

FURTHER EDUCATION UPDATE - SEE BACK COVER

THIRD LEVEL FEES - ICT IN SCHOOLS



TUI Website Relunched

TUI's redesigned website went live at the end of August. The new website was designed by Webtrade and the project was overseen by TUI's Press & Information Officer.

The website is updated regularly and contains vital information for members in every sector across a range of issues. The website's search function has been vastly improved and a members area will be added in the coming months.

The union is also investigating the possibility of the website allowing new members to pay their initial subscriptions online.

Why not make www.tui.ie your homepage today!

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STOP PRESS! New Pay Agreement Proposed

A deal has been reached between social partners on a proposed new national pay agreement. The proposed deal, agreed on September 17th, is to include a 6% pay rise (3.5% with effect from 1st Sept 2009 and 2.5% with effect from 1st June 2010) for both public and private sector workers over a 21-month period.

There will also be an extra half-of-one-per-cent wage hike for the lower paid. The public sector is to implement an 11-month pause on these increases, with a three-month pay pause across the private sector. It has also been agreed that the terms of reference of the Benchmarking process will be reviewed. No additional modernisation will be required as part of this deal.

Unions will be consulting with members prior to an ICTU delegate conference which will be called to consider the proposed agreement.



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A Word from the President



In the current economic climate, there are undoubtedly new challenges for all stakeholders in the future of our country. Terms such as 'recession', 'credit crunch', and 'downturn' dominate news bulletins and newspaper editorials with the Government more than willing to warn of harsh times ahead.

It is the TUI's firm view that such forecasts cannot be used to detract from the problems that were already afflicting our education system. The recently published OECD report 'Education at a Glance 2008', which is based on 2005 figures, shows clearly that Ireland failed to invest adequately in education even when the country was awash with money and record budget surpluses were declared.

The recently announced cuts in education are nothing short of draconian. Applying any cuts to a system that is already clearly underfunded illustrates the government's disregard for education and its potential to contribute to the economic recovery of the country. Further investment in all sectors of education is the only proven way to ensure that today's learners can have a bright future.

TUI will vehemently oppose any cutbacks affecting our education system.

On one hand the Government declares its commitment to upskilling, re-training, 'second chance' education, 'One Step Up' etc; on the other, it fails to provide the resources to make these policies real. The gap between government rhetoric and reality could hardly be more obvious. Over the past sixteen months we have engaged in negotiations in relation to the provision of resources for the Further Education sector. These negotiations under the terms of the Towards 2016 agreement concluded at the end of July and resulted in a clear understanding between the parties. The subsequent failure of the DES to commit to the provision of the resources negotiated under the discussions for the

current academic year represents a clear breach of faith.

The negotiated outcome would have allowed for significant development of the Further Education sector and advancement of QA policies and procedures. Regrettably, this has now stalled. It is now impossible to proceed in the absence of the structures and supports negotiated last July. The message to members is clear: there can be no engagement with the specific new work identified in the instruction given to our members in the further education sector until the government honours its commitment.

At the time of going to press, the remaining 2.5% pay increase due under Towards 2016 has not been sanctioned. We insist that there will be no loss to members including members who retired after the 1st September last.

The issue of a return to third level tuition fees has once again appeared on the agenda this summer. The arguments for and against such a move are debated elsewhere in this edition. TUI believes that access to further and higher education is part of the social contract. TUI opposes the imposition of tuition fees for undergraduates.

Congress 2008 authorised the Executive Committee to carry out a vigorous nationwide recruitment campaign. Our aim is to increase our membership amongst new recruits to teaching and lecturing and also those who for various reasons did not join TUI when they started teaching.

The decision of the Executive Committee to invite literacy tutors and research staff in the Institutes to join the union is to be welcomed. Our willingness to recruit and represent teachers and lecturers from diverse sectors of the public education system in Ireland has been one of the cornerstones of our success. Representing members working in these areas allows us to influence education provision in a wide sphere and enables the generation of the resources necessary to provide a quality service to all our members.

I encourage every new entrant to the teaching and lecturing profession and those who for various reasons have not yet become members to join TUI immediately. The main benefit of being a member of TUI is in knowing that in times of need there is a great wealth of expertise and experience available to each individual member of the union and also knowing that the support of your union colleagues is always there if needed. Thousands have benefited directly from membership of TUI but un-associated teachers and lecturers leave themselves extremely vulnerable should a complication of any kind arise within their professional lives. Membership of TUI offers you protection. It also makes you part of a strong coherent national voice promoting the profession as a whole.

With Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Don Ryan'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Don Ryan, TUI President

Why We Can't Afford Education Cuts

The Minister for Education and Science and the Cabinet need to acknowledge that education is the most important tool in facilitating economic recovery and removing social divisions in this country.

The Government constantly claims that it has high ambitions for education provision and that it sees investment in education at all levels as highly important to economic success. However, the latest OECD figures show that they shamefully failed to invest in any strategic and meaningful manner when we were enjoying economic progress and budget surpluses.

With the current self-generated need for budgetary constraint the Government has embarked on a mission of curtailment, hitting education services across the board with a significant blow. Cutbacks of the magnitude proposed will not just prevent further improvement but will negate many of the achievements to date.

The most important statistic of the recent Education At A Glance Report shows that in relation to the proportion of national wealth spent on education among OECD countries, only the Slovak Republic and Greece spend less than Ireland. Serious questions need to be posed as to why the situation was allowed to deteriorate in recent years.

The proportion of National Wealth expressed as GDP spent on education has actually fallen during the so-called Celtic Tiger from 5.2% in 1995 to 4.6% in this report. That is before the recent cuts so we can expect this figure to have fallen further. This is unforgivable.

In relation to lifelong learning and workplace initiatives it is worrying in the extreme that the report shows that for workers in Ireland, the ratio of hours spent in job-related training is just 12%, compared to the OECD average of 25%. This is an indictment of the Government's complete lack of commitment to the lifelong learning programme.

What makes these findings even more galling is that the survey was based upon the year 2005. If the same indicators were to be examined today, it is inevitable that our results would be far worse.

The level of lifelong learning remains among the Irish population aged between 25 and 64 remains pathetically and unacceptably low at 10% when compared to other

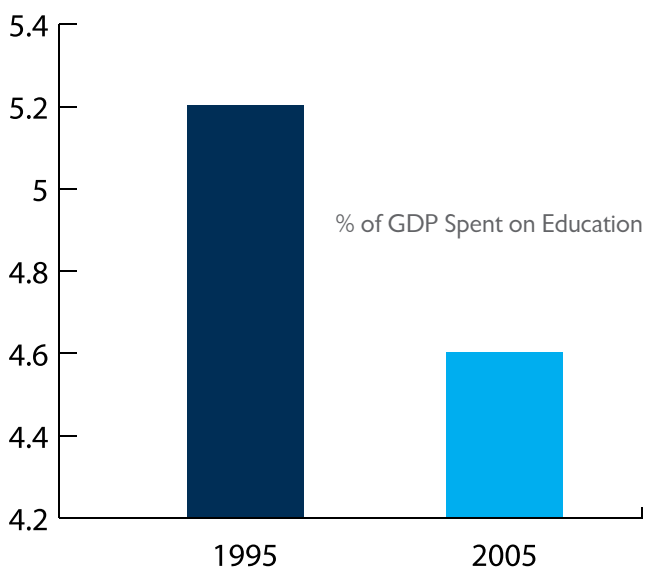
countries such as Sweden, United Kingdom and Denmark where participation exceeds 19%.

This is frightening when one considers the need to upskill the labour force and improve functional literacy among the working age population (currently 23%).

The infrastructure of any country is vital, and with so much emphasis being placed on the knowledge economy it has never been more imperative that we invest wisely in our future as a country. It follows that the most important resource for the future in this regard is our school and college-going population.

The union has been advised that many of the services offered by schools, by VECs and by the Department will be curtailed. Direct teaching is being excluded from the 3% payroll cut but otherwise the cuts will apply across the board, at all levels with no alleviation to the 3% applying to Institutes of Technology. This is having the effect of larger class groups and a reduced level of service to students.

Many economic commentators say that it is acceptable to borrow for investment but not for consumption. Spending on education is investment. It is money put into the future lives of our people, particularly the young and into the future of the country. How much more important is this than spending on infrastructural projects? Education is seen as consumption rather than an investment – which pours cold water on our aim of developing a world-class knowledge-based economy. Spending on education should be exempt from cutbacks for this reason – all the more so in times of economic hardship.



As a nation we can't afford not to spend on education.

If the Government continues to argue that there is no money available for funding in education, they will have to think imaginatively and constructively about how further funding can be raised. It is also timely in the current climate to question whether the money the State is spending on education is being targeted appropriately. TUI is seriously concerned that the effect of these cuts will fall disproportionately on the most vulnerable in society and will further disadvantage such groups.

The union has suggested that an audit is carried out on education spending to

ensure that State money is being spent appropriately and that waste is eliminated.

TUI has also raised its policy with the Department of Education and Science that schools which charge fees and which have excluded themselves from the "free education" system should be required to ensure that the fees charged cover all costs of the school including all salaries thus making savings at the expense of the strongest in society rather than on the weakest.

In effect, the State is funding schools which, by virtue of the fees charged, operate exclusionary enrolment policies. In this climate, funding cuts to programmes which

tackle early school leaving beggar belief. In addition to being exclusive on the basis of charging fees, these schools are engaged in practices which ensure that they do not have a mix of students which is reflective of society in general. They have been shown to have fewer special needs students, fewer from ethnic minority groups, fewer with needs for additional language support.

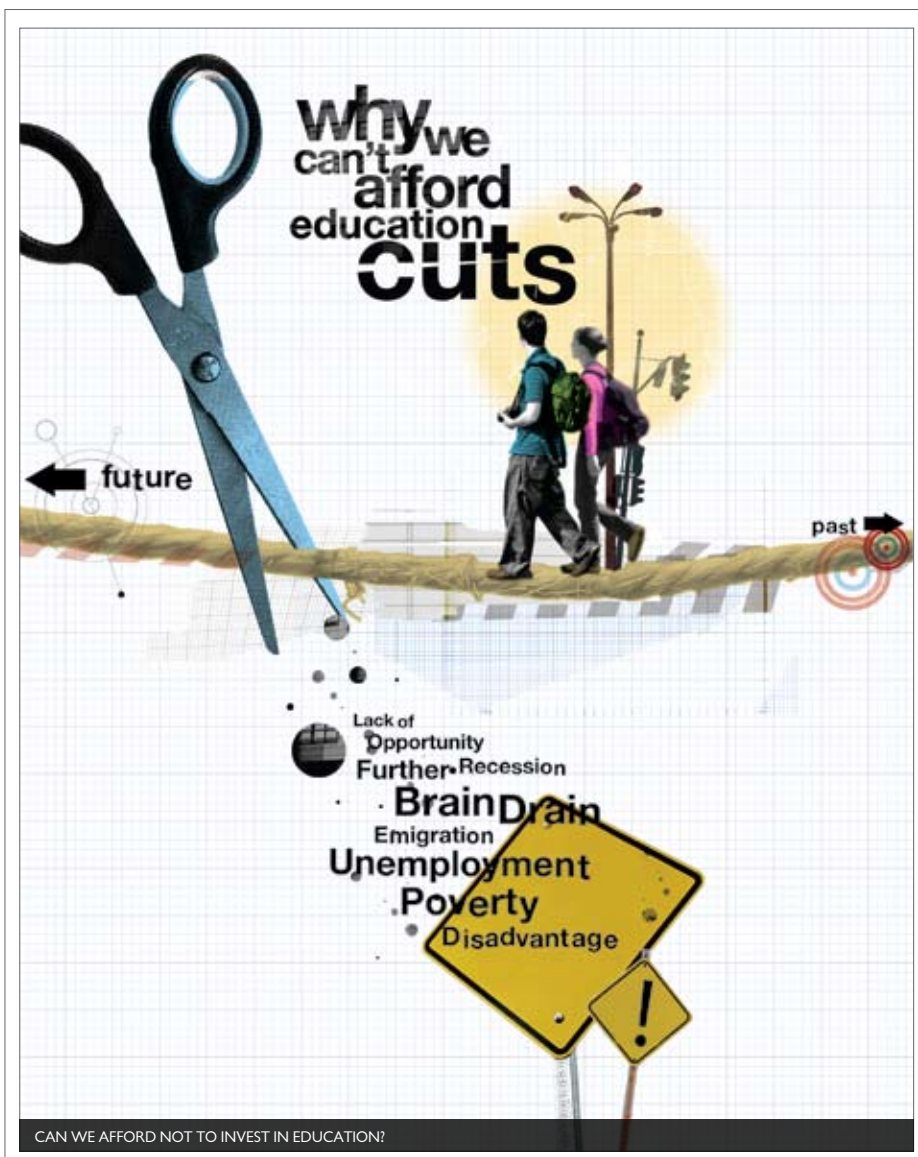
[TUI is abhorred by recent reports suggesting cutbacks in vital services such as the School Completion Programme. Is it fair and appropriate that the School Completion Programme is subject to stealth cuts while the State continues to fund private fee paying schools?](#)

This is a time when we should be ensuring that all children have the same equality of chance, not asset stripping vital services that seek to tackle disadvantage in our society.

We call on the Minister to immediately clarify his intentions with regard to this and other similar initiatives.

We do have a world-class education system for those who can afford it and for those that are selected to benefit from it. For others, it is nowhere near as good and this division is an indictment of our State. It highlights and propagates our divided society. The denial of equality of educational opportunity is one of the most vicious forms of discrimination, particularly because it is vested on the young.

It would be morally wrong to deepen these problems at this point in time.



[1] Expenditure on education as a % of GDP. (Ireland's figure is 4.6%)

[2] From Fifth Periodic Report on the Work of the NESF

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TUI Officials, Officers and Area Representatives Update

Annette Dolan appointed Deputy General Secretary of TUI in June 2008.



Annette Dolan, a native of Ballinasloe Co Galway, has been appointed as Deputy General Secretary of the Teachers' Union of Ireland.

Annette is a qualified teacher and holds honours B. Ed. and honours M. Ed.

Degrees in education. Ms Dolan worked as a primary school teacher prior to taking up a position with the Irish National Teachers Organisation in 1994, where she worked directly with Senator Joe O' Toole, then General Secretary of the INTO.

Ms Dolan joined TUI as Assistant General Secretary in 1999 and has been responsible for a wide range of issues including further education, second level, superannuation and equality matters.

Annette graduated with an honours LLB degree in law in 2005, subsequently qualified as a barrister at law from the Kings Inn and was called to the bar in the Supreme Court in 2007.



John O' Reilly was appointed Assistant General Secretary in June of this year.

A former teacher at Riversdale Community College, John had previously worked with the union as Assistant General Secretary in an acting capacity. He took up duty in July and will work largely in the third level area.



Bernie Ruane began her term as Vice-President on July 1st.



Michael Gillespie has replaced Bernie Ruane as the Area No 14 representative.

Area 14 covers the Community and Comprehensive branches in Carlow, Clare, Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny, Laois, Limerick, Offaly, Tipperary, Wateford and Wexford.



Paul Whelan has replaced John Farrell who has resigned as the Area No 10 representative.

Area 10 covers Dublin City Post Primary, the union's largest single branch.

Education Needs Investment Not Fees

Minister O’Keeffe recently opened afresh the debate about third level undergraduate fees. The Pavlovian reaction of some university presidents –fixated on fourth level and increasingly contemptuous of third - was predictable. They need your money to build their reputations.

They have been suckered into accepting as valid absurd and spurious league-table comparisons that take little if any account of student numbers, available budget and, critically, adherence to national policy imperatives. Irish higher education institutions are expected to evince a practical commitment to equity, and rightly so. The Ivy League is not similarly constrained.

Other contributors, on both sides of the debate, have been more reasoned. The Teachers’ Union of Ireland opposes the imposition of fees and, indeed, proposes that part-time students should no longer have to pay fees. The union believes that the imposition of fees would be socially, educationally and economically regressive.

Fees - a tax on education

It is no longer appropriate to treat participation in higher education as discretionary spending on a luxury commodity which should be taxed by the imposition of fees - which amount to a tax on education.

Fees won’t necessarily improve equity of access to or the level of funding for higher education. There are many competing demands and, in the case of some third level institutions, the clear imperative (as trumpeted by the institutions) is for additional research funding. The saving to Government, equally, would not generate ring-fenced funding for education, much less higher education. It is entirely possible that the re-imposition of fees would be used to replace, and thereby reduce, exchequer funding of education.

Fee-free

The increased enrolment of second-level students in fee-paying schools and for-profit businesses is frequently cited as evidence that fees-free third level education has effectively funded elitism at second level with consequent exacerbation of educational inequalities. The peculiar follow-on contention is that to curb the elitist second-level choices of some of the well-to-do, Government should re-impose third level fees and punish everybody. This proposition is seriously flawed. In the first place, the numbers don’t support it, in spite of what the D4 parochialism of the newspapers might have you believe. The vast majority of second-level students attend non-fee paying schools. Secondly it is, at best, highly

speculative to attribute increased enrolment in the second level fee-paying sector to the absence of third level fees. If Government is genuinely concerned about the inequalities fostered by the fee-paying sector, let it cease payment of teachers’ salaries to those schools and incentivise their transfer to the non-fee sector.

The risk of educational recession

Fees represent a punitive form of additional personal taxation applied to nett income. Viewed in these terms, fees are a particularly regressive form of taxation as they disproportionately burden PAYE workers and, most especially, those on relatively moderate incomes. It is arguable that many students from households in



IMPOSITION OF THIRD LEVEL FEES WOULD BE REGRESSIVE

this category currently progress to higher education only because no fees apply. The significant increase in participation since the abolition of fees is, arguably, attributable in large measure to the capture of this cohort. There is a very real and unacceptable risk that the re-imposition of fees would impede or prevent progression to higher education for this group, particularly in the present, more straitened economic climate.

It is contended – and we agree - that the wealthy should not be subsidised by other taxpayers. However, equity in this regard can best be achieved by the application of a genuinely progressive system of taxation. The re-imposition of fees, on the other hand, would be a blunt and indiscriminate instrument as its effect on the wealthy would be superficial whereas its effect on the PAYE sector would be severe

Progressive taxation system the key to fairness

Those who complete third-level courses have greater earning potential and it is argued that they should pay fees that reflect this benefit. However, not all graduates attract high earnings in subsequent careers. They have also foregone paid employment for three years or more to pursue third level studies in the first place. As often as not, they incur significant debt as third level students (in meeting living costs) that is carried forward as a charge against their later earnings. The skills and knowledge that they acquire in higher education add value to the national economy and attract high-end, knowledge-based inward investment. Fees would seriously impede this dynamic. However, a progressive taxation system would ensure a fair return to the exchequer from those who, over the course of their subsequent careers, exploit the earning potential associated with acquiring tertiary qualifications.

Thresholds carry a financial health warning

Fees, it is argued, would be payable only by those from households with an income that exceeds a particular threshold. This is a cynical argument. The return from those above the sort of threshold being mooted would be very modest, hardly worth the political effort of re-introducing fees. Therefore, we must assume that the real target is the compliant PAYE taxpayer whose income is declared and assessable. After all, thresholds change.

There is also a case to be made for the proposition that young adults should all, as citizens, have an entitlement to benefit from fee-free third-level education. In terms of equity this recognises the independence of each person. Moreover, the benefit to parents who might otherwise have to fund the fees is progressive in nature as the savings relative to income would favour those on modest incomes.

A levy on profits

Very significant additional funding could be raised by the application of an education levy to corporate profits. The funding generated by application of a levy – on profits - could be dedicated to enhancing participation/access by under-represented groups and to facilitating research.

Improving Access depends of early investment

The claim that the abolition of third level fees has failed as a policy - in that it has not resulted in appreciably increased access by socio-economically disadvantaged and marginalised groups – misses the point. Fees were never a factor in that regard as they weren't payable in the first place. The failure of successive Governments to provide adequate resources at primary and post-primary levels is the core obstruction for the marginalised. Completing post-

primary – getting to the starting line – is the challenge. For those who get there, derisory maintenance grants are an inhibiting factor as is the opportunity cost of undertaking a three/four year programme of study. The abolition of fees was, essentially, a matter of fairness, of recognising the contribution, the rights and the legitimate aspirations of PAYE workers. It represented a logical and necessary extension of the social contract.

Reform of grants needed

One measure that could be taken to ensure greater equity would not involve the imposition of fees. The current scheme of third level maintenance grants is notoriously unfair and has been consistently exploited by some among the self-employed and the farming community. We call upon Government to eliminate this abuse and use the savings to increase maintenance grants and thresholds to realistic levels.

The real cost of going to college

Student loans are mentioned as a possible mechanism for harvesting “the individual's contribution”. Money has been cheap in recent years but may not remain so. Loans might prove to be drivers of graduate emigration. Loan repayment, in common with fees payment, will always disproportionately affect those on low or moderate incomes.

Fees, loans and vouchers also carry a pronounced anti-rural bias because of the very substantial maintenance costs for a student living in rented accommodation.

Debate the real issue Minister

What is patently lacking and urgently required at present is the political will to invest appropriately in education at every level. We invite the Minister to initiate a real debate in this regard and jettison the diversionary tactic of ruminating about re-imposing fees.

ICT in Irish Schools – What’s New?

New Strategy for ICT in Schools

During the summer the Department of Education and Science published a substantial report on ICT in Schools. The findings and recommendations presented emanated from a national survey of primary and post-primary schools principals and teachers, a major evaluation of the impact of ICT on teaching and observations during subject inspections. The report summarises the journey from initial introduction of computer modules and studies to the new twin track approach – the development of student competence combined with the promotion of ICT as a tool for teaching and learning throughout the curriculum.

Acknowledging the importance of ICT in and to our modern ‘knowledge-based’ society and modern economy, the report points out that much has been achieved in the area of ICT development in schools. However, it frankly identifies that Ireland continues to lag behind many other countries in the provision of computers and associated infrastructure, other technological aids and technical support to schools. It also identifies that in addition to grants and equipment provided by the Department many schools draw on a significant level of other resources (fundraising, sponsorship, donations). In general teachers and schools are commended for the effective use of available resources and areas of concern are identified and highlighted. In particular the report advocated:

- equipping all classrooms (not just specialist classrooms) with a computer for teachers use, broadband internet access and a data projector and screen.
- developing the range of ICT peripherals and software available
- improving access for teachers to ICT facilities for the purposes of planning and preparing their teaching including



MINISTER BATT O' KEEFFE AND JEROME MORRISSEY OF THE NCTE AT ICT REPORT LAUNCH

- mobile facilities and laptops.
- one member of staff taking the lead in the management and co-ordination of ICT (ICT Co-ordinator) - this person should have clear duties and be could be supported by a steering committee
- more effective strategy for technical support
- strong professional development support for teachers concentrating on integration of ICT in teaching and learning.

The report is welcome and undoubtedly forthright in how it presents where we are at and where we should aim. A second report Investing Effectively in Information and Communication Technology in Schools (2008-2013) was also launched by the Minister. This report is the outcome of the Minister’s Strategy Group on ICT in Schools that considered how best the €252 million promised in the National Development Plan should be invested. It also sets out comprehensive and ambitious priority recommendations and objectives for continuing professional development; software and digital content for learning and teaching; additional and replacement ICT equipment; broadband access and services; technical support and maintenance; implementation structures and innovative practice and research.

Many of the issues and priorities

identified concur with current TUI policy and combined with the report by the Inspectorate it provides some hope for the future. It remains to be seen if the recommendations set out in both reports are translated into practice.

Withdrawal of ICT Advisors - Dismay and Disbelief

ICT Advisors were put in place as part of a national strategy, ICT 2000, to promote and support the development and effective use of ICT in schools. The Advisors were based in Education Centres around the country and provided a valuable service to local schools and teachers incorporating a number of different elements including: planning support; broadband access; internet safety; website development; curriculum initiatives and continuing professional development.

On the 20th June, 2008 an email issued to Directors of Education Centre announcing that funding for the posts (18 nationwide) was to be withdrawn from August 2008. The teacher unions strongly objected to the unilateral decision by the Department of Education and Science to terminate this service without any meaningful discussions with the partners in education. A joint letter issued immediately to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science setting out the substantive issues from the unions’ perspective and seeking an urgent meeting. Representatives from the three teacher unions met with the ICT Advisors and Directors of Education Centres in early July. The sense of dismay and disappointment at the decision and the manner in which it was communicated was palpable and several significant issues were considered including the:

- lack of appropriate consultation with the Education Centres, ICT Advisors

the teachers unions.

- over reliance on the Value for Money Audit (VFM) Report on ICT in Schools to inform the decision; the report was viewed as a blunt instrument in which the negative impact of withdrawing ICT Advisors was not captured.
- diminished capacity of Education Centres to respond to local needs.
- lack of acknowledgement of work plans agreed for work during 2008/2009 which underpinned a legitimate expectation that the service was continuing.
- inappropriate timing of the notice and the manner in which it issued.
- logistical and legal contractual issues that would arise in a number of schools.
- lost opportunities for ICT Advisors with regard to career options - study leave, career break, job share and early retirement.
- absence of any debriefing and in-service to prepare the ICT Advisors for the transition into a significantly changed teaching environment.

Subsequently an urgent meeting was held between the unions and the Department of Education and Science at which the above issues were explored in some detail. While the Department expressed regret at the manner in which the decision was communicated it stressed:

- this was a Ministerial decision
- it was not a 'cutback' but a re-orientation of the current strategy
- a number of different reports supported the decision ICT support

The Department agreed that:

- requests for career break, job share or early retirement by those affected would be considered on a case by case basis
- contractual obligations to teachers that have been replacing teachers on

secondment would be honoured for the coming academic session

- as the outcome for each ICT Advisor emerges relevant in service needs will be considered.

That the ICT Advisory Service to schools merited some re-orientation was accepted by the unions and the ICT Advisors. However, it was strongly argued that in any review regional support should still be a key feature, as is practice in other jurisdictions e.g. in the UK in addition to in school resources one ICT Advisor serves 40 schools. A primary question arises - Why is it only the ICT Advisors Strand of the current strategy that was axed; why not wait and re-orient the entire current suite of current supports after a more thorough examination of the new strategy in consultation with the main partners in education? In this regard the unions emphasised the importance of on-going engagement with the main education partners. It remains to be seen whether the withdrawal of the ICT Advisors was in fact a re-orientation of services or a hidden cutback.

While condemning the decision and the manner in which this was handled the unions welcomed the response of the Department to the practical issues emerging for individual teachers and schools. Ongoing support and advice has been provided to the four TUI members affected and will continue as appropriate and necessary. The TUI will continue to raise relevant issues with the Department over the coming months.



ICT in Irish Schools - A Teacher's Perspective

Jimmy Kelly is a teacher at
Newpark Comprehensive
School, Blackrock, Co Dublin

"It is just over 10 years since I returned to school after the summer holidays to find a "Gateway" machine with an analogue modem under a table in the school office. It had lain there for some months with no accompanying details, nor instructions. An inauspicious start to ICT in Irish second level schools.

Improvements came swiftly, thereafter. Hardware grants were received and IT 2000 was welcomed with open hearts by teachers countrywide. Great numbers of teachers engaged in Level 1 and Level 2 personal IT training.

This momentum stalled, however, thereafter, as you (the teacher) were expected to integrate ICT into your teaching and learning, but were left bereft of the resources to do so. You were expected to invent and produce your own material.

Today the situation is little different. With regard to hardware, the situation has improved: networked computers + "Office Suites"; faster internet access; digital cameras; VOIP; IM; the odd IWB. Yet, software relevant to Irish education remains very thin on the ground

What we need is more home produced software, aimed specifically at the Irish School curricula. We need at the minimum, each classroom to be equipped with a laptop and a data-projector. We need each classroom to have access to the internet. We need to explore the educational benefits of today's Web 2.0 i.e. 'blogging'; 'Youtube'; social networking, etc.

A major disadvantage in the system is the fact that as you succeed in improving computer access, there is no increase in the budget to cater for the increased costs associated with such expansion (i.e. for operating and application software licenses)."

Pay Delay Explanation

Under the provisions of the national agreement Towards 2016, a pay increase of 2½% was due with effect from 1st September, 2008. The provisions of this national agreement also provide that payment will only be made following verification of the changes agreed under that national agreement and, at the time of going to press, agreement has not been reached with TUI on the issues provided for under the national agreement.

Outstanding Issues at Second Level

The three unions, TUI, ASTI and INTO, are currently engaged in a facilitation process in respect of promotions procedures. The Department of Education and Science is demanding the removal of seniority in any form as a criterion for consideration in making appointments to Special Duties and Assistant Principals posts of responsibility. This is the subject of a facilitation process at present and agreement in the near future is hoped for.

It is the view of the Union that the Official Side has excessively drawn out discussions in relation to this matter which should have been completed in time to authorise payment from 1st September. However, it is hoped that agreement will be reached on all the outstanding issues in the near future and that payment will be authorised without further delay.

Outstanding Issues at Third Level

At the June National Partnership Forum (NPF) meeting, which was called for the purposes of recommending payment, there were a number of outstanding issues which had not been fully agreed. The NPF recommended payment on the understanding that the matters would be concluded and that, or in the event of a lack of agreement in regard to certain issues, these issues would be referred to the Labour Relations Commission and Labour Court.

It was the Union's understanding that this recommendation for payment with effect from 1st September was being submitted to the Education Sector Performance Verification Group (ESPVG) and that agreement to pay in September would be reached. At this time the matter has not been referred to the ESPVG and consequently the recommendation to

pay has not been made. It is the Union's understanding that no objection to payment has been made. However, it is the view of the Union that there is full compliance with the provisions of Towards 2016 and that payment should have been authorised by now with effect from 1st September.

The PVG has sought an update on the situation in regard to the issues which have not yet been agreed. Several meetings have taken place and a number of issues have been raised by IOT management which are presenting significant difficulties and which may be the cause of further delay in the authorisation of this payment. As yet the issue of Grievance and Discipline procedures remains incomplete as does the issue of the Apprentice year. An issue has arisen as to the online access to the quality assurance (QA1) forms, a review of PMDS has taken place and issues arising are to be identified and little progress has been made on the Academic Contract.

Payment dates

It is the very strong expectation of TUI that once agreement has been reached on the outstanding issues at both second and at third level that payment will be made with effect from 1st September. The only reason for non payment is if we are in breach of the agreement and we are very strongly of the view that there has been no breach. It is the expectation of the Union that there will be no loss to members and, in particular, those members who have chosen to retire after 1st September will be entitled to the pay increase and will therefore be entitled to a lump sum reflective of this increase.



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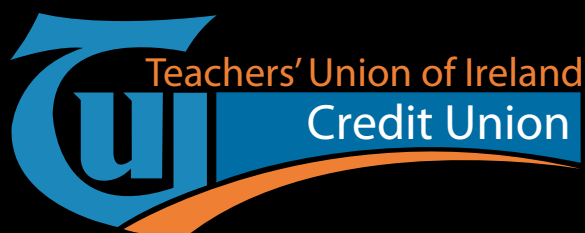


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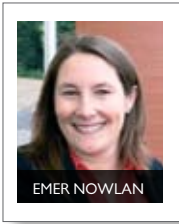
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Educate Together to Move into Second-Level Education



Emer Nowlan, Second-Level Project Manager for Educate Together met with TUI officers to outline her rationale for Educate Together's move into second level education. We asked her to set out her views for TUI News.

Ever since the first Educate Together primary school opened in Dalkey thirty years ago, pressure has been mounting on Educate Together to expand its successful model into the post-primary sphere. With the number of pupils in the sector's primary schools approaching 10,000, parents are becoming more vocal in their campaigns, and the patron body is delighted to now move to support them.

What is the Educate Together Ethos?

Educate Together's distinctive ethos is based on well-established global values of equality and human rights. The Educate Together Charter requires that the organisation's schools are:

Multi-denominational i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected.

Co-educational and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities.

Learner-centred in their approach to education.

Democratically run with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of teachers.

Equality (as opposed to charity, or inclusion) and respect (as opposed to tolerance or accommodation) are the fundamental values on which all decisions made in the school must be based.

While schools of different types use some of the same words in stating their objectives, the Boards of Management of Educate Together schools - being obliged under the Education Act to uphold the "characteristic spirit" of the school as defined by the patron - are legally accountable for ensuring

that these ideals are realised in practice. They must conform to Educate Together policy as agreed through the organisation's democratic structures.

Plans for Educate Together Second-Level Education

As part of its planning for second-level education, Educate Together commissioned the School of Education in Trinity College Dublin to carry out a comprehensive feasibility study. The results were extremely positive and the researchers made clear recommendations as to how the organisation should proceed.

The desire for continuity was voiced strongly in the study and 90% of Educate Together parents reported they would send their children to an Educate Together second-level school if the option existed. Of particular interest, however, were the reasons given for that preference.

Important factors were that parents and students should be treated with respect and that there should be opportunities for meaningful involvement in school management for both parents and students. Balance between academic development and social well-being were also considered important.

Ethos, the study showed, is vitally important to these parents, and 92% said that the Educate Together philosophy works in practice. This philosophy is reflected in the

collaborative management practices of the primary schools, as well as being explicitly taught through the "Learn Together" ethical education curriculum.

What Will an Educate Together Second-Level School be Like?

Exactly what each Educate Together second-level school is like, following the democratic principle of its ethos, will be a matter for each school community. However, the work Educate Together does with school communities in order to ensure the four principles of the ethos can be realised in practice will mean that schools have certain characteristics in common.

For example, agreed codes of behaviour will ensure that teachers' and students' rights to a productive working and learning environment are respected. Specific active learning methodologies will be utilized to enable students take responsibility for their own learning - the focus will be on them becoming resourceful, lifelong learners and responsible contributors to society. Critical thinking, innovation and initiative will be nurtured and developed through all of the activities of the school.

The professional role of teachers is fully supported in Educate Together schools. Continued professional development is encouraged and innovative timetabling and planning ensure that teachers have the opportunity to work together to evaluate

and improve practices in the school on an on-going basis.

A Golden Opportunity

In recent years calls for reform of the education system, so that it better prepares young people for life in 21st century globalised Ireland, have come from bodies as diverse as the Combat Poverty Agency and Google, as well as trade unions. The need for an education system which promotes responsible citizenship, social inclusion and cohesion, innovation and creativity has never been greater. Educate Together recognises that many of its ideals are shared by existing schools and professional organisations. However, the entrance of a new body into second-level education presents a new and ideal opportunity to address some of the issues that arise again and again as problematic;

discipline and behaviour issues, early school leaving, bullying, and the meaningful engagement of parents in school life, to name a few examples.

Educate Together believes that the active manner in which its distinctive ethos is promoted and supported in its schools provides an ideal framework, through which these issues can be tackled and addressed afresh. Working groups are already drawing up detailed proposals as to how the Educate Together ethos can be implemented at second-level in the most effective way possible. These groups have attracted a number of practising education professionals from second and third level and different approaches, models and school types are being explored. There is a palpable excitement about the opportunities which this move presents.

Educate Together looks forward to making a significant contribution at second-level – one which complements existing models and allows parents to exercise their legal right to choose this specific type of education for their children. In particular it looks forward to working in partnership with second-level organisations, and is grateful to the TUI for this opportunity to communicate its aims.

We would like to hear more from education professionals about your views on this project. If you would like to read the Feasibility Study or find out more visit www.educatetogether.ie and click on the **Second-level link**. Contact Emer Nowlan for more information.

Tel 01 4292500 / emer.nowlan@educatetogether.ie

TUI Loses Representation on ICTU Executive Council

With the retirement of the former General Secretary from the position last March TUI has lost its position on the ICTU Executive Council. Jim Dorney was elected to the Executive of ICTU while he was General Secretary of TUI and he has chosen to remain in that position following his retirement. Unfortunately the rules of ICTU provide that a person is elected to the Council as an individual rather than in the capacity that one held when elected and that one is therefore, according to the rules, able to remain on the executive notwithstanding their retirement.

It is a matter of regret that this situation has come about and that there is no longer a person on the ICTU Executive answerable to TUI executive and in a position to bring TUI influence to the ICTU.



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*These courses are part-funded by the Special Education Support Service and the Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education and Science under the NDP.

Special Congress on Teacher Union Co-Operation



TUI's Special Congress on Teacher Union Co-Operation will be held on **Saturday, 18th October in the Burlington Hotel, Upper Leeson Street, Dublin 4, commencing at 11 am.**

It will discuss a proposal drawn up by the four teacher unions - TUI along with its colleague unions ASTI, INTO and IFUT.

This proposed document, which has been circulated to branches, proposes continuing discussions on the earliest stages of teacher union co-operation, i.e. a federation between the four unions. If the document is agreed by the Special Congress it will allow the four teacher unions develop further proposals towards this federation which it is hoped would be brought to the annual Easter congresses of the unions.

The **motion** for Special Congress is as follows:

“Congress approves the Discussion Document on Proposals for a Federated Teachers’ and Lecturers’ Union and instructs the Executive Committee to implement its provisions.”

In the event of a federation of teacher unions being established, it is agreed that each of the four teacher unions would remain in independent existence and only those functions assigned by the four unions to the federation could be carried out by the federation. In order to allay some concerns which have been expressed in relation to those functions which might be transferred to the federation, the TUI Executive Committee is proposing to the Special Congress that functions would only be transferred to a federated teachers’ union by TUI following a decision of a TUI Congress. It is the continuing desire of TUI that major decisions of this nature would be made by the membership following the fullest of information being made available.

Reasons for Teacher Union Co-operation

The present economic climate and pay situation is a prime reason for greater union cooperation. Pathetic levels of education spending, which themselves are being cut and which relegate Ireland to the bottom league of OECD countries, can be better addressed by unions acting in

unison with a common agenda rather than in four separate directions. The critical pay issue, where a significant pay freeze in the public service is being promoted and where members are being asked to accept pay increases which it is clearly known will reduce their standard of living, is a situation which is particularly difficult to address and which also is best addressed by the teacher unions acting collectively.

The decision to be taken by the Special Congress is a significant decision in that it allows for further consideration of the concept of teacher unity. It does not commit to teacher unity or even federation and it is not a final decision. However, rejection of this limited proposal at this time would close off the possibility of teacher union co-operation for the foreseeable future.

Documentation was sent to Branches and amendments to the motion and names of delegates to Special Congress had to be received in Head Office by 5.00pm on Friday, 19th September 2008.

The Final Agenda will be issued on Wednesday 8th October 2008.

Teachers and Students visit Malawi with Concern

A group of post-primary school pupils spent ten days in July in Malawi, visiting projects in the country run by Concern Worldwide, Ireland's largest aid agency. The pupils come from two schools, Holy Family Community School in Rathcoole, Co Dublin, and Athlone Community College.

The Athlone students won this year's Concern Schools' Debate and the Rathcoole students were tops in fundraising for the aid agency. The reward for their hard work was a fact-finding trip to the south eastern African country. They flew to the Malawian capital, Lilongwe, and went straight to Concern's offices in the city before visiting a number of projects funded by

the agency, including a school, a health clinic and an irrigation plant. The visitors were struck by the poverty and living conditions in the country but were hugely impressed with the work being done on the ground by the people themselves and Concern.

As Chris Forde, a teacher at Athlone Community College points out, so little can make such a huge difference in such places. "Concern is not 'throwing aid at Africa', rather it is on the ground and involved in schemes it can finance. The template is there," he explains.



THE CONCERN TEAM, WHICH PLAYED CHIDIDI SCHOOL IN MALAWI

Arbitration Board Report in respect of supervision and substitution in the prisons.

In 2002 the teacher unions accepted proposals for the Supervision and Substitution Scheme which is set out in Circular Letter PPT 01/03. This relates to the supervision of pupils during morning and lunchtime breaks and before and after school and the substitution element provides for an extension of approved substitution to cover teacher absences on uncertified sick leave and certain approved school activities.

The Teacher Unions lodged a claim in 2002 that teachers working in the

education units in the prisons would be included in the arrangements negotiated for teachers in schools/centres in respect of the payment for supervision and substitution.

As no agreement was reached on the claim at Conciliation the matter was referred to Arbitration.

The Arbitration Board determined that the claim for extra remuneration should be allowed in respect of Prison Teachers who make themselves available to

substitute for absent colleagues.

The Board concluded that this extra payment should reflect remuneration for extra 16 hours per annum.

The Board also determined that retrospection and pensionability should apply to this remuneration in the same way as was applied in relation to VTOS and Traveller Training Centres. This means that Teachers in the prisons can expect to receive retrospection for 37 hours per annum backdated to 2002.

Flat Rate Allowances

The Flat rate allowances agreed with the Revenue in respect of expenses for teachers/lecturers are as follows. These rates are to apply for the years 2007, 2008 and 2009.

Second Level

Principal	€608
Teacher	€518
Part time Teacher (not on full hours)	€279

Third Level

Professor/	
Heads of School/Dept	€608
Lecturers	€518
Part time Lecturers (not on full hours)	€279

2008 Third World Fund

The Third World Fund for 2008 will have at its disposal an amount in excess of €13,500. The fund is used to aid developmental, education and trade union projects in underdeveloped countries.

If you have a project which you would like supported with money from the Fund, please make a written submission to Hilary O'Byrne, Administrative Officer, before **14th November 2008** outlining details of the project.

Last year a total of 15 projects received a contribution from the Third World Fund. Examples of some of the projects contributed to were:

- Photocopier and computer equipment for Kahangala Pastoral centre, Tanzania
- Project to address HIV/AIDS pandemic in Zimbabwe
- English language training for guides in the Dogon area in Mali
- Community centre and crèche in Joao Pessa, Brazil.

Each of the 15 projects received between €1,000 and €8,200 each. While the amount for each project is small, the feedback we get from the various projects indicates that your funding of these projects makes a significant impact and is greatly appreciated. There is also the added bonus that the money goes directly to the projects concerned.

Have we got your Union Membership details correct?

- Has your union membership status changed? e.g. from Part-Time to Permanent Whole Time, from Permanent Whole Time to Job-Share or have your part-time hours increased, etc.
- Have you transferred from one employer to another?
- Have you just returned from a Career Break, Leave of Absence or any unpaid leave?

If the answer is "yes" to any of the above questions, please ensure that you complete a new Deduction at Source (DAS) form immediately and send it to:

Dara Blighe, Membership Secretary,
TUI, 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6.

DAS forms are available on the TUI website – www.tui.ie

They are also available from your School/College Representative, from Head Office or in this issue of TUI News.

Please complete a new DAS form to avoid falling into arrears.

Help keep our data base up to date – keep us informed!

See Ireland's top economists go head-to-head on the future of our economy

Cornmarket's "**Midas Smart Money Conference**" will take place on **Thursday 23rd October 2008 in Croke Park from 6.00pm – 9.30pm** and is one not to be missed!

Themed "Healthy, Wealthy and Wise", the Conference will showcase some of Ireland's top talent in Health, Wealth and Wisdom. There will be an impressive arena of speakers at the event including **Derval O' Rourke** (Irish Athletics Champion & Olympic hopeful), **Marc Coleman** (Economics Editor Newstalk 106 to 108, Columnist Sunday Independent

& Irish Catholic), **Jim Power** (Chief Economist, Friends First) and **Matt Cooper** (Broadcaster & Journalist). The main event will see two of Ireland's top economists provide insight into their predictions for the future of the Irish economy. There will also be stands on the night to provide you with tips on how to take make your finances work harder for you.

For more information, please contact Breda O' Driscoll **(01) 408 4116**, or mail to: breda.odriscoll@cornmarket.ie. Places are limited so book **NOW** to avoid disappointment!



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Grinds and Leaving Certificate Performance

Some Research Findings and Perspectives by
Emer Smyth, Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)



TAKING GRINDS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH A BOOST IN PERFORMANCE

The topic of grinds has been given a lot of media attention in recent years. However, this debate has taken place in the absence of evidence on the take-up of grinds and their impact on exam performance. Recent ESRI research, shortly to be published in the Oxford Review of Education, sheds light on the kinds of students who take grinds and how they fare academically. This article summarises the main findings of that research, focusing on students who take grinds on a part-time basis while attending regular schools. It relates both to those attending 'grind schools' for group classes and those taking grinds on a one-to-one basis.

Currently, almost half (45%) of students take part-time grinds at some point during

their Leaving Certificate year. This has grown significantly from a third of Leaving Certificate students in the early 1990s, reflecting the increase in disposable family income resulting from the Celtic Tiger and the freeing up of money by the abolition of third-level fees. Over the same period, increasing numbers of young people have been going on to higher education so they may have been more likely to take grinds as a means to achieve this end.

Although the numbers have grown, students taking grinds remain a distinctive group in many respects. Social background is a strong predictor of grinds take-up. The majority of those whose parents work in higher professional occupations and whose

parents have third-level qualifications take grinds. In contrast, only a minority of their working-class peers take grinds. Girls are more likely to take grinds than boys from similar backgrounds. Furthermore, students taking the Leaving Certificate Applied programme are extremely unlikely to take grinds.

Students who go on to take grinds during their Leaving Certificate year have generally had a positive experience of the schooling process and are more engaged academically. They have already achieved higher Junior Certificate grades than non-participants, they spend more time on homework and study, and they hold higher aspirations for their future.

Taking grinds reflects not only individual but also school characteristics. Students who attend schools with a stronger orientation to higher education are more likely to take grinds, all else being equal. In other words, where college is viewed as the natural route for all students in a school, this 'hothouse effect' may lead students to take grinds as a way of coping with academic pressure.

But do grinds make a difference to how students get on in their exams? We have found that certain groups of students are more likely to take grinds than others and these are precisely the groups of students who tend to achieve higher grades.

We know from previous research that female students, middle-class students, those who have received higher Junior Certificate grades, those with higher aspirations and those who spend more time studying tend to achieve higher Leaving Certificate grades than other students. The group of students who take grinds is therefore made up of students who do well academically anyway. This makes it hard to assess whether grinds make a difference. However, our research (which draws on the regular national survey of school leavers and on a national survey of schools) is based on very detailed information on the characteristics of students, both those taking grinds and those not taking grinds. This means that we can use statistical modelling techniques to accurately compare 'like with like' in looking at the potential impact of grinds.

Overall, students who take grinds tend to achieve higher 'raw' grades in the Leaving Certificate than those who do not. However, when we take account of the differences between grind participants and non-participants in background, aspirations and engagement in study, we find no average net difference in Leaving Certificate grades between the two groups. In other words, taking grinds is not associated with a boost in performance for the students concerned.



Why then do students take grinds if they do not in fact secure them an advantage? There are a number of possible explanations. It may be hard for students and their parents to assess the real impact of private tuition. If a student takes grinds and does well in her Maths exam, for example, she may attribute her success to those grinds rather than to the teaching in her regular Maths class or to her own hard work. Earlier ESRI research has shown relatively high stress levels among Leaving Certificate students, especially girls. Students may therefore seek out grinds because they feel under pressure or are worried about how they will do in the exams. This perceived need to take grinds may be heightened where students are attending schools where most of their peers are focused on going to college and therefore taking grinds.

In conclusion, grinds have become an increasing feature of the Leaving Certificate landscape. Ireland is not alone in this experience, with private tuition a long established tradition in many South East Asian countries and a growing phenomenon in countries such as Greece and Turkey, all educational systems with competitive entry to higher education. We have seen that, in the Irish case, grinds do not significantly enhance student grades but involve a significant investment of time on

the part of students and money on the part of parents. The question remains open as to whether grinds may have other effects on students, such as on the way they learn, how they approach exams and their choices in later life.

This is a summary of 'Buying your way into college? Private tuition and the transition to higher education in Ireland', to be published shortly in Oxford Review of Education. An advance electronic copy of the paper is available for subscribers or for purchase through:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/1344770269-56068463/title~content=g795255612~db=jour>

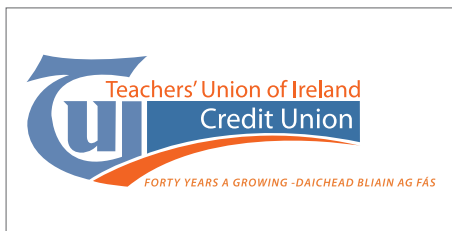
Lower rates and increased benefits on Car Insurance for TUI members!

The Teachers Car Insurance Scheme for members of the TUI has just been reviewed and now boasts even better cover as well as very competitive rates. Administered by Cornmarket, over 24,000 teachers and their partners are now insured under the Scheme. The following is just a sample of the benefits included:

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TUI Credit Union News



The month of July proved popular with teachers wishing to take out loans.

Our interest rates continue to be very competitive as will be noted from our advertisements and posters during the year.

If you are not a member of TUI Credit Union and would like to join, please call into our office at 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6, or telephone: 01 492-2355, or email: tuicreditunion@eircom.net. Our administrative staff, Madeleine, Nadia and Fiona are always glad to help.

Congratulations to the recent winners of the monthly draw:

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B. O'Halloran, Dublin - €500

MAY 08

M. O'Hehir, Dublin - €1500
M. McGivney, Waterford - €1000
C. Long, Waterford - €500

JUNE 08

P. McNamara, Offaly - €1500
P. Meehan, Limerick - €1000
J. Cooney, Westmeath - €500

JULY 08

N. O'Reilly, Wicklow - €1,500
B. Burns, Tipperary - €1000
M. Harte, Dublin - €500

The next car raffle will be at Christmas.

To join the monthly draw please contact

the office for an application form. It costs €5 per month to participate.

Reminder

The TUI Credit Union through its marketing and promotions committee will give some financial support to members who may be organising sporting or cultural events for their students. We also offer some financial help to teachers arranging retirement functions or other special occasions. Please contact the office by letter or by e-mail giving details and also a personal phone number.

Finally, the TUI Credit Union President, Frank McGinn, the directors and supervisors all join in wishing you a very happy school year for 2008-09. Go n-éirí libh!

E Clancy – Marketing/Promotions Committee

Value for Money and Policy Review – Special Needs Assistant (SNA) Scheme

The Special Needs Assistant (SNA) scheme has been selected for a formal Value for Money and Policy Review. A Steering Committee comprising: Senior Officials in the Department of Education and Science, the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Department Inspectorate, the National Council for Special Education Needs (NCSE) and the Department of Finance has been established to support the review. Preliminary work has already commenced and a formal engagement with the education partners will take place shortly.

The Department held an initial briefing meeting with the teacher unions during June and July. At the meeting the Department:

- outlined the historical context for the allocation of SNAs to individual students
- emphasised that the review is focussing on identifying the most appropriate

manner to support students toward independence, while at the same time providing an effective educational service

- set out terms of reference for the review
- identified the approach to be used to collect data for the review.

The TUI concurs that the current model for allocating special needs assistants merits review in the context of how schools can best be supported to provide an appropriate education for all its students including those with special educational needs. The review will span over 18 months incorporating visits to schools (post-primary and primary, special schools), focus group discussions (SNAs/ teachers, parents, students, etc), questionnaires and submissions from interested organisations and individuals.

Formal submissions will be invited shortly. As well as providing general

views and ideas organisations will be invited to identify models of good practise for consideration that could inform recommendations for future practice. This provides a welcome opportunity for the teacher unions to present views in a comprehensive and succinct manner. It is important that the TUI perspective is informed by the team of officials in Head Office, elected representatives, and the general membership but especially by those involved in working with students with special educational needs.

The terms of reference for the review can be accessed www.education.ie

Please forward your views directly to Head Office for the attention of Sandra Howard (showard@tui.ie) or through your branch and Area Representative.

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membership application form

Teachers Union of Ireland, 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6.
t: 01 492 2588 f: 01 492 2953 e: tui@tui.ie

personal details

Surname _____ First Name(s) _____

Male Female

School/Centre/Institute (name & address/department)

Home Address _____

Date of Birth _____ Telephone Number _____

E-mail Address _____

PPS Number _____

Qualifications (Full) _____ Grade (e.g. Class III teacher, LI, etc.) _____

Degree Subjects Taught _____

Subjects Taught _____

Date of Appointment _____

whole time teacher / lecturer only

Is your present post your first whole time appointment? Yes No

Is your appointment? PWT Job-share

part-time teacher / lecturer only

Please indicate the number of regular timetabled hours hrs

Are you employed directly by the School/College? Yes No

union membership

Are you at present, or have you previously been a member of the TUI or any other Union?

Yes No

If "Yes", please state name of Union/Branch/Place of Employment/Dates _____

new members

I hereby apply for membership of the Teachers' Union of Ireland and, if accepted, agree to be bound by the Rules of the Union not in force and as may be amended.

Signature _____ Date _____

Staff / Payroll Number _____

- Note:**
1. Once all sections of the application for are fully completed, please forward to: Membership Section, TUI Head Office, 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6.
 2. Please return a fully completed DAS form with your application form. DAS forms are available from your school / college representative, TUI HeadOffice or www.tui.ie

office use only

New Member Existing Member

Number _____ Branch _____



deduction at source authorisation form

Teachers Union of Ireland, 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6.
t: 01 492 2588 f: 01 492 2953 e: tui@tui.ie

personal details

Surname in English _____ Surname in Irish _____
Surname before Marriage _____ First Name(s) _____
Home Address _____

PPS Number _____
School / Institute (name & address) _____

TUI Branch _____

employment status (please tick as appropriate)

PWT * Part-time Job-share

*Part-time - please indicate the number of regular timetabled hours hrs

deductions

Payroll Number								
TUI Subscription	€					.		
TUI Credit Union	€					.		

authorisation

I hereby authorise

VEC _____ VEC

IT's _____ Institute of Technology

**C & C _____ TUI to authorise the Department of Education and Science

to deduct monthly from my salary, until further notice, the Union subscription appropriate to my employment status at any time as a teacher / lecturer*, to be paid to the TUI on my behalf, together with the amount shown in respect of the TUI Credit Union (if applicable). The amount of subscription to be determined by Annual Congress.

Signature Date _____ Date _____

*This authorises the Employer to alter my Union Subscription from Part-time to PWT/job-share as appropriate.

** With Effect from July 2006 the Dept. of Education and Science are not accepting DAS forms and have requested that TUI hold the original forms on behalf of members.

office use only

New Member Existing Member

Number _____ Branch _____

The following text was supplied by Marsh Ireland

Additional Voluntary Contributions

Pensions are a regular news feature and commentary appears on TV and newspaper on a daily basis. In light of the falling stock market the temptation may be to turn your back on pensions.

Economic analysts broadly agree that addressing the pension issue now and ensuring you are not penalised for inadequate pension provision at retirement is the right approach to take.

Remember most of us want to retire earlier, live longer and ensure we are financially secure throughout our retirement.

As a public sector employee and member of the TUI you are off to a good start with the benefits of the Superannuation Scheme ensuring guaranteed benefits at retirement dependent upon service and salary.

However many of us will retire without full service or have maximised Revenue relief in respect of pension contributions.

Additional Voluntary Contributions or AVCs are special personal savings for your retirement which attract PRSI and tax relief.

As the value of investments may go down as well as up and past performance may not be a reliable guide to future performance, it is important to receive qualified advice when making important investment decisions which will impact on your future.

In fact, as unusual as it sounds, market volatility as presently experienced can benefit mid to long term investments. As the market goes down investors essentially get a better price on the units that they are buying and therefore, a regular premium allows you buy more units. The investor therefore builds up an investment poised to benefit from a recovery without having to

worry about further market fluctuations.

Remember the SSIA opportunity?

For every €4 you saved the government contributed an additional €1 subject to terms and conditions. Your AVC is not dissimilar with every €1 you contribute attracting full tax relief subject to Revenue limits.

There are a number of reasons why you might choose AVCs from a taxation perspective alone:

- Tax relief: available on all contributions subject to Revenue limits
- Tax efficiency: fund growth is free from Capitals Gains Tax or Income Tax
- Tax free lump sum: subject to Revenue limits you can take the value of your AVC as a tax free lump sum, transfer to an Approved Retirement Fund (ARF) or benefit from an enhanced regular pension throughout your retirement. You can also use your AVC fund to purchase Notional Service any time prior to retirement.

The Superannuation Scheme allows you draw a maximum of 50% of your final salary on retirement and AVCs can boost that figure significantly subject to Revenue limits. Your AVC contributions will also enjoy the same tax relief that your Superannuation Scheme receives.

Most public servants on retirement receive benefits from the Superannuation Scheme which are less than those approved under Revenue limits. The AVC fund can be used to enhance your financial security but you need to act today.

Finally, you may ask whether

today is the right time to increase or start paying AVCs. This is entirely dependent upon personal circumstance but broadly speaking the majority of us will benefit in the future from additional savings we make now.

You can choose to pay regularly each month or pay a single premium. Single AVC Premium Investment opportunities allow members to enhance their pension benefits on retirement. This is the right time of the year to consider the sizable tax benefits available as the Revenue deadline of the 31 October looms so you need to move fast.

Many people retiring today will receive the benefits of having chosen to invest in AVC's over the past number of years. If you are considering retiring early or wish to receive additional benefits over and above the benefits of the Superannuation Scheme it is advisable to consider the benefits of AVCs today.

To protect your financial future requires a couple of simple steps. Make an appointment with a Qualified Marsh Consultant on 1800 781 781. The consultation will establish suitability, affordability and scope. The final decision is then entirely yours.

Marsh is the only officially appointed provider of AVCs to TUI members.



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Text provided by the Teaching Council

Teaching Council National Elections

The Teaching Council was established on a statutory basis in March 2006 to set and maintain professional standards, to promote teaching as a profession, to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the State and to regulate the profession. The term of office of the current Council ends on the 27 March 2009. The Teaching Council, which is made up of 37 members acting in a voluntary capacity, includes 16 elected teachers. National elections will be held in February 2009 to elect teachers to the new Council. This is a significant opportunity for teachers to participate, through the Council structure, in the development of a range of policies affecting teaching in Ireland.

The Council has approved Election Regulations and these have been submitted to the Minister for Education and Science for formal consent. Based on the proposed election regulations, the process through which teachers can stand for election and the way in which voting will be conducted is described below. This article will be of interest to any eligible teacher considering nomination and to those eligible to vote. More detailed information will be available on the Elections page of the Council's website www.teachingcouncil.ie

Standing for Election

All registered teachers who are on the Register of Teachers on the 30 September 2008 will be eligible to stand for election to the Council in 2009. Prospective candidates must be nominated by 15 electors (registered teachers) in the same electoral category and geographical constituency. A notice inviting nominations will be published in the national press in early December 2008.

Nominating a registered teacher as a candidate for election to the Teaching Council

Nominations on the official nomination paper must be sent to the Returning Officer in the Council. The nomination paper will shortly be available for download from the election page of the Council's website.

Nominations must be received by the set deadline and all nominations must enclose a consent form completed by the nominated teacher. The Returning Officer will publish a list of nominees as soon as practicable after the closing date for receipt of nominations.

Voting in the elections

All registered teachers who are on the Register of Teachers on the 30 September 2008 will be eligible to vote. In October 2008, the Council will publish the Provisional Electoral Roll (PER). If an eligible teacher's name is not on the PER that teacher may apply to the Returning Officer (before the deadline) to have their name included. An elector may vote only in respect of the candidates nominated in the geographical constituency and in the electoral category in which s/he is entered in the electoral roll. Arrangements regarding access to the PER will be notified by the Returning Officer in due course.

Amending incorrect details on the PER

Following publication of the PER, any teacher included on it can apply to the Council to have his or her name and details amended where there are inaccuracies. Such an application must be received by the deadline set by the Returning Officer. Depending on the nature of the amendment required, documentary

evidence may be required to support the application. In this regard, it is particularly important that teachers check their correspondence address and employment details.

Gender balance

The Teaching Council Act, 2001 makes specific reference to the desirability of an appropriate gender balance in relation to the Council membership. Consistent with this approach gender balance has been built into the geographical constituencies. The candidates in each geographical constituency will be sub-divided into panels. More information on the panels can be found on the elections page of the Council's website.

Electoral categories and geographical constituencies

There are four electoral categories as follows:

- Category 1: Primary teachers (9 members).
- Category 2: Post-primary teachers who are registered to teach in a recognised post-primary school and whose voting category is determined to be the voluntary secondary school sector (4 members).
- Category 3: Post-primary teachers who are registered to teach in a recognised

post-primary school and whose voting category is determined to be the vocational education sector (2 members).

- Category 4: Post-primary teachers who are registered to teach in a recognised post-primary school and whose voting category is determined to be the community and comprehensive school sector (1 member).

Each of these four categories is further subdivided into geographical constituencies which, as far as practicable, reflect the local government areas and boundaries set out in the Local Government Act, 2001. The geographical constituencies will be listed on the elections page of the Council's website.

Assigning voting categories and geographical constituencies

When forming the PER, the Returning Officer will decide on the appropriate voting category of each eligible teacher having regard to the Register and the sector where s/he is employed. Where a registered teacher is not currently employed, or the Council has not sufficient details in relation to his or her current employment, the Returning Officer will decide on the appropriate voting category by lot and in proportions that correspond as far as practicable to the numbers of eligible teachers in each sector.

As far as practicable, the Council will allocate each eligible teacher to a geographical constituency on the basis of the address of the school where s/he is employed. Where the address is not available, the teacher will be allocated to a geographical constituency on the basis of his/her correspondence address, or where this is not available, the last known address in Ireland. Where the Returning Officer has reason to believe an eligible teacher is living outside of Ireland, or where none of the preceding criteria apply, the Returning

Officer shall allocate him or her to a geographical constituency by lot.

Viewing the electoral roll

A candidate may request, in writing, details of the electoral roll in respect of the electoral category and geographical constituency for which s/he has been nominated. The Returning Officer may choose to make the roll available in an edited format.

Any registered teacher may inspect the electoral roll, following its publication in October 2008, during the hours 10am-4pm, Mon-Fri, at the Teaching Council offices.

Postal ballot

The Returning Officer will place a notice in three national newspapers advising electors and candidates of the date of the poll, the place and times for the counting of votes and any other particulars considered appropriate.

Voting will be undertaken by postal ballot. Ballot papers will be sent out to all eligible registered teachers in early February 2009. It is very important that teachers have an accurate and up to date correspondence

address in order to be sure that they receive their ballot documentation.

Voting system

Voting will take place using a single transferable vote system and further details in relation to this system will be available on the elections page of the Council's web-site, www.teachingcouncil.ie

After the election

Votes will be counted within 48 hours of the deadline for receipt of ballot papers. After the poll has taken place and all votes have been counted, the Council will forward a list of elected candidates to the Minister for Education and Science in order that the Minister may appoint the elected teachers to the new Council.

For those interested in pursuing nomination, the following resources may be of interest: the strategic plan, Fás agus Forbairt 2008-2011 and the Annual Report 2006/2007. For more information on the elections, the Council and its publications, please see www.teachingcouncil.ie. The Elections page will be updated on a regular basis.



FORMER MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE PICTURED WITH CURRENT TUI REPRESENTATIVES ON TEACHING COUNCIL. L-R JACQUELINE SHEIL, TOMMY GLYNN, PAT MCQUAILE AND DEREK DUNNE



TUI Professional Development Programme

PRE-RETIREMENT TRAINING

The following pre-retirement seminars have been scheduled.

DATE	LOCATION	VENUE
6th & 7th Nov. 2008 5:30pm – 9:00pm 9:30am – 4:00pm	Galway (1½ day)	The Ardilaun Hotel, Galway
26th & 27th Feb. 2009 5:30pm – 9:00pm 9:30am – 4:00pm	Tullamore (1½ day)	Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

Please note:

There is an upper limit in terms of numbers for attendance, so early booking is strongly advised.

* **Note:** Please complete the form **clearly stating** which course is your **preference**.

APPLICATION FORM	
Name	
I would like to attend:	
Galway Seminar <input type="checkbox"/>	Tullamore Seminar <input type="checkbox"/>
School Name and Address	School Telephone
Home Address	Home Telephone
Fax Number	E-Mail Address

Please send completed form to:

Jane O'Sullivan, TUI, 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6.

Telephone: (01) 492.2588 Fax: (01) 492.2953,

E-mail: josullivan@tui.ie

Launch of the Report on the National Pilot Project on Teacher Induction: Phase One & Two

The Teachers' Unions in collaboration with the Universities and the Department of Education and Science have supported a pilot project on Teacher Induction since 2002. The Report on Phase One and Two of the project was recently launched by Dr. Jim O'Brien, University of Edinburgh. The report presents an evaluation of the work on the project in the primary and post-primary sectors and makes recommendations for the expansion and further implementation of the induction support as a key phase in the continuum of teacher professional development. Speaking at the launch, Dr. O'Brien emphasised the importance of a well-structured and resourced induction programme for newly qualified teachers, particularly in this era of lifelong learning. The programme which was supported in schools by school principals and mentors, was based on a collaborative partnership between the Department of Education and Science (DES), the Universities, the Teacher Unions, the Partner Schools

and the Education Centres. The post-primary pillar is based in the School of Education and Lifelong Learning in UCD. Recommendations in the report embrace the recognition of the importance of an effective programme of induction for newly qualified teachers, tailored to their particular professional needs and sensitive to the strengths, requirements and challenges within the Irish education system.

The Pilot Programme is continuing throughout the country in the school year 2008/2009 with some increase in the number of schools and teachers participating. Newly qualified teachers and mentors receive training and support through workshops and seminars and follow-up school based support. Substitution cover is provided in accordance with local need and within available resources. Notice of the project issues to school principals in each area via the Education Centres and the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, UCD. Schools interested in participating are

advised to contact the Teacher Induction Project Office, School of Education, UCD, Dublin 4 to register interest. Ph: 01-7168672 or email ann.owens@ucd.ie

The TUI believes that the pilot Induction Programme should be extended to all schools and be available to all newly qualified teachers and continues to raise this matter with the Department of Education and Science on an on-going basis.

Pictured at the launch from left to right: Professor Sheelagh Drudy, UCD; Dr. Maureen Killeavy, co-author of the report and Director of the Post-Primary Project, UCD; Professor John Coolahan; Ms. Emer Egan, Assistant Chief Inspector, Department of Education and Science; Ms. Áine Lawlor, Director, Teaching Council; Dr. Jim O'Brien, Head of School and Director of the Centre for Educational Leadership, University of Edinburgh and Ms. Regina Murphy, co-author of the report, St. Patrick's College of Education, Drumcondra.



WorldWise

Supporting Teachers Implementing Development Education in School Linking Projects

Irish Aid - through the WorldWise scheme managed by Léargas - supports second-level schools in Ireland that are involved in linking and immersion projects.

School- to-school linking projects (also called twinning or partnership projects) involve the establishment of learning partnerships between the schools in Ireland and in developing countries. The main aim of these partnerships is to increase mutual understanding of development issues within both partner schools.

The scheme is in its second year of operation and as well as providing grants to Irish schools to carry out development education activities with their partner schools, WorldWise is offering a series of three Professional Development Workshops (PDWs) for teachers involved. These will take place between October 2008 to March 2009 in Dublin and Limerick.

Workshop 1:

An Introduction to School Linking

Dublin – Friday 10 October 2008

Limerick – Friday 17 October 2008

Workshop 2:

Taking the Link Forward

Limerick – Friday 23 January 2009

Dublin – Friday 30 January 2009

Workshop 3:

Exploring Development Issues through your Link

Limerick – Friday 6 March 2009

Dublin – Friday 20 March 2009

For further information please contact Althea O’Sullivan at 01 873 1411 or [email worldwise@leargas.ie](mailto:email.worldwise@leargas.ie)

For information on other WorldWise activities and grant schemes see www.irishaid.gov.ie/worldwise

Education that Fits: Online Special Needs Courses

One of the greatest challenges faced by teachers and schools is the inclusion of students with special educational needs. ICEP Europe is running a full programme of online courses, specifically designed to help teachers in mainstream or alternative education settings gain the practical skills and knowledge essential to this task.

Newly launched this year are courses for mainstream teachers on Asperger syndrome and Down syndrome. Other courses include, Dyslexia, Autism, Gifted and Talented and Supporting Student Behaviour. The autumn programme commences October 13th and enrolment is open until Dec 1st 2008.

The focus of these courses is on effective evidence-based strategies and proven approaches for teaching and learning. Taught by experienced practitioners, the courses offer high levels of individual support and are ideal for busy teachers because they can schedule their studies when and where they wish. ICEP Europe also offers whole-school online training options and University accredited programmes in Inclusive Education. All courses are approved by the DES.

For further information visit ICEP Europe online at

www.icepe.eu

Tel: (01) 6510618 or

Email: info@icepe.eu

Correction

TUI carried an article in the May 2008 edition of TUI News in respect of revised methods of reckoning variable pension allowances. The information available to TUI at the time suggested that such allowances included post of responsibility allowances. Circular Letter 87/2008 just issued confirms that the revised method of reckoning variable allowances does not apply to post of responsibility allowances.

Head Office Organisation

Following recent appointments within TUI Head Office it has been necessary to reallocate responsibility for some branches to different officials. For clarity, each of the branches is set out below together with the official who has first responsibility for these branches. Issues and queries relating to these branches should go to the designated official in the first instance.

Annette Dolan, Deputy General Secretary

Cavan	Limerick City	Area 12 (C&C)
Monaghan	Dun Laoghaire	Area 13 (C&C)
Louth	Cork City	Area 14 (C&C)
Waterford City	Galway City	

Declan Glynn, Assistant General Secretary

Co. Meath	Co. Dublin	Donegal
Tipperary S.R.	Kerry	Dublin City
Co. Kilkenny	Co. Limerick	Co. Cork
Co. Clare	Sligo	Co. Galway
Tipperary NR	Leitrim	Co. Mayo

John MacGabhann, Assistant General Secretary

Wicklow	Longford	IT Blanchardstown
Kildare	Westmeath	Cork IT
Laois	Offaly	Limerick IT
Carlow	Wexford	Limerick University
Roscommon	Co. Waterford	Sligo Colleges
		St. Angela's College, Sligo
		Tipperary Inst (TRBDI)

John O'Reilly, Assistant General Secretary

Athlone IT	IADT Dun Laoghaire	IT Tallaght
IT Carlow	Galway-Mayo IT	Waterford IT
Dublin IT	IT Tralee	Letterkenny IT
Dundalk IT		

TUI Calls for Translation Services and Intercultural Training

TUI has called for further resources to ensure a policy of integration rather than segregation in our schools. The union has called for translation services for parents of minority ethnic students and comprehensive training for teachers in the area of intercultural education.

The TUI has highlighted the need for additional English language teachers for this specific purpose for some time now. So far, while there has been some increase, the DES has failed to respond adequately to the need in the schools.

However, it is most important that a clear message go out that what is required in all our schools is greater integration. The last thing our society needs is any form of segregation, if we are to fully promote respect and understanding between different races and cultures now and in the future.

The Department of Education does not make adequate provision for minority ethnic students to enable them to access that most fundamental of rights – the right to communicate. Language provision is inadequate both at the level of teaching and at the level of the need for translation and interpretation facilities for their parents to understand what the teacher is telling them.

Parent teacher meetings are deemed important but they can be less than productive if the teacher and the parent cannot communicate in a common language. Neither is it acceptable that a pupil should act as a translator for a minority ethnic parent who wishes to inform a teacher about a confidential issue relating to his/her child.

TUI has called for the following provisions to be urgently implemented:

- Under the present DES rules for resource provision, minority ethnic students receive language support for a maximum of two years. TUI calls on the The Department of Education and Science to abolish this ruling which will enable them to receive full support throughout their time in Second Level Education.
- Translation services for parents of minority ethnic students
- Inservice education for teachers on

intercultural education to enable them to interact effectively with a whole range of cultures. If we are to work against the development of racism in our schools, teachers must be trained and equipped to input respect, tolerance and understanding between all students in the classroom. The Department of Education and Science has so far failed to provide this essential



Obstacles to Cross Border Pension Mobility

The North/South Ministerial Council considered the issue of cross border pension mobility and agreed that the Joint Secretariat should convene a working group of officials from relevant government departments to

explore options going forward on the transfer of pension rights on a cross border basis.

The Department of Education and Science has asked TUI to provide information and evidence of difficulties experienced by teachers in moving between jurisdictions- North and South- as a result of inability to transfer pension entitlements.

TUI would appreciate if teachers with teaching service in both jurisdictions would make a short submission to Annette Dolan, Deputy General Secretary TUI adolan@tui.ie, setting out the problems experienced by them because of the existing obstacles to cross border pension mobility.

Retired Members' Association News

Well I hope you enjoyed your summer, wherever you were! As a lot of you know we kicked off our summer with a great outing to Sligo early in May. It was the largest AGM/Conference to date with over seventy people staying in The Southern Hotel, Sligo where the Conference was held. We were given a great welcome in Sligo even the Council Chairman, Seamus Kilgannon hosted a reception for the RMA Management Committee and guests in the beautiful riverside Council Chambers. Seamus is a member of TUI and lectures in Sligo IT. Naturally Yeats featured a lot during our stay and the Charlie McCarthy Lecture was given by Maura McTighe, one of the founder members of the Sligo Yeats Society.

Usually we are anxious to keep these lectures to a maximum of ten minutes. However, on this occasion such was the interest and passion with which Maura spoke that people would have listened for hours. Of course a trip on Lough Gill is essential when in Sligo. This was enjoyed on a beautiful day listening to verses of "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" and other poems by Yeats as we floated across the lake.

Yes, we also did some work! The AGM/Conference was a great success and we are most grateful for the presence and contribution of Peter MacMenamin our General Secretary, Tim O'Meara our President (at the time) and Don Ryan our Vice President at the time and now our President. Our members greatly

appreciated the effort they made to be there and the time they spent with us. It is an indication of the esteem with which they hold the Retired Members of our Union. A sad note at our Conference was the news of the death of Mary Ahern, wife of John who was our Treasurer for many years, may she rest in peace. The annual Mass for our deceased members took place in the Cathedral.

By now you may have received the programme for our autumn break which is taking place in the Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford. The four night's stay is €300.00 for dinner bed and breakfast sharing and €340.00 for a single room. This is a great offer, I'm sure you will agree. Dora has arranged a fine programme of



tours around this event including a visit to the Outlet in Bambridge with a 10% discount for us. If you have not received the information please let us know. Early booking is advisable.

Some of you who pay by cheque may have received a note thanking you for paying by Standing Order, this was a result of a photocopying error. The sad news is that you did not pay and we will be grateful for your cheque as soon as possible. The fee is €20.00.

Paddy Byrne, a past Chairman of the RMA is organising a 'wine run' to France in December, Paddy regularly does this run and is an expert at it. The plan is to travel by car (two per car is recommended) travelling by boat to France from Rosslare, returning the following day. Paddy knows all the best places to get the wine. So if you wish to stock up for Christmas phone Paddy at 01-2985111

Christy Conville, Secretary, RMA.



RMA AGM, SLIGO, MAY 2008

Further Education Issues – An Update

Negotiations on a proposed agreement for the PLC sector concluded on the 23rd of July 2008 between TUI, IVEA and the Department of Education and Science. The proposed agreement was in the context of paragraph 31.2.1 of the Towards 2016 Social Partnership Agreement. A document was finalised at the meeting and it was the clear understanding of TUI that subject to TUI acceptance this final proposed agreement would be implemented for the forthcoming school year 2008/2009. Paragraph 31.2.1 of Towards 2016 states:



“Having regard to developments in the PLC sector, including the Mclver Report, concrete prioritised proposals in relation to PLC provision and focused in particular on the larger PLC providers will be prepared and will be the subject of further negotiations between management and unions. The level of resources for the PLC sector will be determined in light of resources generally and the implications for other areas of education.”

The proposed agreement sets out revised duties for all teachers and holders of Posts of Responsibility engaged in the delivery of PLC Programmes, as well as a revised management and support structure for the PLC sector.

Furthermore it was agreed on the 23rd of July 2008 that separate discussions would take place in relation to the provision of resources for further education centres not comprehended by the Towards 2016 discussions.

Since then the Department of Education and Science has indicated that it is at this time unable to provide the finance necessary to implement the proposed agreement and no implementation date has been agreed.

The Minister for Education and Science in a letter to the General Secretary in late August states:

“I can assure you that my colleague Sean Haughey and I are fully committed to the implementation of the proposed agreement as soon as resources permit. However given the current economic climate I can make no commitment in relation to a possible implementation date at this stage ...”

TUI is completely dismayed in relation to the response from the DES. The Further Education Sub Committee met at the end of August and put forward a number of recommendations for action. In addition a series of meeting were held with the IVEA, FETAC and the Secretary General of the DES prior to consideration of the matter by the TUI Executive on the 5th of September 2008.

It was the clear understanding of all of the parties in the negotiations that new work in the PLC sector can only be undertaken when the necessary resources are provided. The proposed agreement would have begun to address these resource issues and would have permitted the new work associated with the implementation of FETAC policies to proceed. The Executive Committee of TUI is of the view that due to the effective withdrawal of the proposed agreement for the forthcoming year the new FETAC policies and associated new work cannot proceed.

The TUI Executive is therefore instructing TUI members in FE centres not to carry out work associated with the following until the DES implements the proposed agreement:

- New assessment processes to include internal verification, external authentication, and the results approval process.
- Programme development for validation
- Recognition of prior learning
- Self-evaluation of programmes and services.