In the aftermath of Irish Ferries and GAMA, Congress prioritised the following objectives in respect of Labour Standards:

- Preventing an ‘Irish Ferries on Land’ situation;
- Preventing a UK type ‘Gate Gourmet’ situation;
- Dealing with abuses, particularly bogus self employment, in the construction industry.

Other social policy issues that we highlighted as having a workplace relevance were Pensions, Upskilling, Equality, Health, Education and Housing etc. These are covered in Part One of the agreement.

#### Pay

See page 9 for pay terms.

- Same general conditions as ***Sustaining Progress*** apply;
- Public sector modernisation and initial pay pause;
- Anti-inflation group under ***Sustaining Progress*** retained;
- Provision for agreement on employee financial involvement within 12 weeks.

#### Upskilling

- To focus on lower-skilled and vulnerable (including manufacturing) with objective of improving employability;
- Union-led learning network pilot (based on UK union learning reps) to be expanded;

- Creation of workplace basic education fund;
- Targeted fund to help workers returning to third level education pay fees.

#### Pensions

- Issues arising from disputes about pension funds to go directly to the National Implementation Body (NIB), with the active engagement of constituent members of IBEC and Congress in seeking solutions;
- Government will engage with IBEC/Congress to formulate comprehensive policy on pensions. Green Paper to be published. Department of An Taoiseach will lead. Entire process within 12 months;
- Optional pensions’ provision of Transfer of Undertakings Directive will be transposed into Irish law.

#### New Employment Rights Agency (NERA)

- Director will be at top management level;
- Statutory Advisory Board with ability to commission own research;
- Labour Inspectors will be increased from 31 to 90, progressively by end of 2007;
- Necessary legal, accounting and administrative support to be provided;
- Memorandum of Understanding between ERA and unions.

#### Joint Investigation Units (JIUs)

- New legislation to allow Revenue, Social Welfare and ERA to work together, share data and target areas of non-compliance with JIUs.

#### Sub-contractors in Construction

- The RCT1 (tax form) regime will be overhauled to minimise bogus self-employment. The employment status of workers will be a particular focus of the JIUs;
- The Hidden Economy Working Group will be relaunched.

#### Employment Records

- Legislation will be introduced to require the keeping of statutory employment records in a prescribed format;
- Failure to keep records will be a criminal offence punishable by a fine of up to €250,000;
- In redress proceedings taken by employees to the EAT, Labour Court or Rights Commissioners, the burden of proof of compliance via records will rest with the employer.

#### Investigations

- The Minister for DETE will take new powers via legislation to allow him to publish reports of investigations (GAMA were able to prevent him from doing this under existing law).

## New Compliance Model

- Redress for employees using Rights Commissioners, the Labour Court or EAT will be the main focus of the new model rather than the Law Courts (although this will remain a feature in certain cases like failing to keep records);
- All legal penalties will be raised upwards through legislation – fines will range from €5,000 to €250,000 and prison is an option for the first time in this area;
- Rights Commissioners, EAT, Labour Court will in future be able to award compensation of up to two years wages. (In practical terms this will be of enormous benefit to vulnerable people because most of the cases that come up are for non-payment of wages etc and, heretofore, redress only allows restoration of loss and expenses. Therefore, there was no disincentive for employers to exploit people);
- New legislation to protect ‘whistleblowers’ who report exploitation.

## Tracking Labour Market Trends

- A high level group will be set up to track labour market trends in a way that drills down deep into hourly earnings, self-employment, employment conditions and sectoral employment patterns. This is intended to give reliable information about displacement and wage depression in the economy. This type of data has not been available previously, although this has not prevented many self-appointed commentators dismissing union revelations relating to exploitation and abuse;

## Preventing an Irish Ferries on Land

- A detailed procedure (pages 35-41) will be put in place involving amendments to the protection of the Employment Act 1977 and the Unfair Dismissals Acts, 1977-2001 to prevent replacement of workers via collective redundancy;
- It is worth noting that where this procedure is ignored by an employer the EAT can reinstate the workers or award them up to five years wages (with no offsets) by way of compensation. The tax reliefs which apply in normal redundancy situations can be withdrawn.

## Preventing a ‘Gate Gourmet’ Situation

- In the UK last year Gate Gourmet contrived to provoke an industrial dispute which allowed them to sack the workforce and employ replacement workers. The Government has agreed to amend Section 5 of the Unfair Dismissals Acts, 1977-2001, to prevent a similar situation arising in Ireland.

## Public Procurement

- New contracts will be introduced for public capital projects to require certification of compliance

with labour standards. Non-compliance can result in withholding of payments to contractors or sub-contractors.

## Employment Agencies

- General principles by which new legislation to regulate Employment Agencies will be effected, have been agreed.

## Domestic Workers

There will be a new Code of Practice regulating employment in the home. This should help prevent exploitation in the sector, particularly of migrant women workers.

## Economic Migration Policy

- Workers will now own their own work permits;
- Non-EEA students will have to be covered by work permits;
- REA/ERO pay rates will have to apply to work permit applications;
- Permit holders can transfer between employers;
- Language schools will be regulated.

## Equality Issues

- The National Framework Committee for Equal Opportunities at the Level of the Enterprise will continue;
- The National Framework Committee for Work Life Balance will continue;
- The additional 0.5% pay increase for people earning €10.25 or less along with the increase in the minimum wage, will hopefully have some impact on the gender pay gap as many thousands of women workers are working in low paid service jobs (similar arrangements have been adopted in Finland). According to the CSO National Employment Survey 2003, there are 59,000 women working in hotels and restaurants on mean hourly earnings of €9.86 per hour. Overall, 28.4% of people earn less than €10 per hour;
- The initiative to regulate the conditions of domestic workers will also primarily benefit women.



Leading the December 9 National Day of Protest



# **CWHT**

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## Employment Rights

The Irish Ferries dispute was the catalyst for a significant reform of the labour market. It was not anticipated that Ireland, Britain and Sweden would immediately open their labour markets post May 1, 2004 and, more importantly, that the other 12 countries would not.

In our case it meant that a virtually unregulated labour market of 2 million people was opened to a population of 70 million. As the Minister for Education subsequently explained during the Irish Ferries dispute, this was done at the request of the business community. Certainly Congress had no say in it. As a matter of fact we had lobbied strongly during the negotiations on ***Sustaining Progress*** for an increase in the Labour Inspectorate, not in relation to immigration, but to deal with poor regulation of the labour market as it was then was. The response at the time was to increase the number of Labour Inspectors from 17 to 21, equal to approximately one third of the number of dog wardens in the country!

It was naive of Government to think that employers, faced with the prospect of an abundant supply of vulnerable, and understandably compliant, labour would not succumb to the temptation to exploit them. That, of course, is what happened. Initially it was below the radar screen activity in horticulture, hotels and other low pay industries. But the issue became high profile, with GAMA and then Irish Ferries. Parallel developments with the Laval and Viking cases in Sweden and Denmark focussed critical attention on the implications of the EU Services Directive. In Ireland on December 9 2005, over 160,000 people voted with their feet to support the Congress National Day of Protest against exploitation, displacement and a race to the bottom. Very deliberately, the banner we chose to lead the main march read: ***"Equal Rights for All Workers."***

This issue of employment standards, compliance and enforcement in the labour market became our central demand in the new round of Social Partnership negotiations. We were somewhat sceptical about the willingness of employers and Government to seriously contemplate moving away from the extremely flexible labour market model they enjoyed. For this reason we sought certain assurances about the principles involved before entering talks. It took three months to achieve this.

In the event our scepticism was well founded. By way of preparation Congress engaged the services of a prominent Senior Counsel and legal team to assess the type of legislative changes that would be necessary to prevent a 'Race to the Bottom' in employment standards. The legal team created an elegant solution to be achieved through a single new



NUJ members protest over pensions

piece of legislation, as opposed to amending a series of existing Acts relating to employment. When the talks started IBEC and the Construction Industry Federation (CIF) made it clear that, while they could support improved enforcement, they would not countenance any change whatsoever in the existing framework of laws.

It gradually emerged that the real problem lay with the Foreign Direct Investment companies, and, in particular, the American Chamber of Commerce. Ironically these were not the target of our campaign but they saw any change in the legal framework on this issue as a watershed – a fundamental shift away from low regulation, all accommodating, pro-business environment. The power of this FDI sector is immense, not just within IBEC, but also in terms of their direct political access to and clout with the Government.

This veto on legislative change made for a very difficult negotiating environment and was ultimately unsustainable. It does, however, explain why, having spent three months talking about talks, it took a further five months to actually secure the package of employment protection measures incorporated in ***Towards 2106***.

The employers, while eschewing legal remedies, asked us to outline our concerns and vowed to find



Congress President Peter McLoone and General Secretary David Begg at the September 5, 2006 SDC.

remedies for those concerns within the existing legal and industrial relations framework. The problem with this was that we had to submit every proposed solution to the test of our earlier evaluation of the weakness of the existing legal framework. In practice it was not possible to deal with the issues identified by us without recourse to at least amending legislation. That is the way agreement was eventually reached. There will be extensive legislative change. It will not be as elegant as the single act we proposed but it will be effective.

What, in practice, were we trying to achieve? It can be reduced to three critical areas:

- We had to make a working assumption that, if not addressed, it was only a matter of time before we had another Irish Ferries situation, albeit on land. Without a robust legal and enforcement architecture to deal with it, our evaluation was that such a dispute would release very damaging racial and social tensions;
- We had to factor in the experience of the Gate Gourmet dispute in the UK which would have allowed the employer to contrive an industrial dispute to justify a collective dismissal of the existing workforce and its replacement with a completely new group of workers. Existing Irish law would have allowed this, although this was not well known;
- We had to deal with large scale abuse of employment standards, including the extensive use of bogus self-employment, principally, but not exclusively, in the construction sector.

**Towards 2016** deals comprehensively with these issues. A complex series of measures detailed over 15 pages commits the Government to an extensive legislative programme.

In essence, the exploitation and abuse of workers is now a de facto criminal offence. This represents a profound cultural and social shift and one which we believe will benefit this society hugely, over the longer term.

The measures in their totality, and in the context of the legislation necessary to implement them, represents the single biggest leap forward in social policy ever initiated in this country. Other important social policy changes were inspired by the EU but this is the biggest thing we have ever done of our own volition. It is also the most difficult project Congress has ever undertaken both in terms of its complexity and in overcoming the opposition to it. Importantly, across the globalised economy, workers' rights are under constant downward pressure. We believe we have successfully bucked that trend and set a clear example for others to follow.





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PENSION



## CHAPTER 1

## EQUALITY &amp; INTEGRATION

# Overview

A successful economy set alongside a malfunctioning society – this would appear to capture the contradictions of modern-day Ireland. And of course, it is working people that bear the brunt of that malfunction as the services which should be enriching their quality of life – transport, housing, health, education – are either absent, or literally beyond their reach.

Over the longer term, this contributes to deepening inequality across society, an inequality which puts down roots, imbeds itself over the generations and becomes increasingly difficult to eradicate.

Thus, in modern-day contradictory Ireland we have an economy with the one of the highest productivity rates in the EU, creating record levels of jobs but, perversely, one in five people at risk of poverty, according to the CSO report ***Measuring Ireland's Progress***.

And while there has been welcome, increased investment in vital public services over recent years, our pupil teacher ratio at primary level remains unacceptably high and health spending – despite claims to the contrary – remains below the EU average.

Hardly surprising then, that spending on social protection here, in 2004, was just half that of Sweden.

Consequently, the impact of social transfers and pensions in reducing the threat of poverty is lower than elsewhere in the EU. But most shameful of all, for the country with the fifth highest gross national income in the EU 25, is the revelation that just over 10 percent of children under 15 years of age live in consistent poverty.

Overall, the picture that emerges is of a society at odds with itself, set on a course of skewed and unsustainable development.

## Persistent Inequality

Irish equality legislation sets out nine grounds on which people cannot be discriminated against: gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion and membership of the Traveller community. But problems persist, as these recent figures from the Equality Authority demonstrate:

- Only 40 percent of those reporting a longstanding or chronic illness or disability were in employment,

compared to 70 percent for other adults of working age;

- Those with third-level education have the highest probability of getting jobs. Few older people have third-level education and most older people entering jobs (71 percent) have only primary or lower second-level education;
- Carers experience significant difficulties in reconciling paid employment and caring responsibilities;
- Just 44.7 percent of lone parents are in employment;
- Unemployment among Travellers is seven times that of the general population;
- Few of the rights, responsibilities, commitments and benefits assigned to married heterosexuals are available to same-sex couples.
- Some 21 percent of migrants entitled to work in Ireland say they have been denied credit or a loan from a financial institution.

The Central Statistics Office special survey on equality (2005) found that 12.5 percent of the population aged 18 years and over had experienced discrimination within the previous two years, 5.1 percent had experienced work-related discrimination and 9 percent had experienced discrimination in accessing services. Women continue to experience inequalities at work:

- In the last 10 years, there has been a huge surge in the number of women with children entering or returning to the workforce (30,000 in 2005). However, women remain over-represented in low paid, part-time and atypical employment and experience greater vulnerability. Women are also under-represented in the workforce. For example in the 55-64 age group, 64.7 percent of men were employed, compared to 33.4 percent of women;
- Women generally outperform men academically in both secondary and tertiary education, but are significantly under-represented in science and technology subjects, which affects employment opportunities and earning potential;



- There are now over 700,000 working people with children of pre-school or school-going age and tens of thousands more who provide care to aging parents and family members with disabilities or special needs;
- It is still women who undertake the majority of caring responsibilities. The inflexibility of many employments, coupled with issues around the availability and affordability of appropriate care, is a significant contributor towards gender inequality in terms of pay and promotion and leads to a high dropout rate for women with school-going children;
- For many women part-time work has been the only option available to those who wish to combine work and family life, but it is likely to be low or semi-skilled, attracting low pay and poor conditions of employment;
- Women continue to earn 85 percent of men's average hourly earnings. The gap is narrower in the public than in the private sector. The ESRI has reported that the gender pay gap increases by some one to two percent when pensions and other occupational benefits are included;
- Migrant women are among some of the most vulnerable workers and are prone to exploitation and discrimination. The migrant workforce has grown to about 10 percent in less than three years, yet Ireland lacks a national policy on migration and the supports and infrastructure to protect migrant workers;
- Ireland continues to experience economic gain and is recognised as a wealthy nation. However, significant disparities between rich and poor remain and the gap is widening. The proportion of women at risk of poverty, after pensions and social transfers, is the highest in the EU. The at-risk-of-poverty rate for women in the over 65 age group stands at 49 percent (CSO);
- Only 46 percent of women in the Irish workforce have pensions cover, and only one-third, when women in the public service are excluded;
- Women are under-represented in politics, on State boards and in public service higher management positions which significantly affects their ability to influence the equality agenda.

From experience, we know that one of the most effective ways to deal with gender inequality is to include gender as a dimension of the collective bargaining agenda. Congress has ensured that gender equality has remained a key issue of its agenda in successive partnership negotiations. This has ensured a number of improvements, including: increases in paid and unpaid maternity leave; the agreement to draw up a Code of Practice for Domestic Workers; the availability of force majeure leave to same sex couples and increases in the minimum wage. But many key issues remain:

- the introduction of paid paternity leave;
- the legal right to request flexible working;
- poor availability of affordable, high-quality childcare;
- the removal of Section 37(1) of the Employment Equality Act.

Congress included a significant equality dimension in our agenda for the 2006 social partnership talks. Specifically, we sought a commitment to an overarching policy approach to address the persistent inequalities experienced by women and other groups.

## Equality & Towards 2016

**Towards 2016** includes an overarching equality vision, namely that:

***“Every person, irrespective of background or gender, would enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination.”***

The agreement commits Government to promoting gender equality across all stages of the lifecycle, through a range of measures including the recently-published National Women's Strategy. There is also an acknowledgement that “while the introduction of a strong body of anti-discriminatory legislation and other supporting mechanisms has contributed to the reduction of gender inequality..... we have some way to go to achieve true gender equality.”

Other Equality related measures include:

- Policies to increase employment levels with the goal of exceeding the EU Lisbon employment rate targets for 2010 of 70 percent overall: 60 percent for females and 50 percent for older workers;
- Building upon the NDP Equality for Women Measure;
- Focusing on actions by the social partners to encourage greater numbers of women to advance to the higher levels within their chosen careers through training and cost effective reviews of equality policies within organisations;
- Further exploring the causes of the Gender Pay Gap to reduce it further;
- Legislation on Maternity/Paternity Leave to be reviewed again before the end of 2008;
- Reviewing as necessary existing equality legislation to establish best practice in relation to positive action, particularly in access to employment, across all nine equality grounds;
- Reviewing expenditure on the equality infrastructure provided by the Equality Acts to reduce the incidence of discrimination. A particular priority will be the removal of the current backlog of cases before the Equality Tribunal;

- Encourage companies/ organisations to meet the challenges of diversity and equality;
- the National Framework Committee for Equal Opportunities at the level of the Enterprise will continue its work in developing and disseminating practical supports for the equal opportunities workplace;
- Collecting data to support policies for the promotion of equality of opportunity across the nine grounds covered by equality legislation.

There are also a number of new “innovative measures” including:

- A new framework to address the broader issue of integration policy, linked with progress already made in the areas of social inclusion and anti-racism;
- Language and other supports for Migrant workers;
- A range of strategies will also be pursued as part of the National Action Plan Against Racism. Racism in the workplace will be addressed in the context of the Anti-Racist Workplace Week.

## European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

2007 has been designated European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. The European Year in Ireland will be a year to celebrate progress made in promoting equal opportunities for all and combating discrimination.

It offers a real opportunity for Congress to develop our own thinking and strategy on the many changes still necessary to ensure an Ireland where “every person would enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination”. To that end, we have commissioned research for briefing papers in the following areas, to inform our negotiating agenda on equality issues:

- Access to the workplace and promotions
- Flexible working and work-life balance issues
- Childcare
- Equal pay
- Workplace culture – anti-harassment, pro-diversity
- Promoting equality – positive action, accommodating

These will help to develop our own policy and provide us with quality research to necessary to support our work for a more equal society.

## Women’s Committee (ROI)

The Women’s Committee was reconstituted during the period under review and the following elected as Officers:

- Rhonda Donaghy, Chairperson;
- Claire Tracey, Vice Chair;
- Therese Murphy, Secretary.

Major initiatives undertaken during the period included:

The drafting and adoption of a Fifth Gender Equality programme, which will build on the progress of previous programmes and also address new priorities in the gender equality field:

- Equal Opportunities;
- Supporting Parents and Carers;
- Reconciling Work and Family Life;
- Women in Unions;
- Violence against Women;
- Women Migrant Workers;
- Women’s Economic independence

## Monitoring & Evaluation

Congress and its affiliates will actively promote the recommendations on the six priority areas contained in this Programme and put in place a system of monitoring and evaluation.

The Committee also hosted the 16th Congress Women’s Conference which took place over March 10-11, 2006 in Belfast, under the theme Women, Work & Care. A series of motions covering the broad themes of women and work, women and society, and, women in unions were debated and adopted. Conference also included an Informal Debate Session to stimulate and encourage more open debate. To this end, a paper on Women, Work & Caring was circulated with the conference papers. Speakers at the conference included:

- Peter McLoone, President of Congress;
- Sally Anne Kinahan, Assistant General Secretary;
- Paula Carey, Social Affairs Officer, and author of the Congress briefing paper ***Caring for the Future... Who Cares;***
- Professor Kathleen Lynch, Equality Studies, UCD;
- Anneli Palm, Swedish Trade Union Confederation;
- Monica McWilliams, Chief Commissioner of the NI Human Rights Commission;
- Tabitha Khumalo, ZCTU – Zimbabwe.

To jointly mark International Women’s Day and the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007), the Committee hosted the launch of Postcards of Pioneers. A joint Congress/SIPTU initiative, this pack of twelve postcards depicts some of the women ‘pioneers’ of the labour and trade union movement. It is intended as the first in a series which honours the contribution made by working women, North and South. The first cards depict women who have, for example, held officerships in Congress and/or their



December 9, 2005. Marching for the future.

own unions during the 20th Century. The Committee also hosted walking tours of significant landmarks for women on International Women's Day.

The Congress Womens' Seminar 23/24 March 2007, was held in the Clarion Hotel, Dublin Airport. The Theme was **Globalisation, Equality and Workers' Rights in the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All** and speakers included: June Hartley from the Solidarity Centre in South Africa, Salome Mbugua from AKIDWA (African Womens' Network) and Sam Maher from the Clean Clothes Campaign.

The Committee was also delighted to host the annual joint Womens' Committees meeting of the TUC, STUC, WTUC and ICTU (North and South) in November 2006.

## The Integrated Society

Migration can enhance economic and social progress & prosperity, but this is by no means guaranteed, or inevitable. Properly managed, migration can contribute to the social and economic development of Ireland and the integration of migrants will be crucial in determining success or failure.

## NESC Report on Migration

Congress participated in the National & Economic Social Council (NESC) discussions leading to the publication of Migration Policy. The report gives the background to the recent history of migration into Ireland and puts this in the context of international research. It argues that immigration overall has been a relatively positive experience. The report notes that Government cannot be complacent; the continued success of migration requires a clear, coherent wide-ranging migration policy that mainstreams migration within public policy development.

Of particular interest to Congress was the whole area of labour migration. Discussions took place during the Irish Ferries controversy and subsequent negotiations for **Towards 2016**. The report focuses on labour migration, the impact of migration on the labour market, the economy and social cohesion. Crucially, the report goes on to add: "that for migration to continue to contribute to the improved social and economic situation in Ireland, it must contribute to an upgrading within the economy. Migration must contribute to social mobility and integration rather than creating a differentiated labour market."





## EUROPEAN YEAR OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL 2007



2007 — European Year of Equal Opportunities for All



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The report concludes that there are three main implications for policy;

- The approach to migration must be clear with the emphasis on three broad goals; economic and social development, the rule of law and integration in to all aspects of life, economic, social-cultural and civic.
- Migration policy needs to be widened to cover a range of policy areas such as labour market policy, social policy, policies to ensure integration and a responsiveness of social and public services to new needs.
- It also advocates a 'whole of Government' response to migration. This involves having a clearly understood vision of the role of migration in Irish society, a mainstreaming of the integration agenda in service delivery departments, and information gathering to support policy with clear co-ordination and information sharing between different policy areas.

## Immigration Policy

In 2006 Congress set out a vision for a rights-based approach to immigration. We campaigned for improved migrant worker rights and highlighted how Government could simultaneously secure the effective functioning of the labour market. These considerations are appropriate as, for the most part, the need to earn a living is what drives migration and the interaction of permission to reside with permission to work schemes can have a significant impact - good and bad - on workers and their families.

In our submission on the proposed Immigration Bill, Congress called for Irish immigration law to reflect and comply with fundamental principles of international human rights law. Ireland has ratified a number of international conventions that have direct relevance to immigration policy and the forthcoming legislation needs to ensure that the rules and practices established thereby, are free of discrimination and compatible with our obligations under international instruments.

It is crucial the legislation ensures that an invalid or absent employment permit does not invalidate a worker's rights. The scandal of undocumented working cannot be ended by allowing employers to evade their responsibilities. In this regard we have called on Government to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers & Members of their Families. This would guarantee that all migrant workers are covered by employment law and enjoy other rights - the right to trade union membership, freedom of association and collective bargaining - regardless of their residency or permission to work status. We also

called for the introduction of a regularisation process and a 'bridging visa' to assist undocumented, smuggled and trafficked persons.

## Habitual Residence Condition

The Congress led campaign for changes to the Habitual Residence Condition resulted in reforms by Government that have had a very positive impact on those coming from other EU countries. Workers can now establish an entitlement to much needed social security payments. However some obstacles remain for newly arrived migrant workers and for women accessing support services as a result of family breakdown. Migrant workers contribute far more to the public finances through tax and social insurance payments than they could ever claim.

## Asylum seekers

Congress has called for abolition of the weekly 'direct provision' payments to asylum-seekers. Only one other EU country (Denmark) prevents all asylum seekers from taking up paid employment. There are some who are now legally resident in Ireland and in their sixth year of forced unemployment, at huge cost to both the State and themselves. Congress believes the low level of direct provision payment can lead to 'food poverty' and we called for an immediate increase from €19.10 to €50 per week, for adults and from €9.60 to €25, for children. Unlike other social welfare payments, direct provision does not reflect the change in the cost of living. They have remained static since they were introduced in 2000.

## Universality of Child Benefit Campaign

What was formerly known as the Children's Allowance payment is now called Child Benefit. And what used to be a universal payment is now denied to some children. Up to May 1, 2004, all children living in the State received Child Benefit monthly, regardless of family income or immigration status. Then, in response to the enlargement of the European Union, the Government introduced the Habitual Residence Condition (HRC). This is a condition which must be met by certain people seeking certain social welfare payments, including Child Benefit. This ended the previous policy of universality in relation to payment of Child Benefit. The HRC, which was originally introduced to control the flow of EU workers into Ireland, is now impacting hardest on families living in vulnerable situations and, in particular, their children. It places immigration policy requirements above the rights of children and makes children's rights contingent on their parents' situation.



Despite the State recognising that Child Benefit is an important mechanism for keeping or bringing children out of poverty, the imposition of the HRC, means Child Benefit is now denied to children living in vulnerable situations.

Congress therefore joined with a number of organisations, led by Free Legal Aid Centres, to demand that the universality of child benefit payments be reinstated – the denial since May 2004 of child benefit to asylum seekers (children of asylum seekers and separated children seeking asylum) contravenes the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 26 states that: “States parties shall recognise for every child the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance.” The Convention also states that a child should not be discriminated against for any reason. Withdrawal of child benefit to asylum seekers also contravenes the Government’s National Anti-Poverty Strategy which pledges to make sure that no member of a minority will be more susceptible to poverty than anyone else.

## Congress Studentship on Migration

Congress has established a three year PhD studentship at Dublin City University (DCU), to

examine the issue of migration and social integration in contemporary Ireland. The studentship will be dedicated to research and policy development on migration and social integration, from the perspective of the trade union movement. The post will support the development of research, analysis and briefings for use by Congress/unions on key areas of concern relating to migration.

The research will include:

- Labour market effects - recent impact on wage dispersion and others;
- Level of exploitation;
- Migrants career progress
- Effects on housing and health system
- Scale of irregular migration
- Contribution of trade unions to integration

It is envisaged that regular quarterly reports on specific aspects will be produced, jointly supervised by Congress and DCU academics, including Prof. Ronnie Munck, Director of Migration & Integration Programme. A competition to fill the post was held and applications invited from suitably qualified people. Mary Hyland was the successful candidate and will hold the scholarship for three years.



Getting the message on Privatisation



## CHAPTER 2

### WORKING FOR EQUALITY

# National Women's Strategy

The Government launched the National Women's Strategy (NWS), the 10 year plan for tackling gender equality, in April 2007. Congress participated in a Social Partnership consultative group during the drafting of the Strategy and made many suggestions for inclusion. The final Strategy reaffirms commitments to tackle inequality and support the advancement of women contained in a number of existing agreements and strategies including ***Towards 2016***, The National Action Plan on Social Inclusion and the National Development Plan.

The Strategy outlines 20 key objectives and over 200 actions to address all aspects of women's lives under three broad themes:

- Equalising socio-economic opportunity for women;
- Ensuring the wellbeing of women;
- Engaging women as equal and active citizens.

There are some positive developments within the Strategy and there is a commitment that all policy developments at the planning stages will have to take account of the impact on equality between men and women. Congress will have a role in the co-ordinating committee which will oversee the implementation of the strategy.

However, there remains an absence of significant measures that will support women in balancing their work and care responsibilities. These are policies relating to maternity and paid paternity leave, childcare and right to flexible working arrangements. The Strategy does not contain enough measurable targets in this area, with specific timescales for implementation. These measures are vital to tackling the gender pay gap and ending gender inequality. Congress will work through the steering group to gain advances for women in these areas.

The NWS also marked a decision to establish an Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, with special funding of € 21 million. There is some concern that such an office should deal with a wider range of violent activity, as opposed to concentrating solely on domestic violence. Congress will work to ensure that the new office expands its remit to reduce all forms of violence against women.

## Equal Opportunities at the Level of the Enterprise, Framework Committee

Congress continues to participate in the above Framework Committee which acts as a major promoter and supporter of workplace equality measures. Among the work supported over the period are:

- Renewal and expansion of the current consultants panel that works with local enterprises to promote planned and systematic approaches to equality;
- Support for an Athlone Working Group to promote planned and systematic approaches to workplace equality there. The Framework Committee have agreed to fund approximately 10 SMEs to complete equality training and one larger company to complete an Equality Review and Action Plan.
- Initiatives with the HSE, hospitality sector, LGSMB and Engineers Ireland;
- An equality course for IBEC members;
- Equality Champions exercise with Congress which is promoting a planned and systematic approach to equality within Congress and affiliate trade unions.

## Strategic Implementation Committee for Equality Initiatives

Congree agreed with the Equality Authority to contract a review team to implement a 'mapping exercise' of Congress' equality initiatives, with a view to preparing a strategy for future equality work.

Following a competitive tender process Evolution Human Resource & Training Consultancy Ltd and HR Training & Support Services Ltd (the Review Team) were appointed to carry out the work. They reported at regular intervals to a group consisting of Congress and Equality Authority officials.

The review team reported with a set of recommendations, which included the adoption of a clearly defined Equality Strategy, improved resourcing and new structures within Congress to more effectively focus organisational efforts in this area. A further key recommendation was a proposal to establish a Strategic Implementation Committee for Congress Equality Initiatives, made up of senior affiliate representatives, including members of existing equality-related committees and equality officers from unions. The Committee was to be chaired by a senior Congress representative.

The Executive Council duly established the Strategic Implementation Committee (SIC), chaired by Congress Vice President, Rosheen Callender. The new Committee met on a bi-monthly basis to deal with a number of key priorities including:

- Overseeing the implementation of Motion 34 on the promotion of equality within unions;
- addressing the organisational change agenda and developing skills to address the under-representation and participation of women at leadership levels by seeking to mainstream LIFT when the current project ends this year;
- addressing the areas of racism and ethnic diversity (including Travellers) with a view to developing clear policy and guidelines;
- accessing resources for Congress and unions for work on the equality initiatives;

Significant success can be credited to the Committee, including proposals to support the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, the development of a significant body of research on the equality agenda, the provision of a Disability Champions resource for unions and the establishment of a joint project with Dublin City University on migrant workers.

## Going Up: The LIFT Project

LIFT is a strategic development partnership between Congress, the National Centre for Partnership & Performance (NCP) and the Institute of Public Administration (IPA).

The overall aim of the project is to support organisational change and develop skills that help address the under-representation of and participation by women, at leadership level in the trade union movement. LIFT sets out to explore and facilitate the



Joanne Delaney of Mandate - sacked for wearing her union badge, and reinstated after a campaign that drew international support. Joanne was pictured at the Congress launch of 'The Women's Agenda', which set out our platform for the talks. Botanic Gardens, Dublin, International Women's Day, 2006.

empowerment of women into leadership roles within trade unions by providing training, mentoring and coaching to build capacity within the movement.

A key objective for the LIFT Project has been to connect with women and men in new and innovative ways, to support improved participation and progression for women and to facilitate the delivery of personal and organisational development programmes for sustainable trade union organisation.

The LIFT Action Plan has focused on three key areas:

1. Research and Analysis
2. Developing Leadership Programmes
3. Connecting with Women

### Research & Analysis

Qualitative research was undertaken to examine the attitudes, perceptions, policies, practice and views within unions relative to female members, activists and staff. Equally, it also examined those factors which may inhibit women's progression to leadership and senior levels.



Quantitative research was also commissioned to examine the motivation and barriers to joining the Trade Union movement among a cross section of the Irish workforce.

The study explored the validity and relevance of trade unions to existing and potential members to inform the changes required in 'repositioning' the movement to engage a wider audience.

### **Leadership Development Programmes**

The survey outcomes informed approaches to developing and implementing leadership development programmes targeted at current leaders and senior-level women within the movement. The Leadership Development Programmes are supplemented by organisational change strategies and awareness programmes delivered across trade union affiliates and through Congress' Executive Council networks.

### **LIFT – General Secretaries Programme: Strand I**

LIFT Strand I set out to provide an open forum for General Secretaries to reflect, discuss and engage on strategic issues that are critical for the future sustainability and growth of the trade union movement. Seven strategic conversations were held during the year covering the following themes:

- What future for trade unions?
- An organisation-wide strategy for change and development
- Trade unions supporting and promoting learning
- Managing personal and organisational stress/ promoting work life balance
- Leadership development and succession planning – mentoring as a tool
- Recruitment and organisation
- An industry-view of Partnership and the role of trade unions.

The conversations were prompted by briefings which highlighted the challenges facing the leadership of trade unions in Ireland.

This phase of the LIFT programme was designed to complement the other interventions in the programme and to contribute to the development of a leadership development programme for trade union General Secretaries across a range of topics and issues.

Some of the key outcomes of the conversations included widespread agreement on the need for change in the manner in which trade unions operate:

- There was an acknowledgement of the value of strategic discussion across trade unions at

leadership level and of the value of sharing resources across unions;

- The need to make organisational change a strategic priority was agreed, as was the need for a sponsor or driving force to give momentum to a change agenda;
- There was consensus that a new vision for the future of trade unions is required in order to inspire increased recruitment and greater involvement by trade union members;
- The critical role for trade unions in a knowledge economy in promoting and shaping the learning agenda and creating learning opportunities for workers was highlighted;
- There was an acceptance of the need to address attitudes to flexibility in workplaces for trade union employees;
- The value of mentoring as a strategic leadership development tool was recognised

The impact and value of the strategic conversations will be assessed in a series of interviews with General Secretaries over the coming months and an evaluation of this Strand of LIFT will be included in the final evaluation report.

### **LIFT – Senior Leadership Development Programme: Strand II**

LIFT Strand II set out to equip a senior cohort of women with the skills, attributes and competencies required for effective leadership and to enable them to take up leadership roles.

The Strand II Training Programme was structured over 14 days, divided into seven workshops and delivered in two-day units, a feature designed to enable participant's transfer of learning into the workplace and facilitate the significant time and resource investment. However, participants were also required to complete some project work and post-module activity. The participants also engaged in quarterly LIFT Network events and the objective is that they will provide support for the development and growth of other women within the movement. A series of study visits is also anticipated in 2007 to complement the Programme learning.

The Strand II Training Programme incorporated seven Modular Workshops structured around the following themes:

#### **1. Leadership and Personal Development**

Nature and Challenge of Leadership and of Women Leaders

Leadership Styles and Effective Mentoring Skills



Rosheen Callender and Catherine Byrne at the launch of the Lift Project

## 2. Strategic Development

Strategic Planning and Governance / Risk Analysis  
Project Planning and Performance Management

## 3. Trade Union Effectiveness

Negotiating Skills  
Power, Influence and Diversity in Decision-Making  
Key strategic challenges ahead for trade unions

## 4. Personal Effectiveness

Assertiveness and Influencing Skills  
Effective Facilitation and Presentation Skills

## 5. Communication

Effective Communications  
Media Skills

## 6. Facilitating Change

Team Building and Optimising Team Performance  
Change and Innovation - Change Management

The IPA – training partner within the LIFT development partnership – co-ordinated the delivery of the LIFT Training Programme.

A Mentoring Programme was developed during the year and as part of the Transnational dimension of LIFT. A Mentoring Workshop was held with members

of LO Denmark, the trade union federation who are engaged in a similar programme and with whom future networks will be developed. This workshop complemented a number of Thematic Seminars and Collaborative Workshops held at Transnational level as part of the WREDIE (Women's Representation and Empowerment – Denmark, Ireland, and Spain) Network and the ETUC.

A comprehensive evaluation of Strand II of the LIFT programme will be completed by December 2007.

## LIFT – NI

Congress secured additional funding from the Equal Partnership Managing Authority, during early 2007, to extend the programme to Northern Ireland. Formal launch of LIFT NI took place at Strangford Lough, March 8, 2007 in conjunction with International Women's Day.

Qualitative and Quantitative surveys were rolled out and initial findings reported to Congress in May 2007. These will provide the basis for a comparative analysis of the strategic challenges facing the movement – North and South. The Senior-women Leadership Development Programme is in progress and two very successful networking events have been held.

# LIFT



leadership initiative:  
females in trade unions

## CONGRESS RESPONDS TO THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF WOMEN!

The LIFT Programme is about supporting better trade union organisation and leadership excellence through research, professional development, mentoring, and networking.

The LIFT Programme aims to provide an open forum, at senior level, for reflection, discussion and engagement on strategic issues that are critical for future sustainability and growth.

LIFT also seeks to equip a senior cohort of women with the skills, attributes and competencies required for effective leadership and to enable them to take up leadership roles.

In addition, LIFT Women's Networks aim to develop supportive networks from which future leadership potential will be identified and developed.

### What participants think

"I learned the value of reflecting and taking stock....."

"I've learned the relationship between listening and good leadership – delegating to make time to listen and talk...."

"Leadership is about taking responsibility; it's about leadership behaviour as opposed to adopting a leadership position....."

"Leadership is having the courage to think outside the box....."

**The LIFT Programme will conclude in December 2007 and the learning within the programme will be mainstreamed by Congress through future leadership development programmes.**



EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND  
Helping develop employment by  
promoting employability, the business  
spirit and equal opportunities and  
equality in human resources

supporting better organisation through leadership excellence



## CHAPTER 3

### GETTING THE BALANCE RIGHT

# Overview

In 2005 and 2006, Congress participated in the National Framework Committee on Work-Life Balance and in National Work Life Balance Day. We used the latter as a platform to push the Congress demand for:

- the introduction of a statutory right to flexible working and,
- the establishment of an infrastructure of care and the provision of improved leave arrangements and supports to enhance Work Life Balance for working parents.

We now have a workforce in excess of two million people. In the last five years alone, the numbers at work have increased by 300,000, driven largely by migrant workers and the improved participation of women in the workforce, particularly those aged 45 plus.

While Congress obviously welcomes this progress, we are also keenly aware of the challenges it brings. These must be tackled if we are to increase and maintain participation at work, provide quality employment, ensure the health and wellbeing of working people and their families and create a more equal society.

In the Trade Union movement we witness the challenges that working people confront on a daily basis, challenges that are eroding their quality of life:

- long hours spent commuting by growing numbers of workers, as they are forced to move huge distances away from their workplace because of the cost of housing;
- the pressures experienced by working parents trying to cope with the costs and availability of appropriate childcare;
- the demands and pressures of work and the long-hours 'flexibility' increasingly expected in some occupations;

For many people, work has grown to dominate their lives and they are reaching breaking point as they attempt to juggle the demands of the workplace with home. Exhaustion and stress have become an inescapable aspect of working life. Thus, working people need to see a major shift in the way work is organised.

In establishing the case for Work Life Balance policies it is important to acknowledge that not only can they be used to improve quality of life but also to tackle some persistent problems that urgently need to be addressed. For example:

- the hundreds of thousands of jobs in our economy that are poorly paid and offer little prospect of advancement;
- the skills' challenge facing over a half a million people in work today with low education attainment, which limits their potential to access better work opportunities;
- the 700,000 workers with children of pre-school and/or school going age, where both parents are working and lone parent families, struggling to juggle work and caring responsibilities.

The inflexibility of many employments is limiting the potential of workers and fuelling inequality. The creation of a fairer society and continued economic achievement requires us to tackle the problems that hinder the effective participation and advancement of working people.

However, the biggest obstacle confronting workers who want to avail of opportunities to undertake training or second chance education is the absence of paid leave arrangements and inflexible work patterns.

And many mothers returning to work after the birth of a child find that flexible work is often not available at the equivalent level to an existing job. The tendency is for them to take work that fits with the demands of their lives, thus undermining salary and career progression and often ending up in jobs for which they are overqualified.

Clearly, Work Life Balance is relevant to many people in the workforce at various stages of their working life and should be available to all. The introduction of well thought-out and effective Work Life Balance policies can give workers greater control over their working lives. It is relevant to those who are spending hours commuting, or for others who want to take advantage of further learning opportunities, it can facilitate religious observances in a more diverse society or enable migrant workers visit families in their home countries. It can also help increase participation in social, leisure and political activities and contribute towards building vibrant communities and the social capital that supports community activity.

However, Ireland sits at the wrong end of almost every comparative chart or graph, in relation to the policies and measures that make Work Life Balance possible (see report below). Yet, all the social partners have recognised and acknowledged that Work Life Balance is not only desirable, but also very necessary.

Research has shown that more flexible approaches to work and better Work Life Balance is becoming as important to many workers as improvements in pay. While much valuable work has been undertaken through the National Framework Committee, Government policy and employer approaches are failing to keep up with the needs of people who want work reorganised to improve their lives.

Congress believes real progress will only come about when flexible working becomes an entitlement enshrined in law. This would mean workers would have the right to at least one flexible working option, which the employer would be legally-bound to consider and could only refuse by where he/she can provide a compelling business case.

On the issue of childcare provision and care-related leaves, it should be noted that Ireland currently has one of the lowest levels of publicly funded childcare, and the cost of private childcare as a proportion of average earnings is among the highest in the EU.

The State has to intervene to support working parents by providing an infrastructure of care and improving provisions for maternity leave, introducing paid paternity leave, and a payment similar to maternity benefit to enable working parents to take advantage of the parental leave arrangements won by the Trade Union movement.

Every worker should be entitled to enjoy improved quality of life. Congress believes that Work Life Balance concerns must become central to the organisation of work, leading to the development of a new working culture for all.

## Getting the Balance Right

***The following derives from analysis carried out by Congress, in 2006, into the range of work-life balance arrangements and flexible working policies across the pre-accession EU 15. In particular, this work focuses on how Ireland compares, in terms of official policy and workplace practice.***

## How Ireland Fares

Across the EU 15 there exist many different work-life balance arrangements. These differ in terms of what they emphasise, such as whether leave periods following childbirth should be shared between parents and how far the State should go in facilitating gender equality in the family. They also differ in terms of how they are financed and whether leave is paid.

There are markedly different childcare arrangements across the EU 15, reflecting the cultural, familial, economic, historical and societal norms of the individual countries. There are also differences in how far countries are willing to go towards flexible working, with some countries legislating in this area, others encouraging employers to provide the opportunity for different hours and others adopting a laissez faire attitude.

In general terms, it is possible to segment the general EU 15 work-life balance models into: the Liberal Model, the modified Christian Democrat model, the Southern Model and the Nordic Model.

The Liberal Model is what pertains in Ireland and the UK and emphasises individual responsibility and agreements between employers and employees. Although containing legislative rights to leave and benefits, it is mostly left to parents themselves and the market to provide necessities such as childcare.

The Southern model - loosely the system that prevails in Italy, Spain, Greece and to a lesser extent Portugal - emphasises the family and extended family as carer in the first years of life. In work-life balance terms there tends to be a very large trade-off for women between having a baby and working, and this has been identified as one of the major factors in the falling birth rates observed in these countries.

In Germany, Austria and Luxemburg (modified Christian Democrat model) the level of support for families and familial work-life balance tends to be greater than that observed in the liberal and southern models. Maternity leave is among the highest in Europe. They combine high rates of public expenditure on childcare for children over the age of three, with the idea that the mother should



look after the child exclusively for the first years of its life. This model has, however, been undergoing some modifications in recent years. It tends to place more emphasis on tax credits for children than does the Nordic model, for example, which does not differentiate on the basis of family size, in terms of taxation.

The Netherlands is similar to the Christian Democratic countries in many ways, although it has seen a whole host of new initiatives in every area, from work-life balance to childcare, over the last few years. The primary difference between the Netherlands and Central European countries lies in the number of mothers with part-time jobs (it has been dubbed the 'part-time country'). It still tends to put little direct emphasis on childcare, however, and has one of the lowest rates of coverage for those under three years.

The Nordic model is a universalist, social democratic system observed in Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Iceland, and, to an extent, in France and Belgium as well. This model tends to emphasise high levels of public expenditure on childcare and paid leave, while also promoting high levels of gender equity. Family life and work are quite compatible due to high levels of public support. Because gender equity is the basis of the Northern system, it puts a huge emphasis upon childcare to ensure that having children does not become an obstacle or an impediment to women working – almost the mirror image of what pertains in Ireland, where women (and families) are literally penalised for having a child. The level of state support and the level of coverage is high in all of the Scandinavian countries. Belgium and France are similar to the Nordic countries in

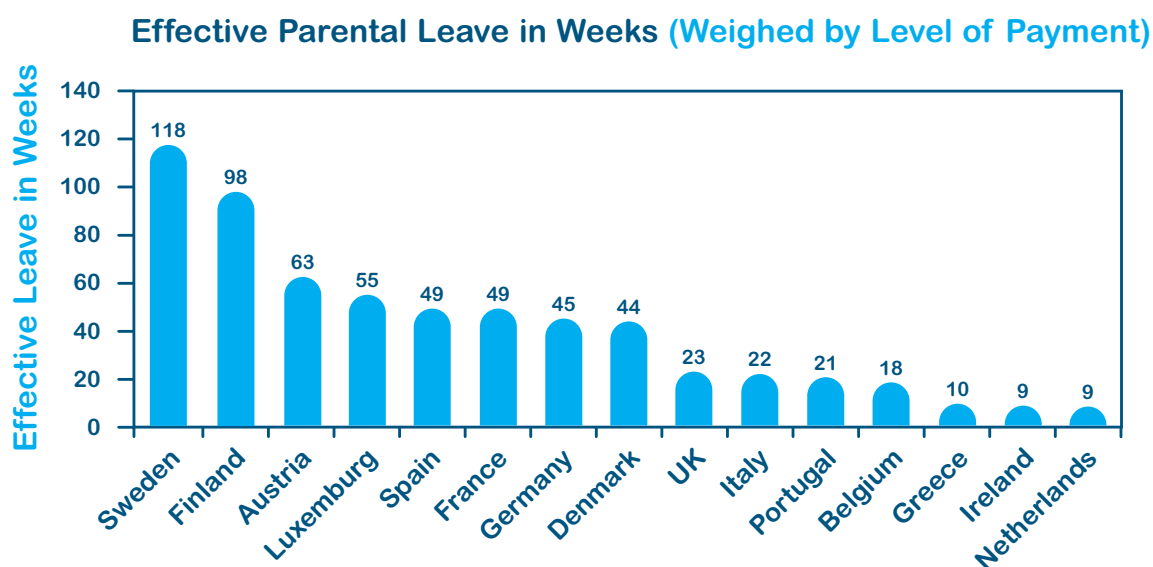
many respects, particularly when it comes to the length of leave and childcare placement rates.

### Leave Schemes

Countries tend to be similar when it comes to maternity leave, but differ somewhat when it comes to issues such as paternity leave and general parental leave. The biggest differences are in relation to whether the leave is paid and its duration. There are also differences between effective leave (the real leave period as weighted by the level of payment) and the leave as legislated.

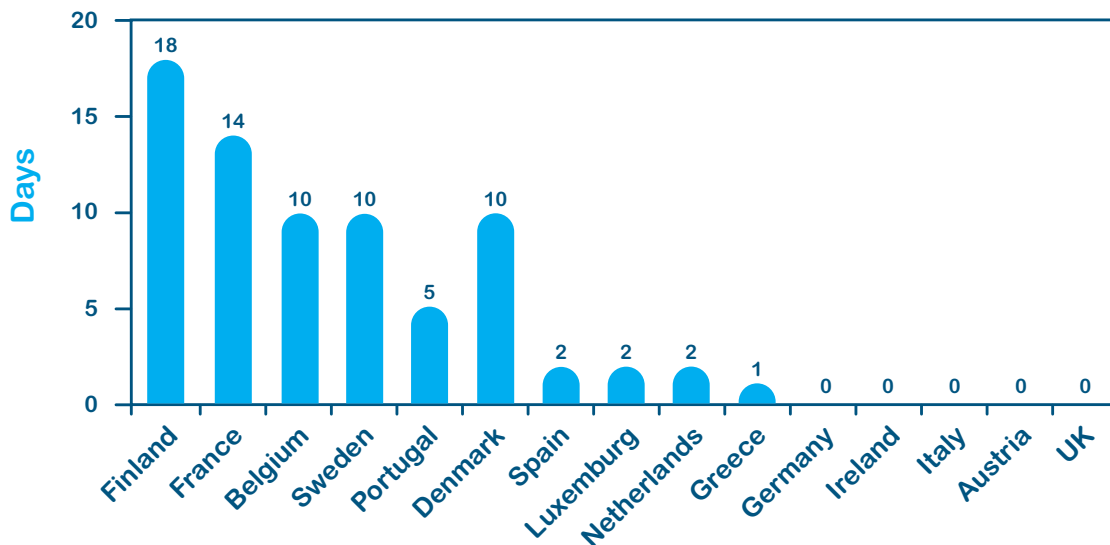
In many countries parental leave is an individual right that cannot be transferred between parents, with Denmark, Germany, Spain, France and Finland being the only countries that do not have a set period of leave that is reserved only for fathers. When it comes to legislative leave length Ireland occupies the lower rungs of the EU, but is not a major outlier and has the longest length for paid maternity leave in Europe at 26 weeks. However, according to the Mercer consulting group Ireland has the lowest levels of statutory maternity benefit in Europe. Their 2006 report revealed that, in real terms, women in Ireland and the UK get less than many Eastern European countries.

When it comes to parental leave, legislation can be deceptive, as it says nothing about either take up or payments. When effective parental leave is taken into account, Ireland becomes an outlier with leave of only 9 weeks, largely because it is unpaid. Greece, Spain, the Netherlands and the UK are the only other countries not to provide some form of paid parental leave.



Source: *Reconciliation of work and private life: A comparative review of thirty European countries (EC, Sept 2005)*

## Paternity Leave



Ireland is also a laggard when it comes to paternity leave, which is non-existent, although we are not alone in the EU on this, but in a clear minority.

### Childcare

In terms of childcare provision there is a divergence in many EU countries between the provision for children under the age of three and for those between the ages of three and when they begin school. This division can have an impact upon the career prospects of women in particular, with countries that have low provision of childcare below the age of three generally having lower rates of female workforce participation.

The Barcelona Targets stipulate that the targeted childcare provision rate throughout the EU15 should be a 33 percent coverage rate for children under the age of three and a 90 percent coverage rate for children over three. Childcare policy is quite a contentious issue in Ireland at the moment, and we do not compare well with anywhere else in Europe.

Historically, policy has been generally reluctant to intervene in the whole area of the family, but this began to change somewhat in the 1990's. Child benefit was steadily increased along with benefits for carers of the elderly. There were also measures to increase work-life balance and increase the supply of childcare places. While child benefit is quite generous in comparative terms, the country remains out of step with the rest of Europe in its failure to tie such benefits to the cost of childcare (from supporting the direct to supporting the indirect costs of childcare).

Childcare provisions in Ireland generally encompass childminders, private crèches and paid/unpaid relatives. There is a 'Capital Grant Scheme' that allows community or not-for-profit groups that help with the building or upgrading of childcare facilities a grant of up to 100 percent. Private sector providers can get grants of up to 65 percent of costs if they do something similar. There is also a 'Staffing Grant Scheme' that contributes to the cost of staff in not-for-profit/community facilities.

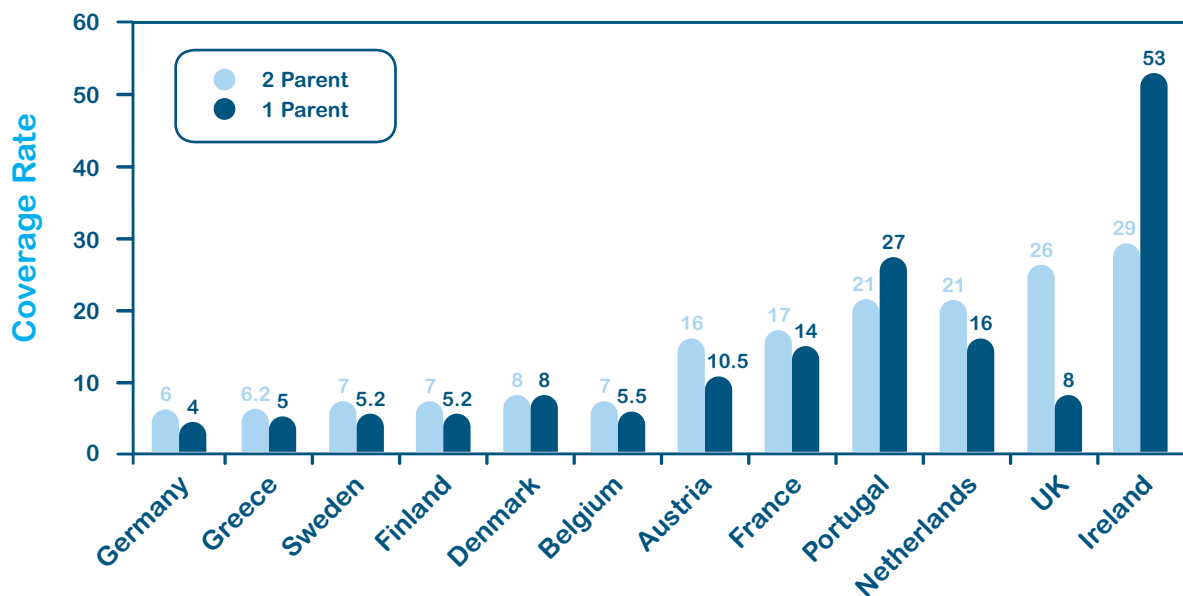
On most childcare indicators, with the exception of cash benefits, Ireland comes last in Europe. Costs in particular are very high, as the OECD chart on page 36 shows. It demonstrates the impact of childcare costs upon employment and work-life balance decisions for one and two-parent families across 12 European countries.

According to the National Economic and Social Council (NESC), Ireland pays twice as much for childcare as does the rest of Europe. This tends to impact most upon disadvantaged families. It seems that the biggest contributor to the costs is the fact that the Government is reluctant to subsidise childcare to the extent that other European governments do, and that market costs of childcare in themselves are in line with the European average.

In Ireland having a child below 15 years reduces mother's employment by 20 percent, while in Belgium, Denmark and Portugal it increases it by 5 percent.

The table on page 36 demonstrates how the EU 15 stack up in relation to one another in the degree of their support for the dual earner model, child care

### % of Family Income Devoted to Childcare Costs



Source: OECD: Source: Immervoll and Barber (2005) results related to 2002.

Index of support for dual earner model		Index of support for Child Care		Index of Birth Leaves		Index of Cash and Tax Benefits	
Denmark	88.45	Denmark	91.06	France	80.84	Luxembourg	80.3
Sweden	78.86	Sweden	69.09	Finland	78.10	Austria	67.1
Finland	56.69	Finland	46.34	Portugal	73.87	Belgium	64.0
France	51.3	France	45.50	Netherlands	70.96	Germany	50.6
Belgium	48.1	Italy	37.56	Austria	66.53	Ireland	47.6
Luxembourg	43.09	Belgium	36.94	Sweden	63.73	Greece	47.2
Germany	39.76	Luxembourg	36.67	Spain	61.09	UK	43.3
Austria	36.5	Austria	33.38	Luxembourg	60.95	France	36.6
Italy	35.66	Germany	30.01	Italy	56.93	Finland	34.0
Netherlands	34.63	Netherlands	27.97	Germany	49.93	Netherlands	30.3
UK	33.63	UK	24.31	Belgium	49.78	Italy	28.4
Portugal	23.12	Portugal	22.13	Denmark	43.87	Sweden	27.8
Greece	19.47	Spain	16.39	Ireland	31.17	Denmark	26.0
Spain	18.37	Greece	14.03	UK	16.67	Portugal	25.5
Ireland	5.64	Ireland	6.84	Greece	12.72	Spain	16.8

Source: The Rationale of Motherhood Choices: Influence of Employment Conditions and Public Policies (MOCHO) project.

provision, length of leave and in the amount of cash and tax benefits that are provided to parents. The childcare indicator encompasses the coverage rate (proportion of children covered, opening hours, public share in the costs, and the child/staff ratio) and the costs of childcare taking public spending into account, especially spending on pre-school children (3-6 years).

As expected, the Nordic countries rank high when it comes to support for the dual earner model (gender equality indicator) and provision of childcare, but drop ranks when it comes to leave length and cash and tax benefits. This is because they tend to

support families by means of public services more than anything else. Day care coverage and state subsidies for day care are very high. France and Belgium, whose systems are close to the Nordic ones, rank quite high in every category. France puts a good degree of emphasis on gender equality, public provision of childcare and tops the list when it comes to birth leave. It drops when it comes to tax and cash benefits due to the lack of cash benefits for the first child in the family.

Belgium scores high in every category except for Birth Leave. Both France and Belgium tend to put a little more emphasis on the desire of some mothers



to stay at home, than the Nordic countries. Germany and Austria occupy the broad middle, largely because they tend to support the idea of women dropping out of the labour market for a considerable length of time on childbirth. Their policies thus emphasise long parental leaves but only partly support women who wish to combine family and working responsibilities. The Netherlands tends to put less emphasis on childcare due to the prevalence of part-time work among women.

Southern European countries - Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal - tend to occupy the lower ranks, with the exception of Italy, which scores high on the childcare indicator. This is largely because although Italian childcare for children below the age of three is poor, for pre-schoolers it has one of the best coverage rates in Europe.

Ireland does poorly in every ranking with the exception of tax and cash benefits, where we do moderately well. The southern European tax and benefit system is also unique in being tied to family income. As income increases they give lower amounts to the families. Spain is worst in this regard, with a fixed income level above which the family is not entitled to benefits that is very low and discourages female employment (as they might lose the benefit).

Policy in Ireland and Britain does not emphasise the desire of some women to work and have children at the same time, with each birth usually coinciding with an exit from the labour market. They do tend to give more support to women with children in the form of cash and tax benefits, though, with the UK having a very generous system of child and working tax credits. Ireland places more emphasis on cash benefits for lone and two-parent families.

Yet even in comparison to the UK and the southern countries, Ireland is an outlier. Ireland comes last, by quite a large distance, in two of the fields – our support for the dual earner model and childcare. It is quite difficult for a woman to combine work and family in Ireland, as has already been indicated by our comparison of childcare costs. Although our system of child benefits tends to be good in comparison to the other European countries it is undermined by our low scores in everything else.

A National Economic and Social Council report in 2005 showed that the while support given to lone parents on welfare was one of the best in Europe, for working lone parents it was worst because of the lack of assistance when it came to childcare. The high cost of childcare is simply not offset by the tax allowances and benefits. Much childminding is of an uneven, random quality while early childhood is given very little emphasis when it comes to spending.

## Flexible working arrangements

There is no statutory right to flexible working in Ireland – such arrangements that exist are dependent on the individual employer. A March 2006 Central Statistics Office Quarterly National Household Survey, found that some 80 percent of the workforce had no discretion over start and finish times to the working day. In fact, only 2 percent enjoyed this luxury, with a further 18 percent availing of a range of flexible working provisions (EU Average = 25%). The CSO survey covered Quarter 2, 2004.

The right to flexible working exists in five European countries – Austria, Finland, Portugal, Germany and Greece, while the right to request flexible work exists in the Netherlands and the UK. The right applies only to parents and is unconditional. In the five countries where flexible work is a right it applies despite how good or bad the business may be doing financially. In the UK workers with caring responsibilities may request flexibility while in the Netherlands most employees have this right. The Dutch system involves a policy whereby hours worked can be saved, along with 12 percent of the annual wage, which can be used for three years of leave. In Germany employees can bargain with the employer for part-time work with every employee in a firm that has at least 15 workers enjoying this right, so long as they have been working there for six months. When given part-time work the employee has no right to return to working full-time, however. Parents are allowed to work part-time under 30 hours per week, for two years after the child is born.

In Portugal parents with children below the age of 12 are entitled to part-time work and, if that is not possible, some form of flexible working hours. In Finland all parents with children in their second year or younger are entitled to this, while in Austria there exists a flexible working right for parents but this can be very restrictive. In Austria a parent can work part time until the child's 7th birthday, after which they can return to full time work. It is limited to companies with more than 20 staff and the employee must have been working for the company for three years.

Belgium has a career break system where people who decide that they want to stop working, or work less to care for a relative or even to pursue education, are allowed to take the time off when they wish, with Government compensation. In a five year period it is permissible to take a break of one fifth of time worked.

## Quality Childcare

### Overview

Despite progress in improving accessibility to early education and childcare policies, Ireland continues to trail behind its EU counterparts, particularly in terms of accessibility and affordability of childcare. Initiatives to date have focused on improved co-ordination, (e.g. County Childcare Committees), quality improvements and increasing supply. The issue of cost and affordability remain serious obstacles to women's participation in the labour force. Our childcare costs are now amongst the highest in Europe and parents receive the lowest level of support in meeting these costs (see Section 1). Most EU countries now provide free universal access to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) services for children aged three to six. A growing number of EU countries now offer paid, job protected maternity/parental leave of at least one year to facilitate parents in caring for their child during the first year of life. The majority of EU countries provide considerable subsidies to assist parents in meeting additional childcare costs. In Sweden and Denmark, parents pay a maximum of 20 percent and 33 percent of costs respectively. Ireland, despite its relatively high participation rates, continues to lag behind most of Europe when it comes to supporting parents with childcare costs. This acts as a major barrier to gender equality as high costs lead to frequent withdrawals from the labour market which are detrimental to a woman's career progression and earnings potential.

The availability, affordability and quality of childcare continue to be key issues for working families trying to balance work and family lives. In 2005, Congress participated in the group set up under **Sustaining Progress** to examine this key issue. Subsequently, a report was agreed – **Quality Childcare from a Social Partnership Perspective** – which set out a number of positive recommendations on the provision of affordable, high-quality care. These included:

- Treating childcare as part of our essential infrastructure;
- Adopting a 10 year strategic plan with clear targets, including a target for 100,000 additional childcare places by 2016 (for both pre-school and school age children);
- Investment to enhance supply with a new programme to follow the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (ECOP);
- Measures to support a diverse range of childcare options, including formal childcare places (crèche) childminding and after-school activities;
- A voucher system to assist working parents with affordability;

- Initiatives to improve quality and increase the proportion of childcare provided through the formal economy;
- Recommendations on training and career progression in the childcare sector – with recognition of prior learning for those already working in the sector;
- Measures to support companies involved in childcare initiatives
- Continuing to develop the role of the City/County Childcare Committees;

In October, 2005 the Congress pre-Budget submission called on Government to take urgent action to address problem by:

- Introduce taxation and direct subsidy measures to incrementally subsidise childcare costs for parents in employment, education or training;
- Increase investment in capital allowances and staffing grants to develop the supply of childcare places towards a target of an additional 15,000 places per year;
- Examine the Benefit-in-Kind structure to remove barriers that exist or discourage employer's contribution to childcare costs - childcare supports provided by employers should not be classified as Benefit-in-Kind for taxation and PRSI purposes.

In December 2005 the government announced a new 5 year Childcare Strategy, in the Budget. It included:

- Supply side measures to increase the number of childcare places, including an exemption from income tax, PRSI and levies on income from childcare up to €10,000 per year;
- Extension of maternity leave from March 2006, giving mothers of newborn children an additional four weeks paid leave, extending the duration of such leave to 22 weeks. This was followed with a further four weeks of paid leave in 2007.
- A new annual childcare supplement for all children under the age of six years, of €1,000, available to all parents regardless of their labour force status.

Obviously, the Budget fell far short of our demands and the needs of working parent. Subsequently, Congress pointed out to Government that its approach was flawed and that the market had not and could not deliver on this most crucial of issues. We called for the creation of a national care infrastructure, with caring in all its manifestations treated as a 'public good', such as Education. This formed part of our agenda going into the **Towards 2016** talks. These resulted in commitments to:

1. Create 50,000 new childcare places;
2. Develop National Childcare Training;
3. Target the early childhood education needs of disadvantaged children;
4. Meet the care and education needs of disadvantaged children in an integrated manner;
5. Standardise and improve inspections;
6. Support and encourage school facilities being made available for childcare provision as a key addition to the utilisation, development and support of local community facilities.

Our 2006 pre-Budget submission continued to emphasise the necessity for affordable, accessible, quality care. In addition, in recognition of the considerable burden on low income families, which often prove to be a barrier to labour force participation (particularly for women and lone parents), Congress proposed the introduction of an income disregard for the cost of childcare for FIS, which is the existing mechanism for supporting low paid families at work.

Congress continues to be represented on many of the city and county childcare committees. Vivienne Rhatigan continues to represent us on the National Childcare Committee.



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## CHAPTER 1

# FUTURE FUNDING AND ORGANISATION

# Background

For several years Congress has experienced a precarious financial position which has seen its consolidated finances fluctuate annually from deficits to modest surpluses. At best, Congress operates on a break-even basis, a position which is unsustainable in the long-term.

The financial problems peaked in 2003/4 when actuarial reviews of the staff superannuation schemes highlighted a significant funding deficit in the region of €2 million. Proposals were developed by the Executive Council to address the situation which resulted in a series of cost-saving measures and prevented a further worsening of Congress' finances. However, this action was not without consequences and impacted on the capacity of the Secretariat to develop and deliver services and activities. An example of this is the impact which the non-replacement of the senior member of staff with responsibility for Education & Training has had on a vital aspect of Congress' activities, at a time when improved funding provision is available to develop union-led learning initiatives.

In addition, the industrial relations portfolio, which was being supported on a dual function basis by the Northern Ireland Officer, has reverted back to the General Secretary following a review of the Northern Ireland Office and the re-assignment of the Assistant General Secretary on a whole time basis to the position of Northern Ireland Officer.

Congress now has no senior official with direct responsibility for the area of industrial relations. It is the view of the Executive Council that this is the essential core part of the business of Congress.

The precarious nature of the finances of Congress is emphasised by the fact that it is virtually incapable of mounting campaigns from its own resources. This was the case with the organisation of the demonstrations on labour standards and Irish Ferries last year, when an appeal had to be made to affiliated Unions for grants to cover the expense involved.

## Consideration by the General Purposes Committee and Executive Council

The General Purposes Committee reviewed this situation in 2006 and, in an effort to examine the options open to Congress, set up a small Finance & Planning Group to conduct a detailed examination of the matter and come forward with proposals for consideration by the Executive Council. The Finance & Planning Group concluded that:

- a) the current situation cannot be allowed to continue as it will erode the capacity of Congress to make a real impact in society, with consequences for the movement as a whole and every individual affiliate;
- b) the problem facing Congress is not simply a financial one which can be corrected by further cutting down on expenditure as that leads, inevitably, to a run-down of the organisation;
- c) Congress finances need to be put on a footing which will enable it to undertake the tasks which the movement expects it to carry out and this requires a substantial increase in its financial resources;
- d) in turn, there is only one source of additional financial resources available to Congress for its mainstream activities – namely the affiliated trade unions.

## Proposal Overview

The overview of the Financial Position which emerged from this examination was that Congress should seek to produce a financial position which would enable the following to be effected:

- 1. the appointment of an Assistant General Secretary in Head Office with responsibility for Industrial Relations;
- 2. the provision of additional resources to enable the restoration and improvement of services;
- 3. the allocation of resources to fund Congress-led campaigning which will support organising and recruitment initiatives;



4. the re-affiliation of Congress to the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC);
5. provision for a contingency fund to enable Congress to meet problems as they arise.

The GPC Finance & Planning Group identified that this would require a minimum increase in the income of Congress of €500,000 per annum.

### Implications for Affiliation Fees

The Finance & Planning Group developed a number of alternative options based on increases in the affiliation fees to achieve the €500,000 minimum funding requirement, which were considered by the Executive Council at its meeting on December 12, 2006.

The pros and cons of the various options were discussed and it was agreed that the most workable proposal was a Hybrid Structure for future affiliation fees based on three factors:

- (a) an amount per member (i.e. the present system); plus
- (b) an amount per BDC delegate which Unions are entitled to send; plus
- (c) a flat amount per union.

The Executive Council viewed the attractions of this system as:

- the maintenance of a strong connection between membership and affiliation fees, the larger the union the larger the affiliation fees;
- the affiliation fee of every union increases;
- While the percentage increase in affiliation fees in the case of the smaller unions is higher than that of the larger unions, the cash increases for the larger unions are much greater than the cash increases for the smaller unions.

The Executive Council recognised that the proposal could impact adversely on some small unions and that provision should be made to give discretion to the Executive Council to waive the increase if necessary.

### Recommendation of Executive Council

The proposed funding structure is designed to produce a once-off 'step' increase in affiliation fees and to put Congress on a sound financial footing to enable it to carry out its functions effectively. The Executive Council recognised that the increases produced by the proposal are not insubstantial. However, it believes that it is not possible to meet the financial requirements of Congress if increases of this sort cannot be met by the affiliated Trade Unions. The Executive Council recommended the introduction of the new Hybrid funding system and requested the secretariat to arrange a consultation process with affiliated unions to establish support for the proposal.

The consultation process took place between January and April 2007, prior to a motion being developed by the Executive for BDC. The proposed change requires an amendment to the Constitution of Congress to set the affiliation fees under the new structure for 2008 and 2009. This change will require a two-thirds majority.

## Organisational Review

A report was commissioned on behalf of the Executive Council to deliver on a commitment given to affiliated unions in Northern Ireland, to review the effectiveness of the reorganisation of Congress, implemented in 2004. At that time, the Assistant General Secretary with responsibility for Northern Ireland, had taken over responsibility for industrial relations in Dublin, as part of series of measures to deal with Congress' financial position.

The review of the Northern Ireland operations was conducted by Mr. Brian Gormley, of Justice Associates. The terms of reference set-out by the Executive Council were:

To review the functioning and effectiveness of Congress in Northern Ireland having particular regard to the impact on the NI Office of the changes implemented since the last review of 2000, the overall restructuring of Congress implemented in 2004 and the most recently agreed Strategic Plan for the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

To consult with and seek the opinion of the Officers of Congress, individual affiliates in Northern Ireland, Trades Councils, Congress NI members and staff (and their representatives if requested) at the Northern Ireland Office.

To report back to the General Purposes Committee and recommend measures to ensure the effective functioning of the Northern Ireland operations of Congress. To include in the report comments on the likely impact of these recommendations on the functioning of Congress on the island.

The Report was concluded in March 2006. A fundamental conclusion of the review was that: "Congress in Northern Ireland must re-affirm and re-establish its core purpose as the trade union centre for the region. That core purpose, from which all else flows, is to act as the voice of the united trade union movement speaking to the people and government of Northern Ireland."

Several key recommendations were made dealing with a range of areas including the financial authority and responsibility within the Northern Ireland

operations, the structure and ways of working of the Northern Ireland Committee and the staffing, operational areas and leadership.

The General Purposes Committee and Executive Council considered the report in April 2006. An immediate outcome was the re-assignment of the Congress Assistant General Secretary, Peter Bunting, to full-time responsibilities in the Northern Ireland Office. The General Secretary, David Begg, assumed direct responsibility for industrial relations work in the Republic. This was followed by a restructuring of

the Belfast Office and the establishment of the new position of Communications and Policy Officer, which was filled by John O'Farrell, and the reappointment of a Union Services Officer with responsibility for Equality and Social Affairs. Pauline Buchanan was recruited to this role. An additional administrative post was also created to which Ms. Noreen Moore was appointed in September 2006.

The Northern Ireland Committee is continuing to address the recommendations made in the Gormley Report.



Congress Treasurer and SIPTU General Secretary Joe O'Flynn

## Overview

Unions are seen as doing a good job by members – and by society generally. There are strong levels of commitment and loyalty towards unions by the membership and, most importantly, they are seen to deliver.

## Attitudes towards unions

### Research Project

An extensive research programme was undertaken over 2006-2007 to establish the factors that influence the participation and engagement of workers in trade unions and to investigate attitudes towards unions across the island. The research, commissioned under the auspices of the LIFT Project, provides a tremendous insight into the perceptions of workers towards unions; members and non-members alike. It is a valuable tool to assist unions understand and improve relations with and the engagement of existing members. It also provides an important insight into the factors that would motivate workers outside of the trade union movement to consider joining.

A nationally representative sample of 500 union members and 300 non-union members were interviewed in the Republic of Ireland, along with

357 workers comprised of 249 union members and 108 non-union members in Northern Ireland. These samples were representative of trade union members and non-members in terms of gender, age, region and social class. The Republic of Ireland research took place in March 2006 and the Northern Ireland sample in March 2007.

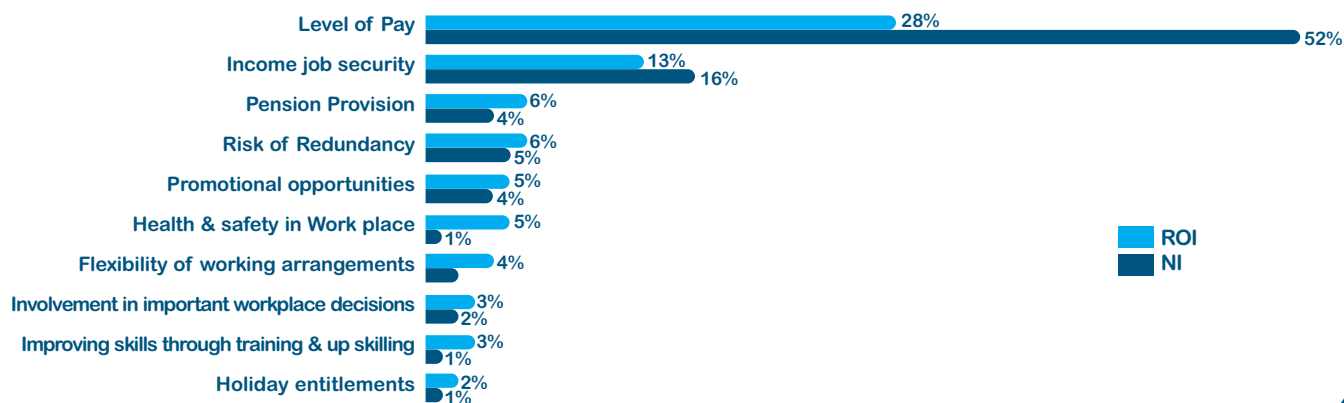
### The Main Concerns of Working People

The research set-out to establish the key issues for working people in relation to their jobs and life outside of work. All workers, union and non-union, were asked to identify the aspect of their job that they were most concerned about. In both Northern Ireland and the Republic, the answer to the question about work-related issues was the same: Pay!

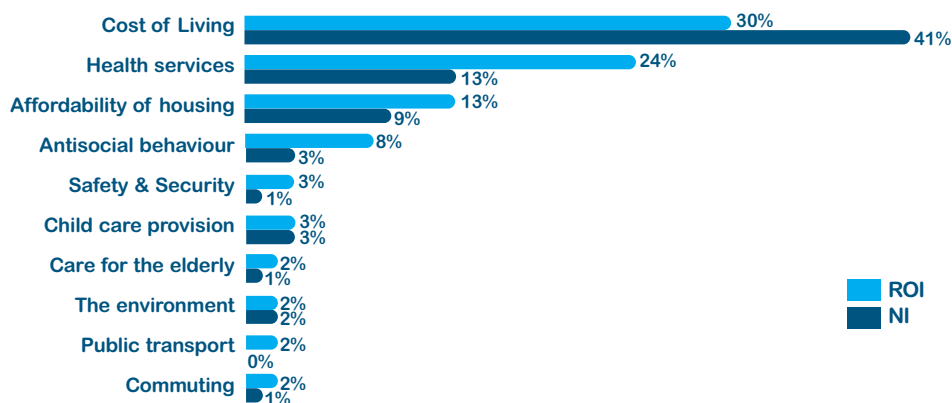
The responses showed that 28 percent of people in ROI stated that their level of pay was the number one issue, whilst a staggering 52 percent of all workers in NI have an issue about pay levels. (Fig 1).

In relation to life outside of work, people were most exercised about the cost of living (30 percent ROI / 41 percent NI). The health service was a major issue for almost a quarter of those surveyed in the Republic, with affordability of housing the issue that achieved the next highest ranking out of the 'life' concerns. (Fig 2).

**Fig. 1 The main job-related concerns for workers**

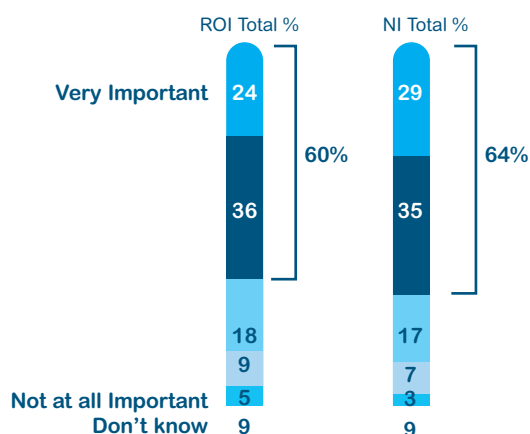


**Fig. 2 The main concerns for workers outside of work**





**Fig.3 Importance of Trade Unions' Role (all respondents)**



### Attitudes to Trade Unions

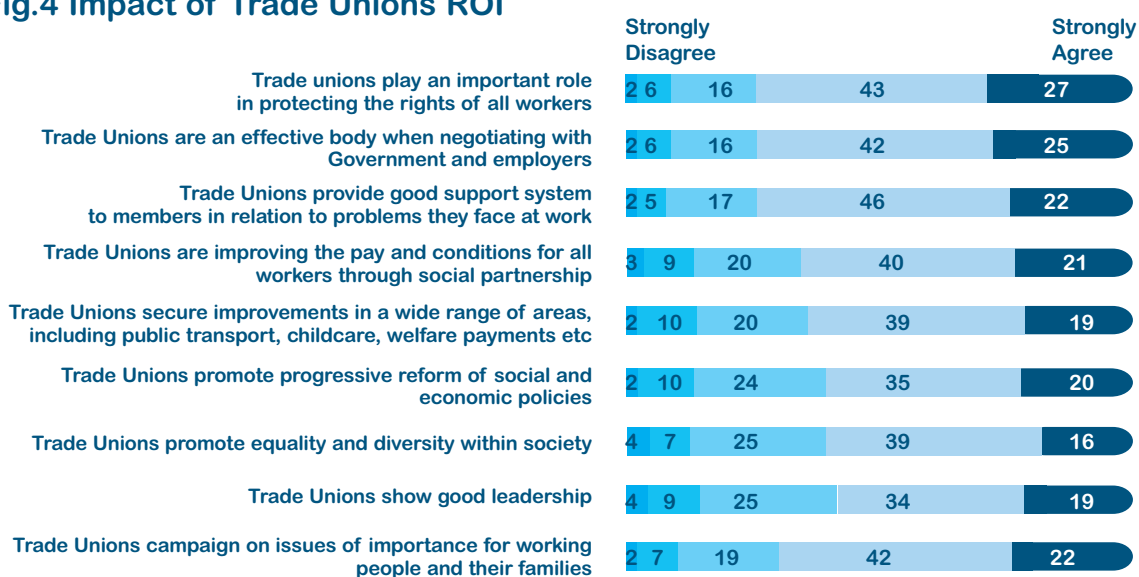
All respondents were asked to assess the importance of the role played by Trade Unions. A massive endorsement was received from workers island-wide, with 60 percent in the Republic and 64 percent in Northern Ireland stating that unions play an important to 'very important' role in Ireland today. (Fig 3).

In the Republic, seven out of ten people at work believe that trade unions play an important role in protecting the rights of all workers and a similar level agree that unions are effective at negotiating with government and employers. Two-thirds support the view that unions provide good support to members in relation to the problems they face at work and over 60 percent of workers believe that unions are

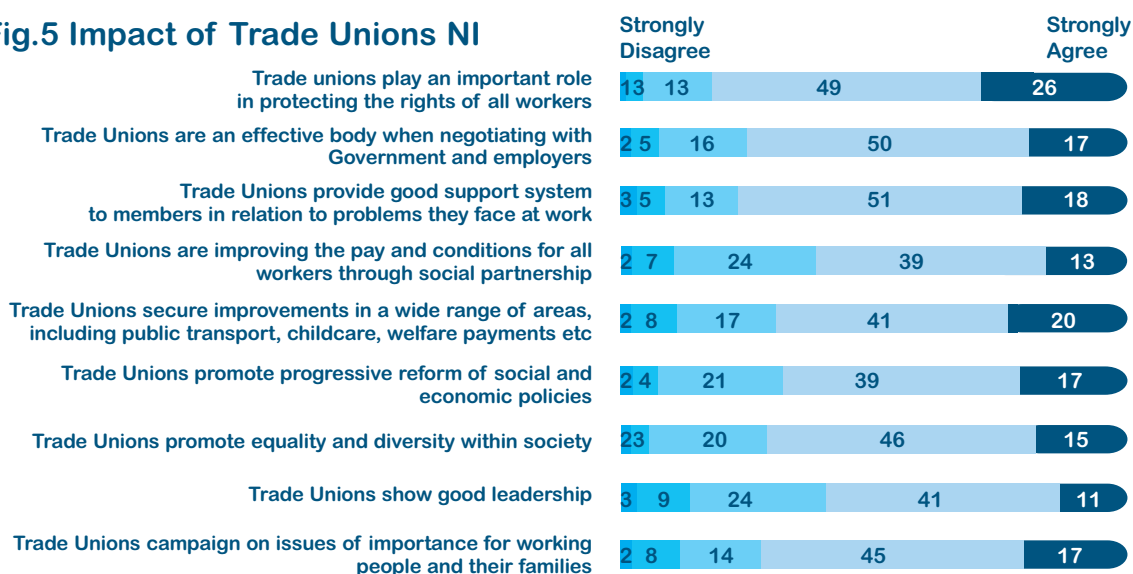
improving the pay and conditions of **all** working people through social partnership. (Fig 4).

The attitude towards the role of unions in protecting the rights of all workers was even stronger in Northern Ireland, where 75 percent of all employees expressed the view that unions played an important role. Two-thirds also believe that unions are effective in NI when negotiating with Government and employers and that they provide good support systems to their members in relation to the problems they face at work. Importantly, 52 percent believe that the trade union movement plays an important role in promoting peace and reconciliation in the North. (Fig 5, next page).

**Fig.4 Impact of Trade Unions ROI**



**Fig.5 Impact of Trade Unions NI**



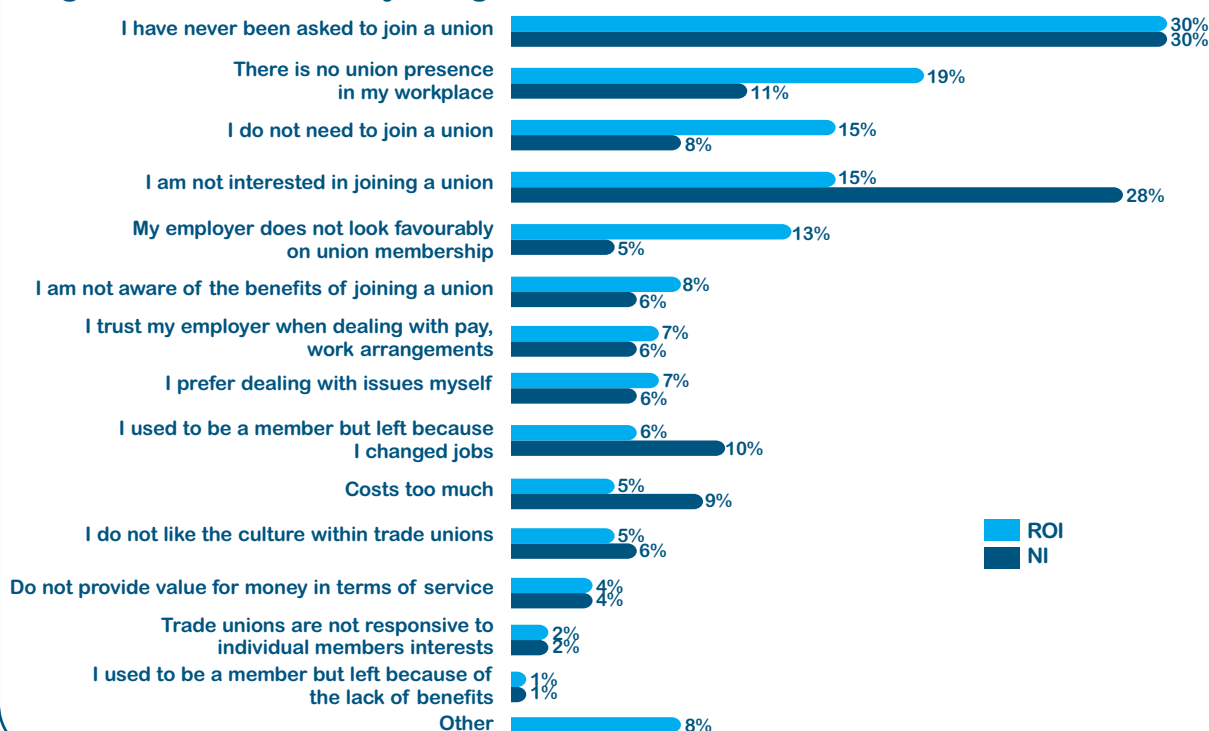
### Non-Union Workers - Rationale for Not Joining

The research investigated the attitudes of workers not currently in a union towards joining. When asked to give the reasons why they were not a member of a union, almost one-third of respondents in both Northern Ireland and the Republic stated that they had never been asked. Close to one-fifth in both areas declared that there was no union presence where they worked. A similar proportion of workers North and South – one-third – were either not interested or did not see a need to be in a union.

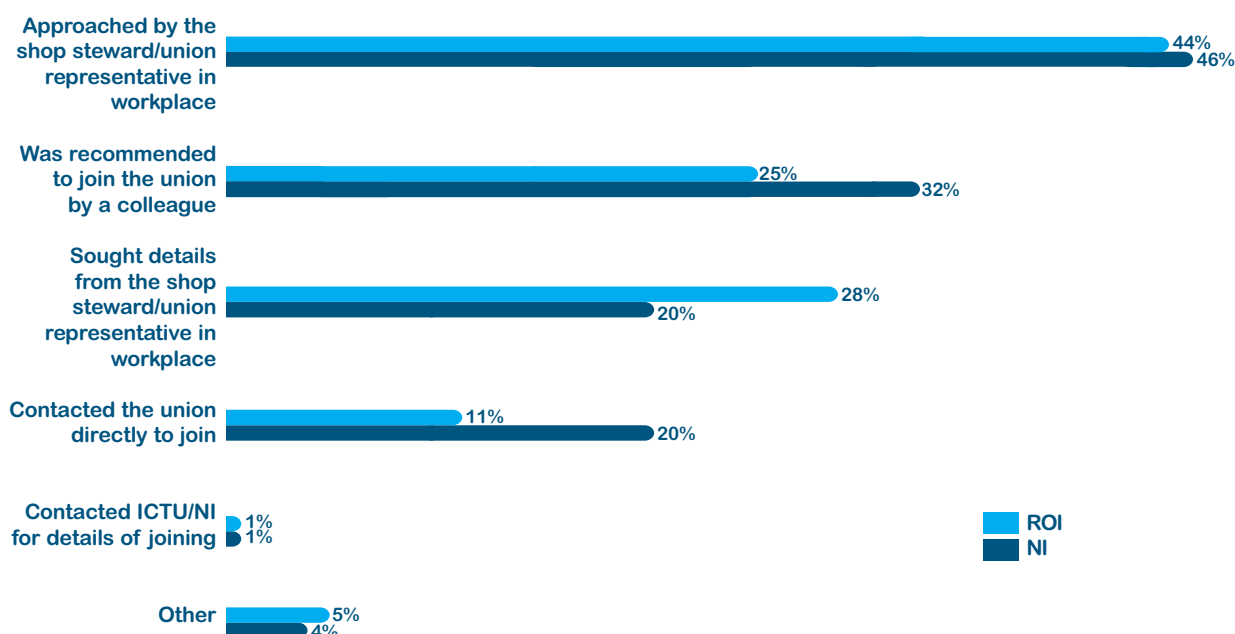
The question was asked if consideration had ever been given to joining a union. Some 27 percent of the Republic of Ireland employees and 31 percent of those in Northern Ireland **had** thought about joining-up. **If realised, this would equate to about 370,000 additional members for trade union organisations.**

These workers were also asked if they believed that being a member of a union might be of benefit to them. In the Republic, 37 percent felt that it would, and 27 percent of those in Northern Ireland believed the same. The main reasons that it would be beneficial were cited as pay, contractual issues and handling grievances with employers. (Fig 6).

**Fig.6 Rationale for not joining union**



**Fig.7 Joining a union (Union members)**



### Considering Joining

Looking at what **would** encourage workers to join a Union; in Northern Ireland improved levels of pay (49 percent) and helping to provide job security (39 percent) were key triggers along with the protection of existing terms and conditions and having access to a source of information and advice on work-related issues. Similarly in the Republic, pay (35 percent) and job security (31 percent), were the top two issues, followed by improvements to existing working conditions and protection of those already in place. About a quarter of respondents, North and South, indicated that a strong union presence would be an important catalyst to joining.

### Joining Decisions

For those already in unions the route to membership was, overwhelmingly, either through an approach made by a workplace representative/ shop steward (44 percent ROI- 46 percent NI), or as a result of being approached by a colleague (25 percent ROI- 32 percent NI). Only 25 percent of members in the Republic and 20 percent in Northern Ireland took steps proactively to join by making direct contact with a union or seeking to join in the workplace. (Fig 7).

### Union Performance from the Members' Perspective

There are strong levels of satisfaction with union performance among the membership on the Island; 73 percent of members in the Republic and 63

percent in Northern Ireland believe their unions represent their interests 'well to very well'. About six out of ten members in the South stated that their union responds effectively to specific problems faced by its members.

The satisfaction level is lower in Northern Ireland where 42 percent believe unions respond well to the needs of their members.

In Northern Ireland, improved pay and protection of employment conditions were seen as the main benefits of union membership. Whilst the results were similar in the Republic of Ireland, greater emphasis was placed on achievements made to improve working conditions.

### Activism

The level of active involvement in Unions was 33 percent in ROI and 15 percent for NI membership. The most frequent 'active' engagement was attendance at union meetings. Two percent of members in the South take on a lay role compared to about 3 percent of NI members. Two-thirds of members in the Republic and 85 percent in Northern Ireland remain inactive members.

When asked why they had not become more involved, 'not having time' was given as the main reasons (34 percent ROI – 33 percent NI). However almost one-fifth of members stated that they had never been presented with the opportunity to become more involved and some 15 percent believe that they



do not have the necessary skills or experience to participate more actively in the work of their union. There are strong levels of commitment to unions in the Republic with 78 percent of membership believing that there is a lot to be gained by being part of the union and 63 percent stating that they have a strong sense of pride in their union. The commitment levels are lower among Northern Ireland members at around 62 percent.

### Room for Improvement

When asked to make suggestions to improve the responsiveness of unions to their members there was a conclusive view across the island that there should be greater contact between individual unions and their workplace representatives and a designated person for workers to go to. Setting-up a union helpline received strong support along with strengthened union committees, better interaction and improved use of new technology for communicating with members. However, letters are the preferred method of communication for half of the membership followed by e-mail, union newsletters and greater telephone contact.

On suggestions to encourage greater participation: communicating the benefits of involvement and asking members directly to become more active were the top two suggestions. It is also the view of members that campaigning around issues to do with workplace rights and workplace action around issues would help to improve participation.

All respondents, members and non-members alike were asked to suggest what unions could do to improve the relevance of their organisations. The top response was to improve awareness of what unions do (38 percent ROI- 45 percent NI). This was followed by improved communications and better engagement with all workers along with improving awareness of the benefits of trade union membership.

The research was conducted by Amarach.

## The Recruitment Challenge

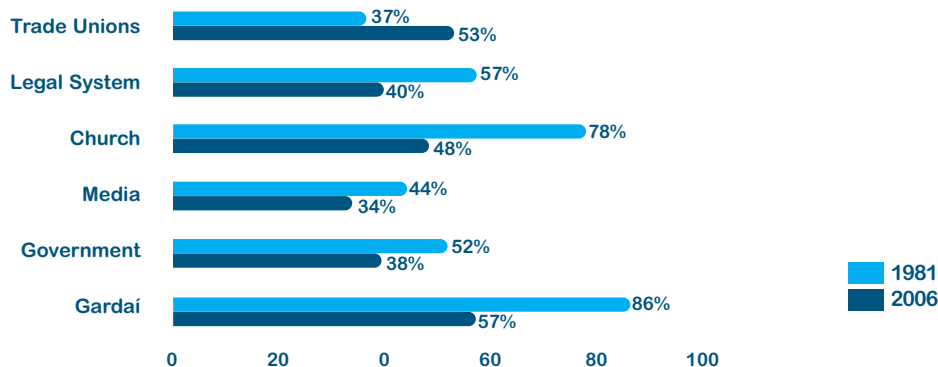
### Union Positioning

The LIFT quantitative research gives an illustrated overview of the attitudes of workers; members and non-members, towards the trade union movement. The picture illustrated is a very good one. Unions are seen as doing a good job by members – and by society generally. There are strong levels of commitment and loyalty towards unions by the membership and, most importantly, they are seen to deliver particularly in relation to their role in protecting the rights of workers and negotiating with Government and employers.

This research complements other surveys that, when taken together, give a strong indication of our positioning in society today. For example, the Amarach Time of Our Lives, Ireland '86-'06 research for RTE's Prime Time, looked at a range of issues affecting peoples' lives and gauged how attitudes had shifted over the last two decades. A major section on Trust in Institutions showed that confidence had decreased for all institutions – except trade unions – in the last 20 years. Confidence in the Government, politicians, the Gardai, Church, legal system and the media, had declined. Trade unions are the only institution in which confidence had actually increased. (fig 8)

The Employees Voice Survey (Geary/ESRI/UCD Research 2006), provided evidence of willingness among large numbers of workers to join unions. The research suggested that many non-union employees would be prepared to join a union if the employer was willing to support union organisation and that they were offered the opportunity to join. In such circumstances, the research indicated that density level could reach 71 percent. The research also looked at membership in a scenario where

**Fig.8 Trust in institutions Amarach Research for RTE/Prime Time May 2006**



management support was absent or hostile. In such an environment, the research showed density rising to 56 percent - the challenge being that unions have to improve the effectiveness of their organising and recruitment practices to make this happen.

### **The Organising & Recruitment Challenge**

In recent years, awareness has grown among unions that density decline is a serious problem that has to be challenged. However, it is not apparent that this is yet seen as a major crisis which could lead to a reduction in union power and impact on our influence.

Several resolutions agreed at previous conferences and the current Congress Strategic Plan clearly establishes Congress policy to develop organising and recruitment activity as a priority. Organising and Recruitment became a regular item on the agenda of the Executive Council with the specific objective of building support for a cross-union, collaborative initiative to build union membership.

During 2006 a number of unions agreed to participate in the development of a joint recruitment / organising initiative with Congress. Regular meetings were held to work through a strategy and approach which would enable the unions to collaborate in an initiative which would extend trade unionism to workers in low density sectors and non-unionised workplaces and support the efforts of unions to organise.

Earlier this year the participating unions and Congress agreed a way to proceed on the development of an initiative to connect workers in low density sectors with a Union Outreach Service.

The principles agreed by the collaborating unions are:

- The initiative will be Congress-led;
- It will complement efforts to rebuild Union density and extend Union organisation across the Irish workforce;
- The objective of the initiative is to create a service to extend to workers in non-union workplaces / low-density sectors, which will provide information and advisory services but not negotiating services, for those who join;
- It is recognised that this will predominantly be for 'individuals' rather than groups of workers;
- It should be capable of providing for general and sectoral recruitment campaigns;
- All activity will have the purpose of building general awareness of the role of Unions and about the campaigns in which we are involved, it will promote the premium of Union membership and support the priority of its stakeholders to organise workers into Unions;

- The initiative should be capable of providing servicing supports, if required, for participating Unions to alleviate time-consuming demands from individuals;
- The service must provide added value over existing offerings;
- The participating Unions will monitor and analyse entrants and determine the potential to transfer individuals to full Union membership;
- The initiative will have a legal form with articles of association on relationships and clear rules on how the entity will function.

### **The Concept**

The proposition under development has been designated as Union Outreach Service (UOS)

It is a Trade Union initiative to reach people it would otherwise be difficult to provide support to. The proposition envisages the creation of a Congress-led, collaborative venture, the primary purpose of which is to extend a Union Outreach Service to hard-to-reach workers. It is envisaged that the service will comprise information and advisory supports through on-line, written and direct contact mechanisms.

Because it is an Outreach Service it cannot offer representation / negotiating facilities. It is understood that this can only be provided by Union organisations. Migration of members to full Union membership is a key objective of the strategy.

All communications' activity will be used to inform members of issues facing working people, build awareness and understanding of the root causes of the problems and seek to engage them in meaningful campaigns to address these issues and build the influence of the Trade Union movement.

A key part of the strategy will be the development and delivery of an awareness raising and advisory programme for senior cycle secondary and third level students, to increase understanding of unions, engage them in campaigning activity and provide them with a gateway to union membership.

To date, the information technology system has been developed and work is underway to progress the advisory service and communications' strategy.

## Communications & Campaigning

In preparation for the opening of talks on a new partnership agreement - anticipated for late 2005 - Congress produced and published a series of briefing papers on a wide range of issues. These were designed not only to shape and inform public debate – sometimes to start it - but also to establish a credible, in-depth and coherent platform for any such talks.

The issues dealt with in the briefing series were diverse: pensions, health, outsourcing, caring, immigration policy and the rights of migrant workers.

While some of the issues could be characterised as ‘traditional’ areas for union comment, so to speak, issues such as caring and health would not be conventionally associated with the trade union movement.

Yet, these are areas of very real concern, impacting as they do on the ‘social wage’ - those services which citizens are entitled to in return for taxes. When these services are poor, or poorly-funded, those that need them most suffer greatest, while the wealthy simply purchase what they require on the private market. Thus, a union movement that did not campaign to improve quality of life in all aspects - inside and outside of work - would be derelict in its duty. In addition, Congress has a clear responsibility to proactively comment and campaign on these issues given our status as the largest civil society body on the island and, therefore, the only civic body with the capacity to deliver upon that progressive agenda.

In terms of the talks process itself, this presented some problems, given its protracted nature and the fact that the Labour Standards issue had to be resolved, prior to talks commencing on the substance of any new agreement.

Nonetheless, in terms of both the Labour Standards and Pay and Policy issues, Congress succeeded in ensuring that its platform and key demands were clearly communicated and kept to the forefront, the better to minimise distortion and misrepresentation.

### The Health Agenda

Over the period in question, perhaps the single most important body of work produced by Congress was ***The Health Report: An Agenda for Irish Health Care Reform***.

This exhaustive study and analysis of the Irish health system was co-authored by international health expert, Professor A Dale Tussing and well-known Irish health economist, Maev-Ann Wren.

It was extremely well-received among the health community and outside, with one reputable publication describing it as a “must read” for anyone with an interest in that sector. Indeed, the Department of Health was one of the first to request an advance copy of the report.

Significantly, ***The Health Report*** was also the first to expose the truth behind the ‘co-location’ plan, particularly the fact that it would cost taxpayers in the region of €400 million, in tax breaks. Prior to this, it had been openly claimed that co-location would deliver extra bed capacity at no cost to the taxpayer.

***The Health Report*** was later updated and published in book form, by New Island, as ***How Ireland Cares*** (2006).

In advance of BDC 2007, key elements of ***How Ireland Cares*** were updated and included in a new pamphlet on the health care crisis. This was published as ***Addressing the Health Care Crisis***, in June 2007 (the Executive Summary is reprinted in Section 6, Chapter 1).

Other publications over the period included a paper on migrant workers and immigration, which contained some disturbing case studies detailing the abuses and exploitation suffered by these workers.

Ultimately, it was these issues - around exploitation and the race to the bottom - that dominated the negotiations that resulted in ***Towards 2016***.

And many of the issues on which Congress campaigned in advance of those talks - the rights of domestic workers, the necessity for a new permits regime - have met with some measure of success.

### Pre-Budget Submissions

Congress submitted and published pre-Budget submissions in 2005 and 2006, using the opportunity on each occasion to highlight and campaign on key issues. In 2005, Congress utilised the platform afforded by the submission to draw attention to the serious deficiencies evident in childcare provision.

In December 2006, Congress criticised the arbitrary extension of the Business Expansion Scheme and lodged a formal complaint with the European Commission, on the issue. This generated a remarkable reaction, from both media and business lobby groups, along with sections of Government, creating a mini-furore among some obviously unused to having such queries raised.

From the tone and content of some of the complaints, it was obvious that there was an element of orchestration to the campaign. Nonetheless, we also



received supportive calls from businesses that felt they had been unfairly excluded from BES.

Our principal objections to the extension of the scheme were that this was a tax break for wealthy investors, who often gained more than the small business; that it was an unwise and wasteful use of taxpayers' money and that there were far better ways of assisting small business; that there was little or no serious analysis of the BES and its supposed benefits. For example, nobody could identify how many jobs BES had created, in what sectors those jobs were and whether they were good quality, sustainable jobs.

Thus, the extension of the scheme was an example of unthinking policy making, as opposed to the evidence-based policy making required in a modern economy.

### **New Logo**

Congress adopted a new logo in late 2006, following a process that lasted almost two years, having been initiated in advance of BDC 2005.

The primary cause of the delay was the discovery, late in 2005, that one preferred option bore a resemblance to the logo of an international financial institution, with operations in Ireland.

While the Congress design was entirely original, the resemblance could have resulted in legal hold-ups and costly delays and so we were forced, literally, back to the drawing board.

Nonetheless, the final result was a logo that is fresh and colourful and which has a broad appeal. It also has several applications, with differing versions now being utilised by the NIC ICTU, the Youth Committee and the Congress Centres' Network.

The adoption of the new logo meant the development of other materials could proceed, such as a new e-zine for affiliates and interested parties which will be available in the very near future.

## **Congress Submissions & Publications**

***Trade Unions & Development Cooperation – Contribution to the DCI White Paper Process*** (Congress, Dublin May 2005)

***Tax Expenditures: Submission on Tax Breaks*** (Congress, Dublin, May 2005)

***Caring for the Future: Who Cares?*** (Congress, Dublin, June 2005)

***Lifelong Learning: Everybody Wins*** (Congress, Dublin, June 2005)

***A New Governance Structure for State Companies*** (Congress, Dublin, Summer 2005)

***Submission to Company Law Review Group on Directors' Compliance Statements Provision*** (Congress, Dublin, 2005)

***Observations & Recommendations on the Employment Permits' Bill*** (Congress, Dublin, September 2005)

***Observations & Recommendations on the Employments Permits Bill 2005*** (Congress, Dublin, September 2005)

***Migration Policy & the Rights of Workers*** (Congress, Dublin October 2005)

***The Health Report: An Agenda for Irish Health Care Reform*** (Congress, Dublin November 2005)

***Quality Work=Quality Life Pre-Budget Submission, 2006*** (Congress, Dublin, November 2005)

***Submission to Government on the WTO*** (November 2005)

***Submission on Organisation of Working Time*** (Congress, Dublin, November 2005)

***Investing for All: Submission on the National Development Plan*** (Congress, Dublin, March 2006)

***Protecting an Informed Public - Submission To Broadcasting Commission Of Ireland*** (Congress, Dublin 2006)

***Offshore Outsourcing: The Implications for Ireland*** (Congress, Dublin Spring 2006)

***The Coming Challenges in Productivity*** (Congress, Dublin Spring 2006)

***Submission on the National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion*** (2006-2008),  
(Congress, Dublin, 2006)

***Economic Outlook 2006: the Case for a Generous Wage Settlement*** (Congress, Dublin May 2006)

***Submission on Violation of Trade Union Rights in Zimbabwe*** (Congress, Dublin September 2006)

***Submission to the Taskforce on Active Citizenship***, (Congress, Dublin September 2006)

***Spreading Prosperity Pre-Budget Submission, 2007***, (Congress, Dublin October 2006)

***Protecting Children and Young People from Exploitation - Submission to Broadcasting Commission of Ireland*** (Congress, Dublin 2006)

***Submission on the Minimum Wage to the Labour Court*** (Congress, Dublin November 2006)

***Migrant Workers & Their Families in Northern Ireland*** (Congress, Belfast December, 2006)

***Submission on the Immigration Bill*** (Congress, Dublin, February 2007)

***Decent Work in the EU's Bilateral Trade Negotiating Mandates*** (Congress, Dublin, February 2007)

***Towards a Sustainable Energy Future (Response to the Government Energy Green Paper)***  
(Congress, Dublin Spring 2007)

***Response to the European Commission's Green Paper on Labour Law (Congress, Dublin, March 2007)***

***Submissions to the Department of Finance on the Spring (2006/2007) and Annual Meetings (Autumn 2005 and 2006) of the international Financial Institutions in Washington*** (Congress, Dublin, 2005-2006))

***Submission on Child Labour to Irish Aid***  
(Congress, Dublin March 2007)

***Addressing the Health Care Crisis*** (Congress, Dublin June 2007)



# *Everything you need to know*



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## CHAPTER 2

# CONGRESS EDUCATION, TRAINING & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

# Background

In 2006, Congress in cooperation with FAS commenced a joint European-funded training project entitled Wield – Workplace Initiative for Employee Learning & Development. The objective of the Project is to develop and deliver specific training courses aimed at developing workers' skills in a number of areas. The intent is to provide high quality, accredited short-courses for upskilling and reskilling employees with little or no qualifications. The training is available to people in employment in the private sector and commercial semi-state bodies.

## Participating Trade Unions / Organisations

Participating Trade Unions / Organisations to date are: – AMICUS, Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre, CWU, Education & Training Services, IDEAS Institute, Mandate, SIPTU, and TEEU / ETOS. All of the training available under the Wield Project is accredited, which allows the trainee to build on future training. A stipulation of the Project is that all of the tutors must be FAS registered.

It is important to stress that training is free to both employer and employee and is designed to be delivered on a paid release basis.

## The Wield Training Modules

Currently there are six modules of training available, as follows:

**Basic Computer Skills** A five day course for absolute beginners which equips participants with word processing, Internet and e-mail skills. This module has proved to be the most popular with demand far in excess outstripping supply.

**English Language Training** A four day course designed around the needs of the workplace, such as understanding workplace signage, basic form filling and social skills. Demand is far in excess of courses available.

**Customer Service** A two day course intended to deliver a quality customer service and to provide an understanding of Equality, Diversity & Customer Service, in particular for 'front line' staff. Whilst this module is designed to provide customer service training in all sectors, it is particular pitched at the retail sector.

**Team Working** A six day course designed to deliver an understanding of the role of team working;

such as how to be a successful team member; understanding the role of the Team Leader; and most importantly how to build effective relationships in the workplace. Feedback from training providers suggests one reason for the success of this module is because effective team work empowers people to take the initiative and participate more constructively in their workplace.

**Basic Skills for the Workplace** A six day course designed to improve essential skills, such as communication and assertiveness in the workplace. Suitable for people in all sectors.

**Union Learning Representatives** A completely new concept in training in Ireland, this is based on the UK model of training trade union activists to enable them to develop and promote training and the acquisition of skills within the workplace. In Britain, this model of training is underpinned by legislation. The role of the Union Learning Representative is to:

- Help promote the value of learning and skill development within the workplace;
- To develop a learning agenda and strategy within the workplace;
- To work with employers to plan learning opportunities;
- To consult with members and assist them to identify their learning and skill needs;
- To support members in planning and managing their learning plan;
- To represent the interests of members and influence learning and development within the workplace;
- To ensure learning is an important part of the wider union agenda.

The first pilot Union Learning Representatives training course was held in Dublin, in November

2006 and was very successful. The Union Learning Representatives Module is awarded at FETAC Level 6.

### Activity under the Wield Project

Since the Project commenced the training activity over all modules has resulted in training for over 800 trainees and over 3,000 training days.

### The Future

Despite the number of trainees and training days achieved to-date under the Project and the very favourable attraction of free training to the employer, there is very compelling evidence to suggest strong resistance from employers to releasing employees on a paid basis for the training. This continues to present problems for the Wield Project and future Projects because it has also contributed to reluctance by some organisations in participating in the Project. Both of these issues are of real concern in the context of moving the Lifelong Learning Agenda forward and in particular with regard to commitments by employers set down in **Towards 2016**.

Congress received funding from FAS, under the One Step Up initiative, to support the training of Union Learning Representatives and to fund learning provision for a specified number of low-skilled workers (WIELD Project). A further application was made in 2007 for resources to develop the Union Learning Institute infrastructure and towards staffing (see below).

## Establishing a Union Learning Institute

Congress is currently working on proposals to establish a broad, overarching structure for the provision of Lifelong Learning and Upskilling, in partnership with FAS. If realised, this could take the form of a new Union Learning Institute.

Providing our population with the skills appropriate to the 21st Century is one of the most crucial issues before us, as society. Ensuring that our people are equipped with the skills to participate economically and access quality work is a key objective of the trade union movement.

Congress has sought to influence policy positions nationally to enhance the provisions made, and supports available, for working people to access Lifelong Learning opportunities. The main forum for this has been successive social partnership agreements, the most recent of which, **Towards 2016**, contains provisions specific to Lifelong Learning and recognises the unique role of the trade union movement in promoting, supporting and delivering learning for working people:

### **Towards 2016; Section (7): 7.4 states:**

“The parties are also agreed on the need to examine on particular the availability of workplace learning (including in relation to basic skills) and upskilling the lower skilled and vulnerable workers, including manufacturing, as well as to workers from overseas. They are agreed on the need to put in place measures to ensure renewed focus for state provision and to ensure more targeted schemes, with a view to maximising the use of resources. In addition, the involvement of employer and trade union representatives in the activation of workplace learning and upskilling will be of particular importance.”

Congress has a membership in excess of 600,000 people in the Republic of Ireland. This membership covers all sectors of the economy and is comprised of many potential learners.

The Trade Union movement has a long history of policy support for education and training and embedded in its mission is the objective to secure improvements in the living standards of its members.

Congress is a critical stakeholder in the delivery of the skills strategy, with a clear focus across the union movement on the development and upskilling of working people.

It is official policy to give particular priority to those workers categorised as low-skilled, early school leavers and in vulnerable employment situations. Research and experience shows that these groups of workers are rarely targeted for development by employer or business entities and research also demonstrates that such groups are not easily attracted to conventional learning situations. Unions are uniquely placed to access and appeal to these potential learners. Congress through its affiliated unions has the potential to reach a considerable number of learners, particularly those workers who are most distant from education, training and learning experience and/or opportunities.

While Congress and affiliated unions are currently well-placed to provide direct training in a number of areas, we believe that the long-term commitment of the trade union movement to delivering the upskilling agenda for people at work is best served by our developing an adequate infrastructure and requisite capacity.

We believe that the most effective way of delivering on the strategy is through the development of union learning organisations and personnel and the establishment of a specialist network of supports under the auspices of a Trade Union Learning

Institute. This will be the initial realisation of the **Towards 2016** commitment to support a union-led learning system.

As an all-island body, we are well placed to incorporate into its learning the advances and achievements of the Northern Ireland union-led learning initiative. Congress can draw on expertise from its Belfast Office (currently 150 Union Learning Representatives in place) to contribute to the development of its infrastructure and activity in the Republic.

## Workplace Innovation Fund

Congress applied to the Workplace Innovation Fund (WIF), established under Part II of **Towards 2016**, for funding to support workplace innovation. Funding was drawn-down in 2006 to progress three specific areas of work:

### a) Union-Led learning

Support was received from WIF to undertake research to inform the union-led workplace learning strategy; to conduct information and awareness activities with unions; to develop and implement a training programme aimed at union officials to build the capacity of unions to deliver on the learning agenda, and to gather information for a learning contacts' database.

### b) Information Communications Technology Infrastructure to support Union-Led Learning Initiative

Funding was granted for Congress to develop proposals to use innovative ICT technologies to support a model of participative engagement and information exchange with union members. This has involved the development of an ICT infrastructure which is designed to provide a multi-medium (web, mobile media, SMS, email and others) communication, built on a database backbone which will facilitate unions in communicating directly with members, to manage their relationships with them, inform them about and provide services, and to facilitate greater engagement and participation in decision making and other processes, including partnership.

### c) Information & Consultation Legislation

Resources were allocated to Congress to develop a strategy with the National Centre for Partnership & Performance to examine how the Information & Consultation legislation could be used to support the achievement of our objectives to deliver Union-led workplace learning and to develop a Flexicurity model. Funding was also received towards project management.

## Learning for Life

During the period under review Congress produced a briefing paper entitled **Lifelong Learning: Everybody Wins**. This drew together the work already undertaken in various areas and set out the views of Congress on upskilling - something which is required at all levels of the workforce - which we see as a win-win situation for the individual worker, the economy and wider society.

## Expert Group on Future Skill Needs

This group works within Forfas and steers the national skill strategy. It has absorbed the National Training Advisory committee. Congress is represented on this committee by Peter Rigney and Linda Tanham (Mandate), together with Paul Sweeney as an alternate member.

## Qualifications Framework

The National Qualifications Framework is administered by three linked bodies: the National Qualifications authority of Ireland (Congress rep Eamon Devoy, TEEU); the Higher Education Training Awards Council (Congress rep Margaret Duignan) and the Further Education Training Awards Council (Congress rep Ron Kelly, SIPTU). Together with the Irish Universities Quality Board (Congress rep Peter Rigney) these bodies play a key role both in ensuring the quality of education courses and ensuring that learners can progress easily from one level to the next, securing credit for previously undertaken study. There are ten levels in the Framework, ranging from basic literacy to doctoral qualifications. This approach is consistent with that of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). This framework is in place in Ireland, the UK and France.

## Skillnets

This body has a mandate to promote training in the workplace through training networks. A number of union-run networks are in operation, promoted by SIPTU, TEEU and Congress. Congress also promotes a project jointly with the Construction Industry Federation (CIF), aimed at encouraging diversity in the construction industry. This provides language training for migrant workers.

## Education & Training Services

Education & Training Services Trust (ETS) is in its fourteenth year of operation. The Trust is jointly owned by Congress, Amicus and the TEEU. It provides safety, technical and organisational training. It currently employs 10 people. The trust is a



registered FETAC centre and the majority of courses carry FETAC certification.

## Construction Industry Safety Representative Training

This aims to develop a core of trained safety representatives in the construction industry. It is run jointly with the CIF with assistance from the Health & Safety Authority. Approximately eight three day courses are run on a countrywide basis, and participants who complete the assessment receive FAS / FETAC accreditation. During the period under review, some 200 participants successfully completed the course, bringing the total trained to date to 1400. Promotional materials on the role of the safety representative have been prepared in Russian Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian and Rumanian.

## Trade Union Education & Training

Congress provides a range of courses to meet the skill needs of trade union activists and officials. These courses cover a diverse range of needs, such as preparing cases for the Labour Court and pensions. The number of courses provided depends on demand and on identified training needs. In accordance with national policy, there has been a move towards placing courses within the national framework of qualifications. This means that those who complete the course and the assessment receive a Level 5 FETAC award. To date the following courses have been approved by FETAC:

- Trade union representative
- Health and Safety – General
- Coaching and mentoring skills.

As a result, courses are tending towards a five rather than a three day duration.

The move towards certification is voluntary and individuals are free not to pursue the option.

Similarly some unions regard the three day course as being more suited to their needs.

Tables 1 & 2 give an indication of training activity provided or grant assisted in the years 2005 and 2006. There has been a modest level of growth, with the numbers of courses and participants increasing. Women represent approximately 50 percent of general training activity, but are somewhat underrepresented on health and safety courses.

## Third Level

Provision of progression routes from union education and training is a key aspect of our work in this area, in accordance with the public policy approach which emphasises access transfer and progression. Accordingly, Congress runs courses in partnership with a number of third level institutions. In conjunction with the National College of Ireland, a HETAC certificate course is run at night in Dublin. There are currently 18 participants - 10 men and eight women. This is run on a modular basis with three modules being undertaken each year.

A UCD certificate course in Health & Safety is delivered by satellite over a 26 week period. The assessment method and format has changed due to the move to modularisation in UCD. There are currently 20 participants.

In conjunction with the Quinn School of Business, at UCD, a Bachelor in Business Studies degree is run. This is offered by distance learning and is based on attendance at a number of weekend workshops. Up to 2006, recruitment was on a biennial basis. Intake is now on an annual basis. The current number of students are:

1st Year Students - 31  
2nd Year Students - 38  
4th Year Students - 31  
Total: 100

**Table 1**

2005	No	Men	Women	Total
General	90	740	750	1490
Health and safety	5	60	20	80
Hetac	4	25	24	49

**Table 2**

2006	No	Men	Women	Total
General	93	765	754	1519
Health and safety	6	63	23	86
Hetac	4	24	25	49



Jim Dorney, TUI, at Special Delegate Conference,

## People's College

The College has continued to hold its own in spite of an ever increasing range of options available to seekers of adult education in the wider Dublin area. Enrolments remain stable at approximately one thousand and interest in core courses remains constant. Over the past two years we have continued to provide a wide range of courses for workers and their families at reasonable rates. The fifty-two courses offered each year include:

- Modern Languages
- Art & Music
- Political, Social, Cultural & Environmental Studies
- Personal Development & Social Skills
- Basic Education (English & Computers and English for Speakers of Other Languages)

All classes take place in the evening, except the Art Appreciation, which takes place in the Municipal Gallery on Saturday mornings.

We continue to provide the kind of courses that our regular participants want - with Yoga, Music Appreciation, Foreign Languages, Environmental Studies and Creative Writing remaining the most popular. We also organise occasional seminars on current affairs - the latest was on the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.

A website ([www.peoplescollege.ie](http://www.peoplescollege.ie)) was established during the year and is proving very useful as a means

of publicising the College and communicating with a wider audience.

A survey was also conducted last year and the results were encouraging. While we are keeping old friends – some for more than 10 years - we are gaining new ones: 44 percent of students were new in 2006. The age profile is satisfactory too: with 30 percent under 40, 40 percent between 40 & 60 years of age and the remainder over 60.

A new venture - a Writing Competition – was initiated this year. This should prove to be a very rewarding project for the College. The Choir continues to flourish, participating in choral festivals at both national and international level; it also performs at social events for the College.

The Debating Society also plays a major role in College life, organising debates and training sessions for its members.

Other activities included:

- the Wexford Outreach programme
- a trip to the European Parliament in Brussels as guests of Proinsias De Rossa M.E.P.

Our priority for the next two years will be to explore with our students the best means of providing them with any new learning opportunities they may require to help them reach their intellectual, social and creative potential and acquire the skills necessary to cope with a rapidly changing society.

## CHAPTER 3

### CONGRESS ACTIVITES

## Trades Councils

There are 33 Trades Councils across the island of Ireland and they continue to play a major role in promoting trade union values at local and community level. The Trades Councils Consultation Committee meets on a quarterly basis to discuss matters of common concern and to report on local activity. During the period under review, along with four regular meetings, two special meetings relating to the Irish Ferries protest were held. Two regular meetings were postponed in early 2006 due to the negotiations on **Towards 2016**.

A common programme of work was adopted by all Trades Councils which specified agreed areas of activity including:

- Trade Union organisation;
- Protection of migrant workers rights;
- Tackling racism;
- Protection and improvement of public services;
- Trades Council organisation
- Working with Congress Centres.

## Irish Ferries Protest

In December of 2005, Trades Councils throughout the country responded to a request by the Executive Council of Congress to support the workers in Irish Ferries and in opposition to the 'race to the bottom' by organising protest marches in several locations throughout Ireland. On December 9, a National Day of Protest saw massive turnouts in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick, Waterford, Sligo, Athlone and Rosslare. Trades Councils in Northern Ireland also demonstrated their solidarity, by holding a demonstration outside UTV offices in Belfast. The Chairman of the UTV Board is a director of Irish Ferries.

At time of writing a three day event is planned for the Spring of 2007, to coincide with the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bray Trade Union Council. Eric Fleming, Executive Council chairs this Committee. Fergus Whelan and Tom Gillen are the Congress servicing officials.

## Congress Centres Network

### Building the Network

Following the appointment in March 2005 of Kathleen McCann as Programme Manager and Louisa Gavin as Administrator, a three year Strategic Plan for the Network was developed and an Agreement of Commitment - as a mechanism by which Centres could formally join the reorganised Network - was drafted. A series of open consultation meetings with Centre Boards of Management and Centre Coordinators took place in Galway, Cork, Dublin

and Belfast during the summer of 2005. In addition, meetings with individual Centres' Boards of Management were held at their request.

Centres were asked to formally join the Network by signing the Agreement of Commitment and by the late October deadline, the following 27 Centres had done so: Athlone, Athy, Ballina, Belfast, Caherciveen, Castlebar, Cork, Drogheda, Dublin 12, Dundalk, Dungarvan, Ennis, Enniscorthy, Fingal, Galway, Killarney, Kilkenny, Leixlip, Letterkenny, Limerick, Longford, Manorhamilton, Mullingar, Newbridge, Tralee, Westport, Bray. The Larkin, Clondalkin, Tallaght, Northside and Waterford Centres did not join, the Tallaght Centre is now in the process of coming back into the Network. The Westport Centre closed in January 2007.

A Centre Coordinators' Group was established and elected Elaine Harvey, Coordinator of the Galway Centre, as its Chair. The Group meets on a quarterly basis. Four 'task and finish' groups made up of Centre Coordinators and Network and Congress staff were set up in early 2006 to focus on fleshing out key areas of the Strategic Plan. These were: Lifelong Learning; Systems, Organisation and Standards; Campaigning, Representation & Profile; Services to Trade Unions. All of these groups, with the exception of Services to Trade Unions, have now completed their work and have made recommendations to be considered by the Network's Board of Management, once it has been constituted. Initiatives which have already been carried out include the development and rollout of integrated IT systems, FETAC accreditation for Centres, common administrative and management systems and standards throughout the Network, branding and publications.

### Governance

A draft paper on proposals for governance of the Congress Centres Network was circulated in late 2005. A small working group, comprising representatives of Centre Boards of Management, Centre Coordinators and Congress/Network staff, was established in early 2006 to develop a governance structure and establish a legal identity for the Network. The group is currently finalising the Memorandum and Articles of Association for the Network for approval by the Executive Council.

Proposals for governance of the Network include a Board of Directors comprising Congress and Centres Board of Management representatives, and a Board of Management comprising representatives from Congress, Centre Boards of Management and Centre Co-ordinators. Provision has also been made for a Congress Centres Network Forum, a non-policy making body made up of representatives of a range of internal and external stakeholders.



## Branding & Identity

By the end of 2005, all but two Centres had removed references to 'unemployed' and 'unemployment' from their Centre names, and the remaining two Centres are in the process of doing so. This was required because the Centres remit, services and client groups are now much broader. Also, the reference to unemployment was increasingly excluding Centres from funding aimed at providing education and training for people at work.

A new logo, based on the new Congress logo, has also been developed for the Network with bespoke versions for each Centre. Work is currently being carried out on signage and displays. A suite of five information leaflets on Centres' services and a booklet are in the process of being published.

## Education & Training

In June 2005, Barra Hallissey took up the post of Training Co-ordinator for the Congress Centres Network but left in August of that year. Mick Corrigan was appointed as Training Co-ordinator in January 2006, but resigned in April 2006.

Activity around education and training has been geared towards building capacity in Congress Centres to participate in the knowledge economy and lifelong learning by providing a range of education and training courses to people vulnerable to redundancy and unemployed workers, as well as groups such as migrant workers, lone parents and adult returners.

Since April 2006, the Network staff have trained and supported twenty individual Centres to apply for FETAC Quality Assurance status in order to deliver FETAC accredited programmes. In addition the Programme Manager and the Training Co-ordinator also developed and submitted a FETAC QA application for the Network office to be able to accredit staff training given by them to Co-ordinators and other Centres staff. To date sixteen of these applications have been approved and FETAC QA status awarded. The remaining five Centres are in the final stages of approval.

A programme of continuous professional development (CPD) training was delivered on a modular basis to Coordinators and other Centres' staff, in areas such as equality awareness and equality proofing, policy and procedure development, project management, team working and team building, systems development and IT training.

The Network has developed closer links with FAS Services to Business (STB) and has participated in a number of their projects. Commitment has been secured from FAS STB to provide and fund

accredited tutor training for Centres' staff. The CCN Programme Manager is a member of the FAS Workplace Basic Education Steering Group. The Network staff also played a key role in the development of successful Congress bids to FAS for projects to deliver workplace learning. A Network policy document on lifelong learning has also been written and Network staff have participated in the process to develop a Congress strategy around lifelong learning.

## External Relations

The Congress Centres Network has played and continues to play a full part in the Community and Voluntary Pillar, and participated in negotiations for **Towards 2016**. The CCN Programme Manager has recently been elected by the C&V Pillar to the Steering Group for same. Throughout 2006 the Network staff worked to strengthen links and build on relationships with statutory agencies and other community and voluntary sector organisations, in particular FAS, Department of Social and Family Affairs, INOU, EAPN, NALA, the Migrant Rights Centre of Ireland, One Family and Age Action.

The Network is currently represented on the FAS Workplace Basic Education National Steering Committee, the NALA Curriculum Development Group, the EAPN employment group, the National Executive Committee of the INOU, Cross Border Openings, the NESF and the RAPID National Monitoring Committee. In addition, individual Centres are represented on a wide variety of local, regional and national bodies. The Chair of the Co-ordinators' Group is currently also the Chair of PLANET.

## Youth Committee

### Talks to Schools

The Youth Committee has continued to build on the success of this programme, which is aimed at transition year and leaving certificate applied students. The Committee provided a number of talks to schools in the period under review and the initiative continues on an informal basis at present.

The talks are facilitated sessions with a trade union activist who uses various tools to engage students in discussions on 'the world of work'. The talks encourage open dialogue and interactive/role-play exercises to encourage students to think, discuss and engage with the activist. Regardless of each activist's style, every talk aims to cover the following:

- the world of work
- what to expect in work
- worker responsibilities
- a week in work – what it's like
- the role of trade unions

- supporting worker participation & development
- Young peoples' rights in work.

This service is particularly necessary and useful for students who may be at risk of early school leaving, or who have to take up part time work prior to completion of the leaving certificate. These young people are, in many cases, extremely vulnerable, and the Committee firmly believes they will have longer and more productive careers in work if they are equipped in advance with information and resources in relation to their expectations, rights and entitlements in work. Additionally, given that the majority of work available to inexperienced young workers today is in the services sector, where terms and conditions can be less attractive, there is an urgent need to ensure that these young workers have access to accurate and reliable information on their rights and entitlements.

### **Your Rights at Work Card & Information Campaign**

Through the work of the Committee, and feedback from activists delivering talks to schools, it became apparent that there was a need for an information campaign in respect of young peoples' rights and entitlements in work. In response, the Committee developed an information card - Your Rights At Work - which outlines minimum entitlements on pay and conditions of employment, and directs young workers to useful websites where they will be able to access further information.

The card was reprinted to reflect changes in the minimum wage, maternity leave and the new Congress logo. The Committee also hopes to print Polish and Russian language versions. However, this is dependent on funding.

### **Training Events**

The Youth Committee have held two training events in the past year:

- March 2006, on Capacity Building
- Presentations made by Liam Berney, Fergus Whelan and Gareth Keogh (Congress) and a representative from the Irish Council of Civil Liberties. 25 activists attended
- Training sessions also took place on the minimum wage, globalisation and organising at the 2006 Youth Conference, which was held in Dundalk
- 60 activists attended.
- Presentations from SIPTU, Mandate, Global Solidarity and Oxfam.

### **Learning Exchanges & Links**

A primary function of the Youth Committee is to engage with other youth organisations in the pursuit of joint objectives, work, campaigns, learning exchange and best practice.

During 2006 the Committee and individual members engaged with/in the following:

### **National Youth Council of Ireland**

- Actively involved in the NYCI Social Policy Network;
- Members of the Committee sit on the board of NYCI.

### **FÁS Opportunities 2006**

- The Committee attended the Opportunities 2006 Conference, Ireland's largest recruitment fair, where Committee members handed out the Your Rights at Work to over 10,000 school students and young workers during a four day period.

### **European Trade Union Confederation Youth / ETUC Youth**

- Congress has been heavily involved in the ETUC Youth;
- The Chair of Congress Youth Edward Mathews (INO) currently holds the post of President in the ETUC Youth, which represents over 52 million young trade unionists over the continent of Europe;
- Edward Mathews represented the ETUC at the European Youth Forum;
- Edward Mathews and Ross Higgins represented the ICTU Youth Committee at IUSY Summer Camp.
- Union Network International/ UNI:
- Keith Pollard (CWU) and Rachel Mathew McKay (SIPTU) attended UNI which represents 15 million members in 900 unions. Keith Pollard has been elected to the steering committee to represent the UK and Ireland.

### **Euro-Med Conference**

- Committee Members Iain Shanahan (SIPTU) and Claire Lynch (INO) attended the conference in Malta in September. The aim of the conference was to create dialogue between individuals from European and Mediterranean countries.

### **Scottish Trade Union Council**

- The Congress Youth Committee is currently building stronger links with the STUC Youth. This included sending a delegation to the STUC Youth Conference in 2005. The STUC Youth Congress Youth Committee and the Northern Ireland Youth Committee will be holding annual meeting together to see if they can find common ground and can work on joint campaigns.

### **Northern Ireland Youth Committee**

- The Youth Committee in the Republic has provided the Northern Ireland Youth Committee with substantial logistical support over the past three months.



Carola Fischbach-Pyttel, General Secretary of the EPSU at the Irish launch of their campaign to protect public services, pictured with Congress General Secretary David Begg.

## Retired Workers

The Congress Retired Workers Committee continues to work to seek improvements in the quality of life for retired workers.

The Committee has been serviced in the past number of years by Hugh Geraghty. Delegates will be aware that Hugh died on March 6, 2007 and the Committee would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Hugh for the tireless work he carried out on behalf of retired workers and to express our appreciation for that work.

FEPRA is the organisation for retired workers in the ETUC. The Committee is represented on the FERPA Executive Committee by Jim Keegan. In the period under review FERPA played an active role in the ETUC campaign against the Services Directive. FERPA continues to lobby the institutions of the European Union to ensure that the needs of older people are considered in the development of policy.

In 2005 and 2006 the Committee submitted their views to the Minister for Social, Community & Family Affairs, on the measures that should be prioritised as part of the budget in each of these years. Their submissions were also presented at the pre budget forum.

**Towards 2016** the recently agreed Social Partnership Agreement in the Republic of Ireland has adopted a lifecycle approach in seeking to address social policy issues. The lifecycle approach identifies measures that are aimed at improving the quality of life of older people. The thrust of the agreed actions are captured in the Vision for Older People in the Agreement. These are;

- Every older person would be encouraged and supported to participate to the greatest extent possible in social and civic life;

- Every older person would have access to an income which is sufficient to sustain an acceptable standard of living;
- Every older person would have adequate support to enable them to remain living independently in their own homes for as long as possible. This will involve access to good quality services in the community, including: health, education, transport, housing and security, and;
- Every older person would, in conformity with their needs and conscious of the high level of disability and disabling conditions amongst this group, have access to a spectrum of care services stretching from support for self-care through support for family and informal carers to formal care in the home, the community, or in residential settings. Such care services should ensure the person has opportunities for civic and social engagement at community level.

The Committee continues to play an active role in the work of the Seniors Citizens' Parliament. The Parliament seeks to;

- To be a strong voice representing older people and their needs at international, national and local level;
- To promote inter-generational solidarity;
- To work through the existing affiliated organisations to ensure better co-ordination of policies and activities whilst ensuring that the affiliated groups retain their own autonomy;
- To work for improvement in the quality of life of Older People;
- To develop solidarity with organisations working to improve the quality of life of Older People;
- To represent Older People's issues to Government;

The Committee is represented on the Senior Citizens Parliament by Paddy Donegan, who is the Vice President of the Parliament and Peter Sands, who is one the Parliament's trustees.

Congress in consultation with the Retired Workers Committee is undertaking a review of the functioning of the Committee. Congress is committed to providing resources to ensure that the Committee can play an active role in pursuing its own and Congress objectives.

# BENEFIT FOR EVERYONE'S HEALTH



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## CHAPTER 1

### PAY AND THE WORKPLACE

# Overview

While the Irish minimum wage is one of the highest in Europe, it has no perceptible impact on employment, possibly due to the fact that it has no impact on inflation (which is largely determined outside this small open economy), just 5.2 percent of the workforce are on the wage (in 2005) and price levels here are some 17 percent above the EU 15 average. Irish productivity growth was very rapid for many years but the rate of growth has slowed. The overall level remains high, being second only to France per worker, per hour worked, in the EU. The employment rate is now 68 percent of the total population of working age in 2005, above the EU rate of 63 percent and up from 57 percent in 1997.

Report of the Minimum Wage Commission		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
€5.59	Average Minimum Wage Rate	€5.58	€5.79	€6.09	€6.35	€6.95	€7.44	€7.65
€9.27	Average Industrial Earnings	€10.61	€11.61	€12.51	€13.42	€14.00	€14.34	€14.91
60%	Minimum Wage as a Percentage of Average Earnings	52.53	49.87	48.68	47.31	49.64	51.88	51.31

Under Social Partnership real take-home earnings grew even faster than real incomes rose, due to large income tax cuts. Average industrial workers saw real living standards rise by over 80 percent in the 20 years . This is equivalent to a rise in real take home pay of 4 percent each and every year, for the last two decades.

With a share of 85 percent, contracts of indefinite duration (permanent jobs) are the most widespread form of employment contract in Europe in 2005. At the same time, the share of employees in EU with fixed-term contracts has risen from 12 percent in 1997 to close to 15 percent in 2005, with the average pushed up by new member state, Poland. In Ireland, the number on fixed term contracts fell to 3.9 percent in 2005 from 5.9 percent in 2000, but for part-time workers it was stable at 16.8 percent.

The tax wedge on low income workers in Ireland is one of the lowest in the EU.

The National Minimum Wage was introduced in the Republic of Ireland in April 2000. Its introduction followed a recommendation of the National Minimum Wage Commission that the hourly rate of the Minimum Wage be set at two thirds of median earnings, or 60% of average industrial earnings at that time. Since its introduction the Minimum Wage has been increased on five occasions. However, despite these increases, the wage has never reached the level recommended by the Commission, as the table above shows.

As part of the negotiations on a successor to Sustaining Progress, Congress sought the agreement of the employers and Government to an increase in the Minimum Wage that would bring its rate up to that recommended by the Commission. It was not possible to reach agreement on a revised rate and the matter was referred to the Labour Court. In our submission to the Court we argued that:

***“Since the Court last recommended an adjusted hourly rate of the minimum wage, its significance as an instrument of economic regulation has increased. In particular, the pending enactment of the Services Directive and the need to protect standards of employment in the economy makes it imperative that the hourly rate of the minimum wage be set at a high level. The growth in the numbers in employment whose income is on or below the minimum wage has added to this imperative.”***

In December 2004, the Labour Court recommended that the hourly rate of the Minimum Wage be adjusted to €8.30 from January 2007, with a further increase in the rate to €8.65, from July 1, 2007. The Minister duly accepted that recommendation.

It is unclear as to how these increases will impact on the relationship between the hourly rate of the Minimum Wage and the original Commission recommendation. Congress will continue to press for its full implementation.

## Pensions

In May 2005 Congress published a major study on the Irish Pension system entitled ***Irish Pensions: Problems and Solutions***. Congress identified a number of serious problems with the system, in three main areas. Firstly, many workers have no second pillar coverage and are facing an old age relying wholly on the first pillar, the state pension, which will not protect them against poverty unless substantially improved. Secondly, there are pressures on Defined Benefit Schemes which have the potential to cause some schemes to fail, or to be abandoned by employers. Finally, there are problems of the low level of contributions and the high level of risk associated with Defined Contribution schemes. The conclusions and proposals for change were as follows:

- Many workers face an old age relying solely on the inadequate state pension;
- The evidence suggests that collective bargaining cannot significantly increase pension coverage in the foreseeable future;
- The effect of PRSAs on pension coverage has been insufficient and will remain so unless employers contribute and/or the State increases support;
- There is a strong case for extra tax incentives directed at lower paid people. This may take the form of incentives for the transposition of SSIs to PRSAs or tax credits;
- The employers' PRSI windfall should be ploughed back into the PRSA;
- Compulsion leads to high coverage but might pose a significant threat to existing DB Schemes;

- There may be worker as well as employer resistance to compulsion;
- Defined Benefit Schemes have been a success and everything possible should be done to sustain existing schemes;
- Revenue rules discouraging surpluses should be revoked. Schemes should be able to offset surpluses against losses in bad times;
- Most Defined Benefit schemes are safe but there are some which have the potential to fail or to be abandoned by employers. A small number of failures could stimulate a catastrophic chain reaction;
- Employers must be prohibited from closing DB Schemes to new entrants;
- DB Schemes with small numbers of members and those which provide blue chip benefits such as full pension at 60, may not be sustainable in their present form;
- If new schemes are established they are likely to be Defined Contribution;
- The low level of contributions to Defined Contribution schemes must be addressed by employers agreeing to a 10 percent minimum contribution and employees agreeing to pay 6 percent;
- There is no way of avoiding the investment risk associated with DC but a State provided annuity could provide some stability;
- Hybrid DC schemes should be developed which can allow workers and employers to share the investment risk;
- Pensioners with accumulated DC funds should have the option of purchasing supplementary Social Welfare pension.

The above conclusions and proposals formed a template for Congress activity over the last two years, both at the level of the Pensions Board and during the talks leading to the ***Towards 2016*** agreement.

At the Pensions Board, the ICTU nominees were actively involved in the preparation of the two major reports requested by the Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Seamus Brennan, who took office in late 2004: the National Pensions Review (published November 2005) and the Report on Mandatory Pensions (published August 2006). They also participated in the preparation of other reviews, reports and publications such as the information booklet on Hybrid Schemes and the Review of the Minimum Funding Standard.

The 2005 National Pensions Review updated most of the important data on pensions (e.g. on life expectancies, labour force projections and the cost of social welfare and occupational pensions); and revisited the various targets that had been agreed in the late 1990s following the 1996-97 National

Pensions Policy Initiative (NPPI). The 'NPPI targets' were a minimum retirement income of 34% of AIE for all (provided by the state pension), a replacement income of 50% of pre-retirement income (provided by supplementary pensions); and supplementary coverage for 70% of workers over the age of 30.

These targets were endorsed as being broadly acceptable; but the Board was also in agreement that the current pensions system, unamended, was not capable of ensuring that the targets would be met. Therefore a long list of possible amendments and enhancements was considered and several key reforms were put forward as unanimous recommendations to the Minister. These included adjustments to the tax incentive for people on low and middle incomes to join pension schemes and take out PRSAs: tax relief at the higher rate for all personal pension contributions; 'matching contributions' of €1 for each €1 invested in PRSAs; and special incentives to encourage the proceeds of SSIs to be invested for retirement. Unfortunately, apart from a very minor provision in relation to SSIs, these recommendations were ignored by the government in the context of Budgets 2006 and 2007.

Of course, a number of Board members (not only the trade union representatives) believed that although the recommended enhancements would serve to improve the existing situation, they would not be sufficient; and that the question of mandatory contributions would also have to be addressed. Some preliminary work on this was done as part of the NPR, but for time reasons this was not sufficiently comprehensive to act as a firm base for detailed analysis and decision-making; and anyway, some Board members were opposed in principle to the idea of compulsion of any kind.

In February 2006, Minister Brennan asked the Pensions Board to carry out the detailed research that was needed, in order to assess what kind of mandatory system might be appropriate for Ireland, if it were decided that Ireland should go down that road in order to meet its agreed pension targets. This research was carried out; systems in other countries which had introduced compulsory contributions were analysed; and their positive and negative features examined in detail, by a sub-group of the Board. The conclusions that were reached were, essentially, that for Ireland to copy any of the other countries' systems exactly would be a mistake; what we needed was to devise a system that would suit our own particular circumstances, would not do damage to the significant gains and good schemes already achieved and would fill the gaps in coverage, as well as the lack of adequacy, in the sectors seen as problematic.

This 'Report on Mandatory Pension Systems' – entitled Special Savings for Retirement – was completed by the Pensions Board in June 2006 as requested and published by the government in mid-August. Its key recommendations were for a system based on increasing the state pension to 40% of AIE, over a 10-year period, and introducing mandatory supplementary pensions for all those at work (i.e. employed and self-employed) who do not have adequate supplementary provision already and whose incomes are within specific bands (between 50% and 200% of AIE was the band suggested). In 'round' figures for 2006, taking AIE as roughly €30,000 per annum, this would mean increasing the state pension from €10,000 to €12,000 per annum and requiring people earning between €15,000 and €60,000 to contribute to a supplementary pension, if they were not already doing so.

As regards the contribution level: the Board based its costings on a total rate of 15% of the amount to be 'pensioned' but did not recommend any particular split, i.e. between employers, employees and the state. (The trade union representatives favoured a simple, equal, three-way split – i.e. 5% each – but others would have different views!).

The fact that the Board chose a total contribution rate of 15%, in the belief that this would be the minimum required to produce worthwhile long-term results, should send out an important message to many workers in schemes to which less than this is contributed, as regards the amount needed in order to achieve a reasonable level of financial adequacy and security in retirement.

Unfortunately, there was little publicity or debate around this important Report on Mandatory Pensions, except within the trade union movement. Nor did it prove possible to include commitments, or even references to it, in the negotiations leading to the 2006 national agreement, Towards 2016. However, Towards 2016 contains a number of other commitments on pensions:

"8.1 The Social Partners are agreed on the importance of pensions, both in terms of their adequacy and coverage, and that the matter is to be dealt with as a priority issue. The Social Partners note the NESC's recommendation that: 'it is important that the Social Partners make a positive contribution to (a pensions) review process and engage constructively with the output from it. Following completion of the Pensions Board Review, the government, in consultation with the Social Partners, should determine the long-term shape of the overall pension system.'





No Sweat – Clothing with a conscience, available from the Congress website.

“8.2 The parties to this Agreement share the objectives of the parties to the PPF in relation to pensions, namely that all retired people should have adequate incomes; that the level of coverage of occupational pension schemes should be increased; and that the social partners will co-operate to promote improvements in the coverage of pension schemes towards the agreed National Pensions Policy Initiative (NPPI) target of 70% of the total workforce over age 30.

“8.3 The financial pressures associated with maintaining adequate funding of Defined Benefit Schemes are fully acknowledged. The parties are committed to protecting the viability of pension schemes on a sustainable basis in an environment which has changed dramatically in recent years due to a multiplicity of factors including the funding standard, the need to comply with accounting standards, the cost of annuities, rapidly increasing liabilities (including longevity) and developments in equity markets. All parties are committed to increasing pension coverage generally in the economy through appropriate models. Industrial relations issues arising from disputes related to pension schemes may be referred to the National Implementation Body (NIB) by either party. The NIB will endeavour to assist the parties to such disputes on the basis of the active engagement of its constituent members in seeking solutions to complex problems.

“8.4 The parties are agreed that in order to promote the achievement of the above objectives and aspirations, they will actively co-operate both at national level, (e.g. through the auspices of the Pensions Board) and at workplace level, between employers and unions, through regular discussion and dialogue on pension matters. Both unions and employers are committed to promoting the introduction of occupational schemes for those employees without access to such schemes, subject to the costs involved not undermining competitiveness and employment in enterprises. Furthermore, nothing in this programme shall impede the improvement of schemes, where employers and/or employees concerned are willing and able to meet the costs.

## Partnership Pensions Review

“8.5 The Government has agreed to engage with employers and trade unions, in a process to be supported by appropriate expertise and taking account of the reports of the Pensions Board and of the operation of the annuity market, in the context of its formulation of a comprehensive approach to future pensions policy.

“8.6 The Departments of Finance, Social and Family Affairs and Enterprise, Trade and Employment will participate in the Review, which will be facilitated by the Department of the

Taoiseach, including as regards the framing of a social partner contribution to the formulation of the Government's Green Paper at Section 8.8 below.

"8.7 The Pensions Board will be asked to research benefit design options in the occupational pensions area and will examine current design issues in both DB and DC arrangements with a view to producing guidance as to designs which encompass the positive elements of each arrangement while adjusting the costs and risks to the parties involved.

## Green Paper on National Pensions Policy

"8.8 The Government is committed to publishing a Green Paper on Pensions Policy outlining the major policy choices and challenges in this area. It will take account of the views of the social partners. The Government are committed to responding to the consultations on foot of the paper's publication within 12 months of the ratification of this agreement by developing a framework for comprehensively addressing the pensions agenda over the longer term.

## Transfer of Undertakings Directive-Optional Pensions Provision

"8.9 The Government is agreeable in principle to the transposition into Irish law of the optional pensions provision of the Transfer of Undertakings Directive. The Government will finalise its consideration of the issue by end-2007, taking full account of the views of IBEC and ICTU on the implications of the options for transposition.

8.10 The Pensions Board will be asked to develop an options paper, dealing with the technical issues that would arise. In addition, the Board will take into account the extensive existing legislation and technical standards dealing with the dis-aggregation and merger of pension schemes."

Soon after the ratification of the Towards 2016 Agreement, a Partnership Pensions Review Group was set up and work commenced on the framing of the Green Paper on Pensions. Minister Brennan gave a commitment that this would be published by Easter 2007 so that the responses to the subsequent consultations would be made within the 12-month timeframe referred to in Par. 8.8 (see above), i.e. by September 2007. However, although work on the Green Paper was completed before the Easter deadline and submitted to the government, the latter did not publish it prior to the General Election in late May 2007.




David Begg, Peter McLoone, Jack O'Connor.

## CHAPTER 2

# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING





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# Developing Union Strategy for Lifelong Learning

It is now approximately fifteen years since Irish unions first used EU money to develop their capacity to deliver work-based learning for members. This built upon a long existing tradition of activist education and training. The provisions of Towards 2016 constitute a timely opportunity to take stock of our Lifelong Learning policy and evaluate the options open to us.

Learning, whether achieved through education or through training runs as a common theme through the rapidly changing labour market debate of the last ten years. When Congress took its first steps to provide work-based learning for workers, we did so as an aid to older workers, with a lesser level of education facing competition in the labour market from a seeming unending flow of graduates from the Institutes of Technology. Now, as that flow of graduates has dwindled, the emphasis on training of those in work has increased. It is crucial for maintaining competitiveness for increasingly technological industry in a globalised economy.

The era of full employment has exacerbated the problems of skill foundation in the labour market and the development of our human capital stock. The education system at all levels has experienced the strong pull of a buoyant labour market and students left courses earlier than they might - not just as early school leavers but by leaving at degree level and avoiding postgraduate study.

The appetite of the labour market for student labour exercised a downward influence on the quality of students study. Additionally, increased work intensity and lengthened commuting times were a major disincentive to workers returning to study. This is compounded by Government's regressive attitude towards fees for adult learning.

Irish economy and society faces a number of challenges. One is to tackle the problem of underachieving young males in the education system, one is to tackle low educational levels among the over 45's while the third is to promote a habit of recurrent learning among all age groups.

Unions have always championed what is termed the high road approach to industrialisation. We use the phrase 'moving up the value chain' as meaning the development and maintenance of increasingly complex manufacturing industry and

services. This will require a workforce that is fluent in increasingly sophisticated technologies which will in turn require continuing investment in workplace learning. Workplace learning should be seen as the maintenance department of the Irish job machine and the money attached to it as the maintenance budget. High productivity firms generally pay high wages but, in most cases, wages are only a small percentage of their total cost base. They normally have a high level of capital investment per job and thus are less vulnerable to low wage competition and the migration of jobs to low wage economies.

At the other end of the scale there is a clear consensus that much needs to be done for workers in vulnerable industries. Learning intervention pre-closure would be many times more effective than similar interventions post-closure. However, the issue of vulnerable industries is a matter that needs to be treated with considerable sensitivity. The labelling of a firm as 'vulnerable' might well be enough to panic creditor and push it over the line. Therefore it may be necessary to detach the workers from the context of the industry in order to reach them.

Unions have a key role as brokers or providers of services in this context. Key to understanding this is the fact that workers do not stay in one job all their lives - they inhabit labour markets. They move jobs and the skills they need in a potential new job may well be different from those they need in the existing industries. This means that we should direct aid at workers rather than at firms mixing vulnerable and healthy industries in training groups. Such training interventions should be available on an ongoing basis and not just when a closure is imminent or announced. Unions are ideally placed to broker or deliver such training.

Training for those in work has replaced training for the unemployed in the policy debate over the last number of years. There are a number of reasons for this. Among them are:

- the virtual disappearance of long-term unemployed;
- the competitive pressures facing manufacturing industry;
- the pressure brought on Government by the EU on the weaknesses of their approach to Lifelong Learning;

- the narrowing options of State aids for industry under EU rules over the emerging role of subsidising workforce learning as a new form of indirect industrial subsidy.

Unions should promote workplace learning as a key element of the overall industrial promotion and support agenda. This has implications for the industry promotion agencies that target firms and are therefore seen as remote from the needs of workers. As we rely more on increasingly complex technological industries, the skills needed to operate and maintain such processes are an integral part of the industrial promotion process. Any evaluation of initiatives in the areas of skills training should give positive answers to the following questions:

- Has the process made it easier for employees to access quality training?
- Has the process shifted the traditional distribution of training within enterprises (the training budget stops where the carpet stops)?
- Has the process made it easier to value learning by promoting certification and thereby strengthening the concept of a ladder of skills and qualifications?
- Has the process developed synergies and links with the partnership process?

These four key questions remain to be answered and will continue to require attention in the years ahead. We all subscribe to the proposition of the development of a strong, exporting, internationally competitive manufacturing sector. Part of the reason for our success to date is the education and training systems. From one point of view this approach is reaching its limits as the education and training system is running out of its traditional source of 18 year old recruits.

This merely confirms the need to promote learning in the workplace. This is not just a 'feel good' initiative, it is a vital process to align the supply of skills training with demands: the demands of workers for an opportunity to upskill, the demands of employers for a more highly skilled workforce and the demands of Irish society for highly skilled, highly productive and highly secure jobs.

There is an implication in the term 'Lifelong Learning' that it is the individuals who do the learning. It is also society and organisations that should learn, that should develop a collective memory of what works and what doesn't and agree strategies in the face of problems.

We should look at the issue of long-term unemployment as a model for our approach in this area. Fifteen years ago this was seen as a totally intractable problem and pundits were then saying that it would never be solved and that the age of work was over forever. Today long-term unemployment is no longer an issue. Part of the solution to the problem lay in the general economic upturn, but another significant part lay in the solutions we developed ourselves, set out in the PESP of 1991 and articulated through a range of policy measures supported by the EU and the Irish exchequer.

The genesis of union education and training arose out of technical assistance to industry, which was itself a function of the post World War II Marshall Plan's application to Ireland. The direct vocational training measures are a product of the EU funding put in place as an accompanying measure to the 1992 process. We now need to develop a strategy relevant to the Ireland of the 21st century. This means deciding what we want and what are we best concentrating on. Ultimately it means deciding what is best for unions and their members.

## The Importance of Skills for Workers

The OECD has found that 80 percent of the workforce of 2017 is already at work but that most of their skills will be obsolete by then. Therefore Lifelong Learning and skill enhancement is vital for workers, their companies and for the economy. Trade union officials have a very important role in encouraging workers to take up courses to improve their skills. Unfortunately, it is the highest educated and skilled people who usually take the opportunity to enhance their skills, while those who most require training, do not. Training improves workers' earnings over their working lives by reducing periods of unemployment, as well as boosting pay. Union officials should encourage workers to take courses and negotiate time off to attend them. Unfortunately, in spite of substantial state support and payments for training and upskilling, and the benefits for firms, too many employers will still not release workers to participate in education and upskilling.

Congress welcomed the Future Skills report, published in early 2007. The Group, in which Congress participated, found that:

- The increases in Ireland's labour quality are estimated to have contributed almost one-fifth of the total growth in output during the economic boom, due to higher levels of educational attainment and upskilling of the 1980s and 1990s;

- The improvements in labour quality contributed 1.0 percent per annum to average annual GNP growth (which averaged 6.4 percent per annum, 1994 to 2003) and annual average GNP growth per adult (4.7 percent per annum);
- Labour quality improvements had a positive impact on the employment rate;
- Investment in education increases growth and boosts national prosperity. A one year increase in average education has been found to raise output per capita by between 3 and 6 percent;
- Increasing either primary or secondary school enrolment rates by one percentage point leads to an increase in per capita GDP growth of between 1 and 3 percentage points;
- Both the initial level and the subsequent growth of tertiary education are found to be significantly related to per capita income growth in OECD countries. It has been found that a one percentage point increase in the annual growth of human capital increases growth by 5.9 percentage points;
- Pre-school development is a key determinant of performance at all levels of education. Intervention at pre-school level could help to address educational disadvantage in Ireland and help reduce the subsequent dropout rate from secondary level;
- There is clear evidence that human capital plays a key role in fostering technological change and diffusion, although the extent of this is not always captured in empirical studies;
- In addition to the monetary and economic benefits coming from education and training, there are additional benefits which positively impact on society as a result of improved educational attainment. These prove the case for sustained and enhanced investment in educational and training;
- Greater educational attainment is linked to superior health status, lower risks of unemployment and poverty, and increases in some aspects of social cohesion such as reduced crime potential and greater political participation. Research has also found positive associations between higher levels of education and lower smoking participation, a lower incidence of excessive alcohol consumption and increased level of exercise.

While the Future Skills' report concentrates on the benefits to society and to the economy, workers also gain with increased earnings when they enhance their skills.

In order to ensure that any workers who want require learning and new skills will be able to access it, Congress believes we need to following measures need to be taken:

- 1) Increased orientation towards mature learners;
- 2) The introduction of paid learning leave;
- 3) A purse of about €12,000 available for every Irish citizen to pursue education and Lifelong Learning at any stage of their life cycle. The cost to the state of the average student at university is around €3,600 a year. Over three years it is amounts to €11,000. Should there not be a purse available to each citizen of Ireland, who can access this amount, provided they complete a recognised course?
- 4) The development of support networks for adult learners;
- 5) The remission of fees for adult learners. It is clearly regressive and perverse that we provide free tertiary education to degree level to all school leavers, but charge for 'second chance' education for people whose PAYE contribution has funded the education sector;
- 6) Congress wants the reallocation of 0.5 percent of workers' existing PRSI contribution to the national training fund;
- 7) Our seven universities and 13 institutes of technology should be harnessed in a single institution tasked with providing distance learning, on the model offered by the Open University in the UK.

Our vision of education is one of a system which will deliver the benefits of Lifelong Learning for all Irish citizens, but in particular for workers. Those who combine study with work and with family life deserve significantly more support than they currently receive. Such a system would serve the needs of the individual, the economy and of society and it should be aimed much more at the less well educated who need more investment and assistance from the state, employers and from unions in the pursuit of Lifelong Learning.





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## CHAPTER 3

# IMPROVING WORKING CONDITIONS

## Information & Consultation of Employees

The Bill transposing the Information & Consultation Directive into Irish law passed all stages in the Oireachtas on March 29, 2006 and signed into law by the President on April 9. Congress viewed this Directive as a potentially important development as it was intended to extend existing employee information and consultation rights. It also represented an opportunity to foster and deepen partnership-style approaches to managing and anticipating change. Congress contends that effective information and consultation is not only a right of all workers, but that it can serve as an essential building block in the construction of the workplace of the future. .

When the Employees (Provision of Information & Consultation) Bill emerged in June 2005 it was a major disappointment. Congress had argued that the legislation transposing this Directive should enshrine the right of employees to information and consultation in their workplaces. Instead, the Bill and the enacted legislation adopted an extremely minimalist approach. When the legislation was adopted in May 2006, it provided:

- that employees must trigger the right to information and consultation and that there was no automatic obligation on employers to do anything unless they choose so voluntarily;
- even if employees were successful in triggering the right to information and consultation the employer could have a significant say in who the employee representative would be;
- that the employer could opt to meet their legal obligations while avoiding the need to consult with employees on a collective basis, and it provided no basis for the participation of trade union officials in the employee representative forums.

During the enactment of the legislation, Congress did seek to have amendments adopted to improve the legislation. However, none were adopted. While there are some positive aspects to the legislation – such as the right to paid time off for training of employee representatives - it is largely down to the employer to determine how their obligations are met. The Labour Relations Commission (LRC) was requested by the Minister for Labour Affairs to prepare a Code of Practice to assist employees in understanding how to avail of their rights and how employers might meet their obligations. At the time of writing, Congress is awaiting a proposal from the LRC on the content of the proposed code.

## Health & Safety Advisory Committee (RoI)

The Health & Safety Advisory Committee meets bi-monthly and continues to play an active part in all aspects of policy and practice pertaining to health, safety and welfare of people at work. The committee is chaired by Eamon Devoy (TEEU). Amongst the issues dealt with during the period under review were:

### 1. The passing into law (Sept 2005) of the Safety Health & Welfare at Work Act, 2005

The main changes this legislation provided for were:

- Extended duties of persons other than employees, in the place of work (contractors, suppliers, designers, landlords etc);
- Enhanced provisions on the role of safety representatives and the safety and health consultation process;
- New penalties for breaches of health and safety legislation including larger fines, imprisonment and 'on the spot' fines;
- Clearly defined role of the Health & Safety Authority;
- Health surveillance & medical fitness to work;
- Testing for intoxicants in prescribed circumstances;
- Protection from penalisation for employees and safety representatives.

### 2. Bullying at Work

Louise O'Donnell (Impact) represented Congress on a sub-committee of the Health & Safety Authority (HSA) which reviewed anti-bullying policy in the light of 2005 Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act. This sub-committee has commissioned a major piece of research by the ESRI to establish whether the **Guidelines for Dealing with Workplace Bullying** have had an impact on the problem. The results of the research and the final report of the review group are awaited, at time of writing.

### 3. Stress and Violence at Work

During the period under review, the Committee monitored the progress made in regard to two European Social Dialogue negotiations, on workplace stress and violence respectively. Agreement was reached at European level on workplace stress but, to date, it has not been possible to have this ratified at national level. Agreement in principle had been reached at European level in respect of violence at work and it is likely that, when this agreement is ratified, it will face the same problem at the national level as the stress agreement. IBEC and Congress have referred the agreement on workplace stress to the Labour Relations Commission with a view to drawing up a Code of Practice.

If this proves successful, It is intended that the agreement on workplace violence will be dealt with in a similar manner.

#### 4. Voluntary Protection Partnerships

The Committee closely monitored the progress of the Health and Safety Authority's project on Voluntary Protection Partnership, which involves a small number of companies entering into an agreement with the HSA to cooperate in trying to improve safety standards. This model was adopted for the USA during Ireland's EU presidency. The Committee took the view that there is not sufficient social partnership involvement in the VPP model and so Congress opposed any expansion of the project.

#### 5. Personal Injuries Assessment Board (PIAB)

The Committee monitored progress in relation to the new system of compensation for personal injury, as operated by the PIAB. The Committee was concerned lest the quantum of awards would be reduced, or at least limited, by the new system. At time of writing the level of awards appears to be holding up and delivery time from claim to settlement greatly reduced

#### 6. Health and Safety Authority

The Committee gets regular reports from the Congress representatives on the Board of the HSA. The current Congress representatives on the Board are Louise O'Donnell (IMPACT), Sylvester Cronin (SIPTU) and Fergus Whelan, Congress

### Construction Industry Committee

For a number of years the Construction Industry Committee (CIC) experienced internal difficulties. Some affiliates refused to attend CIC meetings, or participate in any way. Notwithstanding these difficulties, the Officers of the CIC and the Congress official managed to effectively represent construction workers at the National Joint Industrial Council and in direct negotiations with the Construction Industry Federation.

In December 2004, the Executive Council set up a sub-committee, comprising Jack O'Connor (SIPTU), Paddy O'Shaughnessy (BATU) Jim Moore (UCATT) and Owen Wills (TEEU), to review the operation of the CIC. The sub-committee recommended a number of changes to the constitution of the CIC, which were accepted by the Executive Council. In December 2005 a BGM was held in which all unions participated. Since then the CIC has worked with a unity of purpose to effectively represent the interests of all construction workers. Amongst the range of matters dealt with by the CIC were:

- A significant improvement in the benefits payable in the Construction Operative Pension Scheme;
- A restructuring of the management of the Pension Scheme;
- An improvement in the Registered Employment Agreement Disputes Procedure;
- Ongoing participation in the Construction Safety Partnership;
- Participating in the Pension Board's Review of non-compliance with the Construction Industry Pension Scheme.

The CIC also produced briefing documents for those who negotiated **Towards 2016**. The issues covered were:

- Non-compliance with Registered Employment Agreement;
- Public Procurement;
- Migrant labour and displacement in the industry;
- Employment Agencies in Construction;
- Health & Safety;
- Construction Industry Pay Determination;
- General Employment Rights.

**Towards 2016** contains many provisions which will be of significant advantage to construction workers. The Officers of the CIC are: Tommy White, Chair, Jim Moore, Vice Chair and Niall Irwin Secretary. Fergus Whelan is the Congress servicing official to the Committee.

### CIE Group of Unions

In the period under review, the CIE Group of Unions continued to coordinate the conduct of industrial relations across the CIE Group of companies. The Group also assisted Congress in developing a response to the proposals to re-regulate public transport provision and in particular, on a proposal to establish a Transport Authority for the greater Dublin area. Hugh Geraghty, RIP, acted as Secretary of the Group during this period and Congress is currently in discussions with the unions and the CIE companies about the future structure and functioning of the CIE Group of Unions.

### Irish Ferries Protest

In December of 2005, Trades Councils throughout the country responded to a request by the Executive Council of Congress to support the workers in Irish Ferries and in opposition to the 'race to the bottom' by organising protest marches in several locations throughout Ireland. On December 9, a National Day of Protest saw massive turnouts in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick, Waterford, Sligo, Athlone and Rosslare. Trades Councils in Northern Ireland also demonstrated their solidarity, by holding a demonstration outside UTV

offices in Belfast. The Chairman of the UTV Board is a director of Irish Ferries.

At time of writing a three day event is planned for the Spring of 2007, to coincide with the 90th anniversary of Bray Trade Union Council. Eric Fleming, Executive Council chairs this Committee. Fergus Whelan and Tom Gillen are the Congress servicing officials.

## Private Sector Committee (PSC)

The Private Sector Committee did not meet regularly during the period under review, choosing instead to meet when necessary. Several meetings took place in late 2005 and early 2006 to prepare position papers for the negotiations on Towards 2016. The following is an edited version of the positions adopted by the Committee at the commencement of talks in 2006. The main issues were identified as: Worker Displacement, Public Procurement, European Directive on Services, Employment Rights Enforcement and Employment Agencies.

### Worker Displacement

In advance of the talks, evidence began to emerge of an increase in the number of workers being replaced either by workers on significantly lesser terms and conditions, or of the work being outsourced to a third party, who would employ people on lesser terms and conditions.

The Private Sector Committee suggested the enactment of a new statute or an amended statute on collective redundancies that would require:

1. Consultation with unions well in advance of the date of implementation of collective redundancies or significant outsourcing.
2. Failure to agree at local level would result in mandatory reference to the LRC and if necessary the Labour Court, with powers given to the LRC and Labour Court to compel parties to attend and engage.
3. Labour Court must be convinced of economic necessity of proposed measures and can engage expert advice to assist. Parties must co-operate with expert assistance.
4. Labour Court will issue recommendation and would allow the parties 30 days to consider recommendation.

### Public Procurement

The scandal at Gama Construction highlighted the significant difficulties relating to private sector provision of goods or services. The Committee demanded a general fair labour clause in the legislation transposing the Directives and in order to ensure:

1. That any public authority seeking to have public works contracted to the private sector would be obliged to request the Labour Court to determine what is the appropriate rate of pay and conditions of employment for the type of work concerned. In determining the rate of pay and conditions of employment the Labour Court would have regard to only collectively bargained arrangements.
2. That the public authority would then advise potential contractors of the determination of the Labour Court and advise them of their obligation to adhere to the determination of the Court when preparing their bids.
3. Any new statute should also require private sector employers to facilitate trade union organisation and collective bargaining.

## Proposed European Council Directive on Services

The Private Sector Committee identified two significant problems with the draft Directive. Firstly, the limited scope of the Directive and secondly the application of the country of origin principle to standards of employment. The Committee demanded that:

1. Government commit to supporting the use of the country of origin principle only for measures already harmonised across the European Union;
2. The scope of the Directive would be amended to exclude all public services;
3. Government would propose and support the enactment of a Directive on Services of General Interest and that the two Directives would be processed in the same timeframe.

## Employment Rights Enforcement

The PSC identified two fundamental problems with Employment Rights enforcement. Firstly, much employment rights legislation is weak and difficult to enforce. The piecemeal development of the legislation has led to a confusing array of procedures and fora for vindicating these rights. Secondly, the Employment Rights Enforcement Unit as currently structured is incapable of vindicating the rights of abused workers. The PSC demanded:

- The consolidation of employment rights legislation;
- All cases which currently go to EAT to go to Rights Commissioners in first instance;
- The enforcement unit should be taken out of DETE and be set up as an Agency;



- It should have an inspection staff of 75;
- A specialist unit to police the Registered Agreement in Construction, involving the parties to REA;
- The Agency to operate on a regional basis and be capable for operating a significant out of hours service;
- The burden of proof re compliance should be on the employer;
- Most cases should go through the Rights Commissioner Service with appeal to the Labour Court, rather than the Criminal Courts;
- Criminal prosecution should continue for serious breaches and repeat offenders. GAMA type situations should lead to prosecution on indictment;
- More prosecutions should be directed at failure to keep records;
- Statutory requirement for keeping records in a standard format;
- Trade union officials right to access to statutory records;
- The extent of the role of the inspector in helping claimants take cases to Rights Commissioner and Labour Court;
- Refine Public Procurement guidelines so that non-compliance with ER obligations becomes a disqualifying feature;
- On-the-spot fines for breaches of Protection of Young Persons Act;
- Difficulties in enforcement with companies and Agencies based outside the jurisdiction;
- Increased resources and enhance communications systems to inform all workers including migrant workers of their rights and entitlements and redress procedures;

## Trade Union Activity and Unfair Dismissal

The PSC demanded that re-instatement should be mandatory in cases of unfair dismissal for trade union activity and that the compensation levels for unfair dismissal on other grounds should be significantly increased

## Employment Agencies

The PSC believed that enforcing or vindicating the rights of workers who are employed by employment agencies, particularly those with registered offices outside the State, is impossible under current legislation. Therefore the Committee sought that, where Irish companies use agencies, the client company should have statutory responsibility for ensuring the employment rights legislation is complied with, in the same way as the client has overall responsibility for health and safety at work and has obligations to 'police' sub-contractors etc.

## Other Private Sector Matters

### Employment Rights Compliance

The Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment issued a consultation paper in May 2004 on the functions and operation of the current range of Employment Rights Bodies, following a process of consultation. It was agreed that proposals would be developed to improve the delivery of employment rights services. To this end, an Employment Rights Compliance Group was established in mid-2005 and reported to those involved in the **Towards 2016** negotiations in February 2006.

It was agreed that the principles which should underpin any new compliance model should:

1. be effective in promoting high compliance;
2. be fair, impartial and provide for due process;
3. be simple to understand and use;
4. be clear as to where to go for information and the vindication of rights;
5. provide a quality service with an emphasis on the speedy resolution of issues;
6. provide that ownership of the issue remain with the complainant (with the assistance of their representative) insofar as possible;
7. provide for ongoing consultation/review with the Social Partners;
8. provide for the 'public-interest';
9. provide value for money.



**Promoting the development and improvement of Irish industrial relations policies, procedures and practices through appropriate, timely and effective services to employers, trade unions and employees.**

The Labour Relations Commission provides the following services:

- industrial relations Conciliation services
- industrial relations Advisory services
- a Rights Commissioners service
- a Workplace Mediation service
- assistance to Joint Labour Committees and Joint Industrial Councils in the exercise of their functions

The Commission undertakes other activities of developmental nature relating to the improvement of industrial relations practices including:

- the review and monitoring of developments in the area of industrial relations
- the preparation, in consultation with the social partners, of codes of practice relevant to industrial relations
- industrial relations research and publications
- organisation of seminars/conferences on industrial relations/human resource management issues
- training services

**The Labour Relations Commission**

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**The Labour Relations Commission wishes Congress and delegates every success with your Biennial Conference, 2007.**

## Public Sector Committee

### The Benchmarking Process

The Report of the Benchmarking Body was published on July 1, 2002. Subsequently, the PSC Negotiating Group engaged with the Public Service Employers on implementation of the findings. These discussions concentrated on the modernisation issues associated with implementation of Benchmarking; and the arrangements for payment of the balance of the Benchmarking Awards following the one-quarter of same due from December 1, 2001.

The discussions overlapped with the negotiations between Congress and the employers on a successor to the PPF, (i.e. **Sustaining Progress**) which provided for the application of both the general increases under **Sustaining Progress** and the implementation of Benchmarking – the phasing of the former had to be adjusted to take account of the latter.

The Public Service Pay Agreement made in the context of **Sustaining Progress** provided for the maintenance of industrial peace and further Developments on Modernisation and Change in the Public Service, both generally and in individual sectors, along with a system of independent verification of compliance with the agreement, as a condition precedent to the payment of the increases.

In addition, provision was also made for a further Benchmarking Review which would be discussed between the parties during the period of the agreement, including terms of reference, **modus operandi**, establishment and timescale of a further such exercise. These issues would be settled in the context of the discussions on whatever arrangements on pay and conditions were to be put in place on the expiry of the agreement.

The Public Service Pay Agreement reached in the context of **Sustaining Progress** concluded on June 30, 2006.

Negotiations on a successor to **Sustaining Progress** took place over an extended period and resulted, ultimately, in **Towards 2016** being ratified by a Special Delegate Conference on September 5, 2006.

In the case of the Public Service, the final increase under the previous agreement (2.5 percent) was applied to the pay of members from June 1, 2006 and, as mentioned above, the agreement expired on June 30, 2006.

The Public Service Pay Agreement concluded under **Towards 2016** runs from July 1, 2006 September 30, 2008.

The application of the increases in the Public Service is as follows:

Phase I	1 December, 2006:	3.0%
Phase II	1 June, 2007:	2.0%
Phase III	1 March, 2008:	2.5%
Phase IV	1 September, 2008:	2.5%

The second phase of 2 percent is increased to 2.5 percent for workers whose weekly pay is at or less than €400 (€20,859 per annum). The cumulative effect of these increases is 10.4 percent (10.9 percent for lower paid up to €400 per week).

The first pay agreement under Sustaining Progress, which covered the initial part of the programme, contained a provision to the effect that the Benchmarking Process was an appropriate way of determining public service pay rates in the future.

Under the terms of the second pay module, there was an agreement to carry out a further Benchmarking exercise. The Benchmarking Body was to commence its review by the second half of 2005 and report in the second half of 2007.

The PSC was required to engage in discussions with the employers on a number of issues in order to ensure the following issues were dealt with:

- the terms of reference of the Body;
- the list of grades to be reviewed by the Body;
- the membership of the Benchmarking Body.

Agreement was subsequently reached on all issues.

As regards membership of the Body, the PSC and the employers agreed on the following nominations on 13 January, 2006:

**Daniel O’Keefe, S.C. Chair,**  
**Mr Billy Attley**, former General Secretary of SIPTU,  
**Ms Olive Braiden**, Arts Council; former Chair of Justice sector Performance Verification Group,  
**Mr John Malone**, former Secretary General of the Department of Agriculture and Food,  
**Mr Thomas McKeivitt**, former Deputy General Secretary of the Public Service Executive Union,  
**Mr Willie Slattery**, Managing Director, State Street International (Ireland) Ltd.,  
**Professor Brendan Walsh**, Emeritus Professor of Economics, UCD

The Negotiating Committee engaged with the Body, in consultation with the Public Service Employers, on the approach which the Body would take. In that context, the arrangements which were settled include the following:

- The PSC and the Public Service Employers would both make submissions to the Body on general issues;
- The Body would invite unions and employers concerned with grades being reviewed directly by the body (List 'A') to make submissions;
- Guidelines for submissions were prepared by the Body;
- The Body set July 7 as the closing date for receipt of submissions
- Unions and employers concerned with grades on List 'A' exchanged their submissions;
- The parties had an opportunity to make written comments on each other's submissions;
- The body would use a system of Job Evaluation to compare jobs in the Private Sector with the jobs on List 'A';
- The Body would have oral hearings with the PSC, the National Public Service Employers, unions and employers concerned with the grades on List 'A', Congress and IBEC;
- The Body placed an advertisement in the press seeking submissions from the general public – oral hearings were confined to the Bodies mentioned above.

An important aspect of the work of the Benchmarking Body is the job evaluation exercise, which is designed to compare jobs in the Private Sector and the Public Service to establish comparisons between the two areas of employment.

As mentioned above, in addition to the submissions from individual unions and groups of unions, the PSC and the National Public Service Employers also made submissions to the Body and had meetings with same. These submissions and meetings dealt with general issues, such as other studies on pay in the public service and the private sector, the relevance of international comparisons and general conditions of employment across the public service, most notably, superannuation schemes.

The Body met with representatives of the PSC in July, 2006 to discuss the submission. The PSC also made a supplementary submission to the Body on the National Earnings Survey published by the CSO in May, 2006.

Congress and IBEC also met with the Body.

At the time of writing, a further submission to the Body by the PSC, on pension issues, is being finalised. Consultants were engaged for this purpose. There is likely to be a continuing need for engagement between the PSC and the Body as time goes on.

The Body is to publish its report in the second half of 2007. Implementation will be dealt with in the context of the negotiations to take place on the expiry of **Towards 2016**. These discussions are likely to take place in the winter of 2007/2008.

**Towards 2016** provided that the essence of the conditions concerning industrial peace, co-operation with modernisation and change and Performance Verification provided for under Sustaining Progress would continue.

In the context of the First Benchmarking Exercise, the rates of pay for the craft grades and the related non-nursing and general operative grades outside of Dublin had been set by a parallel benchmarking process. Under the terms of the agreement on the second pay module under **Sustaining Progress**, it was agreed that the arrangements in relation to the next parallel benchmarking process would be the subject of discussions between the parties. Such discussions took place and certain areas of disagreement on the processes involved were referred to the Labour Court, which issued a recommendation that was accepted by the parties.

## Performance Verification

As mentioned above, **Towards 2016** provides that pay increases are conditional on verification of satisfactory achievement of the provisions on co-operation with flexibility and ongoing change; satisfactory implementation of the agenda for modernisation and the maintenance of stable industrial relations and absence of industrial action in respect of any matters covered by the agreement.

**Towards 2016** provides for the re-establishment of Performance Verification Groups (PVGs) in each sector of the Public Service. The partnership processes in each of the sectors of the Public Service developed Action Plans for the implementation of the agreement in each sector. These had to be submitted to the appropriate PVGs for confirmation that they met the terms of the agreement. The PVG could refer the matter back to the partnership structures if it considered that the initial action plans were not satisfactory.

The agreement also provides that the Secretary General responsible for each sector reports to the PVG for the sector, on the progress made on the action plans. Each sectoral PVG has to make an assessment of progress, at the latest, one month in advance of the each of the payment dates specified in the Agreement.

The ultimate responsibility for deciding whether a grade should be paid the increases due (i.e. that



the grade had co-operated with the provisions of the agreement) rests with the Secretary General responsible for a sector. In the event that he or she saw problems arising, unions are to be advised in advance. In the last analysis, if unions consider that a decision by a Secretary General is not in conformity with the agreement, it is provided that the matter can be referred to the Labour Court or the relevant Public Service Arbitration Board for a final determination.

The Performance Verification system has worked reasonably well in most sectors in respect of the increases due under the agreement to date.

At the time of writing this report, discussions are taking place between the parties concerned with the Parallel Benchmarking process for the craft grades and the related non-nursing and general operative grades to settle the terms of reference etc. for same.

## Public Service Monitoring Group

Under the terms of the PPF, it was agreed to establish a Public Service Monitoring Group (PSMG) to oversee implementation of any future public service pay agreements (whether forming part of an overall national programme or otherwise).

The PSMG deals with any overarching issues that arise in implementing these agreements, as well as any other issues which both sides agree would help to improve the operation of public service pay and industrial relations.

Membership of the PSMG comprises an equal number of employer and PSC representatives. The PSMG determines its own procedures and the attendance can be varied to take account of the agenda. It is open to either side to raise issues relevant to its terms of reference.

The PSMG was continued under **Sustaining Progress** and has played an important role in monitoring and facilitating the Performance Verification Process leading to the payment of the increases due.

## Representation On Various Groups

The representation of the Committee on various bodies is as follows:

### Negotiating Group

Peter McLoone	Chair & IMPACT
Matt Merrigan	Vice-Chair PSC and SIPTU
Blair Horan	CPSU
Sean Ó Riordáin	AHCPS
Michael Coffey	FUGE
Brendan Hayes	SIPTU
John Carr	INTO
Jim Dorney	TUI
Liam Doran	INO
Stephen Delaney	POA
Fintan Hourihan	IMO
Daltún Ó Ceallaigh	IFUT
John White	ASTI
Liam Berney	ICTU
Dan Murphy	Secretary & PSEU

### Public Service Monitoring Group

Peter McLoone	Chair PSC & IMPACT
Matt Merrigan	Vice-Chair PSC and SIPTU
Brendan Hayes	SIPTU
Blair Horan	CPSU
John Carr	INTO
Liam Doran	INO
Peter Nolan	IMPACT
Jim Dorney	TUI
Dermot Mahon	AMICUS
Dan Murphy	Secretary PSC & PSEU

### Joint Working Group on Pensions

Peter McLoone	Chair & IMPACT
Matt Merrigan	Vice-Chair & SIPTU
Blair Horan	CPSU
Dave Thomas	AHCPS
Michael Coffey	FUGE
Brendan Hayes	SIPTU
Stephen Delaney	POA
Billy Sheehan	INTO
Jim Dorney	TUI
Dave Hughes	INO
Shay Cody	IMPACT
Fintan Hourihan	IMO
John White	ASTI
Liam Berney	ICTU
Dan Murphy	Secretary & PSEU

## OFFICERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Officers of the Committee elected at the 2006 Annual General Meeting were:

<b>Chair:</b>	Peter McLoone (IMPACT)
<b>Vice-Chair:</b>	Matt Merrigan (SIPTU)
<b>Secretary:</b>	Dan Murphy (PSEU)

# VERSION



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## CHAPTER 4

### EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

# Regulation of Employment Agencies

According to one respected body, recent years have seen a 68 percent rise in agency working in Ireland.\* Affiliates have reported that some employers are using agency work as a means to avoid employment rights, pay employees less and introduce lower standards. During the period under review, Congress vigorously campaigned for improved protection for agency workers and for better regulation of the agencies themselves. Unfortunately, we did not secure new legislation - a key demand - to provide for equality of employment between agency workers and comparable permanent staff.

However, Congress did secure commitments under **Towards 2016** for legislation to improve the regulation of employment agencies, to prohibit certain agency practices and to eliminate some of the loopholes leading to employment rights avoidance. **Towards 2016** provides for principles to inform the development of the new legislation.

At time of writing, Congress was in discussions on this proposed legislation to regulate employment agencies, establish a code of practice and require compliance with the Code as a condition for licensing. It will make it an offence for any employer operating in Ireland to use an unlicensed agency. The legislation will also prohibit the use of agency workers in certain circumstance and outlaw certain agency practices. It will provide improved rights for agency workers and will give clarity as to the identity of the 'responsible employer'.

In 2006, Congress requested the Equality Authority to undertake an investigation into whether and to what extent employment agencies are being used as a means of 'equality avoidance' and whether the legal definition of a comparator was undermining equal pay and equality legislation. This is an unacceptable and it could, potentially, undermine all our progress on discrimination at work.

**\*The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living & Working Conditions**

## The Unequal Workforce

In May, 2007, Congress called for new legislation to stop agency workers being treated as second class citizens. Ireland, the UK and Hungary are the only EU countries where it is permissible to pay agency workers less and subject them to worse working conditions, than regular staff.

Ireland now has the highest proportion of workers employed on temporary contracts in the EU and, with the workforce now over 2 million, this has huge implications for the future. Some 500 employment agencies are believed to operate out of this country.

In recent times, Congress has received an increasing number of reports from affiliates which highlight the fear and suspicion that some employers utilise employment agencies primarily as a means of 'equality avoidance' – circumventing employer obligations to the equality provisions of employment legislation.

In response, Congress conducted a survey among some 280 job seekers in order to gain a clearer insight into their perceptions of employment agencies and their role in the recruitment process.

The survey revealed that 76% felt that some agencies do discriminate against potential candidates, primarily by not sending some forward for interview on the basis of their gender, if they had children, were pregnant or already had children, or had a disability (even where the disability had no impact on their capacity to do the job in question).

Pregnant women were seen as the most likely to suffer discrimination, followed closely by workers with a disability.

While there are very few cases where an employer will pointedly and overtly refuse to employ a person (under one of the nine grounds of discrimination prohibited in the Employment Equality Acts) it is clear that job seekers are concerned that discrimination is



practiced in more indirect and subtle ways. A majority clearly feel that some employers utilise agencies to try and ensure certain 'types' are filtered out of the selection process.

Interviews and jobs are not refused because the prospective employee is, for example, over 50 years of age, rather the candidate is not sent for interview as they do not suit the company employee 'profile'. Concerns about discrimination include all nine grounds prohibited under the law.

## Survey

The survey was carried out through the Congress Network of Centres and the Congress Youth Committee and specifically targeted current and recent job seekers. 280 Questionnaires were returned and these are the preliminary results.

## Survey Results

- 76% of people believed that there were some jobs an employment agency would not send people for because they were a woman and
- 55% believed this to be true for men
- The group seen as most likely to experience discrimination was pregnant women (89%) followed closely by workers with a disability whom 87% believed would not be sent for jobs because they had a disability even though the disability would not prevent them undertaking the work involved.
- 64% believed that having children would influence the decision of an agency to send a worker for some jobs.
- 86% believed that some agencies would discriminate against people because of where they lived, (this is not currently a discriminatory ground protected by employment equality legislation).
- 86% also felt some agencies would discriminate on the basis of nationality, which is unlawful, whereas a job seeker's colour was considered to be less relevant with only 63% of people believing this would influence a decision to send someone for interview.
- 83 % of those surveyed also felt there were jobs that some employment agencies would consider unsuitable for people from the Traveller Community.
- 71% believed that a person being overweight would influence a decision not to send a person for some jobs. Age was identified as an influence on the decision to send people for jobs by 85% of the respondents.
- Of this sample group, a third (32.5%) had tried to find work through an employment agency.

- 60% of these job seekers were not informed who the agency had sent their CV to.
- While over a half (53%) were not told who their prospective employer was, despite being interviewed.

Because of deficiencies in Irish Labour law, employment agencies can be used to undermine the equal pay provisions of equality legislation when an employer employs their staff on an ongoing basis through an agency.

Congress has been calling for improved legislation to combat the use of employment agencies as a means of equality avoidance. Congress believes that recruitment agencies should be obliged to inform workers of the jobs that they have put them forward for and also the jobs that they were deemed unsuitable to be put forward for. Otherwise, recruitment and placement agencies are capable of being used as a mechanism through which employers may defeat the protections against unlawful discrimination in the recruitment process provided in the Employment Equality Acts 1998 & 2004.

Establishing a "right to know" what job you were/ were not put forward for should be supplemented by the right to be informed about any other use the employees CV was put to. This will assist people to complain about breaches of their rights to the Equality Tribunal and allow employees existing rights to be vindicated.

The vast majority of EU member states have addressed the problem of employers using agency work as a means to avoid employment rights, to pay employees less and to introduce lower standards, by introducing laws to provide for equality of employment between agency workers and comparable permanent staff. We are calling for similar legislation to include similar terms to other laws around Europe, that agency workers should receive the same terms and conditions as comparable permanent employees in the user enterprise. Ireland, the UK and Hungary are the only member states not to have introduced the right to equal treatment for agency workers.

## Securing a Better Employment Permits Regime

When the Employment Permits Bill was introduced in 2005, Congress described it as 'bad law'. We did so for a number of very important reasons, chief among these being the fact that the proposed legislation would merely enshrine in law many of the bad practices and regulations then in existence.

Crucially, despite reports and claims to the contrary, the Bill did not deliver on the key promise of worker ownership of the permit, but continued to tie them to the employer. It had been our argument from day one that any new scheme should protect workers, not make them more vulnerable to abuse. It was therefore essential that individuals would be able to change jobs freely and escape abusive employers.

During the course of 2006, we won significant improvements and changes to the legislation, particularly in the context of **Towards 2016**. The Employment Permits Act was passed in June, 2006 and among the key measures it contained were:

- Workers entitled to apply for their own permit;
- Employers prohibited from charging workers costs associated with their recruitment;
- Employers prohibited from retaining employee documents, such as passports, visas, qualification certificates, bank documents;
- Workers on employment permits must be paid the minimum wage, ERO/REA;
- Spouses of permit holders granted residence in Ireland would also be granted an employment permit.

Congress continued to lobby for improvements to the scheme and we later secured a number of new safeguards in respect of restricted categories of jobs and new rules for intra-corporate transfers. However, much remains to be done, particularly with regard to provision of a bridging mechanism for undocumented workers, along with measures to make the promise of Green Card a reality.

## Preventing an Irish Ferries on land

It was our evaluation, following the resolution of the Irish Ferries' dispute, that it was only a matter of time before some employers attempted to follow that – except they would almost certainly try to do so on land. Legally, there was no provision to prevent them doing so. Thus, preventing an Irish Ferries on land became a key priority for the successor to Sustaining Progress.

Arising from those negotiations, Congress secured a commitment for new legislation designed to prevent the unacceptable practices highlighted by Irish Ferries.

At the time of writing The Exceptional Collective Redundancy Bill (2007) was nearing completion. A central feature of the legislation is the creation of a 'Redundancy Panel'. The Panel will deal with proposed collective redundancies and will ask the Labour Court for an Opinion as to whether or not the

proposed collective redundancies are in fact genuine and without any replacement/displacement effect.

Congress and the employers will be represented on the Panel, with the Chair provided by the National Implementation Body (NIB). The Minister may also on his own initiative refer cases to the Labour Court for an Opinion.

In circumstances where the proposed redundancies are found by the Court not to be genuine, then the 'redundancies' may be deemed to be unfair dismissals under the Unfair Dismissals Acts (1977 to 2001), with a right to take a case to the Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT) or a Rights Commissioner. The new legislation provides for an enhanced level of awards (5 years pay) in such cases. Furthermore, such an Opinion by the Court would lead to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment conducting his or her own examination of the application for an employer rebate.

## Accession of Romania & Bulgaria

Congress supported the decision to apply 'transitional measures' to the employment of workers, upon the accession of Romania and Bulgaria in January 2007. Congress was concerned to ensure we would have in place adequate safeguards against abuse and not create the conditions that would facilitate employers bringing workers from Romania and Bulgaria into Ireland, on the basis of wages or working conditions below those acceptable to Irish or other workers within the EEA area. Migration will not contribute to our economic and social strategy if it is driven by low wage labour. Congress has called for the transitional measures to apply to self-employed and to remain in place only until the new employment rights and compliance regime is in place and working effectively.

## Bogus Self-Employment

It used to be obvious whether a worker was an employee or self-employed. But now the difference between an employee and an independent contractor is often deliberately blurred. In many instances, supposed 'clients' of the self-employed are actually employers and the relationship amounts to a contract of employment, within which the worker is dependent for all or most of his or her work.

As the differences in the treatment of directly-employed workers and the self-employed have grown, so it has become more attractive for companies to dodge responsibility by contracting employees, rather than directly employing them. In some sectors, the self employed are quickly becoming the rule rather than the exception.

In 2006, Congress once again highlighted union concerns about bogus self employment and the fact that many workers are pressurised into adopting that status by prospective employers.

Under previous social partnership agreements, Congress negotiated the Code of Practice in Determining the Employment and Self Employment Status of individuals. In the most recent agreement, **Towards 2016** we have secured a commitment from Government to rigorously apply the criteria on employed/self-employed, as set out in the Code, and to ensure that workers status is clear and unambiguous. Compliance and enforcement of the Code should be further enhanced by changes introduced in the Social Welfare Act 2007 which allows for Revenue, Social Welfare and the Labour Inspectorate to share information. In addition, amendments as part of the Finance Act 2007, which require more meaningful reporting of RCT1s, will hopefully bring about closer compliance with the Code.

It is worth mentioning here that in June 2006, the ILO concluded Recommendation 198', which sets out that member states would provide for a legal presumption of employment. The presumption of employment would be a helpful approach as it would mean that employment protection legislation would apply unless it was proved to the contrary. In addition, recent case law has again confirmed that certain self employed workers are covered by the scope of legally enforceable collective agreements and employment rights as 'workers'.

## Protecting Domestic Workers

In 2005 Congress initiated a campaign to improve the recognition, rights and entitlements of workers employed in private homes, or domestic workers.

The campaign focused on improving the situation of all domestic workers – many of whom are migrant women - and also aimed to change the culture around domestic work.

Reports of abuse and difficulties experienced by these workers were myriad. In October 2005, Congress published a briefing paper on the issue **Migration Policy & the Rights of Workers**, which contained examples of the abusive treatment suffered by these very vulnerable workers:

***“One day she threw a wet and dirty cloth at my face and told me to clean the floors. Her children sat at the kitchen table laughing at me. I cried and went to my room. Later that day I saw the children throw clothes at each other pretending***



Drummer leads December 9th March

***it was me. It was like I was a slave and they were playing target practice.”***

Those were the words of 'Sara' a domestic worker from Sri Lanka, who had been forced to seek work abroad when her home was devastated by the December 2004 Asian tsunami.

The complaints received from Domestic Workers detailed wide-ranging abuses: unreasonable duties, excessive working hours, abusive treatment and long working weeks, pay levels below the legal minimum wage, arbitrary dismissal. Remember that domestic workers can lose their job and home at a moments' notice.

Another concern was the lack of insurance cover provided by employers for domestic workers, in relation to accidents at work and social welfare insurance cover. Frequently, domestic workers are not properly covered for circumstances where they become sick or unemployed, or in relation to pregnancy/ maternity benefits.

A key aim of the Congress campaign was to inform domestic workers of their rights and to encourage them to join unions. To this end, autumn 2005 saw the production of a 'Know Your Rights' style booklet, in English and French.

Domestic workers' demands to be recognised as workers and the necessity for improvements in their working conditions were included in the Congress agenda for the talks that led to ***Towards 2016***.

Despite some resistance, Congress was successful in securing a commitment to develop a Code of Practice on the Employment of Workers in Other People's Homes. This Statutory Code was finally introduced in May 2007 and it sets out the employment rights and protections for workers in the context of domestic work, in other people's homes. The Code is an important milestone in the development of employment rights for a particularly vulnerable group of workers. The campaign puts employers on notice that these workers are getting organised and must have their rights recognised.

The Code outlines how existing employment rights can be achieved for workers employed in the private home. It recognises the particular circumstances of domestic workers and addresses issues such as: the treatment of board and lodgings, accidental breakages annual leave and breaks, deductions from wages, the obligation to provide a written statement of terms and conditions, the holding of personal documentation.

The Code clearly outlines that domestic workers must be respected and given dignity at work and in their living arrangements, with clear guidance on the minimum acceptable living arrangements and respect for workers privacy, social life and union membership confirmed.

The next step for Congress is to secure provisions in the upcoming Employment Rights legislation for the circumstances in which the labour inspectorate can gain access to these workplaces. In addition our campaign to have a 'bridging mechanism' introduced for workers who have become undocumented, particularly in circumstances where the employer failed to reapply for their permit will, when successful, be of benefit to many of these workers.



## CHAPTER 5

# REPRESENTATION & DISPUTE RESOLUTION

# Overview

The Executive Council Report to BDC 2005 gave an account of the progress made since the enactment of the Industrial Relations (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004, and the development of the revised Code of Practice on Voluntary Dispute Resolution. In that report, we drew attention to two particular cases: the first involving SIPTU and Ashford Castle, the second involving Impact and Ryanair.

In the Ashford Castle case the Labour Court had issued a binding determination which made substantial improvements to the conditions of employment of the SIPTU members. This was appealed to the High Court by the employer. In his judgement Mr. Justice Clarke rejected the employer's appeal and found that the Labour Court had acted properly in coming to its decision and that the company had the ability to meet the terms of the award. Following the judgement, Ashford Castle implemented the terms of the Labour Court determination.

In the Ryanair Case the employer had been granted leave to take judicial review proceedings against the Labour Court. In those proceedings before the High Court, Ryanair argued that the Labour Court had been wrong to come to the conclusion that it was not the practice of Ryanair to engage in collective bargaining. In his judgement Mr. Justice Hanna agreed that the Labour Court had acted properly in coming to its conclusions and there was no reason to set aside the Labour Court decision. Ryanair appealed this to the Supreme Court, which issued its judgement in February 2006. The judgement ordered that the Labour Court decision be set aside and that the case be reheard by the Labour Court in light of the Supreme Court decision. At the time of writing this report the full impact of the Supreme Court decision was being evaluated.

## Disputes in the Private Sector

The number of days lost due to industrial disputes in the period 2005-2006 fell considerably, when compared with the previous two years.

As the table below shows the total number of days lost due to industrial action was 34,017. This compares with 58,266 for the period 2003-2004. In spite of unprecedented economic growth, increased company profits and productivity, unions in the private sector had to fight hard to maintain decent terms and conditions for their membership. The most obvious and infamous example was the dispute at Irish Ferries, which saw an unscrupulous management attempting to shed the unionised workforce and replace them with vulnerable migrant worker on half the minimum wage.

A number of disputes also arose when companies attempted to resile from pension commitments to staff. The most prominent offender was Bank of Ireland, which attempted to dilute pension benefits for new staff. Bank of Ireland recorded a profit of €1.4 billion in 2006 and has a market value of some €17 billion.

During the period under review a number of private sector disputes were referred to the National Implementation Body. These included: Irish Ferries, Diamond Innovations, P. Elliott & Company, Johnson Controls Limited, Irish Sugar and Smurfit Kappa.

## All-Out Picket Applications

There was only one application to Congress for an All Out Picket during the period in question. The application was made by Mandate in their dispute with Tara Street Service Station. The application was granted.

Year	Number of Disputes	Number of Firms Involved	Workers Involved	Total Days Lost
2005	15	14	3291	26665
2006	10	10	1186	7352

Source CSO

Year	Number of Referrals	Number of Meetings	Settlement rate at Conciliation
2005	1692	1924	81%
2006	1519	1959	82%

Source LRC

## The Labour Relations Commission

The Labour Relations Commission (LRC) promotes the “development and improvement of Irish industrial relations policies, procedures and practices,” and assists with the resolution of disputes. The LRC provides a number of services including, a Conciliation Service, an Advisory Service and a Rights Commissioner Service.

The table above shows the number of cases dealt with by the Commission’s Conciliation Service in the period under review. The data shows that the Conciliation Service continues to successfully assist in resolving the vast majority of disputes referred to it.

The Advisory Service of the Commission is concerned with the development of industrial relations practices, procedures and structures. It is also the division of the Commission that deals with disputes referred under the Statutory Code of Practice on Voluntary Dispute Resolution. The activity of the Advisory Service in the period under review is summarised below.

Cases/Projects	2005	2006
Industrial Relations Audit	6	13
Joint Working Parties	11	11
Preventative Mediation/ Facilitation	24	30
Advice	5	10
Code of Practice on Voluntary Dispute Resolution	78	82
Research	0	4
Training	0	21
Frequent Users	0	24
Others Projects (ICT, Promotion etc.)	0	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>210</b>

Source LRC

The Commission also provides the Rights Commissioner Service. This service provides an inexpensive and informal means of resolving individual industrial relations and employment rights cases.

The work load of the Rights Commissioner Service has continued to increase year on year since it was established and this trend has continued in the period under review. The number of cases referred to the Rights Commissioners in this period is summarised in the table below.

2005	2006
5598	7179

Source LRC

The Board of the Labour Relations Commission was reconstituted in 2005. Congress is represented on the Board of the Commission by Peter Bunting and Peter McLoone. When the Board was reconstituted, Congress raised serious concerns about its make-up, particularly the number of representatives either nominated by, or drawn from employer organisations. At the time of writing Congress was continuing to press Government to redress the obvious imbalance on the board.

## Labour Court Users’ Group

In 2005 the Labour Court established the Labour Court Users’ Group, to act in an advisory capacity to the Court on administrative and general policy matters. It is chaired by Mr. Finbarr Flood and consists of three Congress representatives, three employer representatives and representatives from the Court. The aim of the Group is to support the development of improved services for those using the Labour Court and provides a mechanism which allows users to make an input. Four meetings have been held to date, dealing with issues such as the improvement of the online information provided by the Court and the facilities and support provided by users of the service. A key issue being tackled is reducing the length of time it takes for cases to be heard.

## Disputes Committees Reports

The Executive Council was not asked to approve any Disputes Committee Reports in 2005 or 2006.

### TEEU /Amicus dispute regarding the representation of electricians at Cadbury Ireland Ltd.

A long running dispute regarding the representation of electricians at Cadbury Ireland Ltd was finally resolved following the intervention of the Congress, in early 2007. The two unions and the members

concerned have fully accepted the findings of the Disputes Committee and the electricians have returned to membership of the TEEU.

## **The National Implementation Body**

The National Implementation Body (NIB) was established to ensure and oversee the stability and industrial peace provisions of social partnership. Where difficulties arise or are anticipated, the NIB may be convened at short notice. Where particular problems emerge, the NIB may make recommendations to the parties to a dispute on procedural avenues that could help resolve the dispute. The NIB's function is uniquely different from that of the Labour Court or the Labour Relations Commission. In the period under review the NIB met regularly as follows:

April 1, 2007: The NIB issued a statement following a three week process of dialogue involving the INO, PNA, IMPACT, SIPTU and Health Service Employers.

March 28, 2007: The NIB met to consider issues arising at An Bord Pleanála relating to the implementation of the Strategic Infrastructure Act, 2006 and issued a statement on the issues, to the parties involved.

February 2, 2007: The NIB met with employer and trade union representatives to consider the situation at Aer Lingus and issued a statement on the issues involved.

January 11, 2007: The NIB met to further consider the issues involving Mayo County Council's refuse collection service.

January 11, 2007: The NIB met to consider a report on the brick and block-laying sector of the construction industry.

December 18, 2006: The NIB met with employer and trade union representatives regarding Mayo County Council's refuse collection service. The NIB issued a statement to the parties involved recommending that the matter be referred by the parties to an agreed facilitator under the aegis of the LRC and, in the event of failure to reach agreement, that the issues be referred to the Labour Court as a matter of urgency, such that the Court would be in a position to issue a binding determination not later than February 8, 2007.

October 12, 2006: The NIB issued a statement on the dispute between Bank of Ireland group and the IBOA, over the company's proposal for a new pensions' arrangement in respect of new entrants. The NIB urged all parties to fully assist and cooperate with the Labour Court investigation.

October 2, 2006: The NIB issued a statement on the industrial relations difficulties in regard to Shannon Airport. The statement was issued to the parties involved asking them to make a final effort to reach agreement on all outstanding issues.

September 25, 2006: The NIB met to discuss a number of disputes and issues, including the situation at Shannon Airport.

September 25, 2006: The NIB met with employer and trade union representatives to discuss a dispute at P Elliott & Company.

September 25, 2006: The NIB met to consider further the dispute regarding redundancy terms for Irish Sugar employees at Mallow, having already met with the parties.

September 11, 2006: The NIB met to consider the industrial relations situation generally, as well as the implementation of Towards 2016.

August 17, 2006: The NIB issued a statement to the parties involved in a dispute at Smurfit Kappa, Cork, urging them to re-engage in meaningful talks facilitated by IBEC and ICTU and, if necessary, to refer the matter back to the Labour Court for clarification.

July 26, 2006: The NIB met with the management of Irish Sugar and with officials from SIPTU and the TEEU, to consider issues relating to redundancy payments for workers at Irish Sugar. No statement was issued.

July 18, 2006: The NIB met with the management of Diamond Innovations and SIPTU and the craft unions over the implementation of Phase 2 of Sustaining Progress. The NIB conveyed a statement orally to the parties, requesting the Labour Relations Commission to make further early contact with the parties to see if an agreed solution can be found. The statement was not issued generally.

July 10, 2006: The NIB met with officials from SIPTU and the TEEU to consider issues relating to redundancy payments for workers at Irish Sugar. No statement issued.



December 19, 2005: The NIB met to consider Industrial Relations issues at Shannon Airport and Atlantic Industries. In relation to Shannon Airport, a statement was issued calling for the parties involved in the dispute to engage under the auspices of the LRC to agree necessary improvements in operating costs. In relation to Atlantic Industries, a statement was issued recommending that the matter be referred jointly by the parties to the Labour Court for adjudication.

Note: [The Labour Relations Commission issued its final proposals for the resolution of the dispute at Irish Ferries on December 14, 2005]

December 12, 2005: The NIB met to consider Industrial Relations issues at Irish Ferries, Shannon Airport, and Atlantic Industries. No statement issued.

December 2, 2005: The NIB met to consider the situation at Irish Ferries. The parties involved in the dispute agreed to attend the Labour Relations Commission for further discussions. The body subsequently issued a statement on December 4, 2005 making a number of recommendations to the parties, the social partners and Government.

December 1, 2005: The NIB met to consider the situation at Irish Ferries. No statement issued.

November 30, 2005: The NIB met to consider ongoing difficulties at Irish Ferries. No statement issued.

29 November, 2005: The NIB met to consider industrial relations difficulties at Irish Ferries. No statement issued.

November 17, 2005: The NIB met with representatives of CWU and An Post management. A statement was issued noting that the accountants Grant Thornton had reported concerning the cost implications of amendments proposed by CWU to Labour Court recommendations, and requesting the Labour Court to assist the parties in reaching an agreed solution

November 16, 2005: The NIB met with representatives of CWU, An Post Management and Grant Thornton. No statement issued.

November 14, 2005: The NIB met with representatives of CWU, An Post Management and Grant Thornton. Statement issued advising that the process initiated in conjunction with accountants Grant Thornton would be finalised on Wednesday November 16, 2005 and requesting that the parties refrain from comment in the interim.

November 7, 2005: The NIB met to consider industrial relations difficulties at An Post. No statement issued.

November 6, 2005: The NIB met with representatives of CWU and An Post management. A statement was issued advising that the NIB would engage with the parties, with the support of accountants to be appointed, to clarify the cost implications of amendments proposed by CWU to Labour Court recommendations.

November 5, 2005: The NIB continued to meet with representatives of CWU and An Post management. No statement issued.

November 4, 2005: The NIB continued to meet with representatives of CWU and An Post management. No statement issued.

November 3, 2005: The NIB again met with representatives of CWU and An Post management to consider industrial relations difficulties at An Post. No statement issued.

November 2, 2005: The NIB met with representatives of CWU and An Post management to consider industrial relations difficulties in relation to payment of increases due under **Sustaining Progress** and implementation of Labour Court recommendations. No statement issued.

October 26, 2005: The NIB met with representatives of SIPTU to discuss issues relating to redundancy payments at ADM Ringaskiddy. No statement issued.

September 28, 2005: The NIB met with representatives of SIPTU and the Seaman's Union of Ireland (SUI) to consider Industrial Relations difficulties at Irish Ferries. A statement was issued noting the invitation by the Chairman of the Labour Court to meet the parties separately for informal and exploratory discussions and recommending that the parties respond positively to the Court's invitation.

September 22, 2005: The NIB met to consider Industrial Relations difficulties at Irish Ferries. No statement issued.

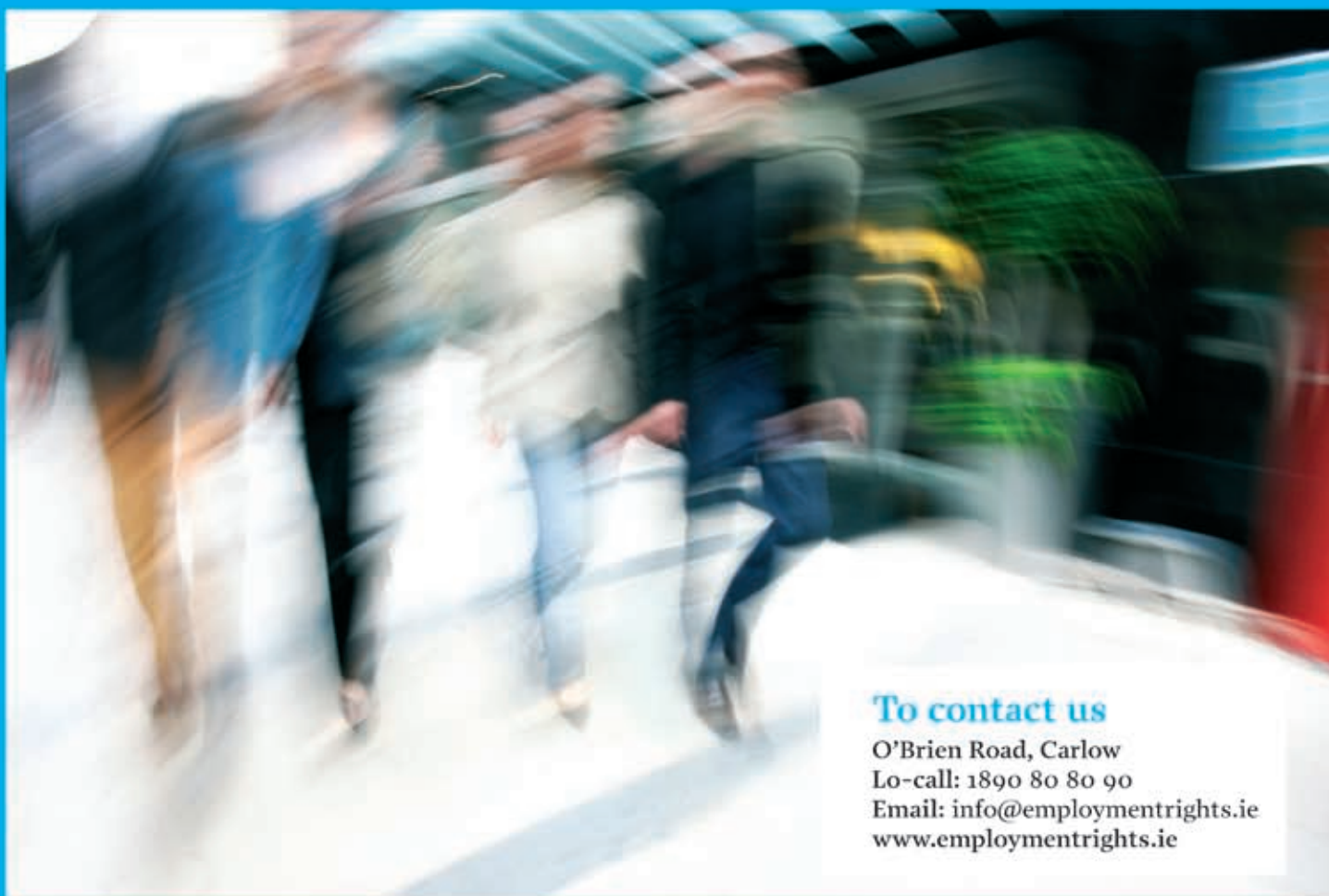
September 7, 2005: The NIB met to consider difficulties at An Post, ESB, United Airlines and Otis Lifts. The issues remain under review. No statement issued.

June 30, 2005: The NIB met for further discussions in relation to the issues involving the Dublin Print Group of Unions and the Sunday Tribune, as per the June 14, 2005 meeting. No statement was issued.

# NERA

The National Employment Rights Authority  
An tÚdarás Náisiúnta um Chearta Fostaíochta

- ▶ Promotes compliance with employment rights legislation
- ▶ Providing information on employment rights



## To contact us

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## CHAPTER 1

# NORTHERN IRELAND

# Overview

At the Biennial Delegate Conference of the Northern Ireland Committee (NIC), in April 2006, the NIC presented a motion in support of the Good Friday Agreement. This was endorsed unanimously, as an affirmation of our commitment to an equal and just society. The motion highlighted a range of issues, including:

- The Economy
- Review of Public Administration
- Comprehensive Spending Review
- Water Charges
- Health & Education cuts
- Academic Selection
- PPP/PFI
- SIB/Public Procurement
- Two-tier workforce
- Skills Shortage

A range of other motions adopted at conference supported our position. At the time of writing, elections have been held and agreement has been reached between the parties and the UK Government regarding the role of the Executive and the Assembly. Ministers have now been appointed, along with Assembly Committees. The NIC will be engaging with the new administration to pursue the policies of Congress in regard to the issues above.

## Review of Public Administration

The Government has been undertaking a Review of Public Administration (RPA). This will impact on the format of District Councils and the location of public sector jobs. Already we have seen a retrenchment in the number of health bodies and initiatives are still ongoing concerning education and local government. Significant job losses have been announced in the RPA-affected areas and the NIC, through its membership of the Central Joint Forum, a body comprising senior civil servants and Congress, has been engaging in a range of activities designed to secure improved public services and job protection. This activity is ongoing.

## Water & Sewerage Charges

The introduction of separate household Water Charges was suspended by the UK Treasury within a week of the first bills being posted. This follows over three years of active Congress leadership in the Coalition Against Water Charges and a determined

policy of promoting non-payment, democratically mandated at the April 2006 Conference.

The trade union movement's campaign energised the electorate during the Assembly elections of March 2007 and candidates found that water charges were the top issue on the doorsteps. The public were directly informed by a leaflet outlining the case for non-payment, which was delivered to every household in Northern Ireland and also inserted in leading newspapers. Congress kept up the political pressure by issuing a series of statements, having trade union speakers at dozens of public meetings across all communities and a specific charter delivered to each of the 248 candidates standing for elected office. The charter asked candidates to support five pledges:

- 1) Will you pledge to keep the Water Service in 100% public ownership for the entire duration of the incoming Assembly?
- 2) Will you pledge that the land publicly owned through the Water Service will not be sold off to private hands?
- 3) Will you pledge to ensure that the regulation of Water and Sewerage is honest, open and accountable to the people of Northern Ireland?
- 4) Will you pledge to keep the Water Service open to public scrutiny and accountable to the Assembly and the locally-elected Minister for Regional Development and the DRD Select Committee of MLAs?
- 5) Will you pledge to back a campaign of non-payment of Charges, from April 1, 2007?

The majority of candidates who responded gave positive responses to the first four pledges. Most who were eventually elected said that they could not support non-payment. But the electorate led the way, as thousands of law-abiding citizens pledged not to pay twice for such a basic human right. After much lobbying by political parties who responded to the campaign led by trade unions, the Chancellor agreed to suspend Water Charges and return the issue to the NI Assembly and Executive to finally decide.



Congress will continue to campaign on this issue until the threat of separate charges and the planned privatisation of the Water Service is permanently abandoned, a theme echoed at a series of public rallies across Northern Ireland, on March 31, 2007. The NIC is working closely with all the parties and individual MLAs in an effort to promote our policies. It is now our intention to work with MLAs to reconstitute the cross-party MLA Trade Union Group. This will be vital in pursuing policies and objectives of Congress with our local administration. The Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Bilateral Forum, a body comprising Government and trade unions, is being revisited in the light of the new Assembly and we hope to make major progress on this issue in the short-term.

## The Economy

The NIC continues to influence the debate on the future of the Northern Ireland economy. This is being done through membership of the Economic Development Forum, the Economic Research Institute for Northern Ireland, and a range of European Programme Bodies, which include the INTERREG and PEACE Programmes. Key issues identified are our skills mix and the need to engage the economically inactive into the workforce. The NIC is pursuing these aims through membership of the Skills Expert Group and through initiatives on Lifelong Learning and Workplace Learning. In 2006, the NIC produced a major economic policy document entitled Not Old Wine in New Bottles.

Further to this and in preparation for the March 2007 Assembly elections, the NIC produced an Election Charter. This dealt with a range of social and economic concerns and was complemented by two distinct and more specific election charters, on Water Charges and Women's' Rights.

The Election Charter highlighted the need for the following measures:

- A sustainable economic development strategy to benefit all the people of Northern Ireland;
- Sustained and co-ordinated efforts to tackle the scourge of long-term unemployment and economic inactivity, which together comprise almost 40% of our working age population;
- Strategic investment in economically and socially deprived areas, leading to greater skills and jobs;
- The creation of high quality employment and enhanced skills training for those in and out of employment and a renewed emphasis on the importance of Lifelong Learning;
- The creation of innovative and sustainable manufacturing policies to strengthen that sector;
- The strengthening of public services and an end to privatisation by stealth in same;

- Urgent development of policies directed to improving our environment and responding to climate change, while simultaneously creating industries and employment to lead in this sector;
- The abolition of an additional tax for water and the implementation of a fair rates system;
- An end to fuel poverty and a reduction in tariffs for electricity, gas and other forms of energy;
- The restoration of a vision for good public service provision, as opposed to current Review of Public Administration (RPA), a cynical exercise in cutting services and jobs;
- Incentives to aid growth in the private sector centred on grant aid for export-led increased employment, investment in R&D, increased productivity and innovation.

The Charter also included Congress' policies on a range of issues including health and social services, education, social inclusion, equality and human rights and finally the elderly. The major elements of the Charter are detailed below:

## Health & Social Services

- Public and free at the point of need;
- The right to see a GP within 48 hours.

Issues requiring urgent action:

- Trolley waits/A & E cover;
- Health service reform;
- Waiting lists and times;
- Community and nursing home care;
- Assess to prescription drugs;
- Privatisation (PPP/PFI);
- Equality and access, particularly at local level;
- Ward closures;
- Ambulance service;
- Young people and children;
- Mental health;
- Free prescriptions for all NHS users.

## Education

- The establishment of an effective, single, governing body to meet the educational needs of all our children;
- Equality of opportunity for all young people through abolition of the 11 plus and the introduction of a fully comprehensive system of secondary education;
- Free and nutritional school meals for all, including breakfasts;
- A fully resourced health and wellbeing strategy for all pupils and staff;
- The withdrawal of any form of fees for university education;

- An end to the capping of student numbers at third level institutions in order to halt the 'brain drain';
- A new impetus on the primary school curriculum centred on the provision of science and language related subjects;
- Action with clear funding commitments on under-performance in schools, particularly numeracy and literacy.

## Social Inclusion

- Full implementation of policies to target social need;
- The location of jobs and public services in areas of greatest need;
- An end to sectarianism and divisions in our society through the promotion of non-violence and the firm opposition to policies, actions and behaviour that damage, injure or deny the rights, safety and well-being of others;
- Provision of social and affordable housing in all infrastructural developments;
- A social housing programme to enable those with a disability fully integrate into our communities and economy;
- Increased social security benefits to bring those in need out of poverty;
- A statutory duty to eliminate poverty;
- Priority programmes to address educational disadvantage, employment deficit and the need for greater protection for young people;
- Better resourced programmes to deal with substance abuse.

## Equality & Human Rights

- Full Government compliance with all international instruments and conventions aimed at eliminating discrimination in all its forms;
- Strong and early implementation of statutory duty and an inclusive and universal Bill of Rights;
- The introduction of effective legislation that will help eliminate the increasing gap between male and female pay;
- The utilisation of public procurement and investment strategies for Northern Ireland to promote the extension of equality and human rights for all;
- Effective action to tackle and eradicate racism and homophobia;
- The end of exploitation on pay, conditions and employment rights, particularly for young people, women and migrant workers.

## The Elderly

- Pension link to be restored to increases in average earnings;
- Reinstatement of the pension book;
- Free personal care for older people;

- Creation of a Commissioner for Older People;
- Free travel at 60 years of age;
- Elimination of age discrimination.

## Comprehensive Spending Review

The Government has now initiated a Comprehensive Spending Review and it is clear from our preliminary discussions that this will lead to a reduction, in real terms, of the block grant. This would also appear to indicate that there will be a significant reduction in public sector jobs, in addition to those losses already expected under the RPA. The Government is expected to issue a formal consultation on Budgets and Priorities in the autumn of 2007 and the NIC will be fully engaged in this consultative process.

## Migrant Workers

In recent years, especially since EU enlargement, both parts of the island have witnessed a dramatic rise in the number of migrant workers arriving on our shores. There are now an estimated 40,000 people of Polish origin living and working in Northern Ireland.

In order to gain greater insight and understanding of this new phenomenon, the NIC commissioned new research examining the lives of migrant workers.

***Migrant Workers and their Families in Northern Ireland*** by Dr Robbie McVeigh, was launched in December 2006, on UN International Migrant Workers' Day.

The report uncovered often disturbing stories of abuse and exploitation and called for greater engagement by the trade union movement, in terms of organising migrant workers. The report concluded with 10 recommendations:

1. It is imperative that **organising** Migrant Workers across different sectors and statuses is seen as a major priority for the trade union movement.
2. Congress should give consideration to the establishment of a **Unit for Migrant Workers Rights** with a particular focus on policy development and intervention.
3. There needs to be a properly resourced **welfare/employment rights team** based within the labour movement.
4. Congress should lobby and campaign for an ECNI formal investigation into the activities of recruitment agencies recruiting people to work in Northern Ireland.
5. The continued under-representation of migrant workers in trade union structures in Northern Ireland should be addressed. There should be **specific courses for migrant worker members** interested in becoming active in their unions.

6. Congress must become **the key social partner** in the project to institute a model of good practice of economic justice for migrant workers in the restored Assembly.
7. Congress should take a lead in policy development grounded in a rights-based approach and also review and customise its own policy and structures, with specific reference to migrant workers in Northern Ireland.
8. Congress must ensure that trade union spokespersons are fully cognisant of its policy and analysis on this issue, which is grounded in an employment rights based approach and resolutely opposed to any expression of anti-migrant worker racism.
10. Congress has engaged a broad strategic partnership in the steering group formed to support this research and it should be reconstituted as an **ad hoc** committee to drive forward policy and practice on migrant workers.

## 1907 Centenary

2007 marks the centenary of the 1907 Dockers' and Carters' strikes in Belfast, arguably the most significant event in the history of the trade union movement in the North. Congress is marking the occasion and all activities are co-ordinated by a 1907 committee, chaired by USDAW veteran Bob Gourley, one of the most respected trade unionists in Northern Ireland. The activities involve a range of communities and all affiliates, but especially the AT&GWU and SIPTU, the 'direct descendants' of the National Union of Dock Labourers and the organising talents of Jim Larkin.

The May Day parade and all of May Week were themed around 1907. Activities included:

- Production of a pamphlet that folds out to an A2 poster, promoting the events;
- An exhibition in Belfast City Hall of the photographs taken in 1907 by Alex Hogg;
- A professional theatrical show involving an updating of 'Mixed Marriage', a play written in 1911 by St John Ervine with the strike as its backdrop;
- A Belfast City Council-commissioned window in Belfast City Hall celebrating the centenary, highlighting the role of Jim Larkin and the Independent Orange Order;
- Unison sponsored a Women's' Day lecture by Theresa Moriarty (ILHS) on March 22nd and its publication as a pamphlet;
- The SIPTU-sponsored new edition of *City in Revolt*, John Gray's definitive history of the strike;
- The AT&GWU marked the centenary with special events, publications and artwork;
- Belfast Resource Centre sponsored a piece of art that will be on permanent display in the John Hewitt bar;

- An education pack for schools;
- Distribution of a DVD of 'A Tale of Two Cities', broadcast on BBC in Nov 2006;
- A travelling exhibition/lecture series for show at community festivals in Belfast and beyond through the summer and into the autumn;
- An event at the BDC in July.

## Equality Report

### Women's Committee

The Committee has prioritised two pieces of work; flexible working and caring in the informal sector. LIFT has been extended to NI and 10 women are to embark on the programme. A series of training events has taken place on subjects including: harassment, domestic violence, sex discrimination and equal pay. A number of celebratory events were held for International Women's Day and to mark the launch of LIFT. Responses have also been made to a number of Government Consultations.

### Disability Committee

Over the period in question, the Committee has heard from a variety of guest speakers, while a meeting between the Officers and Chairs of the Disability Committees, North and South, was held to discuss issues including: Congress Disability Rights Charter, Mainstreaming Disability to Congress programmes and a joint event to mark European Day of People with Disabilities. The theme for the 2005 seminar was Employment & Training for People with Mental Health Needs. This was followed by another successful seminar in 2006 on Training & Employment for People with Learning Disabilities.

### Black & Ethnic Minority Committee

The Committee has been involved in a number of projects including the launch of Migrant Workers and Their Families in NI, published on International Migrants Day. A meeting of unions was also held to discuss recruitment of migrant workers. A number of events have also been arranged including a play NEWKID and the showing of *Amazing Grace* to mark Intercultural and Anti-Racist Week. Meetings have been attended with Polish, Czech and Slovak workers. In addition, submissions were made to various bodies, including the Equality Commission, NICE and the Race Forum.

### Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Committee

The Committee held a workshop to discuss a response to the Consultation on the Sexual Orientation Strategy. A number of affiliates requested speakers from the Committee. Names have been put forward to OFMDFM office for the LGB Steering Group. At the time of writing a one day school has been arranged to discuss strategies. Documents

including No More Hiding Place for Prejudice and OURSTORY have been circulated to raise the profile of LGBT issues in the workplace.

### **Equality & Human Rights Committee**

The Committee hosted an event to celebrate the European Year of Equal Opportunities, at which the other Committees spoke of their work and their aspirations for 2007. Congress Vice-President spoke at the HR Consortium event on the Bill of Rights. The Vice-President and Officer have also secured seats on the Bill of Rights Forum. This year will also see a meeting with the Northern Ireland Human Rights' Commission to discuss CEDAW, the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, on which the Government must submit a shadow report to the UN. Ongoing meetings have been held with the Equality Commission to discuss Migrant Workers, Single Equality Bill and related issues.

### **North/South Committee**

The North/South Committee continues to meet on a regular basis. The main items of business are: **Towards 2016**, including the all-island economy, the North/South Economic Development Strategy, the North/South Health Partnership, labour mobility and skills, North/South Round Table, the Participation and Rights Project, public procurement and equality matters. The Committee is currently considering what recommendations it can put forward regarding the North/South Economic Development Strategy.

### **Health & Personal Social Services**

The AGM of the Health Services Committee was held in February 2007 and new officers elected. The Committee is currently focussed on the Review of Public Administration (RPA) and the reorganisation of the Health Trusts. Under RPA the construct of the Health Services administration has changed and significant job losses announced. The Committee has been active in working with non-affiliated trade unions to promote partnership and also to highlight the funding difficulties in the health sector. A major public rally was held in Belfast in March 2007. This was co-ordinated by Congress with the assistance of a number of non-affiliated unions.

### **Education Trade Union Group**

The Education Trade Union Group has held its AGM and has appointed new officers. The bulk of the Group's work has been concentrated on the Review of Public Administration. Meetings have been held with the Department regarding the RPA and also the Comprehensive Spending Review. Representations



Assistant General Secretary Peter Bunting

have also been made in relation to the membership and role of the new Education & Skills Authority and the Education Advisory Forum. These discussions are ongoing.

### **Trade Union Education & Lifelong Learning**

This period saw the retirement of Tom Moore in August 2005. Tom served as Education and Training Officer with Congress for over a decade.

Clare Moore was appointed as Education and Training Officer in July 2006.

The Government's long awaited Skills Strategy finally appeared in February 2006. Whilst the NIC welcomed its publication and acknowledged the need for a comprehensive strategy to address the skills needs for Northern Ireland, we noted that the role of trade unions in raising the skills levels of our workforce was given scant attention.

Unions need to be recognised as key stakeholders in the skills policy framework and this should be supported by robust partnership arrangements at regional, sectoral and workplace levels. We continue to work closely with the relevant government departments in the rollout of the skills strategy and the NIC is represented on the Department for Employment & Learning (DEL) Skills Expert Group as well as the DEL Essential Skills Committee and the Sector Skills Development Agency.



The NIC office has continued to provide a first class service to affiliates in relation to trade union education and has worked closely with our delivery partners, BIFHE and the NWIFHE, to focus on new courses and curricula tailored to affiliates needs. This has included a focus on shorter courses, such as Introduction to Pensions and Dealing with Workplace Stress. Adding to the portfolio of courses designed for Union Learning Representatives (ULR), our trade union studies department has offered Stage 2 courses for ULRs including Skills for Life.

We continue to offer unique courses - such as Introduction to Equality developed by Congress, BIFHE and the Equality Commission - and have been working closely with the Open University (OU) to ensure that our Certificate courses are not only recognised for access purposes but that they carry credit transfer points towards higher education courses.

December 2006 saw the launch of a memorandum of understanding between Congress and the Open University. Director of the Open University in Ireland, Rosemary Hamilton, spoke warmly of the partnership between the two organisations whilst AGS Peter Bunting praised the OU for their efforts in widening participation and access to higher education. The memorandum outlines special discounts available for trade union members wishing to study OU courses, along with bursaries available for those on lower wages.

The partnership between the Congress and the Open University was further acknowledged at an OU conference where the EU funded Cross Border Openings project was recognised as a best practice model.

A conference to celebrate the end of the third year of the ULF NI and to examine successes and challenges was held at the end of March 2006. The conference was addressed by the Secretary of State, Peter Hain who announced a renewed commitment to the Fund and additional capacity for the NIC ICTU in delivering on the skills agenda. Two Project Workers have been appointed by NIC ICTU to support the development of the Union Learning Fund and Union Learning Representatives.

To date, six projects have been supported by the NI ULF: UNISON, ATGWU, POA, FBU, CWU, AMICUS and UCATT. Funding of current projects will continue until March 2008.

## May Day

The May Festival is now established as a major event in the cultural and social life of Northern Ireland.

The May Festivals of 2005 and 2006 attracted huge audiences both for the rally and the family festival afterwards in St George's Market. The Community Relations Council and affiliated trade unions continue to financially support the festival.

Thanks are due to the NIC May Day committee which continues to meet throughout the year to plan May Day events. The Committee works especially hard to ensure strong participation from Northern Ireland's minority communities. Particular thanks should go to the Chinese Welfare Association, the Indian Community Centre and the African Cultural Group for their support in this.

## Health & Safety Committee

The Health & Safety Committee was re-established in Autumn 2006 with a renewed programme of work which particularly focuses on vulnerable workers and supporting health and safety representatives. Since then the Committee has met with the Health and Safety Executive NI to discuss joint events and partnership and has scheduled meetings to focus on developments in relation to health and safety in the Republic of Ireland and in the rest of Europe. The Committee continues to promote the HSENI Safety Rep of the Year Award and to work with the Executive to plan the HSE's Spring Conference. A conference for Health and Safety Representatives is being planned for September 2007.

## Trade Union Education & Training Committee (TUETC)

The TUETC was re established in Autumn 2006 and has worked with the Education department to plan each term's programme and to act in an advisory capacity to the NIC's union learning project. A programme of work was drawn up in March 2007.

## Global Solidarity

The Global Solidarity project made rapid progress during the period under review, with Neil Alldred joining the Belfast office in July 2005.

Immediately prior to that, Aileen McErlean had been appointed Treasurer of the Make Poverty History (MPH) coalition in NI and played a leading role in ensuring that Congress was to the fore in all MPH campaigns and events in Belfast and beyond.

Right through 2006 and 2007, Neil offered modules on Globalisation and Trade Unions to the AT&GWU Advanced Shop Stewards' courses across NI on a regular basis. He also taught on the Master's in Leadership for Sustainable Development at the Gibson Institute at Queen's University. Global



Mick O'Reilly, NI First Minister Ian Paisley and David Begg in Wright Bus, Ballymena

Solidarity also made presentations at union conferences – e.g., the NASUWT in March 2006 and the UTU in March 2007.

Neil and Aileen attended the evaluation meetings of the MPH campaign, to see where the follow-up initiative – the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) could next concentrate our campaigning efforts. As a complement to its work in MPH and GCAP, we joined the Coalition of Aid and Development Agencies (CADA) as well as the Boards of the Centre for Global Education (CGE) and of the international agency IRENE (the International Restructuring Education Network, Europe), based in the Netherlands.

We also participated in a European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) Working Group on Trade and Globalisation and spoke to the TUC Seminar on International Development in September 2006. We engaged regularly with MLAs and other politicians – with Carmel Hanna of the All Party Group on International Development (APGID) on several occasions, to discuss the Education for All campaign, the Arms Trade, and to introduce her to Timothy Kondo (of Zimbabwe) and Henry Wejja (of Tanzania) who participated in political lobbying carried out during ICTU's Workers and Farmers Speakers' Tour on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs).

Project staff engaged with Fairtrade issues and spoke at a number of venues on Solidarity issues – for example, at the Ormeau Baths Gallery exhibition on Work in November 2006 and at the Development Education Conference in Belfast in March 2007. We were involved in Latin America Solidarity Week (April 16-21) and were instrumental in launching the

Trade Union Friends of Palestine, which Neil services on behalf of the NIC.

Staff would like to express appreciation to the voluntary members of the Global Solidarity Committee, NI, which met regularly and gave valuable support, guidance and feedback on the activities of the project.

## Youth Committee

The NIC ICTU Youth Committee has been reactivated over the past two years. Since then, we have been actively involved in the water charges campaign and the NIC ICTU Youth Workers' Rights Card, along with hosting the young trade unionist conference for all of Ireland and actively assisting in preparations for May Day. The Committee have been involved in building up a network of young trade unionists to expand on their campaigns. The committee is due to be reconstituted in the next few months. If any one wants to join the NIC ICTU Youth you can contact Aileen McErlean through the NIC ICTU Office.

Aileen McErlean (T&G/ ICTU)  
 Donal O'Liathain (AMICUS)  
 Claire Hanna (AMICUS)  
 Kerry Flack (BTUC)  
 Stephen Gribben (CWU)  
 Kieran McCann (IBOA)  
 Karen Reid (UNISON)  
 Ronan O' Dochartaigh (UNISON)  
 Diane Nugent (UTU)

## NI Submissions & Publications

**Amendments to the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations** (Northern Ireland) 2003 (OFMDFM) (Belfast, July 2005)

**Implementing the EU Equality Obligations in Northern Ireland: Updating the Sex Discrimination Order** (OFMDFM) (Belfast, July 2005)

**Review of Public Administration** (Belfast September 2005)

**Review of the Operation of the s75 Duty** (NIO) (Belfast, September 2005)

**Coming of Age** (OFMDFM) (October 2005)

**Making Migration Work for Britain: Managed Migration** (Home Office) (Belfast November 2005)

**Promoting Equality of Opportunity: Consultation on the Draft Employment Equality (Age) Regulations** (NI) 2006 (OFMDFM) (Belfast, November 2005)

**Priorities and Budget 2006-08** (Belfast, December 2005)

**Older People's Strategy: Action Plans and Progress** (OFMDFM) (Belfast, January 2006)

**NIHRC Strategic Plan 2006 - 2008** (Belfast, January 2006)

**Review of Powers of the NIHRC** (NIO) (Belfast, February 2006)

**Not Old Wine in New Bottles** (Belfast, April 2006)

**ECNI Draft Corporate Plan 2006 – 2009** (Belfast, February 2006)

**DEL Work & Families: Choice and Flexibility** (Belfast, June 2006)

**Workplace Guidance on Domestic Violence and Abuse** (Belfast, June 2006)

**Response to the DHSSPS Northern Ireland Suicide Prevention Strategy** (Belfast, June 2006)

**Special EU Programmes Body Preparation of Operational Programmes for the EU Cross-Border Territorial Co-Operation and the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation 2007-2013** (Belfast, June 2006)

**Collective Redundancies – Employers' Duty to Notify Government** (Belfast, July 2006)

**Draft Water and Sewerage Services** (NI) Order (Belfast, August 2006)

**Draft Local Government Pension Scheme** (Amendment No.3) Regulations (NI) 2006 (Belfast, August 2006)

**DRD's Consultation on Powers, Status and Governance of Public Trust Ports in Northern Ireland** (Belfast, September 2006)

**Options For A New Local Government Pension Scheme In Northern Ireland** (Belfast, October 2006)

**Sexual Orientation Strategy** (Belfast, November 2006)

**Migrant Workers & their Families in Northern Ireland** (Belfast, December 2006)

**EU Structural Funds – Northern Ireland Competitiveness and Employment Programmes 2007-2013** (Belfast March 2007)

**Consultation on Draft Charges Scheme for Northern Ireland Water Limited 2007 -2008** (Belfast, March 2007)

**Supporting Families in Northern Ireland** (Belfast March 2007)

**Promoting Good Relations** (Belfast March 2007)

**Northern Ireland Draft Regional Economic Strategy** (Belfast, April 2007)

**Hidden Cruelty, Secret Pain (Sexual Violence)** (Belfast, April 2007)

**Submission to the Committee for Regional Development on the Terms of Reference for the Review of the Water Service** (Belfast, May 2007)

**Submission to the Committee for Regional Development on Labour Force issues in the Water Service** (Belfast, May 2007)



# Skillnets

## Enterprise-led learning networks

Skillnets is an enterprise-led support body whose mission is to enhance the skills of people in employment in Irish industry to support competitiveness and employability. Skillnets is funded from the National Training Fund and its stakeholders include leading employer and employee representative bodies - IBEC, Chambers Ireland, CIF, SFA, ICTU.

To find out more about how Skillnets can help you meet your training needs please contact a member of staff at 01 2079630 or email [info@skillnets.com](mailto:info@skillnets.com)



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An Rann Fiontar, Tríola agus Fiontartha  
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment



## CHAPTER 1

# THE ECONOMY

# Overview

The prolonged period of economic growth - the Celtic Tiger - began in 1987 but did not translate into jobs growth until 1994. Growth eased somewhat in 2001, before a new phase of growth commenced in 2002, albeit at a somewhat lower rate than previously. This mini-Celtic Tiger is still in train and growth rates of over five percent, twice the developed world average, are continuing.

The past two years have been exceptional in terms of employment growth, with:

- A booming jobs market;
- High job creation;
- Strong immigration;
- Tight labour market – many job vacancies;
- Employers facing recruitment and retention problems;
- Strong services employment growth;
- High level of productivity.

But ....

- Manufacturing employment has fallen after some years of exceptional growth
- Although productivity is very high in Ireland, the rise of recent years has slowed

## Public Finances

Because the public finances are strong and in good health, the following observations can be made:

- There has been no need for tax increases on workers;
- Government can fund extra spending on the 'social wage' (health care, education, public transport, childcare, eldercare etc) from economic growth and by closing the many loopholes still left open for property speculators and out-dated business 'incentives'
- Government is also to fund strong investment in a new National Development Plan to 2013, as advocated by Congress.
- The National Debt is down to just 25 percent of GDP, compared to an average of 72 percent in the Euro area. It is lowest in the EU 15, bar Luxembourg
- Large sums of taxpayers' money are being invested in the National Pension Fund (€19bn at end 2006) on top of the strong public finances

## Earnings, Wages & Inflation

The increase in wages and prices, as measured by the Consumer Price Index over recent years, is as follows:

Table 1

	2004	2005	2006	2007*	2008*
Average wage growth	6.4	5.6	5.3	5.8	4.6
Inflation	2.2	2.5	4	4.8	2.9
Increase in real wage	4.2	3.1	1.3	1.4	1.7

Source: ESRI and own estimates\*

Table 1 shows the increase in real earnings, over inflation, which generates the increase in the standard of living. The tight labour market should keep wages buoyant, but this is mitigated by inward migration. Leading firms in strong sectors and those which encounter skill shortages should pay over and above the rises agreed in **Towards 2016**, which gives an average cumulative rise of 4.6% annually over its 27 month period.

Employers have argued that wages have risen at a much faster rate in Ireland than in other EU countries in recent years and in this they are correct. However, this ignores the fact that for many years Irish wages have been well below those of our EU counterparts and, recent times, we have been catching up with them. Nonetheless, wage levels here are still lower than most of the EU 15. Equally, prices in Ireland have risen faster and price levels here are much higher here, than elsewhere in Europe. Price levels were 17 percent above the EU15 in early 2007.

On earnings, gross average earnings in Germany in 2005 were €41,074, compared to €31,663 in Ireland. When the low tax regime and very low social security contributions paid by Irish employers are taken into account, total labour costs – the cost of employing someone - in Germany were \$53,278, compared to only \$34,395 in Ireland (OECD). German employers' pay far higher social security contributions than Irish employers and the latter also enjoy our very low rate of corporation tax.

Average manufacturing earnings in Ireland are \$21.94 an hour, lower than in many EU countries. The highest cost manufacturing countries are Denmark at \$33.75 per hour, followed by Germany (including the former GDR), Netherlands, Belgium and then Sweden, Austria, Luxembourg, the UK, then France and outside Europe, the US, with Ireland ahead of Italy, as the chart below shows.

Spain and Portugal are well behind Ireland in compensation per hour, but as the chart shows, hourly labour costs in Ireland are still substantially below those of many EU countries. Relatively low labour costs, combined with Ireland's high hourly productivity, means that our performance is good.

Irish workers work far more hours per year than German workers, thanks to the latter's longer holidays

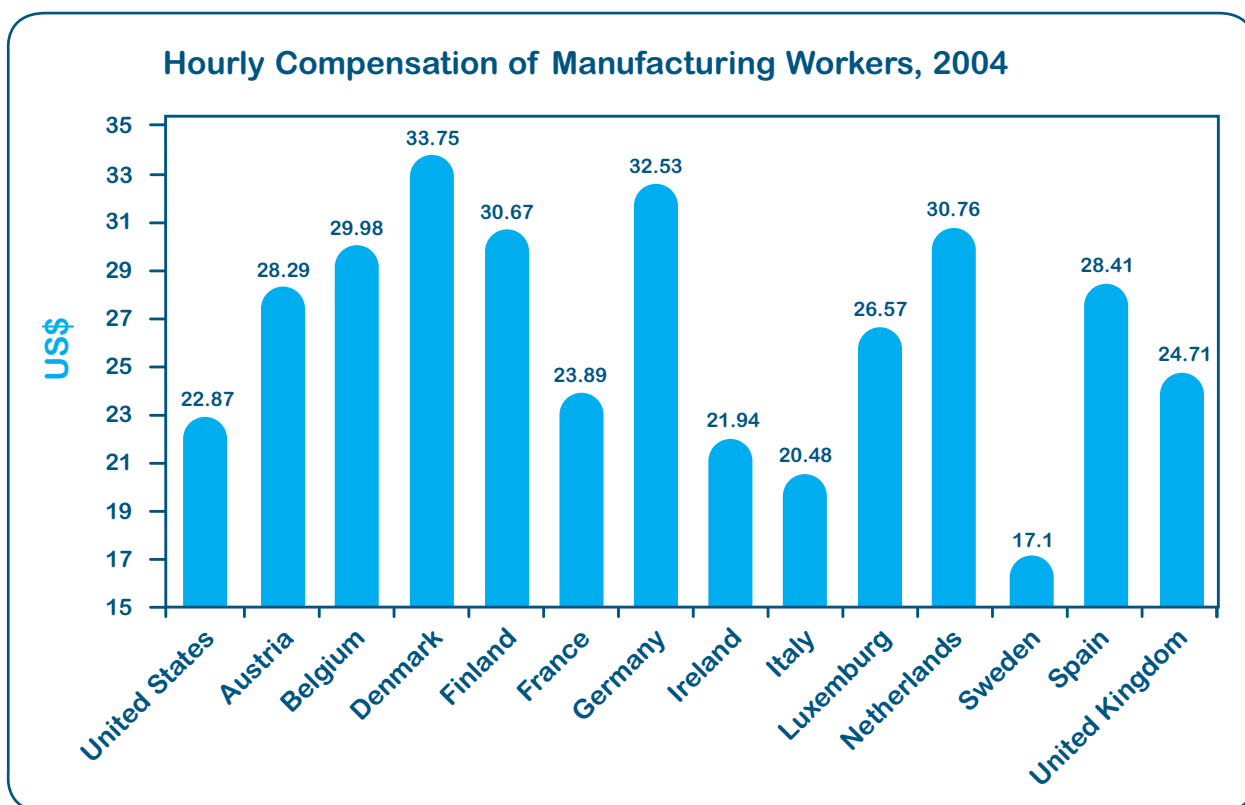
and a higher number of public holidays. On average, Irish workers work 14 percent more hours a year than German workers – equivalent to over five weeks a year. In terms of the 'social wage', Germans and other Europeans have a far superior public transport system, better child care supports and a better health system, all of which is financed by a much higher level of public spending, an issue which is explored in greater detail later in this chapter.

## Towards 2016

In 2006, workers gained an increase in real earnings and are likely to make a small gain in 2007 under the terms of **Towards 2016**. Thus, average living standards will rise in real terms, over the 27 month term of the pay deal despite a rise in inflation that was above what all forecasters predicted, during negotiations. The agreement delivers the following increases:

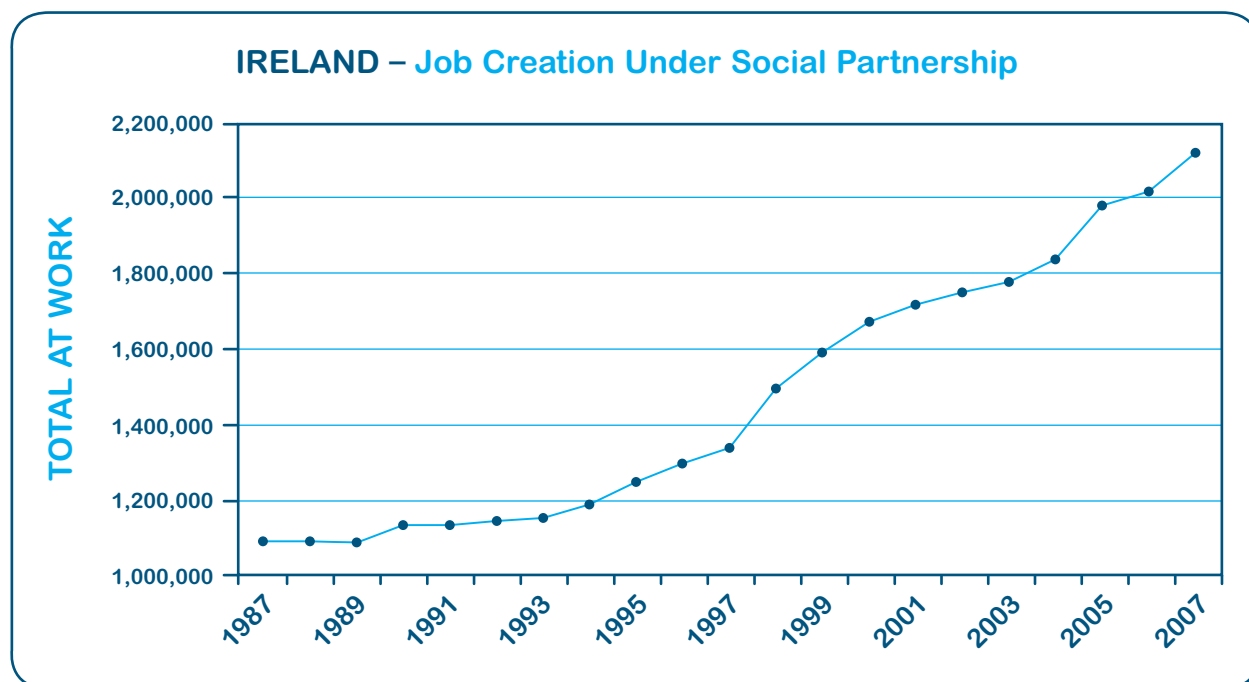
- 3% of basic pay for the first 6 months of the Agreement as it applies in each particular employment or industry;
- 2% of basic pay for the next 9 months of the Agreement as it applies in each particular employment or industry – except for those employees on an hourly basic rate of €10.25 per hour or less on commencement of the second phase, where a 2.5% increase will apply;

Chart 1



Sources: CSO, QNHS & ESRI estimate for 2007.

Chart 2



Sources: CSO, QNHS & ESRI estimate for 2007.

- 2.5% of basic pay for the next 6 months of the Agreement as it applies in each particular employment or industry; and
- 2.5% of basic pay for the next 6 months of the Agreement as it applies in each particular employment or industry.

## Employment

2006 was an historic year because total employment exceeded 2 million for the first time ever. The rate of growth in employment over the past two years has been very high – at twice the natural growth in population seeking jobs. Congress has sought a shift in Government policy from the pursuit of economic growth for its own sake, to sustainable economic development, where growth is managed and its benefits redistributed. We have had some agreement with the Government on this issue, but have seen very little in terms of hard, practical measures to implement it.

**Table 2**  
**Employment & Unemployment**

	2004	2005	2006	2007 Forecast
Agriculture	117	115	118	116
Industry	516	539	557	572
Services	1,232	1,298	1,367	1,117
<b>Total at Work</b>	<b>1,865</b>	<b>1,952</b>	<b>2,042</b>	<b>2,117</b>
Unemployed	87	89	93	97
<b>Labour Force</b>	<b>1,952</b>	<b>2,041</b>	<b>2,135</b>	<b>2,214</b>
Unemployment Rate %	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4
Net Migration	31.6	53.4	69.9	55.0
of which: Inward Migration	50.1	70.0	86.9	72.0

Source: ESRI Qterly December 2006.

Table 2 shows the rapid increase in total employment, up to 2.1m in 2007. It also shows that agriculture is now quite insignificant in the Irish economy.

Industry is boosted by the high numbers employed in construction. Services employment is growing rapidly.



Chart 2 demonstrates the economic success of job creation under Social Partnership, which began with the Programme for National Recovery in 1987. There was slow job growth until the end of 1993, when it really took off. Job creation has been strongly maintained even with the slower growth in the past five or six years. Employment growth has exceeded that of most other countries for many years. Twice as many jobs have been created in the past few years than the natural increase in the labour force with the difference made up by immigrants. Foreign workers made up just over one in ten workers, or 215,000 people. The participation rate was 62.6 percent – close to the EU average and up from 56.5 percent in 1998. The unemployment rate was 4.3 percent in 2006. Construction employed some 263,000 people, or 13 per cent of the total. This is abnormally high compared to other economies and, in the long-term, it is not sustainable.

## Skills

In the past, economists believed that the only way to achieve economic growth was by investment in plant and machinery. The role of education and training was not recognised. With the move up the value chain, from the mass production of basic goods by unskilled workers to the 'knowledge economy', there has been a major shift in economic thought and action. The key to increased earnings and economic development in the modern society is investment in education at every level, from pre-school to Fourth Level, allied with and continuous upskilling in the workplace. The **Report of the Future Skills Group**

in early 2007 showed that by 2020, there will be a shortage of people with high skills and too many people with low skills. This means that many of those at the bottom of the skills pyramid will suffer unemployment, unless action is taken to upskill them now. It is imperative that trade unions take a lead role in the education of our members.

## Productivity

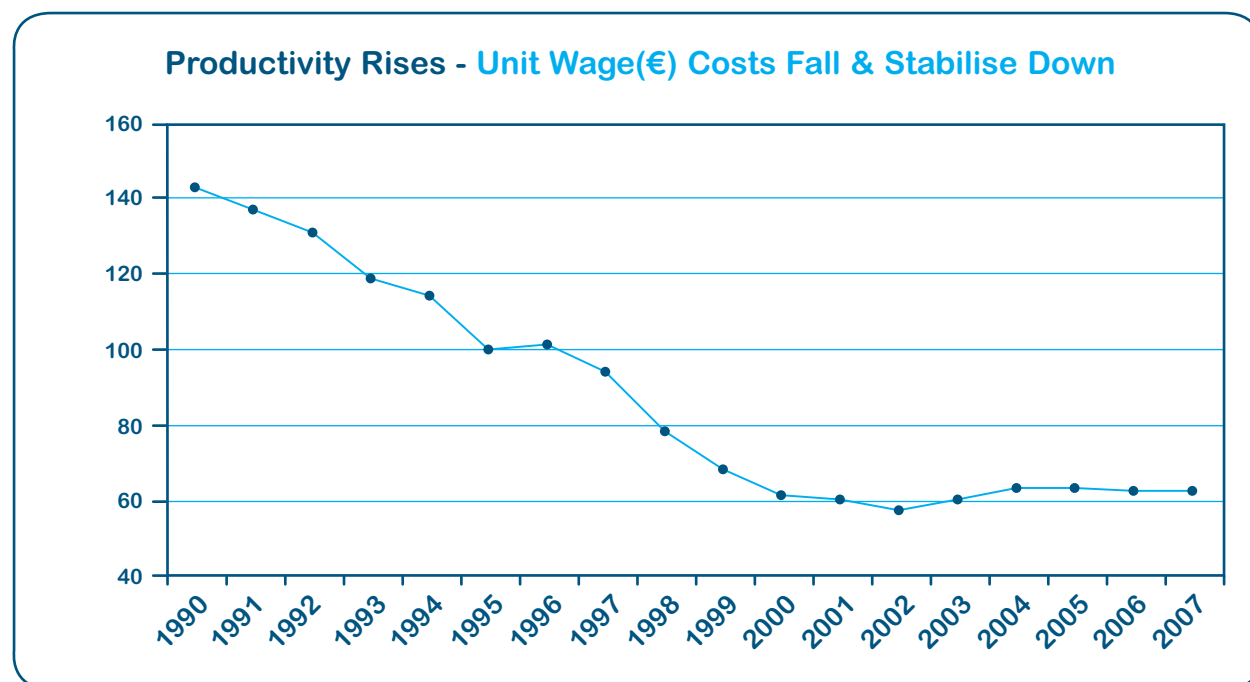
Ireland's workers are amongst the most productive and hard working in the world. There are various methods of measuring productivity, but the best is output per employee per hour worked. Ireland is near the top of the world league, close to France and ahead of the US, in this regard. Chart 3 shows how unit labour costs (in Euros) fell dramatically in the 1990s, then rose very slightly, but have since stabilised.

If you were to believe the chatter from the right-wing economists who dominate the media – **the Commentariat** – you would think that productivity is declining in Ireland and that wages should therefore be reduced! The real story is that the rapid **rate of upward growth** in Irish productivity over the past 17 year has been slowing. But the level of Irish productivity is still high.

## Inflation

Irish inflation has been amongst the highest in the European Union (15) over the past two years. What is worse is that inflation is rising from a high base. The average price level in Ireland is 17 percent above

Chart 3



Source: Central Bank.

that in the EU 15, as of early 2007. While most prices increases in Ireland are externally driven, unions are cognisant that it is unproductive to enter what could become a wage-price spiral. However, it is our job to ensure workers living standards increase in real terms and we have delivered on that ambition in spectacular fashion over the past decade. Average earnings increased by 25 percent in real terms, while after tax rises have been higher due to income tax cuts, which have substantial and, indeed, higher than what was sought by Congress. The cuts in income and company tax were accompanied by rises in spending taxes and in user charges in many areas. This pushed up inflation and was regressive, that is, it adversely impacted on the lowest incomes.

## Taxation

Taxation is important to Congress because

- it raises money to pay for public services and for welfare
- it provides money to pay for the myriad of incentives/subsidies to businesses, directly in cash grants, in tax breaks or in public services
- it can be used to help redistribute wealth

In our pre-budget submissions, Congress has focused on equity and in maintaining workers' living standards though indexation of credits and the widening of bands.

Table 1.4 shows the total payments made by industrial workers in income tax and social contributions in Column One the income tax paid as a proportion of their gross earnings in Column Two, social contributions (PRSI) in Column Three and, finally, the gross earnings of industrial workers, in Column Four (in US dollars, but adjusted for spending power and so not directly comparable to Euros).

The table clearly shows that income taxes on Irish workers are the lowest in the industrialised world. Irish workers paid only 12.2 percent of earnings in 2005, compared to an average of 17.2 per cent in the EU15, or over 30 percent in Denmark. But when the social contribution is included, workers in Belgium, Germany and Denmark pay 40 percent of earnings to the state and in many other countries they pay over 30 percent. Combined, the payment is less than 18 per cent of income here.

The booming economy has meant that Government have been able to reduce income taxes dramatically, but taxes on spending were not reduced. There were alternative tax strategies, such as a smaller reductions in income tax and reductions in spending taxes - now 70 percent higher than the total anticipated take from income taxes in 2007.

Irish employers enjoy very low Corporation Taxes and very low employers' social security contributions. Congress believes that tax competition between the member states in a single European market will ultimately prove to be self-defeating. Ireland, along with the UK, opposes Corporation Tax harmonisation in the EU. As more countries outbid each other to cut company taxes, Ireland will no longer enjoy the competitive advantage we currently have. Ultimately, the winners will be multinationals paying low taxes and the losers will be nation states, with emptier coffers. Further, low tax rates are not an intrinsic competitive advantage, but one which is bestowed on companies by the State. Furthermore, Ireland has gained from 'first mover advantage' with regard to Corporation Tax, something which cannot be repeated. Many multinationals have located profits here which are not actually made here, which has benefited the Irish Exchequer. This is an artificial and temporary benefit, on which only the most foolish would rely into the future.

The low income tax regime will not last in the long-run, because the downturn in the business cycle will lead to higher unemployment and this will necessitate higher taxes.

Under the various national agreements since 1987, Congress conceded moderate wages in return for income tax reductions for action on employment. The growth in employment has been spectacular. It is Ireland's greatest economic achievement, ever. Congress has played a pivotal role in this achievement. A 100 percent increase in employment in the past 20 years is far in excess of what we could have dared hope for.

However, on the other side, the reductions in income taxes have been far greater than we sought. Ireland is a low tax economy for incomes, profits and social contributions, but has relatively high taxes on spending. Citizens now pay for services which hitherto were paid from taxation. In short, our tax regime is less progressive than it was.

As part of the move to lower tax rates, it was Congress' understanding that the Government would close most of the loopholes and bring the nominal and effective tax rates closer. Much progress had been made on this by governments, but in recent times, new tax avoidance schemes have been opened up, such as the greatly expanded Business Expansion Scheme (BES) and tax subsidies for 'private' hospitals. Congress lodged a formal complaint with the EU, over the expansion of the BES scheme. We argued that this tax break would not stand up to a rigorous economic evaluation and that there was scant research on its impact and

**Table 1.4: Income tax plus employees' social contributions  
(as % of gross wage earnings), 2005<sup>1</sup>**

Country <sup>2</sup>	Total payment (1)	Income tax (2)	Social security contributions (3)	Gross wage earnings <sup>3</sup> (4)
Belgium	41.9	27.9	14.0	41 101
Germany	41.7	20.9	20.9	44 086
Denmark	41.0	30.4	10.6	38 454
Hungry	32.9	19.4	13.5	13 681
Netherlands	32.2	10.5	21.7	41 560
Austria	32.1	14.1	18.1	36 934
Poland	32.0	6.4	25.6	16 232
Finland	31.3	24.9	6.4	35 035
Sweden	31.0	24.0	7.0	33 154
Turkey	30.4	15.4	15.0	18 609
Norway	29.0	21.2	7.8	38 509
France	29.0	15.4	13.6	33 619
Italy	27.3	18.1	9.2	27 060
Luxembourg	26.5	12.6	13.9	40 984
United Kingdom	26.5	17.4	9.1	46 091
Iceland	24.9	24.7	0.2	32 113
Czech Republic	24.1	11.6	12.5	15 229
Australia	24.0	24.0	0.0	36 851
United States	23.6	15.7	7.8	31 666
Canada	23.5	16.6	7.0	31 297
Slovak Republic	22.1	8.7	13.4	12 478
Switzerland	21.7	10.7	11.1	40 694
Greece	21.6	5.6	16.0	25 808
Portugal	21.1	10.1	11.0	20 148
New Zealand	20.5	20.5	0.0	27 274
Spain	20.3	14.0	6.4	26 451
Japan	18.5	6.6	11.8	38 235
Ireland	17.7	12.6	5.2	31 056
Korea	9.9	2.7	7.1	37 702
Mexico	7.9	6.3	1.6	10 688
<b>Unweighted average:</b>				
OECD	26.2	15.6	10.6	30 760
EU-15	29.4	17.2	12.2	34 769
EU-19	29.2	16.2	13.0	29 899

Note: EU-15 area countries are: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. EU-19 area countries are: EU-15 countries plus Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovak Republic.

1. Single persons without children at the income of the average worker.

2. Countries ranked by decreasing total payment.

3. US Dollars using PPP.

Source: OECD calculations based on country submissions and OECD, Economic Outlook No 77, June 2005.

effectiveness. Congress does support subsidies for small businesses, but not ineffective subsidies, which ultimately benefit the very wealthy.

While Congress welcomes the high investment in the economy under the current National Development Plan, there could be greater public spending on many areas of the economy which would improve the social wage. The current economic boom means that we can have low taxes and increase public spending for some years, instead of even greater tax cuts. But as sure as night follows day, there will be a recession. Taxes will then have to rise and our public infrastructure will still be deficient. Our health, education and public transport systems are not up to European standards, particularly for a country which has one of the highest per capita incomes in the EU.

## Public Spending

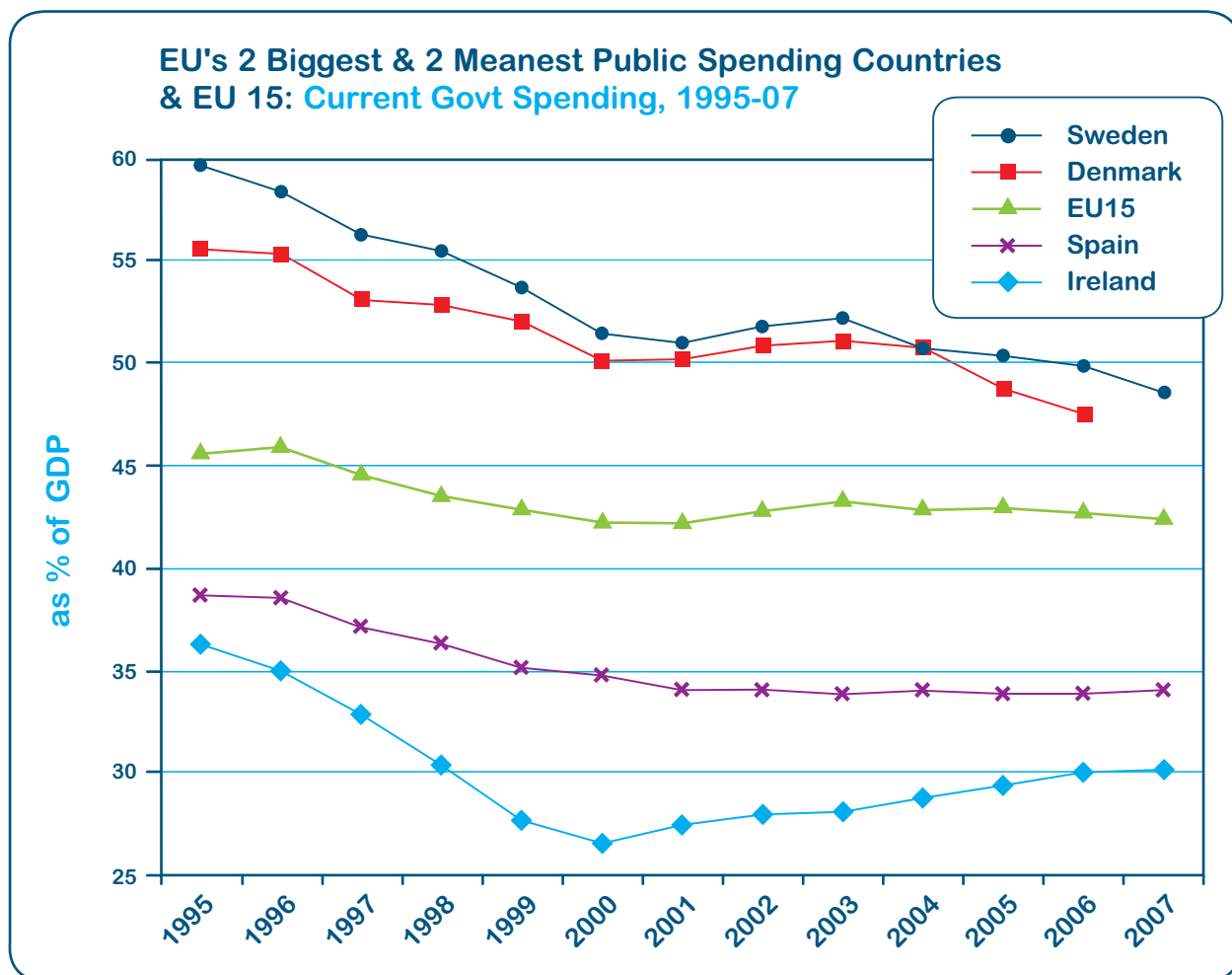
The other side of the taxation coin is public spending. As Chart 4 demonstrates, Ireland has the lowest public spending in the original EU15, at 30.2 percent of GDP in 2007, compared to an average of 42.5 percent for the EU15. Spain has the second lowest

level after Ireland, followed by Luxembourg. Ireland's current public spending is slightly below that of the US, at 31.4 percent. Eight of the original 15 member states are close to the average of 42 percent. Ireland, Spain and Luxembourg are the states that are well below the average, with Sweden, Denmark, France and Belgium above.

Of the 27 member states, only Estonia and Lithuania spend less than Ireland. As the measure of GDP understates spending for Ireland, (GNP is accepted as a better measure for Ireland because 'transfer pricing' by multinationals exaggerates our GDP) an adjustment to convert to GNP adds a few percentage points. This means that Ireland would be close to Spain and some of the new member states (most of which, though not all, are low spenders).

If Ireland's day-to-day public spending was at the same level as the average of the EU15 (42 percent of GDP) and if we adjusted it to 34 percent (to adjust for GNP up from 30.2 per cent GDP in 2007), it would mean that the additional current public spending would rise by a staggering €16.6bn in 2007. This would allow a doubling of education spending, or a

Chart 4



Source: European Commission, European Economy, Autumn 2006, Statistical Appendix. (France is above Denmark in 2007, but only in that year).



doubling of Social & Family Affairs spending or a 62 percent increase in day-to-day spending on health! Even a slight rise in current spending and a slight move closer to the advanced European economies, means we could greatly improve public services and living standards for all in Ireland. But for the moment, the anti-public spending / tax-cutting ideology is dominant.

Five of the new EU member states spend close to the EU15 average. It can be seen from the chart that public spending in Ireland was reduced considerably between 1995 and 2001, as a percentage of GDP. In fact, it must be emphasised that public spending continued to rise in these years in real terms i.e. above inflation. The economy grew massively in the late 1990s and so, as a proportion of the total economy, current public spending fell.

## Competition, Liberalisation and Deregulation

The neoliberal ideology of deregulation is driven by the desire to access some of the huge annual spending of public money and the massive stock of public assets, which range from roads, sewages, water reservoirs, hospitals, schools. While Ireland does not have a balance sheet of public assets, unlike the UK and other modern economies, we know they are worth tens of billions. Non-entrepreneurial firms would like to get their hands on these State assets.

There is no problem with competition policy being implemented and overseen by the EU Commission and the Irish Competition Authority. However, the attempts to force 'competition' into areas which are natural monopolies or into markets which are small and in many cases, not contestable, causes unnecessary problems. This wholly 'false competition' particularly impacts on workers whose jobs can be threatened by the irrational ideological obsessions of zealots, as opposed to common sense

The small Irish electricity market has been subject of just such a drive for 'competition' at the expense of competitiveness. Consequently, prices have been pushed up in a largely vain attempt to attract competition to a small market. Similarly, forcing competition in bus markets fails to learn the lessons of the UK. The initial burst of competition there led to declining standards, exploitation of labour and then concentration, with three or four bus companies now dominating. Competitiveness is being sacrificed at the altar of this false 'competition.'

## National Competitiveness Council

Congress reviewed its continuing participation in the National Competitiveness Council (NCC) in 2006. For some years, the Congress nominees had strong conflicts of opinion with other members of the Council on taxation and on competition issues. Congress disagrees with the current dominant ideology - favouring low tax and low public spending - and also has a more realistic view of competition than many politicians, commentators and bank economists, especially in areas of natural monopoly and contestable markets. In 2004, and especially in 2005, Congress nominees had to articulate their unique view in a minority report of one of the publications of the NCC.

Fortunately, this did not recur in 2006. NCC published its **Annual Competitiveness Report Volume 1** which has around 100 benchmarks on Ireland's performance in many areas against other countries. While some are subjective, many are useful and of interest. **Volume 2** set out the main challenges on competitiveness for Ireland. The NCC also published a report - **The Cost of Doing Business in Ireland** and another on Ireland's **Productivity 1980 to 2006**.

## The National Development Plan

The Government published a major programme of both capital and current expenditure in early 2007. Congress had made a detailed submission and the Government took account of the great majority of our arguments. This plan, the first financed entirely by the Irish taxpayer, will focus more on public transport and social issues than others did in the past. Congress argued that deficits in housing, health, education, care and public transport exacerbate existing inequalities. However, Congress is critical of the NDP: a) where large areas of public investment are to be opened up to Public Private Partnerships, and b) the proposal for the privatisation of the major Irish ports by stealth. The plan is to do this by starving the ports of equity investment as they expand, thus forcing them into the arms of the privateers.

## The Economic Outlook

The economic outlook is fairly good, but most of the economic growth in recent years has been due to domestic consumer demand, not exports of goods and services. The economy is overly-dependent on the construction sector - accounting for 13 per cent of total employment and 23 per cent of output. The overheated Irish housing market could have a soft landing, but it also could collapse, with a major impact on the whole economy. Thankfully, the soft landing looks more likely. Imports are up, driven by strong



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domestic demand, while exports are not growing as fast as they did in the past. There is a growing balance of payments imbalance. Investment is high and should remain so, underwritten by strong public investment through the new NDP. Congress has urged a shift from the strong emphasis on economic growth to economic and social development. The time may be opportune to make this shift.

## Regulation & the Public Domain

### Regulation

It is Government policy to continue to devolve powers to independent regulatory authorities. These devolved powers provide organisations such as COMREG with the authority to set prices and designate the conditions under which operators participate in particular sectors or markets.

Congress continues to have serious reservations about the structure and operation of economic regulation in the Irish economy. In 2006, Government initiated a public consultation on how the decisions of economic regulators are appealed. Congress used this opportunity to set out our concerns. We pointed to three fundamental flaws in the system.

Firstly, economic regulation has evolved in an ad hoc fashion. There are now at least five organisations in the economy that have some degree of responsibility for the regulation of a sector or an activity and there are plans to devolve more such responsibility to new or existing organisations.

In our view we need a new structure that would provide for a more efficient and less costly system of economic regulation. More importantly, however, we need to develop common and more balanced terms of reference that would guide the operation of economic regulation across the economy. Most organisations charged with the responsibility for regulation operate under a regime that has a single purpose, that of promoting competition. Despite the fact that the decisions of such bodies impact on practically every citizen, the wider public interest is very often ignored. It is assumed that in every single instance the necessities of competition will deliver benefits across society.

The second fundamental flaw concerns the accountability of the sectoral regulators. Decisions of regulators can impact significantly on every citizen. Despite this, the level of interaction between regulators and citizens is minimal. Of greater concern is the apparent fact that once a decision has been made there is little that can be done to have that decision altered. It is vital that a more robust system of accountability is developed.

In our submission, Congress also raised concerns about the appeals mechanism and called for a simpler and more transparent approach.

At the time of writing we were still awaiting a response to our submission.

## The Semi-State Sector

At BDC 2005 the future of the semi-state sector was much discussed and debated. The debate centred primarily on the failure of Government to develop an overall policy on the future of the sector. Conference endorsed the approach adopted by Congress, which was to get agreement on a strategic plan for the sector as a whole.

In **A New Governance Structure for State Companies** (Summer 2005) set out a new blueprint for the sector, through the establishment of a state holding company in which the combined assets of the state companies could be vested. These in turn could be leveraged to provide for the future development of the sector, while retaining the individual companies in state ownership. However it has not been possible, primarily because of Department of Finance objections to get any serious engagement on this proposal.

While we have not been able to make progress on that specific proposal, under the auspices of the **Sustaining Progress** mid-term review and later in **Towards 2016**, we agreed broad principles that will guide the reform and development of the sector. However, the failure of Government to engage seriously on the sector as a whole has led to a series of significant problems across a number of the state companies. We have summarised these here.

## Aer Lingus

It has been a very turbulent period for Aer Lingus. While it was agreed that the continued development of the company required significant capital investment we differed with Government about the means of providing these monies. Congress argued that it was legally permissible and strategically important for the state to invest the €400 million the company required, thus retaining the company wholly within the state sector. The Government differed and decided to dispose of a majority share in the company. This disposal resulted in the state retaining 25.1%, with the ESOT and staff holding just over 14% of the shares. In advance of the floatation, agreement was also reached on a range of items including how the considerable deficit in the pension scheme was to be managed. The company was floated in September 2006 and within two weeks Ryanair made a takeover bid. The bid was strongly resisted and



Ryanair failed to secure a majority of the shares. At the time of writing Ryanair had withdrawn its offer and the European Commission was continuing an examination of the implications of such a takeover.

## Dublin Airport Authority

When the State Airports' Act (2004) was enacted it enabled the establishment of Cork, Shannon and Dublin Airports as independent state airports. Their separation was predicated on the preparation of business plans by the boards of each airport, that would provide for a viable future for each of airports on a standalone basis. Congress argued that the separation was unnecessary and not financially viable. Despite the enactment of the legislation enabling the full separation of the three airports there are significant issues still facing the airports. The development of additional capacity at Dublin Airport has been approved by Government but continues to face public criticism from Ryanair. How the development is to be funded and its future operation is still to be decided. While the new terminal at Cork is open and operating how it is to be paid for remains unresolved. Attempts to reduce job numbers at Shannon and outsource many of the services are being resisted by the work force.

In 2006 the company disposed of the Great Southern Hotel Group. Agreement was reached with the unions on the disposal with a considerable number of staff transferring to new employers.

## ESB

The ESB continues to be a highly successful company, both domestically and internationally. Despite this we have seen a very public campaign aimed at breaking the company up. Those who want to see this argue that EU law requires the ending of the ESB's dominance in power generation and that such a move would encourage greater private sector participation and, consequently, cheaper electricity.

In the period covered by this report Congress has made two major submissions in which we have argued that the ESB must be maintained as a vertically integrated utility. The first submission was made to consultants Deloitte, who had been commissioned by the Irish Government to conduct a review of the electricity sector. The second submission ***Towards a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland*** - was made directly to Government in response to its Green Paper. The subsequent White Paper surprisingly proposed the break up of the ESB, a proposal to which Congress stated its clear opposition.

## VHI Healthcare

The private health insurance market is underpinned by the principle of community rating and is supported by a system of risk equalisation which, in theory, should compensate companies in the sector with an older client base. The Health Insurance Authority recommended the triggering of risk equalisation payments in 2006. However the move was challenged by BUPA in the Courts. The BUPA challenge was unsuccessful and very shortly afterwards they announced that they were leaving the Irish Market. Subsequent to that decision it was announced that the Quinn Group has purchased BUPA. The Quinn Group asserted that because they were now a new entrant they were exempt from risk equalisation payments for three years. If this position was allowed to stand it would pose very serious structural problem for the private health insurance and VHI Healthcare.

At the of writing the European Commission had initiated proceedings against the Irish Government concerning the exemption granted to VHI Healthcare in respect of reserves. The publication of reports by the Competition Authority and the Health Insurance Authority into the operation of the private health insurance market was also awaited.

## Public Transport

The provision of bus-based public transport in Dublin and in other parts of the country has been the subject of ongoing discussions between Congress and the Department of Transport. The Department continues to seek increased private sector participation on the provision of services. They also wish to see the regulatory functions of the Department transferred to a new regulatory authority. Congress continues to argue that whatever arrangements are put in place, they must safeguard the public service and protect standards of employment in the sector.

At the time of writing, Government had announced that it planned to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of a transport authority to oversee the implementation of Transport 21 in the Greater Dublin Area.

## An Post

The refusal of An Post to pay the terms of ***Sustaining Progress*** led to a protracted industrial dispute. The company had refused to pay the terms of the agreement unless the employees agreed to significant work practice changes in return. The dispute resulted in strike action at the company and, following the assistance of the National Implementation Body, the Labour Relations Commission and the Labour Court,



agreement was reached. This company continues to face significant challenges, particularly as the various EU directives seeking to introduce competition into postal services come into force.

## The Services Directive

During the period covered by this report Congress was very active in seeking to amend a proposal by the European Commission to enact a Directive that would allow service providers operate in any EU member state under a common set of rules. It was not the objectives of the Directive that caused controversy, rather the rules it sought to put in place.

The most controversial aspects of the proposed Directive included the scope of the proposed legal instrument, the use of the 'country of origin' principle and the relationship between the proposed legislation and labour law.

It was proposed that the Directive would cover all services - including public services. If enacted in this way it would have seen individual countries lose the ability to control the provision of public services within their own countries. The Directive further proposed to allow service providers to operate in any EU country, while only being required to observe regulations in their country of origin. The 'country of origin' principle also applied to labour law and thus had the potential to significantly erode labour standards and collective agreements across the EU.

In line with the legislative procedures in the EU the proposed directive fell for consideration in the first instance to the European Parliament. As the Parliament was considering the Directive, Congress mounted a lobbying campaign to secure the support of the all MEPs on the island, for a significantly revised Directive. A Congress delegation, including, Paul Bell (SIPTU), Blair Horan (CPSU), Brian Campfield (NIPSA), Bernard Harbor (IMPACT) and Liam Berney (Congress) visited the European Parliament and met with all political parties representing the island.

Meetings also took place with some of the independent members and senior figures within the Socialist Group. Congress also met with political parties within the Oireachtas and organised a major conference as part of the campaign. All political parties with European Parliament representatives and independents, were invited to speak on the Directive and proposed amendments. The conference heard strong messages of support for the Congress position from: Proinsias De Rossa, Marian Harkin, Arthur Morgan, Simon Coveney and Eoin Ryan. The National Day of Protest organised by Congress on December 9, 2005 also had a demand for a balanced Services Directive.



MEP's Prionsias de Rossa & Simon Coveney, with Congress Vice President Patricia McKeown, at the EU Services Directive Meeting.

It could be argued that the controversy caused by the Directive caused or contributed to the rejection of the proposed EU constitution, by the Dutch and French electorates. What is certain is that its proposed enactment allowed the European Parliament to connect with European citizens in a way they had not previously done.

Following the Parliament's deliberations a political compromise emerged which saw the 'country of origin' principle abandoned, most public services excluded from the scope of the Directive and protection for legally-enforceable standards of employment. While there were some efforts made to undo the progress made by the European Parliament their draft was adopted by the European Council of Ministers in late 2006. The task of transposing the Directive into Irish law will now fall to the Department of Enterprise Trade & Employment, with a deadline of 2008 for actual transposition.

It is difficult to assess at this point how its transposition will impact on service provision. It is also difficult to predict how its enactment will affect labour standards. But one clear lesson to emerge is that the European Parliament can be used as a force for positive reform in the face of a liberal, anti-public provision European Commission.



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## CHAPTER 1

# HEALTH & CARE



The following is an extract from **Addressing the Health Care Crisis**, which was published by Congress in June, 2007.

## Executive summary

### The Problems

#### Spending

It is a fact that health spending has increased in recent years and that current spending is almost three times what it was a decade ago, in 1997.

Presented in isolation, this stark fact appears to support the oft-repeated allegation that there is a 'black hole' at the heart of our health system, into which vast and ever increasing amounts of money simply disappear every year.

Dramatic though it may sound, this allegation is actually untrue. But unfortunately, the myth of the 'black hole' has gained some credence and is employed frequently by critics of the public health system and advocates of 'for profit' private care.

Focussing solely on the increased health budget and citing it in isolation results in key facts being obscured and hampers understanding of the real causes of the crisis in our health system.

Our increased health spending is actually a new and recent phenomenon. Indeed, it is only now that we are beginning to undo some of the damage done to the health service by decades of chronic under spending and cutbacks.

It is also important to understand that Ireland still includes some 'social spending' in our health budget, thereby distorting the size of that budget. In international comparisons, most other countries separate out the money spent on areas like care for older people and people with disabilities. By not doing so, we artificially inflate the size of our health budget.

Furthermore, the health care sector is not immune to inflation. Each year, the cost of equipment, drugs and other supplies tend to rise. The health services are not immune to rising prices and each annual health

budget must take account of these increases.

Equally, our population has experienced dramatic growth in recent years, with the Census 2006 findings showing a figure in excess of 4.2 million, up from 3.6 million in 1996. More people naturally places greater demands on existing services.

#### Beds

In 2002, the previous coalition Government promised 3,000 extra hospital beds. They have not been delivered. In fact, just a fraction of that number has actually materialised. Without those new beds, we cannot begin to undo the damage done by health cutbacks of the 1980s, when beds were stripped from the system, let alone build the sort of world class public health service which this country both needs and deserves.

#### Equal Access

Our health system is unequal. Those who can afford to pay will quickly access consultant-provided hospital care. Those who cannot pay will typically wait longer to access care provided by overworked junior doctors.

Currently the treatment of private patients in public hospitals is subsidised by the taxpayer, while private healthcare receives financial incentives from government in the form of generous tax breaks and in how doctors and hospitals are actually paid.

In addition, plans to construct private hospitals on the grounds of public facilities are well-advanced. This could see the taxpayer shell out in excess of €400 million in tax breaks, for facilities that will be entirely private and owned solely by investors. This huge subsidy to private healthcare is a wasteful use of public money and will further entrench inequality in our health system.

#### General Practitioner (GP) Care

In most EU countries people access GP and community health services at no cost or very low cost. But in Ireland 70 percent of the population pay a fee each time they visit a GP. Primary, community and continuing care services are seriously



underdeveloped, while some essential services like physiotherapy, speech and language therapy either do not exist or have long waiting times. Care for older people is being privatised at a huge cost to patients and the public health system.

## The Solution

### Investing in equality

Ireland both needs and deserves a high-quality healthcare system – the fabled “world class system” that has been repeatedly promised and never delivered. Ireland now has among the highest income per capita in the EU and the public finances are strong. A world class health service is both affordable and achievable. At its core must be the principle that care is provided on the basis of need, not the ability to pay.

The investment needs of the service were listed in the 2001 **Health Strategy Quality & Fairness, A Health System for You**, - a blueprint supported by the 2002-2007 coalition, but which remains unimplemented.

Meeting the targets outlined in the Health Strategy would require a doubling of investment in healthcare facilities (hospitals, clinics etc) over the next decade and a 10 percent increase in day-to-day spending on health.

This is a substantial amount of money, but it would still be significantly lower than what we spend on roads and transport. Our health service deserves at least equal priority.

We need some 400 additional new public hospital beds, every year up to 2013 (the same lifespan as the NDP). Naturally, additional doctors, nurses and other front line staff will be required to ensure the new beds are fully utilised.

To ensure equality of access we need a common waiting list for all patients and an end to designating patients as public or private, within all public facilities. Public money should be invested solely in public facilities, to create a one-tier public health service. Taxpayers should not be forced to subsidise private investment in private healthcare.

Doctors and hospitals must be paid in the same way for treating both private and public patients, as the current system incentivises treatment of private patients.

***This document was published by Congress in June 2007.***

## Eldercare

Ireland currently has one the youngest populations in Europe and our old age dependency ratio - the ratio between the number of people over 65 and the number of people of working age - is currently 16.5 percent the second lowest in the EU25 and considerably less than the EU25 average of 24.9 percent. However, it is estimated it will reach 28.3 percent by 2030. This would see the number of people over the age of 65 rise from 430,000 to over 1m. In the next 10 years alone, the number of over 65s will increase by about 165,000.

The demographic pressures will increase further over the following 20 years so that, by 2036, approximately 20 percent of the population will be over 65 compared to 11 percent now. In ***Caring for the Future...Who Cares?*** Congress called for an integrated National Care Initiative funded through the National Development Plan (NDP). This document outlined the need to provide a modern care infrastructure for all citizens, specifically those individuals who helped build the economic success we enjoy today.

## Care for Older People

Ninety percent of older people prefer to remain in their homes for as long as possible, with the help of family and community-based services. Congress has called for the services provided to reflect the needs and preference of older people, in particular we called on Government to invest substantially in community care. In ***Towards 2016***, Congress secured commitments on spending for eldercare. There have been additional resources of €110 million in 2006 and €255 million in 2007 allocated to Services for Older People and Palliative Care. Some €109 million of that is earmarked for community care supports.

## National Development Plan

The National Development Plan commits €9.7 billion to help older people live independently at home and also for investment in residential care facilities. A significant amount of the investment will emphasise community care supports, which will include Home Care Packages, Home Helps, Day Care and Respite Services. The €9.7 billion will be allocated under two sub-programmes: the Living at Home sub-programme (€4.7 billion) and the Residential Care sub-programme (€5 billion).

## Elder Abuse

A National Implementation Group on Elder Abuse has helped to oversee the implementation of the recommendations arising from The Report on Elder

Abuse. Some €2m has been allocated for 2006 and 2007, specifically to put in place the group's recommendations. The Interim Health Information and Quality Authority has been put in place to ensure that all residential care service providers meet a national standard. This independent body will inspect and register residential care settings for older people in public, private and voluntary nursing homes. This function will be undertaken by the Social Services Inspectorate as part of the Authority. The overall goal of the Authority is to achieve the same level and standard of care irrespective of setting be it public, private or voluntary. Congress will monitor the progress of HIQA.

## Nursing Home Support Scheme

A new nursing home support scheme, A Fair Deal is currently being implemented. There will be a national standardised needs assessment of older people. There will no longer be large discrepancies in the way people are accessed for their contribution to their care that were present under the former scheme. Contributions are based on an assessment of income and assets and what the individual can afford. The deferred contribution from a principal private residence is capped at 15 percent of the market value, 5 percent over a maximum of three years. The new scheme will be fully operational in January 2008. There are some real concerns about the equity of the scheme and Congress intends to monitor it closely.

## Carers

Congress has campaigned for increased payments for Carers along with improved rights and entitlements. In 2007 measures to improve access to part time work were secured, allowing Carers work up to 15 hours per week, without endangering their entitlements.

This was an important development, insofar as the burden of caring tends to fall disproportionately on women which can lead to long absences from work.

Being able to stay in regular contact with work, to attend at key meetings or other workplace events, can help reduce inequalities caused from caring absences.

But making this work will require genuine flexible working arrangements being put in place.

In this respect, we will continue in our endeavours to secure a statutory right to flexible working, along with specific entitlements for employees taking up carers

leave to stay on in their job and work the 15 hours per week allowed.

Currently, the Carers' Leave Act (2001) only provides for a right to take breaks of 13 continuous weeks on Carers Leave. We have called for significant increases in the Carers Benefit and Allowance and for income disregards to be increased to allow Carers earn more from their part time work.

## Disability

The Disabilities' Act 2005 finally became law in the summer of 2005. It forms an integral part of the National Disability Strategy, which aims to develop an integrated approach to promoting equality and social inclusion and improving service provision for people with disabilities. The key components of the strategy are:

- The Disabilities Act, 2005;
- The Comhairle Bill, 2004 (to provide personal advocacy service, as appropriate);
- Outline Sectoral Plans in six government departments;
- The Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act, 2004;
- A commitment to multi-annual Investment Programmes for disability support services.

In general, Congress welcomes the National Disability Strategy and the sectoral plans of government departments. The Government and the social partners agreed that the National Disability Strategy (NDS) represents a comprehensive strategy for this aspect of the lifecycle framework and that implementation should be the focus of policy over the lifetime of **Towards 2016**. Implementation needs also to take account of linkages with other relevant national strategies and policies. Creating a society and workplaces that are inclusive remains a major challenge and in our pre-Budget submissions, we have stressed the following:

- a) the Multi-annual investment programme attached to the NDS is largely intact, but needs additional resources to address the assessed health and educational needs of under 18 year olds;
- b) Congress demands - once again - the development of an action plan for implementation of the code of practice on sheltered employment;
- c) Early action on standards of service for people with disabilities by the Health Information and Quality Authority(HIQ/A), based on the work of the National Disability Authority;
- d) Practical moves to address the added cost of people with disabilities, including the cost of disability payment;



Launching *The Health Report* in November 2005. Pictured are David Begg, Report authors Dale Tussing, Maev Ann Wren and Peter McLoone

- e) The benefits trap has long been identified by research as a major obstacle to people with disabilities entering employment. This needs resolution, particularly on the medical card and the need for higher limits for people with disabilities;
- f) Proactive work on the DETE commitment to develop a comprehensive employment strategy for people with disabilities, including one for retention of people in employment after they acquire a disability;

Congress has engaged with Government departments in relation to sectoral plans, particularly the Department of Enterprise Trade & Employment. We are now part of a DETE consultative group to develop an employment strategy for people with disabilities. It is our hope this indicates a serious engagement between government, employers, unions and people with disabilities, to fashion and implement a new Employment Strategy. Congress has stressed that it is time for an end both to the excuses and the barriers that hamper people with disabilities. In particular, Congress believes there is a need to focus on three key priorities:

- the State needs to take a central role to raise the level of education and training among people with disabilities;
- Greater efforts are required to achieve the three percent employment target in the Public Service, establish recruitment targets for the Private Sector in an environment where job vacancies are the norm and, adequately support people in Sheltered Workshops, replacing the system of payment of benefits (to which people are entitled) with proper pay and conditions of employment and proper support to offset the cost of disability
- an end to the interminable debate about the Hobson's Choice faced by most people with disabilities, where they are required to give up medical cards and other essential social supports, if they take up any form of employment, even part-time.



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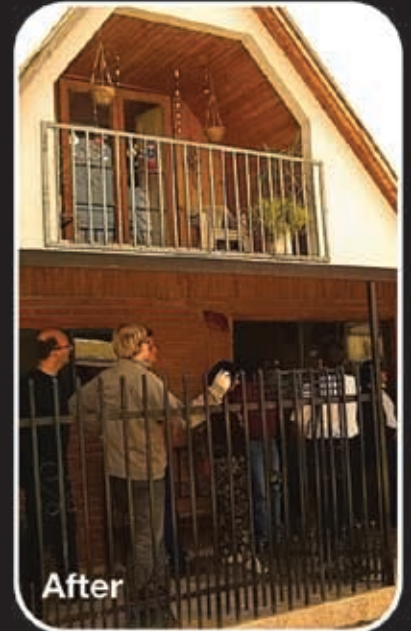


## CHAPTER 1

# INTERNATIONAL

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# Setting International Standards

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is the UN agency that seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognised human and labour rights. The ILO formulates international labour standards in the form of Conventions and Recommendations. These set out minimum standards of basic labour rights: freedom of association, the right to organise, collective bargaining, abolition of forced labour, equality of opportunity and treatment, and other standards regulating conditions across the entire spectrum of work related issues.

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The Member States of the ILO meet at the International Labour Conference, held every year in Geneva, Switzerland, in the month of June. Congress attends as part of the Irish delegation.

The role of the International Labour Conference is to develop, adopt and oversee compliance with international labour standards, establish the budget of the organisation and elect members of the Governing Body. During the period under review the Conference has served as a major international forum for debate on social and labour questions of global significance.

The work of the Congress in protecting migrant workers has been recently highlighted in an ILO video and in 2006 the Congress/IBEC Workway Project for people with disabilities was featured as an example of effective tripartite activity. In 2006, Congress reported to the ILO on the restrictions on freedom of association and collective bargaining placed on 'voice over' artists by the Competition Authority.

## The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

The ETUC represents 60 million workers, through affiliated Trade Union centres in Europe. The single major challenge for ETUC is to preserve the European Social Model at a time when globalisation and neoliberal forces are undermining it.

In the period under review the most sustained attack on the European social model came in the form of the Directive on Services. Using the so called 'Country of Origin' principle the Directive sought to give the right to business to provide services in any EU country on the basis that the employment rights of staff, and vindication of customer complaints, would be in accordance with the law of the country in which the business was based. This had the potential to undermine pay and conditions in the more developed countries and create a race to the bottom across Europe. Following a strong campaign at Brussels and national level the Directive was substantially redrafted to exclude the most damaging aspects. What emerged during the campaign is that the Parliament is now a significant force. In the past, the ETUC would have seen the Commission as 'a friend' - not any more. ETUC will in the future work much more closely with the Parliament.

The future of the EU Constitution is now a major concern. It is expected that the German Presidency will try to find a way out of the impasse caused by the French and Dutch referenda. The fear is that a political settlement could be made around a mini Treaty dealing only with procedural matters. The inclusion of the existing Part 11 of the Treaty embracing the Charter of Fundamental Rights is vital from a trade union viewpoint. The Charter contains



an article guaranteeing the right to collective bargaining, which assumes a new importance in an Irish context in the aftermath of the Ryanair Supreme Court Judgement.

The General Secretary is a member of the Executive Committee of ETUC.

## Global Solidarity

Congress was very active in the MakePovertyHistory campaign of 2005 and our key objectives were designed to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Trade unions were prominent in the huge march in Dublin in June 2005, with Congress vice-President Patricia McKeown, addressing the rally.

We were delighted when the Irish Government recommitted itself to an aid budget of 0.7 percent of GNP by 2012, something which the trade union movement had campaigned strongly on.

In December 2005, Global Solidarity officer Neil Alldred went to Hong Kong as a member of the official Irish delegation to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) 6th Ministerial Conference, where he presented the trade union position on the talks to British and Irish politicians, civil servants and business people.

We were also involved in a Send Bertie a Christmas Card campaign in December 2005 and followed that up with advocacy for fairer global trade policies. Since then, trade talks have faltered and delivered nothing to poorer countries.

Congress also works with the Trade Matters coalition\* to help shape and influence Irish Government policy on trade. The coalition has particularly focussed on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), which the EU intends to sign with poor countries and which trade unions feel are detrimental to the needs of working people and poor people generally.

We have also worked on the Education for All campaign, with David Joyce serving as the Chair of the Irish branch of the Global Campaign for Education. The teachers unions are central players in the campaign and the openness of Irish Aid to our concerns has been noticeable. There was also a strong response across the movement to our report on child labour prioritised the need to get all children into good quality education for a minimum of six years.

We have chosen to align each of our campaigns to International Labour Organisation (ILO) annual themes, and we have focussed particular efforts on the ILO work to combat and eradicate child labour. We regularly raise the issue with Irish Aid and are

working to ensure that the International Programme to Eliminate Child Labour (IPEC) will receive a substantial boost from Irish Aid funds. Our campaigning work on child labour also took us to the ILO Conference in Geneva (June 2006) and to London for the worldwide launch of the ILO's own report on progress towards eliminating child labour. Child Labour can best be tackled by working in a co-ordinated manner and we have (jointly with Concern) set up a task force to ensure that momentum isn't lost.

Our international lobbying focuses on submissions to the Irish Minister of Finance ahead of International Financial Institutions meetings (World Bank, International Monetary Fund). However, we have been engaged with many more people than the economists in Washington: in March of this year we were gratified to learn that the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, TD, had responded favourably to our calls for stronger Irish condemnation of the Zimbabwe regime. The Irish Government agrees with Congress on this issue and claims it has lobbied hard within the EU. Delegates to the 2006 Congress Women's Conference in Belfast were inspired by a trade union visitor from Zimbabwe, Tabitha Khumalo.

In March 2006, Global Solidarity ran a seminar (in Dundalk) on the theme of Globalisation & Workers' Rights. Gemma Abada, from the ICFTU's New York office, gave a wonderful talk on the Decent Work agenda and delegates heard from several other speakers.

In August, GS held a very successful Summer School in Kilkenny, with 26 delegates attending – 11 from NI and 15 from RoI. Speakers from five different countries featured: June Hartley, (Solidarity Centre, South Africa); Annie Watson (Ethical Trading Initiative, UK); Anneke van Luijken (IRENE, The Netherlands); Cait Moran (Irish Aid); and Barnabas Dorda, an organiser with SIPTU.

As a result of both of these events, we have deepened our engagement with Irish Aid. Following a meeting between Irish Aid and members of the Executive Council in October 2006, we are working to ensure a trade union voice is heard on development cooperation. There are plans to work on a capacity building programme with trade unions in Lesotho.

In March 2007, Global Solidarity collaborated with the Women's Committees on a seminar on Globalisation, Equality & Workers' Rights in the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. The seminar heard addresses from the General Secretary, David Begg, Assistant General Secretary, Sally Anne Kinahan and vice-President Patricia McKeown. Guest speakers included June Hartley (Solidarity Centre, South Africa), Samantha Maher (Clean Clothes Campaign)



and Salome Mbugua (AKIDWA, the Africa Women's Network).

Throughout the period, we have tried to keep international issues at the forefront of the trade unions agenda, especially through our website ([www.ictuglobalsolidarity.org](http://www.ictuglobalsolidarity.org)) and our thrice yearly newsletter. The Global Solidarity project is not simply a channel for delivering information, however: we are an integral part of the movement's attempts to create a better society. When Dunnes Stores sacked Joanne Delaney for wearing her union badge, Global Solidarity publicised the Mandate campaign to have her re-instated and were gratified to see the case raised in three National Parliaments or Assemblies and for Joanne to win reinstatement.

Our website is full of examples of workers who need our support, often with electronic petitions that you can fill in a few seconds and send off to some of the most dictatorial governments in the world – and to some of the most vicious employers and businesses, too. The website also contains a link to No Sweat Apparel, a US-based clothing retailer that only sells products manufactured by union labour – in countries such as Indonesia, Mexico, Brazil and even Palestine. No Sweat believes trade unions are the only coherent response to a global race to the bottom and their existence is an admonishment to the corporate sweatshop producers.

Global Solidarity acknowledges the continued financial support for our work by the EC, Irish Aid, DfID (the UK Government's Department for International Development), by Trocaire and by the trade union movement.

Over the period under review, Global Solidarity produced:

- Six issues of the Global Solidarity Newsletter (in an enlarged, 12 page format)
- Agenda for Change – free trade and workers' rights: an action guide for trade unionists
- Forced Labour – a hidden shame
- Ending Child Labour – the role of trade unions
- Corporate Social Responsibility- a guide for trade unions

\* Trade Matters members: Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Christian Aid, Comhlámh, Friends of the Earth, Oxfam Ireland and Trócaire

## Time for Asia Fund

In response to the 2004 Tsunami, Congress organised a major fundraising initiative - Time for Asia - to help rebuild the lives and livelihoods of those worst affected. A small project team was established to consider projects submitted for support under the

Time for Asia fund, with a focus on the restoration of livelihoods. The Time for Asia initiative represented a genuine and tangible act of solidarity on the part of the Irish Trade Union movement, with those affected by the tsunami and its aftermath. The four projects being assisted are:

1. The ILO in Sri Lanka – Trade Union Assistance to Tsunami-affected Communities; Making Voices of the People Heard. This project focuses on the economic empowerment of coastal communities, rebuilding livelihood and job opportunities and organising the unorganised. ILO partners in this project are: National Association of Trade Union Research and Education (NATURE) and its affiliates, Trade unions, Cooperatives and Community associations. Amount of Time for Asia grant: €300,000
2. Forum Bangun Aceh (FBA). Salt farm micro-economic recovery project aims to rebuild eight salt farms and factories in Baet village, Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Time for Asia grant: €10,000.
3. Volunteer International, Sri Lanka. This project aims to provide the tools and materials that will enable people to return to work and to give people the opportunity to establish a sustainable livelihood that generates income independent of Government or other aid, and contributes to families becoming self-supporting. Time for Asia grant: €10,000
4. International Trade Union Confederation. A project in India which is aimed at assisting the livelihood-building efforts of post tsunami-affected communities by providing them with skills development and vocational training. The development of operational strategies, monitoring and evaluation of the programme shall be done by the ITUC regional organisation, ICFTU-APRO in cooperation with the ITUC Secretariat in Brussels. Time for Asia grant: €333,635.

# Irish Aid – working to create decent employment and stable incomes in developing countries



**Irish Aid**

Department of Foreign Affairs  
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha



Honduran factory worker producing garments for export to the American market

Irish Aid-supported projects in Honduras are working to improve occupational health and safety conditions for women workers. The projects build workers' capacity to better defend their rights.

We work with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, the Fairtrade Movement, the International Labour Organisation and other partner agencies to create decent and fair employment conditions in the developing world.

Through these partnerships, we aim to combat all forms of slave, bonded and coercive labour.

To find out more about what Irish Aid is doing on your behalf to help the world's poorest workers log-on to [www.irishaid.gov.ie](http://www.irishaid.gov.ie)

Irish Aid is the Government's programme of assistance to the developing world. This year Ireland will spend over €813 million in the fight against poverty.

## APPENDIX 1

### CONGRESS FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2004-2006

# IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT -

### NUMBER 1 ACCOUNT 2004-2006

	2006 €	2005 €	2004 €
<b>Income</b>			
Affiliation Fees	1,807,124	1,619,438	1,499,895
Delegates' Fees	22,518	99,656	23,402
Administrative Charge to Education, Training and Advisory Service	150,000	150,649	102,000
Grant and Project Income	358,126	-	-
<b>Other Income</b>	<b>301,292</b>	<b>159,304</b>	<b>103,898</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>2,639,060</b>	<b>2,029,047</b>	<b>1,729,195</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
<b>Administration Expenses</b>			
Staff Costs	1,150,891	920,380	972,889
Ex-gratia Pensions	64,503	65,017	63,163
Motor and Travelling Expenses	57,464	35,179	17,840
Light and Heat	19,951	17,716	12,293
Telephone	40,936	39,817	30,848
Postage	16,382	20,542	16,571
Rates	38,697	27,086	19,584
Repairs and Renewals	70,729	69,135	22,616
Insurance	17,446	9,991	9,548
Legal and Professional Fees	143,123	184,751	28,225
Event Costs	24,412	-	-
Activity Costs	298,065	-	-
Audit Fees	16,269	8,139	7,000
Grants and Subscriptions	20,805	19,113	2,490
Books, Papers and Periodicals	7,360	11,230	17,391
Leasing of Office Equipment	7,663	9,808	6,600
Bank Charges and Interest	51,918	57,002	61,738
Cleaning	22,736	14,920	6,695
Sundry Expenses	6,436	14,487	23,085
(Profit)/loss on sale of Motor Vehicles	-	-	(3,700)
Advertising	1,271	62,865	3,115
Staff Recruitment	-	5,326	16,078
Waiver of Northern Ireland Loan	92,407	-	-
<b>Total Administration Expenses</b>	<b>2,169,464</b>	<b>1,592,504</b>	<b>1,334,069</b>
<b>Publications and Stationery</b>			
Publications	6,592	74,386	17,348
Stationery	35,730	34,819	39,754
<b>Total Publications and Stationery</b>	<b>42,322</b>	<b>109,205</b>	<b>57,102</b>



	2006 €	2005 €	2004 €
<b>Expenditure</b>			
<b>Meeting Expenses</b>			
Biennial Conference	15,172	112,513	-
Executive Council	1,742	788	8,103
Committees and Conferences	6,741	41,005	73,449
International	694	32,668	11,420
<b>Total Meeting Expenses</b>	<b>24,349</b>	<b>186,974</b>	<b>92,972</b>
<b>Other Expenditure</b>			
International Affiliation Fees	96,416	86,346	90,575
(Profit)/Loss on Foreign Exchange	-	13,945	(16,965)
Depreciation	30,887	32,857	28,215
<b>Total Other Expenditure</b>	<b>127,303</b>	<b>133,148</b>	<b>101,825</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,363,438</b>	<b>2,021,831</b>	<b>1,585,968</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>2,639,060</b>	<b>2,029,047</b>	<b>1,729,195</b>
Operating surplus for year	275,622	7,216	143,227
Deposit interest	-	-	1,100
Taxation	-	-	223
<b>Surplus for year</b>	<b>275,622</b>	<b>7,216</b>	<b>144,550</b>

# IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

## BALANCE SHEET - NUMBER 1 ACCOUNT

### 2004-2006

	2006 €	2005 €	2004 €
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>3,214,396</b>	<b>3,225,922</b>	<b>3,133,996</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Bank Balance and Cash	17,757	260	76,514
Debtors and Prepayments	527,532	318,560	192,523
Stock of Stationery	1,434	1,434	1,434
	<b>546,723</b>	<b>320,254</b>	<b>270,471</b>
<b>Less: Current Liabilities</b>			
Bank Loans and Overdrafts	(23,268)	(240,437)	(148,437)
Creditors and Accrued Expenses	(342,811)	(128,037)	(217,064)
	<b>(366,079)</b>	<b>(368,474)</b>	<b>(365,501)</b>
<b>Net Current Assets /(Liabilities)</b>	<b>180,644</b>	<b>(48,220)</b>	<b>(95,030)</b>
<b>Creditors: Amounts due after more than 1 year</b>			
Bank loans	(980,331)	(1,038,615)	(907,094)
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>2,414,709</b>	<b>2,139,087</b>	<b>2,131,872</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Accumulated fund	751,956	476,334	469,119
Premises Funding Account	1,662,753	1,662,753	1,662,753
	<b>2,414,709</b>	<b>2,139,087</b>	<b>2,131,872</b>

# IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

## CONGRESS EDUCATION, TRAINING AND

### ADVISORY SERVICES ACCOUNT 2004 - 2006

	2006 €	2005 €	2004 €
<b>Income</b>			
Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment	1,801,320	1,773,000	1,080,000
Participants' Fees	984,595	855,480	784,148
C.I.E. Group Secretariat	133,790	53,270	111,760
Sales of Publications	33	271	509
Grant and Project Income	117,752	-	-
Other Income	36,214	198,607	102,277
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3,073,704</b>	<b>2,880,628</b>	<b>2,078,694</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Staff costs	1,227,624	1,179,327	996,371
Ex-gratia pensions	24,000	24,237	21,216
Advisory Consultancy Costs	666,000	666,000	-
Administrative charge - Head Office	122,000	104,000	102,000
Education Division – SIPTU	182,842	182,842	182,842
Education Division – ATGWU	31,743	31,743	31,743
Motor, Travelling and Subsistence	53,014	12,690	9,930
Research and Consulting	93,117	-	-
Training courses and Seminars	789,990	566,201	673,676
People's College Grant	40,750	24,955	31,740
Canteen	-	1,348	858
Printing and Publications	7,577	5,954	4,950
Lease of Office equipment	7,478	-	-
Stationery	7,084	28,361	21,195
Insurance	9,981	8,038	4,898
Audit Fees	5,270	10,987	9,665
Light and Heat	6,000	6,000	3,000
Postage and Telephone	6,513	6,324	17,118
Rent, Rates and Service Charges	20,447	20,000	35,000
Repairs and Renewals	13,525	12,982	8,546
Bank Interest and Charges	90	210	416
Cleaning and Sundry Items	27,568	25,958	6,118
Depreciation	6,716	7,494	7,395
Loss on disposal of fixed asset	2,650	-	-
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>3,351,979</b>	<b>2,925,651</b>	<b>2,168,677</b>
<b>Deficit for the year</b>	<b>(278,275)</b>	<b>(45,023)</b>	<b>(89,983)</b>

# IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

## BALANCE SHEET

### CONGRESS EDUCATION, TRAINING AND ADVISORY SERVICE ACCOUNT 2004 - 2006

	2006 €	2005 €	2004 €
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>12,057</b>	<b>26,867</b>	<b>29,579</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Stock of Printing, Publications and Stationery	3,600	3,600	1,000
Debtors and Prepayments	743,055	896,578	742,258
	<b>746,655</b>	<b>900,178</b>	<b>743,258</b>
<b>Less: Current Liabilities</b>			
Bank Overdraft	28,761	741,718	441,815
Creditors and Accrued Expenses	1,082,050	259,150	359,822
	<b>1,110,811</b>	<b>1,000,868</b>	<b>801,637</b>
<b>Net Current Liabilities</b>	<b>(364,156)</b>	<b>(100,690)</b>	<b>(58,379)</b>
<b>Net Liabilities</b>	<b>(352,099)</b>	<b>(73,823)</b>	<b>(28,800)</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
<b>Accumulated Deficit</b>	<b>(352,099)</b>	<b>(73,823)</b>	<b>(28,800)</b>



# CONGRESS NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE TRAINING SERVICES ACCOUNT

	2006 Stg £	2005 Stg £	2004 Stg £
<b>Income</b>			
Grant from Department For Employment and Learning	98,000	98,000	100,000
Contributions from Trade Unions	16,252	18,580	19,465
Other Income	12,000	6,036	9,170
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>126,252</b>	<b>122,616</b>	<b>128,635</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Salaries, National Insurance and Superannuation	86,615	81,046	78,143
Shop Steward, Health & Safety Training	18,543	22,042	25,389
Publications	1,506	2,632	1,617
Rent and Rates	6,800	6,800	6,800
Insurance	800	800	800
Heat & Light	1,200	1,200	1,200
Stationery	2,000	2,000	2,000
Postage	1,600	1,600	1,600
Telephone	2,000	2,000	2,000
Travel Expenses	981	934	1,337
Other Expenses	2,630	2,993	7,741
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>124,675</b>	<b>123,647</b>	<b>128,627</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit for Year</b>	<b>1,577</b>	<b>(1,031)</b>	<b>8</b>

# CONGRESS NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE

## TRAINING SERVICES ACCOUNT 2004 - 2006

### BALANCE SHEET

	2006 Stg £	2005 Stg £	2004 Stg £
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors and Prepayments	4,296	4,055	18,080
Bank Balances	12,002	---	---
	<b>16,298</b>	<b>4,055</b>	<b>18,080</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Accrued Expenditure	---	---	2,681
Bank Balances	12,812	2,146	12,459
	<b>12,812</b>	<b>2,146</b>	<b>15,140</b>
<b>Net Current Assets</b> (Liabilities)	3,486	1,909	2,940
Fixed and Net Current Assets	3,486	1,909	2,940
<b>Represented by Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>3,486</b>	<b>1,909</b>	<b>2,940</b>

# CONGRESS NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE

## WORK STUDY ADVISORY SERVICES

### ACCOUNT 2004 - 2006

	2006 Stg £	2005 Stg £	2004 Stg £
<b>Income</b>			
Grant from Department For Employment and Learning	86,000	76,000	74,000
Other Grants	1,068	---	---
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>87,068</b>	<b>76,000</b>	<b>74,000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Salaries, National Insurance and Superannuation	25,566	49,282	48,133
Congress Contribution	12,000	---	---
Equality Training Programme	5,208	3,849	3,090
Publications	1,501	2,723	1,236
Rent and Rates	6,800	6,800	6,800
Insurance	800	800	800
Heat & Light	1,200	1,200	1,200
Stationery	2,000	2,000	2,000
Postage	1,600	1,600	1,600
Telephone	2,000	2,000	2,000
Travel Expenses	1,843	1,316	2,431
Other Expenses	12,027	8,277	6,070
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>72,545</b>	<b>79,847</b>	<b>75,360</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit for Year</b>	<b>14,523</b>	<b>(3,847)</b>	<b>(1,360)</b>

# CONGRESS NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE

## WORK STUDY ADVISORY SERVICES

### BALANCE SHEET 2004 - 2006

	2006 Stg £	2005 Stg £	2004 Stg £
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors and Prepayments	16,154	---	---
Bank Balances	---	910	4,728
	<b>16,154</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>4,728</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Accrued Expenditure	1,631	910	821
Bank Balances	---	---	---
	<b>14,523</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>3,847</b>
<b>Net Current Assets (Liabilities)</b>			
Fixed and Net Current Assets	14,523	---	3,847
<b>Represented by Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>14,523</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>3,847</b>



## APPENDIX 2

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE

The Executive Council held 18 ordinary meetings and 18 Special meetings (36 in total) between July 2005 and May 2007.

In addition there was a number of briefing meetings for the Republic of Ireland members of the Executive Council during negotiations on ***Towards 2016.***

The attendances at these meetings were as follows:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Ordinary</b>	<b>Special</b>	<b>Total</b>
P McLoone (President) (IMPACT)	18	18	36
R Callender (Vice President) (SIPTU)	15	7	22
P McKeown (Vice President) (UNISON)	13	5	18
J O'Flynn (Treasurer) (SIPTU)	15	10	25
A Allaway (NIPSA)	13	0	13
L Broderick (IBOA)	15	12	27
P Buchanan (GMB)*	5	1	6
C Byrne (INTO)	11	11	22
J Carr (INTO)	17	14	31
S Cody (IMPACT)	18	15	33
J Corey (NIPSA)	14	0	14
E Devoy (TEEU)	16	11	27
S Dooley (NUJ)	18	14	32
L Doran (INO)	15	15	30
J Dorney (TUI)	15	15	30
J Douglas (MANDATE)	12	8	20
S Fitzpatrick (CWU)	15	16	31
E Fleming (Trades Councils)	15	16	31
R Glackin (CPSU)	13	10	23
N Greene (AMICUS)	13	10	23
B Hayes (SIPTU)	13	8	21
B Horan (CPSU)	15	15	30
P King (SIPTU)	15	11	26
B Lawn (PCS)**	8	0	8
B Mackin (AMICUS)	13	4	17
J Moore (UCATT)	16	17	33
D Murphy (PSEU)	18	17	35
J O'Connor (SIPTU)	15	15	30
M O'Reilly (ATGWU)	13	14	27
P O'Shaughnessy (BATU)	13	7	20
J Shanahan (AMICUS)	17	17	34
L Tanham (MANDATE)	7	4	11
J Tierney (AMICUS)***	6	9	15
C Tracey (INO)	14	11	25
J White (ASTI)**	10	3	13
O Wills (TEEU)	15	10	25

\*resigned in October 2006

\*\*Observer

\*\*\* resigned in April, 2006

## General Purposes Committee

The General Purposes Committee met 23 times between October 2005 and May 2007.

The attendances were as follows:

P McLoone (President)	23
R Callender (V President)	11
P McKeown (V President)	11
J O'Flynn (Treasurer)	17
P Buchanan*	6
J Carr	22
D Murphy	22
J O'Connor	18
J Tierney**	12

\*resigned in October 2006

\*\*resigned in April 2006

## Northern Ireland Committee

The Northern Ireland Committee's Biennial Delegate Conference was held in the Canal Court Hotel, Newry, Co Down, on 25/26 April 2006 and the following were elected as members of the Committee for 2006-2008.

K Smyth (USDAW), P McKeown (UNISON), J Cunningham (SIPTU), E McGlone (ATGWU), P Williamson, K McAdam and B Mackin (AMICUS), M Kiddle (UCATT), M Morgan and J Corey (NIPSA), S Searson (NASUWT), B McCreight (GMB), F Bunting (INTO), A Hall-Callaghan (UTU), L Huston (CWU), J Barbour (FBU), C McCambridge (TSSA), K Doherty (Belfast & District TC).

At its inaugural meeting in May 2006, Michael Kiddle was elected Chair and Eugene McGlone as Vice-Chair.

Following Mr Doherty's appointment as a member of Congress staff in Northern Ireland he relinquished his position as the Trades Council representative on the NIC and was replaced by Mr Paddy Mackel, Belfast and District Trades Council.

## Obituaries

A number of close colleagues in the trade union movement died since BDC 2005, including:

Paddy Cardiff (ex Congress President), Paddy O'Reilly (ESBOA).

On behalf of the Executive Council Congress wishes to extend its deepest sympathies to the families of those deceased.



IRELAND EMBRACING  
CULTURAL DIVERSITY  
NATIONAL ACTION PLAN AGAINST RACISM

# Experience and Success

## *The Work of The Garda Racial and Intercultural Office*

Since foreign nationals first started to arrive on Irish shores in considerable numbers, whether for refuge or work opportunities, much has changed in the cultural and social landscape. Many of the activities in our everyday lives involve interaction with a wide range of people from different ethnic backgrounds and this is an essential part of modern Ireland as we know it today.

Foreseeing these changes and preparing for the challenges that came with them has been a major task which An Garda Síochána has so far been successful in achieving. The establishment of the Garda Racial and Intercultural Office (GRIO) was a milestone development in ensuring that the police force would be prepared for policing in a new diverse society.

Acting as a branch of the Garda Community Relations Section, the GRIO is responsible for coordinating, advising and monitoring on all issues relating to ethnic and cultural diversity. Since the office on Harcourt Street was first set up in 2000 it has been proactive in nurturing long and productive relationships with other government and non-government organisations with the same vision of working towards an inclusive and tolerant society free of discrimination. Groups such as Amnesty International, The Equality Authority, The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Intercultural (NCCRI) and The National Crime Council all partner with the GRIO on pressing intercultural issues and from these partnerships strong strategic initiatives and solutions

continue to emerge.

A review of some of the progress made by the GRIO:

- The training of 350 ethnic liaison officers
- The provision of comprehensive intercultural training programmes for all levels of the police force
- The establishment of local ethnic relations forums
- The development of a new police data base designed to compile statistics relating to racially motivated crime
- The on-going development of awareness-raising campaigns on racial and ethnic issues

The unit continues to work towards developments in policy and strategies that support the community police ethos across the organisation. Furthermore, it continues to enhance existing relationships and develop and nurture relationships with citizens regardless of religion, culture, nationality, ethnicity and background.

Racial and Intercultural Office,  
Garda Síochána,  
Community Relations Section,  
Harcourt Square,  
Dublin 2.  
Tel: (01) 666 3150



IRELAND EMBRACING  
CULTURAL DIVERSITY  
NATIONAL ACTION PLAN AGAINST RACISM



## APPENDIX 3

## AFFILIATED MEMBERSHIP

# Unions affiliated to Congress 2007

## (Membership figures in respect of 31 December 2006)

**R** = Republic of Ireland  
**NI** = Northern Ireland  
**HO** = Head Office  
**GS** = General Secretary  
**IR** = Irish Representative  
**DO** = Divisional Organiser/Officer  
**W** = Women

**DS** = District Secretary  
**NS** = National Secretary  
**RS** = Regional Secretary  
**JGS** = Joint General Secretary  
**NO** = National Officer  
**HC** = Honorary Chairperson  
**AS** = Area Secretary

Name of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
<b>ACCORD</b>	R	97	HO	Ged Nicholas, Simmons House, 46 Old Bath Road, Charvil, Reading, Berkshire RG109QR, England Telephone: 0044 118 9341808 <a href="mailto:info@accordhq.org">info@accordhq.org</a>
	NI	1662		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1759</b>		
	WR WNI	75 1069		
<b>Amicus</b>	R	29,171	HO  NS  RS	Derek Simpson, Amicus, 35 King Street, Covent Gardens, London WC2E 8JG <a href="mailto:derek.simpson@amicustheunion.org">derek.simpson@amicustheunion.org</a>  Peter Williamson, 26-34 Antrim Road, Belfast, BT15 2AA Telephone: 04890 747871 Fax: 04890 748052 <a href="mailto:peter.williamson@amicustheunion.org">peter.williamson@amicustheunion.org</a>  Jerry Shanahan, Amicus, 15 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-6761213 <a href="mailto:jerry.shanahan@amicustheunion.org">jerry.shanahan@amicustheunion.org</a>
	NI	29,171		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>58,342</b>		
	W R W NI	11,000 1,390		
<b>Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union</b>	R	14364	HO  RS  R	Tony Woodley, ATGWU, Transport House, 128 Theobald's Road, Holborn, London <a href="mailto:twoodley@tgwu.org.uk">twoodley@tgwu.org.uk</a>  Michael O Reilly, 102 High Street, Belfast BT1 2DL Telephone: (048) 90232381 <a href="mailto:moreilly@tgwu.org.uk">moreilly@tgwu.org.uk</a>  John Bolger, Senior Regional Organiser 55-56 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-8734577 / 8734023 / 8734089 <a href="mailto:jbolger@tgwu.org.uk">jbolger@tgwu.org.uk</a>
	NI	26,081		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40,445</b>		
	W R WNI	4524 5565		
<b>Association of Higher Civil and Public Servants</b>	R	3,330	GS	Dave Thomas Flemings Hall, 12 Flemings Place, Dublin 4 Telephone: 01-6686077 / 6686064 <a href="mailto:soriordain@ahcps.ie">soriordain@ahcps.ie</a>
	NI	-		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,330</b>		
	W R	950		

Name of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
<b>Association of Irish Traditional Musicians</b>	R NI <b>Total</b> W	162 - <b>162</b> 60	GS	Peadar Ó Ceallaigh 32/33 Belgrave Square, Monkstown, Co. Dublin Telephone: 01-2800295 <a href="mailto:enquiries@comhaltas.com">enquiries@comhaltas.com</a>
<b>Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	17,154 - <b>17,154</b>  11,487	GS	John White ASTI House, Winetavern Street, Dublin 8 Telephone: 01-6040178 Fax: 01-6719039 <a href="mailto:jwhite@asti.ie">jwhite@asti.ie</a>
<b>Association of Teachers and Lecturers</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W NI	- 2,062 <b>2,062</b>  1458	GS   IR	Mary Bousted, 7 Northumberland St., London WC2N SDA Telephone: 0044 2079306441 <a href="mailto:info@atl.org.uk">info@atl.org.uk</a>  Ms E Rodgers, 397A Holywood Road, Belfast BT4 2LY Telephone: (048) 90471412 <a href="mailto:ni@atl.org.uk">ni@atl.org.uk</a>
<b>Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	- 559 <b>559</b>  - 222	GS  RS	Joe Marino, Stanborough House, Great North Road, Welwyn Gardens City, Hertfordshire <a href="mailto:bfawuho@aol.com">bfawuho@aol.com</a>  John Halliday, 2nd floor, 80 High Street, Belfast BT1 2BG Telephone/Fax: (048) 90322767 <a href="mailto:john.halliday@bfawu.org">john.halliday@bfawu.org</a>
<b>Broadcasting Entertainment Cintematograph and Theatre Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	51 539 <b>590</b>  14 215	GS  IR	Gerry Morrissey, General Secretary, 373-377 Clapham Road, London SW9 9BT Telephone: 0044 2073460900 <a href="mailto:info@bectu.org.uk">info@bectu.org.uk</a>  David Donovan, Transport House, 1 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF12 9SD. <a href="mailto:ddonovan@bectu.org.uk">ddonovan@bectu.org.uk</a>
<b>Building and Allied Trades Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b> W R W NI	10,000 - <b>10,000</b> 150 -	GS	Paddy O'Shaughnessy Arus Hibernia, 13 Blessington Street Dublin 7 Telephone: 01- 8301911 / 8301280 <a href="mailto:p.oshaughnessy@batu.ie">p.oshaughnessy@batu.ie</a>
<b>Chartered Society of Physiotherapy</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	230 965 <b>1,195</b>  190 932	GS  IR	T Simon, 14 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4ED Telephone: 00442073066666 <a href="mailto:enquiries@csp.org.uk">enquiries@csp.org.uk</a>  Linda Austin, Merrion Business Centre, 58 Howard St., Belfast BT1 6PJ Telephone: 048 90313548 <a href="mailto:austinl@csp.org.uk">austinl@csp.org.uk</a>
<b>Civil Service Alliance (ATOA)</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	65  <b>65</b>  2	HT	Pat Quinn, CSA, Irish Aviation Authority, Engineering Department, Ballycasey Cross, Shannon, Co Clare Telephone: 061-366180

Name of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
<b>Civil and Public Service Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	13,775 - <b>13,775</b>  9896	GS	Blair Horan 19/20 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-6765394/5 <a href="mailto:bhoran@cpsu.ie">bhoran@cpsu.ie</a>
<b>Communications Workers' Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	19,600 - <b>19,600</b>  2,600	GS	Stephen Fitzpatrick Aras Ghaibreil, 575 North Circular Road, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-8366388 <a href="mailto:sarah@cwuconnect.org">sarah@cwuconnect.org</a>
<b>Communication Workers Union (UK)</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W NI	- 5,372 <b>5,372</b>  1,147	GS   RS	Billy Hayes CWU, 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1RX Telephone: 0044 2089717200 <a href="mailto:bhayes@cwu.org">bhayes@cwu.org</a>  Lawrence Huston, 27 Knockeen Crescent. Ballymena, Co.Antrim BT42 4DQ Telephone: 048 25 640679 Mobile: 0044 78 02 787733 <a href="mailto:l.huston@btopenworld.com">l.huston@btopenworld.com</a>
<b>CONNECT</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	9 542 <b>551</b>  1 145	GS	Simon Petch 30 St. Georges Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 4BD Telephone: 0044 208 9716000 <a href="mailto:union@connectuk.org">union@connectuk.org</a>
<b>Equity (British Actors Equity Association)</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	70 346 <b>378</b>  40 144	GS  IR	Christina Payne, Guild House, Upper St. Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9E Telephone: 0044 2073796000 <a href="mailto:info@equity.org.uk">info@equity.org.uk</a>  D McFarlane, 114 Union Street, Glasgow, G13QQ <a href="mailto:lgilchrist@glasgow.equity.org.uk">lgilchrist@glasgow.equity.org.uk</a>
<b>Electricity Supply Board Officers' Association</b>	R NI <b>Total</b> W R	2,020 - <b>2,020</b> 1110	GS	Fran O' Neill 43 East James's Place, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-6767444 <a href="mailto:franoneill@esboa.ie">franoneill@esboa.ie</a>
<b>Fire Brigades' Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W	- <b>1,651</b> <b>1,651</b>  54	HO  IR	Matt Wrack, Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey KT2 Telephone: 0044 2085411765 <a href="mailto:davy.curry@fbu.org.uk">davy.curry@fbu.org.uk</a>  T Maguire, FBU, 14 Batchelors Walk, Lisbon, Co Antrim BT28 1XJ Telephone: 048 9266 4622 <a href="mailto:tony.maguire@fbu.org.uk">tony.maguire@fbu.org.uk</a>



Name of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
<b>First Division Civil Servants</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W	- 146 <b>146</b>  41	GS  IR	Jonathan Baume, 8 Leake Street, London SE1 7NN Telephone 0044 845 470 1111 <a href="mailto:jonathan@fda.org.uk">jonathan@fda.org.uk</a> Neill Jackson, Room 50, Craigantlet Buildings, Stoney Road, Belfast B4 3SX
<b>GMB</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W	58 12,708 <b>12,766</b>  <b>5778</b>	GS  IR	Paul Kenny, GMB 22-24 Worple Road, London SW19 4DD Telephone: 0044 208 9473131 <a href="mailto:info@gmb.org.uk">info@gmb.org.uk</a>  Paul McCarthy, 3-4 Donegall Quay, Belfast BT1 3EA Telephone: (048) 90312111 <a href="mailto:paul.mccarthy@gmb.org.uk">paul.mccarthy@gmb.org.uk</a>
<b>Guinness Staff Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	1,072 - <b>1,072</b>  634	GS	Sean Mackell, GSU, 107 James's Street, Dublin 8. Telephone: 01- 453 6700 <a href="mailto:sean.mackell@diageo.com">sean.mackell@diageo.com</a>
<b>Irish Bank Officials' Association</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	15,267 6,306 <b>21,573</b>  10,426 4,732	GS	Larry Broderick IBOA House, Stephen Street Upper, Dublin 8 Telephone: 01-475 5908 <a href="mailto:larry.broderick@iboa.ie">larry.broderick@iboa.ie</a>
<b>Irish Federation of University Teachers</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	1,727 - <b>1727</b>  684	GS	Daltun O'Ceallaigh IFUT, 11 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01- 661 0910/661 0909 <a href="mailto:ifut@eircom.net">ifut@eircom.net</a>
<b>Irish Medical Organisation</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	5,801 - <b>5,801</b>  2,248	GS	George McNeice IMO, 10 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01- 676 7273 <a href="mailto:imo@imo.ie">imo@imo.ie</a>
<b>Irish Municipal, Public and Civil Trade Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	57,532 - 57,532  38,000	GS	Peter McLoone IMPACT, Nerney's Court, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-817 1500 <a href="mailto:pmcloone@impact.ie">pmcloone@impact.ie</a>
<b>Irish National Teachers' Organisation</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	27,975 7,100 <b>35,075</b>  23,499 5,467	GS	John Carr INTO, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 Telephone: 872 2533 <a href="mailto:jcarr@into.ie">jcarr@into.ie</a>

Name of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
<b>Irish Nurses Organisation</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	34500 - <b>34,500</b>  33032	GS	Liam Doran INO, Whitworth Building, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7 Telephone: 01-6640600 <a href="mailto:liam@ino.ie">liam@ino.ie</a>
<b>MANDATE</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	43,756 - <b>43,756</b>  29,000	GS	John Douglas MANDATE, 9 Cavendish Row, Dublin 1 Telephone: 874 6321 <a href="mailto:johndouglas@mandate.ie">johndouglas@mandate.ie</a>
<b>Musicians Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W NI	- 177 <b>177</b>  45	GS	Sheena Macdonald Scotland and Northern Ireland Regional Organiser 1 Woodside Terrace, Glasgow G3 7UY Telephone: 0141 341 2960 Fax: 0141332 8709 <a href="mailto:Glasgow@musiciansunion.org.uk">Glasgow@musiciansunion.org.uk</a>
<b>Medical Laboratory Scientists Association</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	1,893 - <b>1,893</b>  1192	GS	John Kane, MSLA 5 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Liberty Hall, Dublin 1 Telephone: 8586472 Fax: 8780086 <a href="mailto:mlsa@siptu.ie">mlsa@siptu.ie</a>
<b>National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	- 12591 <b>12591</b>  - 12591	GS  IR	Chris Keates, NASUWT, Hillscourt Education Centre, Rose Hill, Rednal, Birmingham B458RS 0044121 453 6150 <a href="mailto:nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk">nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk</a>  Ian Marrey Ben Madigan House, Edgewater Office Park, Edgewater Road, Belfast BT 3 9JQ Telephone: (048) 90784480 <a href="mailto:rc-nireland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk">rc-nireland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk</a>
<b>National Association of Probation Officers</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W NI	- 92 <b>92</b>  68	GS  IR	Judy McKnight 4 Chivalry Road, Battersea, London SW11 1HT Telephone: 0044 2072232991 <a href="mailto:info@napo.org.uk">info@napo.org.uk</a>  Paul McCusker c/o PBMI, 330 Ormeau Rd, Belfast BT9 6BS Telephone: 048 90262400
<b>National League of the Blind of Ireland</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	119 - <b>119</b>  60	HC	Larry Carroll, Chairman NLBI, 21 Hill Street, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-874 2792 <a href="mailto:nlbi@eircom.net">nlbi@eircom.net</a>

Name of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
National Union of Journalists	R	3346	GS	Jeremy Dear Acorn House, 314/321 Gray's Inn Road London WC1 8DP Telephone: 0044 2072787916 <a href="mailto:generalsecretary@nuj.org.uk">generalsecretary@nuj.org.uk</a>
	NI	954		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4300</b>		
	W R	1128	IR	
	W NI	316		Seamus Dooley 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Spencer House, Spencer Row, Off Store Street, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01- 8170340 <a href="mailto:seamusd@nuj.ie">seamusd@nuj.ie</a>
National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT)	R	54	HO	Bob Crow, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD <a href="mailto:info@rmt.org.uk">info@rmt.org.uk</a>  Ian McIntyre 180 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 2UE, Scotland Telephone: 0044 1413321117 <a href="mailto:i.macintyre@rmt.org.uk">i.macintyre@rmt.org.uk</a>
	NI	58		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>		
	W R	11	IR	
	W NI	4		
National Union of Sheet Metal Workers of Ireland	R	800	GS	Richard Hurley NUSMWI, 6 Gardiner Row, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01- 874 5701 <a href="mailto:info@ucatt.ie">info@ucatt.ie</a>  Temp address: C/O UCATT House, 56 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1
	NI	-		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>800</b>		
	W	-		
Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance	R	-	GS	John Corey NIPSA, 54 Wellington Park, Belfast BT9 6BZ Telephone: (048) 9066 1831 <a href="mailto:john.corey@nipsa.org.uk">john.corey@nipsa.org.uk</a>
	NI	43368		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>43368</b>		
	W NI	28,530		
Operative Plasterers and Allied Trades Society of Ireland	R	4,220	GS	Niall Irwin 72 Shantalla Road, Beaumont, Dublin 9 Telephone: 01- 8625185/8625188 <a href="mailto:niall@plastersunion.com">niall@plastersunion.com</a>
	NI	-		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,220</b>		
	W R	3		
Prison Officers' Association	R	3,145	GS	John Clinton POA, 18 Merrion Square Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-6625495/6768501 <a href="mailto:shirleysullivan@poa.ie">shirleysullivan@poa.ie</a>
	NI	-		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,145</b>		
	W R	345		
Prison Officers' Association Northern Ireland	NI	1658	GS	June Robinson POA NI, Castelle House, 116 Ballywalter Road, Millisle, Co Down
	WNI	299		

Name of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
<b>Prospect</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	3 928 <b>1,050</b>  1 118	GS	Paul Noon, Prospect, 8 Leake Street London SE1 7NN  <a href="mailto:paul.noon@prospect.org.uk">paul.noon@prospect.org.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:amyhong@prospect.org.uk">amyhong@prospect.org.uk</a>
<b>Public Service Executive Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	12,000 - <b>12,000</b>  6,720	GS	Dan Murphy PSEU, 30 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-676 7271 <a href="mailto:dmurphy@pseu.ie">dmurphy@pseu.ie</a>
<b>Public and Commercial Services</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W WNI	19 2882 <b>2901</b>  10 1691	GS   IR	Mark Serwotka 160 Falcon Road, London SW11 2LN Telephone: 0044 2079242727 <a href="mailto:Mark.serwotka@pcs.org.uk">Mark.serwotka@pcs.org.uk</a>  Alastair Donaghy, PCS, 20 Brigadie Avenue, Ballymena, BT43 7ER
<b>Sales, Marketing and Administrative Union of Ireland</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R	621 - <b>621</b>  107	GS	Liam Cassidy SMAUI, 9 Cavendish Row, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-8870700 Fax: 01-8729581 <a href="mailto:smaui@eircom.net">smaui@eircom.net</a>
<b>Seamens Union of Ireland</b>	R <b>Total</b>	50 <b>50</b>	GS	Bob Carrick SUI 61 North Strand Road, Dublin 3 Telephone: 01- 8363500 Fax: 01-8365336
<b>Services Industrial Professional Technical Union</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W R W NI	206,881 7,001 <b>213,882</b>  77,580 3,001	GS	Joe O'Flynn SIPTU, Liberty Hall, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01- 8586300 <a href="mailto:gensec@siptu.ie">gensec@siptu.ie</a>
<b>Society of Radiographers</b>	R NI <b>Total</b>  W NI	- 631 <b>631</b>  591	GS  IR	Richard Evans 207 Providence Square, Mill Street London SE1 2EW <a href="mailto:info@sor.org">info@sor.org</a>  Ian Marrey, SOR, PO Box 4179, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY83WY



Name of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
Teachers' Union of Ireland	R	13,378	GS	Jim Dorney TUI, 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6 Telephone: 01- 4922588/4922510 <a href="mailto:jdorney@tui.ie">jdorney@tui.ie</a>
	NI	-		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13,378</b>		
	W R	5351		
Technical, Engineering and Electrical Union	R	42,176	GS	Owen Wills TEEU, 5 Cavendish Row, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-874 7047/872 2369 <a href="mailto:Owen_w@teeu.ie">Owen_w@teeu.ie</a>
	NI	-		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>42,176</b>		
	W R	568		
Transport Salaried Staffs' Association	R	1,343	GS	Gerry Doherty, TSSA Walken House, 10 Melton Street Euston, London SW1 2EJ <a href="mailto:info@tssa.org.uk">info@tssa.org.uk</a>
	NI	495		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1838</b>	AIR	Carla McCambridge TSSA, Nerney's Court, Off Temple Street, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-874 3467 <a href="mailto:mccambridge@tssa.ie">mccambridge@tssa.ie</a>
	W R	406		
	W NI	148		
University & College Union	R	4328	JG S	Ms S Hunt, Egmont House, 25-31 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9UT Telephone: 0044 2076709700 Paul Mackney London WC1 X 9JP 27 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JP Tel 020 7837 3636 Jim McKeown UTU, 475 Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 7EZ N Ireland Tel 048 90665501 Fax 048 90669225 <a href="mailto:jmckeown@ucu.org.uk">jmckeown@ucu.org.uk</a>
	NI	<b>4328</b>		
	W NI	2083	IS	
Ulster Teachers' Union	R	81	GS	Avril Hall-Callahan 94 Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5HP Telephone: (048) 90662216 <a href="mailto:office@utu.edu">office@utu.edu</a>
	NI	6,743		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,459</b>		
	W R	71		
	W NI	5,845		
Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians	R	13110	HO	Alan Ritchie, 117 Abbeyville Road, Clapham London SW4 9RN <a href="mailto:info@ucatt.org.uk">info@ucatt.org.uk</a>
	NI	2,700		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15,810</b>	NS	Jim Moore UCATT, 56 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-873 1599 <a href="mailto:info@ucatt.ie">info@ucatt.ie</a>
	W R	10		
	W NI	60		

Name of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
<b>Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers</b>	R	-	HO	John Hannett, 188 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield Manchester M14 6LJ
	NI	10,866	IR	<a href="mailto:enquiries@usdaw.org.uk">enquiries@usdaw.org.uk</a>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10,866</b>		
	W NI	6,407		Kieran Smyth USDAW, First Floor, Unit 2, 41 Stockmans Way Belfast BT9 7ET Telephone: (048) 90663773 Fax: 028 9066 2133 <a href="mailto:belfast@usdaw.org.uk">belfast@usdaw.org.uk</a>
<b>UNISON</b>	R	-	HO	Dave Prentis 1 Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9AJ
	NI	38,358	IR	Telephone: 008453550845 (Lo-Call)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38,358</b>		
	W NI	31,500		Patricia McKeown Galway House, 165 York Street, Belfast BT15 IAL Telephone: (028) 90327929 <a href="mailto:e.robinson@unision.co.uk">e.robinson@unision.co.uk</a>
<b>Veterinary Ireland</b>	R	1,110	GS	John Horan
	NI	-		13 Kilcarberry Park, Nangor Road, Dublin 22
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,110</b>		Telephone: 01-4577976 <a href="mailto:vetireland@eircom.net">vetireland@eircom.net</a>
	W R	259		
<b>Veterinary Officers' Association</b>	R	337	GS	Ned Phelan
	NI	-		VOA, Fleming's Hall
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>		12 Fleming's Place Dublin 4
	W	60		Telephone: 01-668 6077/ 668 6064 <a href="mailto:petermul@iol.ie">petermul@iol.ie</a>

# Unions with Associate Status affiliated to Congress 2007

(Membership figures in respect of 31 December 2006)

Name of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
ALGUS	R NI Total  W R W NI	100 100  78	HO	General Secretary 22 Upper King Street Leicester LE1 6XE England 00441162856585
ASPECT	R NI Total  W R WNI	127 127  77	HO	John Chowcat General Secretary ASPECT Woolley Hall, Woolley Wakefield West Yorkshire WF4 2JR England Telephone 0044 1226383427 <a href="mailto:naeiac@gemsoft.co.uk">naeiac@gemsoft.co.uk</a>
Association of Educational Psychologists	R NI Total  WR WNI	109   91	HO	Charles Ward General Secretary Association of Educational Psychologists 26 The Avenue Druham DH1 3ED, England Telephone 0044 1913849512 <a href="mailto:sao@aep.org.uk">sao@aep.org.uk</a>
Community	R NI Total  W R WNI	100 100  27	HO	Michael Leahy General Secretary Community Swinton House 323 Gray's Inn Road WC1X 8DD, England 00442072391200 <a href="mailto:info@community-tu.org">info@community-tu.org</a>
British & Irish Orthoptic Society	R NI Total W		HO  NI	5th Floor, Charles House 48/49 Gt Charles Street Queensway Birmingham B33HT, England 0044 121 2008010 <a href="mailto:ir@bda.uk.com">ir@bda.uk.com</a>  David Wright British & Irish Orthoptic Society Orthoptic Dept, Altnagelvin Area Hospital Glenshane Road, Londonderry BT47 6SB N Ireland
Society of Chiropodists & Podiatrists	R NI Total  W WNI	145 350 495  104 260 364	HO	Eddie Saville Director of Industrial Relations Society of Chiropodists & Podiatrists 1 Fellmongers Path Tower Bridge Road SE1 3LY England Tel: 0044 20 7234 8620



# EMPLOYEES

# HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY!

Through the support of the Construction Safety Partnership (CSP) the Safety Representative Facilitation Project (SRFP) is available, free of charge to employers, trade unions, employees, and management to:

- Promote, and assist in, the selection process for the Site Safety Representative role
- Provide support and advice to Construction Safety Representatives in the performance of their role and functions in the Construction Industry
- Carry out promotional lectures with both employer organisations, and trade unions, on the role, function and benefits of the Construction Safety Representative
- Carry out Tool-Box-Talks, or lectures, on construction site, on the role, function and benefits of the Construction Safety Representative
- Provide support and advice to construction employers, site management, and trade unions, on the role, function and benefits of the Construction Safety Representative
- Provide a construction site consultation development service
- Facilitate the Promotion of Construction Site Health and Safety through Partnership

To acquire the SRFP's assistance in the development of any aspect of the site safety representative role and functions, contact either:

**Mr. Tony Whelan,**

**Safety Representative. Facilitator / ICTU / ETS,**

Education & Training Services Trust, 31/32 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

Phone: 01 878 0988. Mobile: 087 258 9958. Fax: 01 878 7322.

E-mail: [safetytraining@etst.ie](mailto:safetytraining@etst.ie)

**or Mr. Pat O'Neill,**

**Safety Representative Facilitator / ICTU / ETS,**

Education & Training Services Trust, 31/32 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

Phone: 01 878 0988. Mobile: 087 246 8029. Fax: 01 878 7322.

E-mail: [safetytraining@etst.ie](mailto:safetytraining@etst.ie)

**Mr. Stephen Rooney (MIOSH),**

**Safety Representative Facilitator / CIF,**

Construction Industry Federation, Construction House,

Canal Rd, Dublin 6. Phone: 01 406 6000. Fax: 01 496 6953.

Mobile: 086 608052. E-mail: [srooney@cif.ie](mailto:srooney@cif.ie)



**Safety  
Representative  
SRFP  
Facilitation  
Project**



STRONGER TOGETHER

**CONGRESS**

Irish Congress of Trade Unions

The SRFP Project is supported by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, HSA, FAS through the CSP.



## LOCAL COUNCILS OF TRADE UNIONS AFFILIATED TO CONGRESS 2007

### **Athlone and District Trades Union**

J Kane, Sean Costello Street, Athlone, Co. Westmeath

### **Ballymena and Antrim District Council**

A Law, 28 Montague Park, Ballymena BT42 2DE

### **Ballina and District Council of Trade Unions**

C Hughes, Secretary, Ballina & District Council of Trade Unions, Rathnaconeen, Ballina, Co. Mayo

### **Belfast and District Trades Council**

P McKenna, c/o ATGWU, 102 High Street, Belfast BD1 2DL

### **Bray and District Council of Trade Unions**

J Byrne, Trade Union Centre, rear 97 Main Street, Bray, Co Wicklow

### **Castlebar and District Trades Council**

D Breen, 52 Castlehill Park, Castlebar

### **Clare Council of Trade Unions**

T Kenny, Springfield House, Harmony Row, Ennis, Co. Clare

### **Clonmel Trades and Labour Council**

A Atcheston, Secretary, 15 Bolton Street, Clonmel, Co Tipperary

### **Cork Council of Trade Unions**

Acting Secretary, c/o Connolly Hall, Cork

### **Craigavon Trades Council**

D Harte, 13 The Brambles, Craigavon BT66 6LP

### **Derry Trades Union Council**

L Gallagher, 35 Marlborough Place, Derry

### **Drogheda Council of Trade Unions**

F Gallagher, 40 New Fields, Drogheda, Co. Louth

### **Dublin Council of Trade Unions**

S Nolan, 194 Ballymun Road, Dublin 9

### **Dundalk Council of Trade Unions**

A Conroy, c/o Dundalk Centre for the Unemployed, 30 Clanbrassil Street, Dundalk, Co Louth

### **Dungarvan Council of Trade Unions**

T Mansfield, 35 O'Connell Street, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford

### **Fermanagh Trades Union Council**

M Steward, 114 Windmill Heights, Enniskellen, Fermanagh

### **Galway Council of Trade Unions**

T Browne, c/o Galway City Library, St. Augustine Street, Galway

### **Kildare Council of Trade Unions**

H Breslin, 3 McDonald Drive, Athy, Co Kildare

### **Kilkenny Council of Trade Unions**

M Butler, c/o 22 Vicar Street, Kilkenny

### **Killarney Trades Union Council**

E Breen, 3 Beaufort Valley, Culline, Killarney, Co. Kerry

### **Letterkenny & District Trades Union Council**

A Wilkinson, Unemployment Centre, Pearse Road, Letterkenny

### **Limerick Council of Trade Unions**

K O'Loughlin, c/o SIPTU, John Street, Limerick

### **Longford & District Trades Union Council**

R McGee, Dromod, Co Leitrim

### **Meath Council of Trade Unions**

F Cosgrove, Ardmulchan, Navan, Co Meath

### **Monaghan Trades Council**

P McAleer, 11 Cherry Park, Clones, Monaghan

### **Mullingar & District Trades Union Council**

D Sheridan, Kilgraston, Ballymahon Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

### **Newry & District Trades Union Council**

J Murphy, 24 Cherrywood Grove, Newry, Down BT34 1JW

### **North Down and Ards**

J McNulty, c/oc/o Dept of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down

### **Omagh Council of Trade Unions**

A McCabe, 7 Sunningdale, Omagh BT78 1JX

### **Sligo Council of Trade Unions**

J McDonagh, 6 Chapel Street, Sligo

### **Strabane Area Trade Union Council**

F McCrossan, 18A Newtown Street, Strabane, BT82 8DN

### **Tralee Council of Trade Unions**

A McCarthy, Connolly Hall, Upper Rock Street, Tralee, Co. Kerry

**Waterford Council of Trade Unions**

P Myler, 10 Morrisons Avenue, Waterford

**Wexford Council of Trade Unions**

M Wall, SIPTU Office, Corish Memorial Hall, Wexford

## CONGRESS CENTRES NETWORK 2007

**Dr. Steven's Resource Centre,**

Athlone, Lloyd's Lane, Athlone, Co. Westmeath

Co-ordinator: Bernie Mannion,

Phone: 090 647 3001

Fax: 090 647 8291

e-mail: coordinator.athlone@congresscentres.net

**Athy Resource Centre,**

38 Duke Street, Athy, Co. Kildare

Co-ordinator Mary Maguire

Phone: 059 863 8523

Fax: 059 863 1445

e-mail: coordinator.athy@congresscentres.net

**Ballina People's Resource Centre,**

Bury Street, Ballina, Co. Mayo

Co-ordinator Lucy Cunningham,

Phone: 096 70885

Fax: 096 71900

e-mail: coordinator.mayo@congresscentres.net

**Belfast Congress Centre,**

45-47 Donegall Street, Belfast BT1 2FG

Co-ordinator Brendan Mackin,

Phone: 04890 961111

Fax: 04890 961110

e-mail: coordinator.belfast@congresscentres.net

**Caherciveen Congress Information Centre,**

3 New Street, Caherciveen, Co. Kerry

Co-ordinator Peter Twiss,

Phone: 066 947 2866

Fax: 066 947 2123

e-mail: coordinator.caherciveen@congresscentres.net

**Castlebar People's Resource Centre,**

Burleigh House, Ellison Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

Co-ordinator Lucy Cunningham,

Phone: 094 902 2814

Fax: 094 902 2814

e-mail: coordinator.mayo@congresscentres.net

**Congress Information & Opportunity Centre,**

Elivation Business Park, Clonroad, Ennis, Co. Clare

Co-ordinator Noel Clune

Phone: 065 684 1009

Fax: 065 684 2132

e-mail: coordinator.clare@congresscentres.net

**Cork Congress Centre,**

13 North Main Street, Cork

Co-ordinator Willie Fitzpatrick

Phone: 021 427 5876

Fax: 021 427 9661

e-mail: coordinator.cork@congresscentres.net

**Co Wexford People's Resource Centre,**

Captain Wafer Hall, Springvalley,

Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford

Co-ordinator Caroline Horan

Phone: 053 9239578

Fax: 053 9239579

e-mail: coordinator.wexford@congresscentres.net

**Drogheda Resource Centre,**

7 North Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth

Co-ordinator Jacqui Taaffe,

Phone: 041 983 5754

Fax: 041 983 9064

e-mail: coordinator.drogheda@congresscentres.net

**Dublin 12 Congress Centre,**

155a Drimnagh Road, Drimnagh, Dublin 12

Co-ordinator Margaret Fitzpatrick,

Phone: 01 405 9377

Fax: 01 405 9198

e-mail: coordinator.dublin12@congresscentres.net

**Dundalk People's Centre for Information & Training,**

30 Clanbrassil Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth

Co-ordinator John Mathews

Phone: 042-933 8820

Fax: 042 933 0696

email: coordinator.dundalk@congresscentres.net

**Dungarvan – The People's Centre,**

33 Lower Main Street, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford

Contact Jimmy Byrnes.

Phone: 058 44099

Fax: 058 44099

e-mail: coordinator.dungarvan@congresscentres.net

**The Fingal Centre,**

5 Cardiffsbridge Road, Finglas, Dublin 11

Acting Co-ordinator Maureen Kelly

Phone: 01 884 5228

Fax: 01 884 5226

e-mail: coordinator.fingal@congresscentres.net

**Galway People's Resource Centre,**

Canavan House, Nun's Island, Galway

Co-ordinator Elaine Harvey

Phone: 091 564822

Fax: 091 566758

e-mail: coordinator.galway@congresscentres.net

**Noreside Resource Centre,**

22 Vicar Street, Kilkenny  
Co-ordinator Yvonne Moriarty,  
Phone: 056 776 2146  
Fax: 056 776 1580  
e-mail: coordinator.kilkenny@congresscentres.net

**Killarney Resource & Information Centre,**

8 College Street, Killarney, Co. Kerry  
Co-ordinator Tom Murphy  
Phone: 064 36863  
Fax: 064 36876  
e-mail: coordinator.killarney@congresscentres.net

**Leixlip Resource Centre,**

Unit 3, Leixlip Shopping Mall, Leixlip, Co. Kildare  
Co-ordinator Joan Kenny  
Phone: 01 624 2511  
Fax: 01 624 6492  
e-mail: coordinator.leixlip@congresscentres.net

**Congress Resource Centre Letterkenny,**

Celtic Apartments, 8/9 Pearse Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal  
Co-ordinator Marie Slevin  
Phone: 074 912 8010  
Fax: 074 912 9491  
e-mail: coordinator.letterkenny@congresscentres.net

**Limerick People's Resource Centre,**

Unit 6/7 Hunt's Lane, Dominick Street, Limerick  
Co-ordinator Pdraig Malone  
Phone: 061 416056  
Fax: 061 411696  
e-mail: coordinator.limerick@congresscentres.net

**Employment Development & Information Centre,**

Longford, Mel Sexton House, 11 Richmond Street, Longford  
Co-ordinator Mary Smith,  
Phone: 043 47515  
Fax: 043 48823  
e-mail: coordinator.longford@congresscentres.net

**Mullingar Congress Information & Development Centre**

Friars Mill Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath  
Co-ordinator Barney Fitzgerald  
Phone: 044 9345060  
Fax: 044 9345675  
e-mail: coordinator.mullingar@congresscentres.net

**Newbridge Resource Centre,**

Lower Eyre Street, Droichead Nua, Co. Kildare  
Co-ordinator Theresa Whelan Carroll  
Phone: 045 432763  
Fax: 045 433275  
e-mail: coordinator.newbridge@congresscentres.net

**North Leitrim Resource Centre,**

New Line, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim  
Co-ordinator Gerry Cornyn  
Phone: 071 985 6029  
Fax: 071 985 6185  
e-mail: coordinator.northleitrim@congresscentres.net

**Congress Employment Information Centre,**

Tralee, 5 High Street, Tralee, Co. Kerry  
Co-ordinator Marilyn Bulman,  
Phone: 066 712 7617  
Fax: 066 712 7920  
e-mail: coordinator.tralee@congresscentres.net

**Wicklow Trade Union Centre,**

97 (rear) Main Street, Bray, Co. Wicklow  
Co-ordinator Patricia Shortt  
Phone: 01 286 6730  
Fax: 01 282 9276  
e-mail: coordinator.bray@congresscentres.net

## Affiliated Membership

Total membership was 817,592 based on membership figures of 31 December, 2006, an increase of 27,670 over 2005. Total female membership accounted for 351,145.

Total membership in the Republic of Ireland was 602,644, in 42 unions, an increase of 17,080 on 2006.

Total membership in the Northern Ireland was 225,082 in 30 unions – in increase in membership of 9,707 over 2005.

## Amalgamations

Since BDC 2005, FUGE has amalgamated with IMPACT, AUT has amalgamated with NAFTHE to form UCU (University & College Union).

## New Affiliations

Since BDC 2005, ASTI has reaffiliated to Congress. ACCORD, POA NI and MSLA have affiliated as new unions.

## Associate Membership

Since BDC 2005 ALGUS, ASPECT, Association of Educational Psychologists, Community and the British & Irish Orthoptic Society have affiliated to Congress as Associate Members.





## APPENDIX 4

### CONGRESS SECRETARIAT

## Staff at Congress (as at May 2007)

Head Office, 31/32 Parnell Square, Dublin 1  
(Telephone: 01 8897777 Fax: 01 8872012)  
Northern Ireland Office, Carlin House, 4-6 Donegall  
Street Place, Belfast BT1 2FN  
(Telephone: 028 90247940)

## General Secretary's Department

**General Secretary** – David Begg  
**Assistant General Secretaries** –  
Peter Bunting,  
Sally Anne Kinahan  
**General Secretary's Office Program Manager**  
– Eileen Sweeney  
**Clerical Officer** – Natalie Fox

## Finance, Administration & Communications Department

**Communications Officer** – Macdara Doyle  
**Finance & Administration Officer (Systems/  
Funding)** – Frank Vaughan  
**Finance/HR Program Manager** – Paula McGrath  
**Reception** – Jan Boud (Natalie Fox)  
**Clerical Officer AGS/LIFT** – Katarzyna Balcerszyk  
**Household Officer** – Elizabeth Atkinson,  
**Household Assistant** – Una Herbert  
**Accounts Consultant** – Pat Quinn

## Northern Ireland Office

**Assistant General Secretary** – Peter Bunting  
**Union Services Officer (Industrial Relations)**  
– Tom Gillen  
**Union Services Officer (Education & Training)**  
– Clare Moore  
**Union Services Officer (Equality and Social  
Affairs)** – Pauline Buchanan  
**Union Services Officer (Communications)**  
– John O'Farrell  
**Union Services Officer (Global Solidarity)**  
– Neil Alldred  
**Project Worker (Union Learn)** – Aileen McErlean  
**Project Worker (Union Learn)** – Kevin Doherty  
**Project Co-ordinator (Leadership)**  
– Patricia McMullan  
**Administrative Staff** – Laura Neill,  
Jacqueline McGonagle, Noreen Moore.

## Policy Department

**Congress Centres Network**  
– Kathleen McCann (Project Manager), Louisa Gavin  
(Administrator), Vacant (Trainer)  
**Development Education/Equality Officer**  
– David Joyce

**Economic Advisor** – Paul Sweeney  
**Public Affairs & Legislative Officer/Social  
Affairs Officer** – Esther Lynch  
**Research Officer** – Conor Farrell  
**Global Solidarity/Youth Committee Executive  
Officer** – Gareth Keogh  
**Administrator** – Marian Flynn

## Union Services Department

**Union Services Officer Education & Training**  
– Peter Rigney  
**Union Services Officer Private Sector**  
– Fergus Whelan  
**Union Services Officer Public Sector**  
– Liam Berney  
**Personal Assistant/Administrator Union  
Services** – Mary Twohig

## Project Managers

**LIFT Project Manager** – Danyanne Quemper  
**WIELD Project Manager** – Barbara Keogh

## Congress Secretariat Changes

A number of staff changes took place during the  
period 2005-2007, as follows:

### Retirements

Hugh Geraghty (RIP)	May	2005
Tom Moore (NI)	July	2005

### Career Break

Paula Carey	July	2006
Fiona Elward	October	2006

### Left Congress

Tommy Coleman	July	2005
Ursula O'Hare (NI)	August	2006

### New Appointments

Neil Alldred (NI)	August	2005
Katarzyna Balcerszyk (maternity leave cover)	December	2006
Pauline Buchanan (NI)	October	2006
Michael Corrigan	January	2006
Kevin Doherty (NI)	October	2006
Conor Farrell	December	2006
Natalie Fox (career break cover)	October	2006
Louisa Gavin	February	2005
Noreen Moore (NI)	October	2006
John O'Farrell (NI)	October	2006
Danyanne Quemper	June	2005

### Maternity Leave

Deirdre Keogh	October	2006
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# Hughie Geraghty: An Appreciation



On March 6, 2007 we lost a dear comrade and colleague Hughie Geraghty, who died following a short illness. Hughie was a lifelong trade unionist and member of the Labour Party. He began his working life at the CIÉ works at Inchicore, Dublin, and would continue to be associated with representing workers in that company for the remainder of his life. He was Secretary to the CIE Group of Unions for 13 years, a post which was regarded as one of the most challenging and demanding within the movement.

He joined the Amalgamated Engineering Union in 1964, and was a founder member of the Dublin District Junior Workers' Committee. Among the causes he supported were the AEU apprentices' strike in Britain and the Irish building workers' strike for a 40-hour week. In 1967 he became the youngest shop steward in Dublin when he was elected to the position at the Inchicore Works. That year also he became a delegate to the Dublin Trades Council. He held various positions in the AEU and in 1971 became convenor of CIÉ maintenance shop stewards. By now a member of the Labour Party, he was a founder member of the Crumlin branch in the early 1970s.

In 1987 he was elected Dublin district president of the AEU and in 1990 was granted the union's award of merit in recognition of his 23 years as an office-holder. In 1992 he was appointed secretary to the CIÉ group of unions at ICTU, a position he held until his retirement in 2005. A member of the Irish Labour History Society, he had a particular interest in the Invincibles. He was elected president of the society in 2005. His book, *William Patrick Partridge and His Times*, was published in 2003. He married Mary Hughes in 1968. Predeceased by his wife in 2002, he is survived by his daughter Clare, and sons Kevin and Seán.

***"We carry on the battle for roses and bread"***

## Obituaries

Mary Kelly, Gladys Murtagh, Muriel Todd and Hugh Geraghty (Congress Staff). Congress extends its sympathies to the families of Mary, Gladys, Muriel and Hugh.

On behalf of the Executive Council Congress wishes to extend its deepest sympathies to the families of those deceased.





## APPENDIX 5

COMMITTEES  
EXTERNAL BODIES

## MEMBERSHIP OF CONGRESS COMMITTEES

### Disputes Committee Panel

Sean O’Riordain, AHCPS; Frank Maunsell, Peter Kenny, Brendan Ogle; Colbert Byrne, Pat Kirwan; Sean Fay (ATGWU); Alan Carr, (AUT); Fran O’Neill (ESBOA); Jerry Harpur, IFUT; Kevin Callinan, Gerry Dolan, Brian Gorman, Louise O’Donnell, Denis Rohan (IMPACT); Tony Fitzpatrick, David Hughes, Philip McAnenly, Edward Mathews, Kevin O’Connor, Phil Ni Sheaghdha, Mary Fogarty, Noel Treanor, Michael Dineen, Patsy Doyle, Liz Curran, Noreen Muldoon, (INO); Carla McCambridge, (TSSA).

### Appeals Board

Al Butler (IMPACT); Bernadette Thornton (SIPTU); Gerry Light (MANDATE); Brian Campfield (NIPSA).

### General Purposes Committee

Peter McLoone (IMPACT); Pauline Buchanan, (GMB); Rosheen Callender (SIPTU); John Carr (INTO); Patricia McKeown (UNISON); Dan Murphy (PSEU); Jack O’ Connor (SIPTU); Joe O’ Flynn (SIPTU); John Tierney (AMICUS); David Begg (General Secretary Congress); Peter Bunting (AGS Congress); Sally Anne Kinahan (AGS Congress)

### Health & Safety Committee (Republic of Ireland)

Patrick Coughlan (INPD TG/SIPTU); Denis Farrell (BATU); Kevin Gaughran (CPSU); Aiden Hourihan (CWU); Paul Graham (BATU); Michael McKillen (IFUT); Fintan Hourihan (IMO); Bobby Carty (IMPACT); Louise O’ Donnell (IMPACT); Catherine Samuels (INO); Frank Barry (AMICUS); Michael Dowling (SIPTU); Michael Tobin (SIPTU); Cecily Canning (SIPTU College); Sylvester Cronin (SIPTU College); Eamon Devoy (TEEU); Michael Meegan (IBOA); Mary Cahill (IBOA).

### Health & Safety Committee (Northern Ireland)

Colin Patterson (GMB); Maurice Wilson (FBU); Pat Archer (UCATT); Pat Larkin (AMICUS); Barbara Martin (AMICUS); Sean Doherty (CWU); Frank Duffy (UNISON); Pat Hanna (INTO); Brian McAnoy (UCU); Lyn Fawcett (UCU); Fiona Jack (SOR); Geraldine Alexander (NIPSA); Ken Bogle (AMICUS-GPMU); Brian Magennis (PCS); Martin Devlin (ATGWU); Ann Orr (UTU); Robert Thompson (IBOA); Aodh McCay (NASUWT); Noelle Boyle (UCU).

### Trade Union Education and Training Committee (Northern Ireland)

Kieran Smyth (USDAW); Brian McAnoy (UCU); Cath Friel (UNISON); Noelle Boyle (UCU); Jackie Reid (UTU); Audrey Stewart (UTU); Willie Carville (NASUWT); Mary McSherry (PCS); Michael Kiddle (UCATT); Roisin Graham (NIPSA); Bumper Graham

(NIPSA); Lynda Rowan O’Neill (FBU); Jim Norney (AMICUS); Alastair Donaghy (PCS); Alfie Jones (GMB); Greg Sachno (ATGWU).

### Industrial Relations Committee

John Tierney (AMICUS); Owen Nulty (MANDATE); Dan Murphy (PSEU); Jim Dorney (TUI).

### Disability Committee (Republic of Ireland)

John Kelleher (AHCPS), Deirdre O’Connor (INTO), Rosheen Callender (SIPTU), Teri Cregan (SIPTU), Michael Gogarty (SIPTU), Jim McDonald (Sligo Council of Trade Unions), Siobhán Browne (ESBOA), Carla McCambridge (TSSA), Bernie Padden (Ballina & District Council of Trade Unions), Kevin Gaughran (CPSU), Joe Roe (CPSU), Brendan Conway (CPSU), Seamus Dooley (NUJ), Valerie Sweeney (NUJ), John O’Reilly (TUI), Elaine McElligott (TUI), Claire Kelly (CWU), Cora McGrath (INO), Noreen Muldoon (INO), Martin Naughton (DFI), Joanna Marsden (IWA), Gerard Monaghan (IMPACT), Dermot Gallagher (AMICUS), John O’Sullivan (AMICUS), Bernie McCrea (AMICUS), Tom Geraghty (PSEU), Michael Lavin (PSEU), Michael Meegan (IBOA), Frank Warwick (IBOA), Aileen Morrissey (MANDATE), Martin Brennan (MANDATE), Pat Fallon (IMPACT), Maire Masterson (INTO), Maire Mulcahy (ASTI), Geoffrey McCormack (ASTI).

### Disability Committee (Northern Ireland)

G Noble, (ATGWU); M Morgan, (NUJ); J Foster, (Belfast Council of TU); A Madden, (INTO); G M O’Brien, (NIPSA); Dr B Rushton, (UCU); B McCrea, (AMICUS); R Newell, (GMB); P Dooley, (UNISON); R Murray, (UNISON); M Goligher, (UCU); R Adams, (ATL); S E McKee, (UTU); P McCluskey, (CWU); J Evans, (GMB); P Macklin, (GMB); J Coghlan, (NUJ); M Cotton, (IBOA); F Brown, (NASUWT); M Dobbin, (GMB); F Warwick, (IBOA).

### Private Sector Industrial Committee

John Bolger (ATGWU); Larry Broderick (IBOA); John Douglas (MANDATE); Jerry Shanahan (AMICUS); Brendan Byrne, AMICUS; Jack O’ Connor (SIPTU); Anne Speed (SIPTU); Chris Rowland, SIPTU; Arthur Hall (TEEU); Eamon Devoy (TEEU); Tommy White (TEEU); Sean Mackell (GSU); Liam Cassidy (SMAUI); Terry Delany (CWU).

### Public Services Committee

Jim Dorney (TUI); Patrick O’ Shaughnessy (BATU); Daniel Murphy (PSEU); Niall Irwin (OPATSI); Daltun O’ Ceallaigh (IFUT); Joint General Secretaries (FUGE); Sean O’ Riordain (AHCPS); John Clinton (POA); Patrick Coughlan (INPD TG/SIPTU); John Broderick (VOA); Patrick Kinsella (ERHA Group of Unions); Jerry Shanahan (AMICUS); John Bolger (ATGWU); Frank Maunsell (ATGWU); Frank Barry (AMICUS); Fintan Hourihan (IMO); Blair Horan (CPSU); Liam Doran (INO); Jim Moore (UCATT); Brendan Hayes

(SIPTU); John Carr (INTO); Tom Quigley (RCPA); Dermot Mahon (AMICUS); Donal O' Mahony; Peter McLoone (IMPACT); Kevin Callinan (IMPACT); Matt Staunton (IMPACT); Stephen O' Neill (IMPACT); Shay Cody (IMPACT); Sean McHugh (IMPACT); Louise O' Donnell (IMPACT); ); Tom Geraghty (PSEU); Billy Hannigan (PSEU); Derek Mullen (CPSU); Anne Cody (INO); Owen Reidy (SIPTU); Gerry Dolan (IMPACT); Peter Nolan (IMPACT); Bernard Harbuor (IMPACT); Jack McGinley (SIPTU); Matt Merrigan (SIPTU); Frank O' Brian (IMPACT); John Power (IMPACT); Lou Kennedy (IMPACT); Brendan McKay (IMPACT); John Larkin, (VOA); Phyllis Behan, (PSEU); George Maybury, (PSEU); Eugene Quinn, PSEU; Terence Casey. MLSA.

### **Retired Workers Committee (Republic of Ireland)**

Peter Sands (IMPACT); Christy Foster (IMPACT); Thomas Harford (IMPACT); Kit Carolan (NFPA); Bill Rothwell (NFPA); Eddie Fitzgerald (Dublin TC); Nell Fitzpatrick (MANDATE); Jim Coulton (MANDATE); Frank Farrell (MANDATE); Tom Houlihan (INO); Maureen McCann (INO); Eilish MacCurtain-Pearce (NUJ); Dermot Kelly (NUJ); Kevin Moore (NUJ); Richard Kearney (OPATSI); Charlie Hammond (CPSU); Carmel Kerrigan (AMICUS); Joe Roche (AMICUS); Paul Houlihan (TSSA); Tom Quigley (AHCPs); Con Ryan (AHCPs); Nick Broughall (AMICUS-GPM); J J Higgins (CWU); Joe Kelly (IBOA); Donnchadh O' Riordain (TUI Retired Members Association); Patrick Donegan (SIPTU); Stephen Delaney Snr. (Association of Retired Prison Officers); Gerry Fenton (Association of Retired Prison Officers); Jim Keegan (GSU); Con Ó Donnchú (PSEU); Michael O' Halloran (Irish Senior Citizens Parliament); Barney Harnett (ATGWU); Anthony Gilligan (SIPTU).

### **Retired Workers Committee (Northern Ireland)**

Margaret Galloway (Chair, PCS), Richard Gray (Vice Chair, NASUWT), John Martin, (Secretary, CWU), John Ley (NUJ), Annie Nicholl, John Hughes (FBU), Hugh Rafferty (AT&GWU), Francis Hughes (PCS), J Hanna (GMB), Meg Holmes (GMB), Louis McConnell (NUJ), George Cassidy (AT&GWU), Rowena Atkinson (UTU), J Mathews (Amicus), H Magowan (AT&GWU)

### **Women's Committee (Republic of Ireland)**

Rosheen Callender (SIPTU), Mary Leahy (SIPTU), Claire Kelly (CWU), John Kelleher (AHCPs), Marian Geoghegan (IBOA), Mary Sexton (IBOA), Patricia Tobin (PSEU), Valerie Behan (PSEU), Siobhan Browne (ESBOA), Therese Murphy (ESBOA), Madeline Spiers (INO), Clare Treacy (INO) Caroline Reilly (TEEU), Antoinette Lenehan (TEEU), Liza Hussey (AMICUS), Carol O'Brien (AMICUS), Ann Hanrahan (IMPACT), Adrienne Byrnn(e IMPACT), Aileen Atcheson (Clonmel Trades & Labour Council), Theresa Dwyer (CPSU),

John O'Reilly (TUI), Margaret Duignan (TUI), Rhonda Donaghy (Dublin Council of Trade Unions), Breda Murray (GSU), Denise Smith (GSU), Agnes O'Toole (Clonmel Trades & Labour Council), Dinah O'Connor (CPSU), Eira Gorman (Kildare Council of Trade Unions), Bernie McMahon(Kildare Council of Trade Unions), Ann McElduff (INTO), Maire Mulcahy (ASTI), Carmel Heneghan (ASTI), Mary Brannigan (ATGWU).

### **Women's Committee (Northern Ireland)**

Pamela Dooley (UNISON); Gaye Partridge (AMICUS); Moya Giligher (NATFHE); Katrina Cooley (NIPSA); Jean Bailie (SIPTU); Mary Hughes (INTO); Marie Morgan (NIPSA); Joanne McWilliams (GPMU); Rene Prendergast (AUT); Teresa Graham (NASUWT); Margaret Baumann (NATFHE); Avril Hall-Callaghan (UTU); Dana Bruno (GMB); Anne Madden (INTO); Anne Donnelly (Derry Trades Council); Jo Bailey (SIPTU); Moya Cotton (IBOA); Rita Murray (UNISON); Rosaline Boyle (Derry Trades Council); Lorraine Strong (NASUWT); Patricia Hodge (AMICUS); Linda Rowan O'Neill (FBU); Mary Shapcott (AUT); Una Murphy (NUJ); Ros Harkness (UTU); Jackie White (UTU).

### **Black & Ethnic Minority Committee (BME NI)**

J Ford, (UTU); J McKeown, (UCU); F Brown, (NASUWT); A Orr, (UTU); L Stronge, (NASUWT); A Rizza Cerezo, (UNISON); S Skillen, (UNISON); J Thomas, (ATL); S Tweed, (AMICUS).

### **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Committee (LGBT NI)**

J Reid, (UTU); S Morrin, (UNISON); S Brogan, (UNISON); K O'Kane, (NASUWT); G Lee, (PCS); R Gillespie, (PCS); S Mottram, (AMICUS); I Brown, (AMICUS); J Ford, (UTU); B O'Dochartaigh, (INTO); J Evans, (GMB).

### **Strategic Implementation Committee**

John O'Reilly (TUI), Maire Mulcahy (ASTI), Christine Bond (BECTU), Marian Geoghegan (IBOA), Seamus Searson (NASUWT), Martin Furlong (FDA), James Quinn (FBU), Clare Treacy (INO), Siobhan Browne (ESBOA), Lawrence Huston (CWU), Jane Boushell (SIPTU), Rosheen Callender (SIPTU), Jacquie Reid (UTU), Paddy Keating (IMPACT), Peter Sands (Retired Workers Committee)Deirdre O'Connor (Disability Committee), Rhonda Donaghy (Women's Committee), Ross Higgins (Youth Committee) Martin Malone (BATU), Theresa Dwyer (CPSU), Hugh Geraghty (Retired Workers Committee), Billy Hannigan (PSEU).

### **Solidarity Committee (Republic of Ireland)**

Donal O'Donoghue (INTO), Brendan Archbold (ATGWU), Iain Atack (IFUT), Aileen Atcheson (Clonmel Trades Council), Mary McCarthy (INO) Joseph Bambrick (IMPACT), Frank Barry (AMICUS), Denis Bohane (INTO), John Bowen (Cork Council of Trade

Unions), Tom O'Driscoll (Cork Council of Trade Unions), Bernard Daly (AMICUS), Noel Dempsey (AMICUS), Michael Dowling (Kildare Council of Trade Unions), Michael MacGreil (Kildare Council of Trade Unions), Madeline Spiers (INO), Teresa Barrett (PSEU), Eugene Quinn (PSEU), Joe McDonagh (Sligo Council of Trade Unions), Hugh McConville (Sligo Council of Trade Unions), Jimmy Kelly (TUI), Una Twyford (TUI), Beryl Forrester (Limerick Council of Trade Unions), Kevin Gaughran (CPSU), Conor McKinney (CPSU), Brian Condron (GPMU), Seamus Sheils (SIPTU), Gerry Faulkner (Dundalk Council of Trade Unions), Siobhan Flanagan (GSU), Chris Humphries (IVU), Willie Hamilton (MANDATE), Keith Pollard (CWU), Fran O'Neill (ESBOA), Marie Humphries (TUI), Bernard Harbor (IMPACT), David Shanks Des Bonass (DCTU), Seamus Cody (IMPACT), Jim Higgins (INTO), John O'Brien (AMICUS), Peter McGrane (INTO).

### **Global Solidarity Committee (Northern Ireland)**

Brian Moore (Chair, NIPSA), Margaret Baumann (UCU), Tony Maguire (FBU), Jim Barbour (FBU), Charley Curley (USDAW), Trevor Smyth (NIPSA), Jacqui Reid (UTU), Lorraine Stronge (NASUWT), Amanda Allaway (NIPSA), Gerry Murphy (INTO), Barney Magill (INTO), Fred Browne (NASUWT), Ann Orr (UTU).

### **Youth Committee (Republic of Ireland)**

Keith Martin (AMICUS); Dennis Ryan (CPSU); Deirdre Maher (CPSU); Keith Pollard (CWU); Joe O'Donnell (GSU); Luana Gunning (IBOA); Patrick Fitzgerald (IMPACT); Edward Mathews (INO); Marian Anderson (INTO); Rachel Mathews-Mckay (SIPTU); Ross Higgins (SIPTU); Miriam Hamilton (SIPTU); James Walsh (SIPTU); Iain Shanahan (SIPTU); Margaret Ayres (SIPTU); Sasha Goldstone (SIPTU); Fiona Elward (SIPTU); Karl Byrne (SIPTU); Wayne Osborne (SIPTU); Caroline Reilly (TEEU); Stephen Rowsome (TSSA).

### **Youth Committee (Northern Ireland)**

Aileen McErlean (AT&G ; Donal O'Liathain (AMICUS) ; Claire Hanna (AMICUS) Kerry Flack (BTUC) ; Stephen Gribben (CWU UK) ; Kieran McCann (IBOA) ; Karen Reid (UNISON) ; Ronan O'Dochartaigh (UNISON) ; Diane Nugent (UTU).

## **BODIES ON WHICH CONGRESS IS REPRESENTED**

### **Republic**

#### **Industrial Relations**

Civil Service Arbitration Board  
Employment Appeals Tribunal  
Employment Rights Group  
Equality Authority  
Labour Court  
Labour Relations Commission  
National Centre for Partnership & Performance  
Personal Injuries Assessment Board  
Private Security Authority

#### **Economic Affairs**

County and City Development Boards  
County Enterprise Boards  
ERSI Council  
EU Structural Funds – Monitoring Committees  
FAS  
Harbour Boards  
Hidden Economy Working Group  
Informal Advisory Group on PPP's  
Information Society Commission  
Local Government Strategic Policy Committees  
Local Partnerships  
Monitoring Committees for Community Employment Programme  
National Competitiveness Council  
National Economic & Social Council  
National Economic & Social Forum  
National Statistics Board  
Pobal

#### **Education and Training**

Expert Group on Future Skill Needs  
FAS (various committees)  
Further Education Training Awards Council  
Governing Bodies of Institutes of Technology  
Governing Bodies of Universities  
Higher Education Training Awards Council  
National Adult Learning Council  
National Apprenticeship Advisory Committee  
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment  
National Qualifications Authority of Ireland  
Performance Verification Group for Education Sector  
Quality Assurance Group Education Sector  
Skillnets  
Teaching Council

#### **Safety, Health & Welfare**

National Health and Safety Authority  
National Industry Safety Organisation



## **Social Affairs**

Crisis Pregnancy Agency  
Equal Opportunities Framework Committee  
Equality Proofing Working Group  
Equality for Women Measure  
Health Services Skills Group  
National Courts Services Board  
National Disability Authority  
National Medical Council  
National Pensions Board  
NDP/Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion  
Coordinating Committee  
Immigrant Council  
Social Welfare Tribunal

## **Towards 2016**

Anti-Inflation Group  
High Level Group on Manufacturing  
Labour Market Standards  
Labour Market Trends  
Pensions Review Group  
Steering Group

## **Social Partner Representation**

Comhar  
eInclusion Stakeholders Group  
Equality Proofing Working Group  
Housing Forum  
Implementation Group on Alcohol Misuse  
Labour Force Standing Committee  
National Action Plan Against Racism Steering  
Committee  
National Childcare Co-ordinating Committee  
National Disability Strategy Stakeholder Monitoring  
Group  
National Women's Strategy Co-ordinating Committee  
Public Transport Partnership Forum  
RAPID Monitoring Committee  
Rent Supplement (ad hoc)  
Rural Development Forum

## **Other Bodies**

Abbey Theatre  
An Board Pleanala  
Coillte  
Development Cooperation Ireland  
Dublin Airport Stakeholders Forum  
Dublin Foundation Board  
National Forum on Europe  
National Roads Authority

## **Northern Ireland**

### **Industrial Relations**

Fair Employment Tribunals  
Health & Safety Executive  
Industrial Court  
Industrial Tribunals

Labour Relations Agency  
LRA Arbitration Panels  
Staff Commission for Education & Library Boards

## **Economic and Social**

Economic Development Forum  
Invest NI  
Investment Belfast  
Local Strategy Partnerships  
Economic Research Institute for Northern Ireland  
Northern Ireland Housing Executive  
Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company  
Statistics Advisory Committee

## **Education and Training**

Council of University of Ulster  
Essential Skills Taskforce

## **EU Structural Fund Monitoring Committees**

Building Sustainable Prosperity Monitoring  
Committee  
Community Support Framework Monitoring  
Committee  
EQUAL  
PEACE 2 Monitoring Committee

## **Other Bodies**

Bar Council Professional Conduct Committee  
Basic Skills Committee  
Belfast Harbour Commissioners  
Counteract  
District Policing Partnerships  
Equality Commission  
Northern Ireland Local Government Superannuation  
Committee  
Social Economy Agency  
Workers' Educational Association

## **International Bodies**

Consultative Committee of the European Coal and  
Steel Community  
CEDEFOP  
EU Advisory Committee on Freedom of Workers  
EU Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and  
Health Protection at Work  
EU Advisory Committee on Vocational Training  
EU Economic and Social Committee  
EU Standing Committee on Employment  
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living  
and Working Conditions  
European Social Fund Committee  
European Trade Union College  
European Trade Union Confederation, (ETUC)  
European Trade Union Institute  
International Labour Conference  
Trade Union Advisory Committee, OECD



## APPENDIX 6

ACTIONS ON MOTIONS  
TO BDC 2005

### **1. Migrant Workers (Guinness Staff Union)**

Congress has an ongoing program of seminars on employments rights delivered in Polish, Russian and Mandarin. Congress won significant improvements against unfair provisions in Ireland's work permit regime which were introduced through the Employment Permits Act 2006. The legislation introduced a new scheme for employment permits which focuses on attracting high skilled workers, including the provisions which make it possible for workers to own their employment permit and to change employer. There are also new legal prohibitions on employers keeping workers' documents i.e. passports, visas, or bank accounts and employers are prohibited from charging the worker for any of the costs associated with their recruitment.

### **2. Migrant Workers (National Association of Teachers in Further & Higher Education)**

Participates in National Steering Group of the National Action Plan Against Racism in pursuance of the major commitments in relation to migrant workers. Continued to be leading partner in the Anti Racist Workplace Week Partnership and held a conference with trade union reps from around Europe on integration and anti-discrimination measures in November 2005. Played a lead role in an ILO led "Inti" project which produced guidance for unions on the issue of planning for diversity and tackling racism.

In 2006 organised 25 seminars in Polish, Lithuanian, Russian and Chinese which reached over 1,000 workers. Participated in NESC consultations on migration and integration. Continued participation in ETUC Migration Group.

### **3. Migrant Workers (Building & Allied Trades Union)**

Participates in National Steering Group of the National Action Plan Against Racism in pursuance of the major commitments in relation to migrant workers. Continued to be leading partner in the Anti Racist Workplace Week Partnership and held a conference with trade union reps from around Europe on integration and anti-discrimination measures in November 2005. Played a lead role in an ILO led "Inti" project which produced guidance for unions on the issue of planning for diversity and tackling racism.

In 2006 organised 25 seminars in Polish, Lithuanian, Russian and Chinese which reached over 1,000 workers. Participated in NESC

consultations on migration and integration. Continued participation in ETUC Migration Group.

### **4. Migrant Workers (Belfast & District Trades Council)**

Congress has an ongoing program of seminars on Employments Rights delivered in Polish Russian and Mandarin. Through these we have developed good working relationship which a range of voluntary organisations which support the welfare of migrant communities.

### **5. Migrant Workers (Technical, Engineering and Electrical Union)**

Congress won significant improvements against unfair provisions in Ireland's work permit regime which were introduced through the Employment Permits Act 2006. The legislation introduced a new scheme for employment permits which focuses on attracting high skilled workers, including the provisions which make it possible for workers to own their employment permit and to change employer. There are also new legal prohibitions on employers keeping workers' documents i.e. passports, visas, or bank accounts and employers are prohibited from charging the worker for any of the costs associated with their recruitment.

### **6. Migrant Workers (Craigavon Trades Council)**

Congress is campaigning for ratification of a number of International Instruments to improve the legal underpinning for the rights of migrant workers and their families. A central focus of the campaign has been the proposed immigration legislation where Congress called for the forthcoming Immigration Bill to ratify and incorporate the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families. It also sought to implement a number of ILO Conventions and Recommendations and called for the Bill to provide for rights and responsibilities that reflect the migrants' temporary or permanent status, with maximum possible access to the rights that promote integration – including work, family reunification, public services and participation on our democratic system.

### **7. Emigrants (Cork Council of Trade Unions)**

Congress has continuously represented the interests of the emigrant community and with some success. The total amount of founding for emigrant services in 2007 is €15 million.



**8. Affiliation Fees (Constitutional Amendment - Executive Council)**

Constitution amended and new fees applied.

**9. Trades Councils (Strabane Area Trades Union Council)**

No action required.

**10. Tax Treatment of Union Subs (Association of Higher Civil & Public Servants)**

Increase sought in trade union tax credit from €60 to €100, but not granted in 2007 Budget. Easier system of claiming the tax relief by our members was negotiated with Revenue early in 2007.

**11. Executive Council (Irish Bank Officials Association)**

This motion was ruled out of order by the Standing Orders Committee for BDC2005 as it required a constitutional amendment. The Executive Council considered whether there was any way its purpose could be accommodated but was unable to find a solution.

**12. Election of Executive Council (Galway Trades Council)**

No action required (ruled Out of Order)

**13. Recruitment & Organising (Executive Council)**

The Executive Council made this a key priority during the last two years. Organising and Recruitment became a regular agenda item at both the Executive Council and General Purposes Committee meetings. Congress undertook to establish support among unions towards a joint initiative to address declining membership levels. This resulted in a number of unions committing to work on a collaborative approach and to allocate resources towards joint communications' activities and for the development of a union outreach service. Plans for this activity are under development with the objective of piloting the initiative later in 2007.

**14. Recruitment & Organising (Irish Municipal Public & Civil Trade Union)**

Extensive discussions took place following BDC 2005 with unions to identify support for a cross-union initiative to tackle union density. By 2006 a number of unions had agreed to work together, pooling resources and intelligence, to develop a collaborative approach towards the Recruitment and Organising challenge. Core principles, a concept and model for a joined-up approach were developed over several months. Work is ongoing to define the most effective

way to set-up and run the proposed model. It is envisaged that the initiative will be used to target and build support for union membership among those workers employed in sectors with low density levels. This will be done by raising awareness of the role and purpose of union organisations through effective campaigning and communications' strategies and by offering advisory support services.

**15. Economic Affairs (Executive Council)**

Implemented through *Towards 2016*. Manufacturing group established; some improvement in education and in NDP; enforcement of employment standards greatly improved under NERA promotion of Equality; greater social cohesion underwritten in *Towards 2016*; equality between social and economic. Demonstrations, organised by Congress with 160,000, against Irish Ferries.

**16. Privatisation (Amalgamated Transport & General Workers' Union)**

A number of actions were undertaken in respect of this action. We continued to engage with the relevant Government Departments and State Companies. We developed and published a proposal for a state holding company and we sought and received specific commitments as part of the negotiations leading to the *Towards 2016* agreement.

**17. Privatisation (Waterford Council of Trade Unions)**

A number of actions were undertaken in respect of this action. We continued to engage with the relevant Government Departments and State Companies. We developed and published a proposal for a state holding company and we sought and received specific commitments as part of the negotiations leading to the *Towards 2016* agreement.

**18. Privatisation (Civil Public & Services Union)**

A number of actions were undertaken in respect of this action. We continued to engage with the relevant Government Departments and State Companies. We developed and published a proposal for a state holding company and we sought and received specific commitments as part of the negotiations leading to the *Towards 2016* agreement.

**19. Semi-State Companies (Electricity Supply Board Officers Association)**

A number of actions were undertaken in respect of this action. We continued to engage with the relevant Government Departments and State

Companies. We developed and published a proposal for a state holding company and we sought and received specific commitments as part of the negotiations leading to the **Towards 2016** agreement.

## **20. An Post (Public Services Executive Union)**

A serious potential dispute relating to the context of this motion was resolved in 2006.

## **21. Public Services (Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance)**

Congress's work in the area of public services was pursued in line with the objectives of the motion. In particular Congress continues to monitor the use of PPP's and the PFI and assures that agreements are adhered to.

Congress in Northern Ireland continues to oppose the privatisation of public services and the activities of the Strategic Investment Board which is charged with responsibility in the public investment area. The strategy of the SIB is apparently one of delivering investment using the PFI model in the majority of instances.

## **22. Health Services (Irish Nurses Organisation)**

Congress raised the issue of the National Health and Primary Care Strategies at the **Towards 2016** talks and resulting from this the Social Partners established the Health Forum where the issue/s will be addressed. Congress has also published a book on health How Ireland Cares and a briefing report on Health called The Health Report: Addressing the Health Care Crisis.

## **23. Health Services (Irish Municipal Public & Civil Trade Union)**

Congress ran an extensive lobbying campaign in respect of the Services Directive.

## **24. Water Services (Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance)**

Congress NI is currently leading a non-payment of water charges campaign across Northern Ireland. This campaign is attracting significant support not just within the Trade Union Movement but from external community groups from across all sections of society. A major focus of the campaign is to ensure that the provision of water is retained within public ownership thus defeating the Government objective of privatisation and the retention of jobs within the public sector.



IMPACT's Shay Cody

## **25. Water Services (GMB)**

Congress NI is currently leading a non-payment of water charges campaign across Northern Ireland. This campaign is attracting significant support not just within the Trade Union Movement but from external community groups from across all sections of society. A major focus of the campaign is to ensure that the provision of water is retained within public ownership thus defeating the Government objective of privatisation and the retention of jobs within the public sector.

## **26. Decentralisation (Public Services Executive Union)**

Congress through its Public Services Committee continued to engage with relevant Government Departments in pursuit of the objectives of the motion.

## **27. Decentralisation (Transport Salaried Staff Association)**

Congress made representations to both Bus Eireann and the Departments of Transport and Finance in respect of the motion.

## **28. Decentralisation (Federated Union of Government Employees)**

Congress through its Public Services Committee continued to engage with relevant Government Departments in pursuit of the objectives of the motion.

## **29. Double Taxation (Fermanagh Council of Trades Unions)**

Congress NI is currently leading a non-payment of water charges campaign across Northern Ireland. This campaign is attracting significant support not just within the Trade Union Movement but from external community groups from across all sections of society. A major focus of the campaign is to ensure that the provision of water is retained within public ownership thus defeating the Government objective of

privatisation and the retention of jobs within the public sector.

### 30. Wealth Distribution (MANDATE)

**Towards 2016** and NDP means greater income and wealth distribution, €1 increased gained, in the Minimum Wage and increases in welfare. Congress persuaded Government to terminate some tax based property schemes; limits in pension schemes; challenged questionable tax shelters e.g. BES, investments in private hospitals and clinics etc.

### 31. Regulation (Communication Workers' Union)

Congress continues to pursue this motion. At the time of writing a Congress submission to the consultation paper on regulatory appeals was in preparation. Congress also met with the Better Regulation Working Group to discuss the approach to economic regulation in the economy.

### 32. Postal Services (Communication Workers' Union (UK))

A delegation from Congress NI met with senior officials from the CWU to discuss ways in which Congress can assist in maintaining the postal service in public hands. Congress also supported the CWU in its lobbying activities with the Secretary of State and local political parties in an effort to retain the postal service in public ownership.

### 33. Manufacturing Northern Ireland (AMICUS)

Congress NI launched a publication 'Not Old Wine In New Bottles' a statement on the economy which includes specific sections on the manufacturing industry and identifying the imperative of 'a transformation from a 'war economy to one based on education/skills/training/innovation.'

Furthermore Congress NI has been involved with Ministers, all NI political parties, business associations, Invest Northern Ireland and the Economic Development Forum in discussions as to best grow our dysfunctional economy.

### 34. Equality Within Unions (Executive Council)

Acting on recommendations of consultant's report looking into Congress equality initiatives, Congress has formed a Strategic Implementation Committee for Equality Initiatives. Representatives from Congress equality related committees, North and South have been working to gather information on trade union equality initiatives as well as formulating a Congress equality strategy in relation to:

1. Structures and decision making within the organisation;
2. Congress' role in supporting affiliates;
3. Congress' role in trying to influence the policy environment

### 35. People with Disabilities (Executive Council)

Congress has engaged with Government Departments in relation to their sectoral plans under the National Disability Strategy. We are part of a DETE consultative group to develop an employment strategy for people with disabilities. We have also successfully managed to obtain resources from FAS to develop a network of trained disability champions within trade unions North and South and to keep the Workway website updated and relevant.

### 36. Pensions (Executive Council)

The issue of sustainable pension provision was made a priority by Congress both during the negotiations leading to **Towards 2016** and as part of our ongoing participation in the Pension Board. **Toward 2016** contains a commitment by Government to produce a Green Paper on Pension in April 2007. At time of writing Congress is actively engaged with Government regarding the contents of the Green Paper.

### 37. Pensions (Graphical, Paper & Media Union)

In addition to the actions taken regarding motion 36, Congress has been actively supporting unions who are attempting to defend defined benefit schemes and trying to prevent the closure of such schemes to new members.

### 38. Pensions (AMICUS)

The issue of sustainable pension provision was made a priority by Congress both during the negotiations leading to **Towards 2016** and as part of our ongoing participation in the Pension Board. **Towards 2016** contains a commitment by Government to produce a Green Paper on Pension in April 2007. At time of writing Congress is actively engaged with Government regarding the contents of the Green Paper.

### 39. Construction Industry Pension Scheme (Dublin Council of Trades Unions)

Congress secured a commitment by the Pension Board to examine levels of compliance with The Construction Workers Pension scheme. The report made a positive contribution to the debate and helped inform the discussions on this matter in the **Towards 2016** negotiations. At time of writing the Dept of Community and Family Affairs are examining the possibility of using the PRSI collection system to collect construction industry



Jerry Shanahan

pension contributions. Initial indications are that is not regarded as a viable suggestion.

#### 40. Childcare Costs (Guinness Staff Union)

A Social Partner report on childcare was agreed in the run up to Budget 2006 which set out a range of policy recommendations in relation to the provision of quality and affordable childcare. Responding to Budget 2006, Congress increased its demands making it clear that a market-based solution to the issue of care was unworkable and demanding that the issue of care – childcare, elder care, disabled care –be treated as a major policy priority with the establishment of a “national infrastructure of care.” **Towards 2016** negotiations resulted in commitments to:

1. Create 50,000 new childcare places;
2. Development of a National Childcare Training;
3. Targeting the early childhood education needs of children from areas of acute economic and social disadvantage;
4. Meeting overall care and education needs of disadvantaged children in an integrated manner;
5. Steps to standardise and improve inspections;
6. Agreement to support and encourage school facilities being made available for childcare provision as a key addition to the utilisation, development and support of local community facilities.

#### 41. Early Childhood Care & Education (Irish National Teachers Organisation)

A Social Partner report on childcare was agreed in the run up to Budget 2006 which set out a range of policy recommendations in relation to the provision of quality and affordable childcare. Responding to Budget 2006, Congress increased its demands making it clear that a market-based solution to the issue of care was unworkable and demanding that the issue of care – childcare, elder care, disabled care –be treated as a major policy priority with the establishment of a

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2. Development of a National Childcare Training;
3. Targeting the early childhood education needs of children from areas of acute economic and social disadvantage;
4. Meeting overall care and education needs of disadvantaged children in an integrated manner;
5. Steps to standardise and improve inspections;
6. Agreement to support and encourage school facilities being made available for childcare provision as a key addition to the utilisation, development and support of local community facilities.

#### 42. Childcare (Irish Nurses Organisation)

A Social Partner report on childcare was agreed in the run up to budget 2006 which set out a range of policy recommendations in relation to the provision of quality and affordable childcare. Responding to Budget 2006, Congress increased its demands making it clear that a market-based solution to the issue of care was unworkable and demanding that the issue of care – childcare, elder care, disabled care –be treated as a major policy priority with the establishment of a “national infrastructure of care.” **Towards 2016** negotiations resulted in commitments to:

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2. Development of a National Childcare Training;
3. Targeting the early childhood education needs of children from areas of acute economic and social disadvantage;
4. Meeting overall care and education needs of disadvantaged children in an integrated manner;
5. Steps to standardise and improve inspections;
6. Agreement to support and encourage school facilities being made available for childcare provision as a key addition to the utilisation, development and support of local community facilities.

#### 43. Childcare (Services Industrial Professional Technical Union)

A Social Partner report on childcare was agreed in the run up to Budget 2006 which set out a range of policy recommendations in relation to the provision of quality and affordable childcare. Responding to Budget 2006, Congress increased its demands making it clear that a market-based solution to the issue of care was unworkable and demanding that the issue of care – childcare, elder care, disabled care –be treated as a major policy priority with the establishment of a



“national infrastructure of care.” **Towards 2016** negotiations resulted in commitments to:

1. Create 50,000 new childcare places;
2. Development of a National Childcare Training;
3. Targeting the early childhood education needs of children from areas of acute economic and social disadvantage;
4. Meeting overall care and education needs of disadvantaged children in an integrated manner;
5. Steps to standardise and improve inspections;
6. Agreement to support and encourage school facilities being made available for childcare provision as a key addition to the utilisation, development and support of local community facilities.

#### **44. Free Education (Teachers’ Union of Ireland)**

Congress won commitments from Government for the further development of measures to combat early school leaving, and enhance attendance educational progression, retention and attainment at both primary and second level. **Towards 2016** further commits that all children will have the opportunity to become ICT literate by completion of second level.

#### **45. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged and Education (Irish National Teachers Organisation)**

A Social Partner report on childcare was agreed in the run up to Budget 2006 which set out a range of policy recommendations in relation to the provision of quality and affordable childcare. Responding to Budget 2006, Congress increased its demands making it clear that a market-based solution to the issue of care was unworkable and demanding that the issue of care – childcare, elder care, disabled care – be treated as a major policy priority with the establishment of a “national infrastructure of care.” **Towards 2016** negotiations resulted in commitments to:

1. Create 50,000 new childcare places;
2. Development of a National Childcare Training;
3. Targeting the early childhood education needs of children from areas of acute economic and social disadvantage;
4. Meeting overall care and education needs of disadvantaged children in an integrated manner;
5. Steps to standardise and improve inspections;
6. Agreement to support and encourage school facilities being made available for childcare provision as a key addition to the utilisation, development and support of local community facilities.

#### **46. Education Funding (National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers)**

The question of education funding has been a high priority for both the NIC and it’s Education Trade Union Group. The issue of funding was raised with the Minister and Permanent Secretary. There is now a Comprehensive Spending Review being undertaken in the UK. As part of this Review Congress has sought a meeting with the Permanent Secretary of the Dept. Of Education and will make an input regarding future funding requirements for this sector.

#### **47. Education (Association of University Teachers)**

This issue is being pursued on an ongoing basis with the Government and through our membership of the expert group on future skill needs. It will be developed further in the national skills strategy.

#### **48. Low Pay (Civil Public & Services Union)**

Tackling income inequality is a priority for Congress and specific measures to address income inequality were sought as part of the negotiations on the new National Agreement, where a greater increase for lower paid workers (2.5%) was secured at the commencement of the second phase of the pay agreement. Further measures aimed at improving the situation of low paid workers were sought from the Government as part of Congress pre-budget submissions. part of the Budget process each year.

#### **49. Public Holidays (Galway Trades Council)**

No Action Required (Withdrawn)

#### **50. National Pay Agreements (Teachers’ Union of Ireland)**

No Action Required (Ruled Out of Order).

#### **51. Inability to Pay National Wage Agreements (Communication Workers’ Union)**

No Action Required (Ruled Out of Order).

#### **52. Health and Safety (Ulster Teachers’ Union)**

Congress has pursued the issue of a health and wellbeing strategy for teachers and included it in the Trade Union Charter for the Assembly Elections in March 2007.

With regard to improvement in school meals, healthy lifestyle programmes, some additional finance has been secured but still remains totally inadequate for achievement of an holistic approach to the obligation of the motion.

### **53. Health and Safety (Public and Commercial Services Union)**

Congress NI has made representation to Government regarding attacks on public service workers in social and employment services, fire and rescue, health services and workers in the educational sectors. This concern remains high on the agenda for the NIC and the Committee continues to support initiatives by affiliates.

### **54. Health and Safety (Waterford Council of Trades Unions)**

Congress raised the issue of the Centralised Cancer Care at the *Towards 2016* talks and resulting from this the Social Partners established the Health Forum where the issue/s will be addressed.

### **55. Health and Safety (Irish Bank Officials Association )**

Congress has pursued this matter with the Board of the Health and Safety Authority. In February 2006 the Authority published 'Guidelines for the Safe Transit of Cash in the Security Industry'. The matter is also being pursued in Europe where it is under discussion as part of the 'Social Dialogue' negotiation on violence at work.

The comments referred to in resolution 53 apply equally to workers in the private sector in particular those in the banking, financial and support services.

### **56. Health and Safety (MANDATE)**

Congress through its representatives on the Board of The Health and Safety Authority has continued to highlight the problem of violence at work. The HSA have issued guidelines for the protection of workers in the security industry.

Congress has participated in Social Dialogue negotiations at the European level which has resulted in a draft agreement on violence and harassment at work. The agreement is currently before the Social Partners for ratification

### **57. Ban on Smoking (The Chartered Society of Physiotherapists)**

Smoking has been banned in enclosed public spaces in the Republic of Ireland for many years. Since March 2004 smoking has been banned in enclosed workplaces with the exception of prisons long stay hospitals and some hotel rooms.

The NIC has responded to consultations on this matter and fully supports a total ban on smoking in all workplaces and enclosed public places.

### **58. Dignity at Work (National Association of Schoolmasters & Union of Women Teachers)**

As part of the Congress involvement with the 'Taskforce on Workplace Bullying' we agreed a Dignity at Work Charter with the employers and Government. Since then this Charter has been adopted by most unionised enterprises in the State.

The question of bullying and harassment at work remains high on the priority of NIC and it's affiliates. Education on this matter is a standard item on congress courses in Northern Ireland.

### **59. Workers in the Care Sector (Executive Council)**

Congress has secured agreement as part of *Towards 2016* that the hourly rate of the minimum wage will be reviewed and adjusted as and from 1st January 2007.

### **60. Exploitation (Services Industrial Professional Technical Union)**

This motion was central to the negotiation of *Towards 2016*.

### **61. Labour Standards (Communication Workers' Union (UK))**

Congress continues through it's work on the ETUC and the ILO and in conjunction with the Solidarity Project to ensure that international standards are applied to collective agreements and working arrangements regarding offshore working and outsourcing.

#### **62. Labour Inspectorate (Dublin Council of Trades Unions)**

The establishment of a new Office of Employment Rights Enforcement with increased resources was agreed in *Towards 2016*.

#### **63. Agency Workers (Union of Shop, Distributive & Allied Workers)**

Congress secured commitment from Government to introduce legislation to better regulate employment agencies and to improve the situation of agency workers. At the time of writing Congress was involved in discussions on the development of a Code of Practice for Agencies. Compliance with the Code will be a condition for licencing. Further legislation will be introduced to confirm that agency workers are covered by EROs/REAs. Unfortunately despite lobbying from Congress no progress was made on unblocking progress for the Directive.

#### **64. Freelance Workers (National Union of Journalists)**

Congress held a number of meetings with the Competition Authority and reported the unlawful restrictions on collective bargaining being imposed by the Competition Authority on certain freelance workers to the International Labour Organisation. Congress continues to work on this.

#### **65. Two Tier Workforce (GMB)**

The main focus for our action at EU level against the growth of a two tier labour market of insiders and outsiders was the removal of the 'country of origin' principle from the Services Directive. Congress made recommendations to Government on the European Green Paper on Labour Law and we have led the ETUC campaigns in Ireland.

#### **66. Privacy of Employees (National Union of Journalists)**

Congress has developed recommendations for new legislation to protect employees privacy at work. Congress is pursuing the introduction of these rights with Government and is cooperating with colleagues at EU level to ensure an EU wide implementation of these rights.

#### **67. Part-time Workers (Electricity Supply Board Officers Association)**

Congress has developed proposals for a new right for employees to request flexible working arrangements and for an obligation to be placed on employers to seriously consider the request and that the employer would be obliged to provide the options unless they had a sound business case for refusal.

#### **68. Agency Workers' Directive (Craigavon Trades Union Council)**

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#### **69. Black/Shadow Economy (Federated Union of Government Employees)**

Part 2 of *Towards 2016* - the hard won section on workers rights - will considerably improve the elimination of the black economy and tax evasion. The establishment of NERA, working with Revenue, will help the elimination of evasion. Each pre-Budget submission has had a section on evasion, calling for more audits etc.

#### **70. Skills Training (Technical, Engineering & Electrical Union)**

This issue raised in the talks on *Towards 2016*. The matter will continue to be raised through the expert group on future skill needs. Two pilot projects are under way under the auspices of FAS

#### **71. Skills Training (National Association of Teachers in Further & Higher Education)**

The National Qualifications Authority and the UK qualifications bodies launched a leaflet outlining comparisons between the Irish national qualifications framework and the 3 UK qualifications frameworks. Congress NI is represented on the Expert Skills Group in Northern Ireland which deals in detail with the issues referred in this resolution. As part of this work joint meetings are held with the skills body's sister organization in the Republic of Ireland. This work is also supported by the EURES Programme on Labour Market Mobility and Skills.

#### **72. Maritime Industry (National Union of Rail & Maritime Trade Union)**

Congress continues to press Government to have the Transfer of Undertakings Directive and other protective legislation extended to seafarers.

#### **73. European Constitution (National Union of Rail & Maritime Trade Union)**

No action required (Withdrawn)

#### **74. European Constitution (Amalgamated Transport & General Workers' Union)**

This motion was remitted. The ratification of the European Constitution was not put to a referendum vote.

#### **75. Services Directive (UNISON)**

Congress campaigned for significant changes to the draft Service Directive. To this end we lobbied Irish MEP's in the European Parliament, we organised a conference and invited all political parties to participate and we had several meetings with the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment to seek Irish Government support for our position. The Services Directive was adopted in November 2006 incorporating many of the changes we sought.

#### **76. Services Directive (Graphic, Paper & Media Union)**

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#### **77. Assistance to Developing Countries (Association of Higher & Public Servants)**

Congress has an ongoing process of engagement with Irish Aid, including a submission to the White Paper and participation in consultative meetings. We are working with Irish Aid officials to explore how the trade union movement can contribute towards the capacity building of trade unions in developing countries – Lesotho is a pilot country for that exercise.

#### **78. ICFTU (UNISON)**

Congress was a major partner of the Make Poverty History Movement both North and South. As well as participating in public events and facilitating trade union participation in the campaign, Congress was also a member of the Irish delegation to the Hong Kong WTO talks and campaigned vigorously to ensure that the Irish Government set a firm target to reach 0.7% GNP for overseas development assistance. Congress is currently in discussions with the ITUC (formerly ICFTU) regarding our affiliation.

#### **79. Rights of the Palestinian People (Belfast & District Trades Union Council)**

Connex who run Luas through it's Irish subsidiary, Veolia Transport Ireland were due to train Israeli engineers because Connex run a similar rail system to Luas in Jerusalem with a view to service illegal settlements. Through pressure from Congress and SIPTU Veolia Transport Ireland cancelled the training for Israeli engineers.

No Sweat are now caring clothes made in Bethlehem in Palestine. The factory employs 120 union workers.

Congress acts as Secretary to the Trade Union Friends of Palestine group in Belfast.

#### **80. Use of Shannon Airport (Cork Council of Trade Unions)**

No action required (Motion Fell).

### **Emergency Motion**

#### **1. Community Rating (Amicus)**

Congress raised the matter directly with Government. At the time of writing this report the Health Insurance Authority had recommended the triggering of Risk Equalisation Payments and the Minister had accepted this recommendation. BUPA took High Court proceedings seeking to have the decision of the Minister reversed but failed in their attempt. On foot of this BUPA announced that they had decided to exit the Irish Market and their business was sold to Sean Quinn. Around the same time the Government passed emergency legislation ensuring that the liability for BUPA's risk equalisation payments transferred to the new owner,









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