

MANDATE TRADE UNION SHOPFLOOR

OCTOBER 2016

With **€13BN** we could:

- End homelessness by building 100,000 homes
- Eliminate hospital waiting lists
- Create enough jobs to have full employment
- Implement free education including at university level
- Provide affordable childcare for all workers

**WOULD
YOU
ACCEPT**

€13BN

**IF YOU
COULD DO
ALL THIS?**

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STRAIGHT TALKING

New politics, same old tune

THE present construct of government, Fine Gael and the Independent Alliance minority government supported from the sidelines by Fianna Fail is often described as “new politics,” an era of open, transparent and consensus government.

Well so far it's the same old, same old self-interest and vested-interest politics played by the same political class in support of their class dressed up to con the masses in an effort to get reelected.

The powerful still call the shots and the media daily report half-truths and spin to the public as news stories, when in fact each story is politically loaded and biased to support the status quo and attack all dissenters.

So our “new politics” government told the EU that Ireland did not want the €13 billion Apple tax and that they were prepared to spend tens of million euros in legal fees in appealing the EU ruling. Whether the €13 billion Apple tax is totally due to Ireland is really irrelevant, the fact of the matter is that Apple and many multinationals have been attracted to Ireland by our corporation tax regime which facilitates corporations paying little or no tax either here or abroad.

To have a functioning welfare state, all citizens and corporations must pay their fair share of tax (social contribution to a decent society), be that in Ireland or in another country.

The fact of the matter is, Ireland (and we are not alone) facilitates multi-national corporations avoiding their social contribution thereby depriving Ireland, France, Spain, Africa, Asia of schools, hospitals, health care, housing and welfare, etc.

Ireland, like some other countries, has been complicit in providing “stateless corporations” with a route to pillaging scarce social resources in the name of profits and shareholder value.

We agree that Ireland cannot solve this issue on its own, but the EU put down a serious marker to all corporation in the Apple ruling, and Ireland should not be standing in Apple's corner, we should not be providing a cloak to hide behind at a time when there is no end in sight to our homeless crisis and housing crisis.

Ireland should have stood with our people, with the weakest and most vulnerable at home and abroad; instead Ireland danced like a performing monkey for the organ grinder of international capital, as it did before when it bailed out 42% of all EU bank debt at the expense of its own citizens and future generations.

As we approach this government's first Budget in October, “new politics” Fine Gael are committed to abolishing the USC which raises €4 billion towards the social wage – 75% of which is collected from those earning more than €50,000 per year.

The media is full of stories of a “high tax economy”, “making work pay” and the “squeezed middle” and of multi-Apple type corporations who cannot attract key executives to Ireland because of our tax regime – well, I suppose if the corporations pays no tax, why would the top executives want to pay taxes? The rest of the masses will be told to expect little, tighten your belts, put your shoulder to the wheel, wage increases are a danger to recovery and we must do what Europe tells us on water (but not on Apple tax).

We cannot afford to build houses but can pay hotels and landlords billions of euro to provide emergency accommodation, we cannot afford to staff hospitals or employ special needs assistants or carers, but we can afford to abolish the USC.

It's the same old spin, the same old politics and the same old crap – it's about policy choices, and those making those choices are making them in the interest of powerful business and finance capital.

Whether it's water charges, private health care, bank debt, social contributions, corporation taxes, bus workers' wages, and decent jobs on a living wage, it's the same organ grinders just different monkeys dancing to the same old tune.

The last election was just the beginning – look behind the spin and build for real change.



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NEWS



● Rejection overwhelming & emphatic

Tesco pre-1996 staff reject WRC proposals

By David Gibney
Mandate communications officer

MANDATE members in Tesco have overwhelmingly rejected proposals put forward by the Workplace Relations Committee (WRC) by a margin of 97% against and only 3% in favour.

Following the ballot, the union and company agreed to refer the outstanding issues in dispute to the Labour Court for investigation. No date has been set yet, but members will be kept informed in the near future.

In other news, Mandate and Tesco management are expected to commence negotiations in early October 2016.

Gerry Light, Mandate Assistant General Secretary told Shopfloor: “It's important that our members in Tesco are not left out of pocket from recent hikes in rent, house prices and motor insurance costs, among other essential items, and in that context we are seeking to begin pay negotiations very soon.”

He added: “We are also still awaiting a recommendation from the Labour Court in relation to sick pay. Once it is



Gerry Light: ‘members must not be left out of pocket’ available it will be put to the relevant members for their consideration.

“Mandate has referred the issue of calculation and accrual of annual leave backed to the WRC.”

Mr Light assured all members working in Tesco that Mandate will be keeping them fully updated as each relevant issue progresses.

Wallis store closes with loss of 13 jobs

ARCADIA announced in June its decision to close one of its brands trading in the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre with the loss of 13 jobs following the expiry of the lease.

The Wallis store closed in September and will now trade as a concession outlet in the Debenhams store in the shopping centre.

Commenting on the closure, shop steward Sharon Bohan told Shopfloor: “While the decision to close did not come as a surprise given the company announcement in 2009 of its intention to cease trading then, it still was a shock to all the members.

“Thankfully we did not have to go through any dispute unlike our colleagues in Limerick and Grafton

Street did a couple of years ago, our collective action to support them at the time resulted in an agreement, the terms of which have since been applied by the company.”

She added: “All the workers in the store are members of Mandate and benefited from the enhanced redundancy terms agreed which are only applicable to members of the union.”

Divisional Organiser Brendan O'Hanlon expressed his disappointment at the company's move and underlined his concern over high commercial rents which he pointed out was a significant contributory factor in such decisions being made by employers.

● Labour: Workers being exploited due to deficits in current legislation



Picture: Justin Pickard (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Bill aims to help workers with 'uncertain hours'

By David Gibney
Mandate communications officer

MANDATE has welcomed a new Bill introduced by the Labour Party that aims to provide better protection to workers with uncertain hours of work and has called on other parties to support the legislation.

Labour Senator Ged Nash, a former business and employment minister, claimed the Bill would give greater certainty and job security to thousands of atypical workers across the country.

He said a University of Limerick report published last year had flagged up the evolution in employment relationships, with atypical and casual working arrangements – known as “if and when contracts” – concentrated in areas such as hospitality, retail and social care.

“These arrangements are occurring at the edge or even outside of our existing laws,” he told *Shopfloor*. “Women are particularly affected by this phenomenon. Some of these uncertain-hours practices have escaped Ireland’s suite of employment rights protections, such as the *Organisation of Working Time Act*.

“I believe workers are being exploited because of the deficits which currently exist.”

Welcoming the proposed legislation, Mandate said it was essential that all political parties worked to-



Bill: Labour's Ged Nash



'Essential': John Douglas

gether to tackle these issues and pass the Bill.

General Secretary John Douglas said: “We welcome, in particular, the provision whereby a worker would receive a new contract which reflects the hours they actually work after a six-month ‘look-back’ period.

“This would give thousands of workers in Dunnes Stores and other retail companies certainty over their weekly income and prevent exploitation.”

Mr Douglas also urged the Government to commence the consultation process promised when the Banded Hours Contracts Bill was passed in July.

Senator Nash said his proposed new legislation would include:

- New rules whereby periods of “lay-off” between fixed-term con-

tracts would be deemed to represent continuity of service, rather than broken service;

- Where an employer registered an employee under the PAYE system, then the employee would be regarded as continuing in employment until the date specified in a notice to Revenue of cessation of employment;

- Measures to include casual work in the calculation of continuous employment;

- An entitlement to request the employer to correct the employment terms so that the stated particulars of weekly hours of work reflected the pattern of work actually done a week in the previous six months;

- A Workplace Relations Commission complaints procedure to ensure fair and equitable application of cases under the legislation;

- An anti-victimisation measure protecting workers who invoke their rights under the legislation;

An exemption from the legislation in cases where employers and trade unions have negotiated Sectoral Employment Orders or Registered Employment Agreements, or where an employment regulation order has been signed as the result of a Joint Labour Committee initiative.

O'Leary's SuperValu vote for 50c/hr rise

MANDATE members in O'Leary's SuperValu, Macroom, Co Cork, have voted to accept a flat-rate increase of 50 cents per hour as part of a pay proposal for 2016/2017.

The increase was backdated to June 1, 2016 for a 12-month period and represents an average increase of 4.5% for the members over the period covered by the agreement. Welcoming the move, Divisional Organiser Lorraine O'Brien told *Shopfloor*: “The agreement is a very positive

development for the members as this is the second year that a pay increase has been awarded following a number of difficult trading years for the store.

“However, management have acknowledged the commitment and the contribution made by staff to the upward trend in business and recognise the benefit of paying an increase in terms of retaining staff who help to drive the business and deliver a first-class service in the store.”

€13bn Apple ruling exposes priorities for successive Irish govts

By David Gibney
Mandate communications officer

THE EU Commission has said the Irish government did a special deal with Apple which allowed them to pay an effective tax rate of 0.005% and now the company owes €13 billion.

If you or I were to pay that effective tax rate, we would contribute between 1c and 2c per year to Revenue and the whole country would collapse.

Instead, what happens is, when Apple or other companies don't pay their share, the burden is put on everyone else – or else we face seriously deteriorated public services. That might explain the public healthcare system, the housing and homelessness crisis, the poverty levels and the largest class sizes in the EU.

Bizarrely, one of the main defences for the Government is that it wasn't a “special deal” because we allow other companies to avoid paying tax in the same way. You couldn't make it up.

The ruling by the EU Commission is being portrayed as a battle between major tax avoidance multi-national corporations and the EU. The Irish government has decided to stand in the corner of the tax avoiders and spend millions of euro on legal fees challenging the ruling. No doubt this saga will run and run for several years, but to give you an idea of what could be done with €13bn, We could, for example:

1. Employ 100,000 nurses for five years.
2. Hire 20,000 hospital consultants.
3. Build 100,000 homes.

Or the Government could say no thanks. The Government has said it “disagrees profoundly”

Apple...



..or maybe we should all get a share..?

with the Commission's analysis and will immediately appeal any negative outcome to the European Court of Justice.

Because taxes are only for you and for me. It's not like Apple benefit from the roads that we pay for, the airports their products are imported in through, the educated workforce that Irish people pay for, the healthcare system that keeps their employees healthy, etc, etc.

For all the benefits that Apple receive, you'd think they wouldn't mind contributing their fair share, especially considering they have \$216 billion in reserves. The only real question is, is the money owed to the Irish people or is it owed to the workers in sweat shops in China and other parts of the world? Or maybe we should all get a share?



Picture: Sébastien Bertrand (CC BY 2.0); Illustration: Vishai Sharma (CC BY 2.0)

Heatons members win 4.5% pay increase

MANDATE members in Heatons have voted overwhelmingly in favour of a new agreement with the company that will lead to a 4.5% increase in pay, together with improvements to many other conditions of employment.

The deal allows for a 2.5% increase from 1st July 2016 and a further increase of 2% on 1st March 2017.

The average working hours of individual part-timers will be maintained. Members can also look forward to further increases in hours as the business grows.

Contracts of employment are to be improved with 1,000 additional hours committed, and an additional 30 full-time roles will be created. Existing staff will also have first option to apply for any positions that become available in new stores.

Restricted low hour contracts will be as-

essed on an annual basis with flexible staff being moved to a 12-16 hour contract.

Divisional Organiser Bill Kelly told *Shopfloor*: "Many part-time workers aspire to a full-time role and the creation of additional full-time jobs is a significant positive development that was well received by members."

Mr Kelly pointed out that a survey carried out by Mandate last year highlighted how the lack of adequate notice of working hours was a very important issue for members.

"They told us that this made such things as arranging a doctor's appointment for a child very difficult and more notice of working hours will now be given," he said.

"We are continuing, however, to seek two weeks' advance notice and both the rostering arrangements and the contracts will be reviewed during 2017." He added: "This agree-



ment has been designed to ensure that the real income level of members in Heatons is maintained and improved over its course."

It is understood additional service days have been introduced and revisions to the staff discount, Sales Incentive Scheme and security procedures agreed.

Pension clinics are to be held in all stores to detail the Company Defined Contribution Scheme which all employees are eligible to join.

Mr Kelly continued: "This is an important exercise given that very few part-time workers in Ireland are members of an occupational pension scheme. Mandate is encouraging all members to take part in these clinics particularly given the inadequate level of the State Old Age Pension and the fact that the majority of workers will not receive it until they are 68 years old."

●Mandate sends #solidarity message to 55 sacked workers of Carlton United Breweries #BoycottCUB

Oz workers have the bottle to win

By David Gibney
Mandate communications officer

MANDATE, the union for retail and bar workers in Ireland, has sent a message of solidarity to the 55 striking workers of the Carlton United Breweries plant in Abbotsford, Victoria and urged all Irish workers based in Australia to support the workers as they struggle for their rights and their jobs.

General Secretary John Douglas told *Shopfloor*: "We recognise this as a deliberate attempt by a large-scale conglomerate to crush the rights of a unionised workforce and introduce insecure working conditions to significantly reduce their bargaining power in the future."

"This cannot and should not be tolerated by any workers in Australia, because if CUB get away with this reprehensible behaviour, other employers will try to undermine working conditions for their workers."

'Invited' to re-apply

The dispute started on June 10 when 55 fitters, electricians and maintenance workers backed by the ETU, the Electrical Trades Union, and the AMWU, Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, were told by management that they would be sacked, only to be then "invited" to re-apply for their jobs through a third-party contractor, Catalyst Recruitment.

The new jobs came with an effective 65% wage cut.

The offer of individual contracts came with no guarantees. The offer was immediately rejected by the workers and their unions, who proceeded to take strike action.

CUB is owned by multinational SAB Miller, which boasts a turnover of billions of dollars and a huge share of international beer production market. SAB Miller made \$4.4 billion in operating profits in 2015

Mandate Organiser Moira Murphy, David Gibney, Mandate Communications Officer with Australian trade union activist, and former AMWU Communications Officer Denis Rogatyuk. Right: Australian Unions ad publicising the CUB dispute



and its CEO Alan Clark is estimated to receive \$62 million in earnings this year. In 2015-2016, SABMiller paid zero tax in Australia.

While it is attacking its workers in Melbourne, SAB Miller is also attacking its Indian workforce at the

Sonepat brewery in the state of Haryana, India.

For more than 11 weeks now, the workers have been maintaining a community picket with the support of trade unions, the local community and an increasing number of pubs,

bars and small breweries that refused to purchase and serve any of the beers and beverages produced at the CUB plant.

Mandate has fought against attempts by retailers companies to introduce zero-hour and casual contracts

across Ireland. We commend the actions of our comrades in the ETU, AMWU and the greater Australian trade union community for standing up for these workers and defending their right to well-paid and secure jobs.

C.U.B HAVE ALL THESE BRANDS
AND MORE UNDER THEIR ROOF



YET SACK 55 WORKERS



ONLY TO OFFER
THEIR JOBS BACK
FOR 65% LESS PAY

Australian Unions



An injury to one is an injury to all...

IF YOU want to support the CUB workers in Australia, here are the brands to avoid until the dispute is resolved: Victoria Bitter, VB Gold, Carlton Draught, Carlton Mid, Carlton Dry, Carlton Cold, Carlton Black, Cascade Pale Ale, Cascade Stout, Cascade Premium Light, Cascade Draught, Cascade Bitter, Crown Lager, Melbourne Bitter, Pure Blonde, Fosters, Light Ice, Matilda Bay, Redback Beer, Dogbolter, Dark Ale, Alpha Pale Ale, Fat Yak, Lazy Yak, Great Northern Super Crisp, Power's Gold, Reschs, Grolsch, Pilsner Urquell, Peroni, Miller, Strongbow, Mercury, Bulmers, Redd's Apple Ale, Abbotsford Invalid Stout, Sheaf Stout.

PEOPLE DESERVE BETTER

THE Irish Congress of Trade Unions has called for Budget 2017 to aim to raise living standards through investing €2 billion in key services and critical infrastructure.

ICTU General Secretary Patricia King made the comments ahead of the publication of its pre-Budget submission, titled People Deserve Better.

She said: "We need to raise people's living standards and boost the Social Wage by investing in a range of key services such as health, education and childcare.

"After eight long years of crisis and diminished living standards the citizens of this society deserve far better."

In particular, Congress has proposed:

- €2 billion in additional spending to boost the Social Wage, by investing in key services and infrastructure;

- 'Growth friendly' tax measures to raise an additional €1 billion in revenue;

- A sum of €1 billion allocated to tackle emergency in housing;

- An end to the reduced VAT rate for the tourism sector, while low pay and precarious remain so pronounced in the industry;

- Increasing employer PRSI on the portion of salaries above €100,000 to fund childcare provision.

- Introduce a Net Wealth Tax

Ms King continued: "People deserve an inclusive equality-proofed budget that places the welfare and betterment of the majority at its very core, a budget that will prioritise higher living standards, and deliver this through a transformative programme of investment in infrastructure, services and service delivery."

The Congress submission outlines four key priorities for Budget 2017:



ICTU General Secretary Patricia King outlined four priorities for Budget 2017

Picture:RollingNews.ie

1. Repair and rebuild

Congress proposes a sum of €2 billion in additional discretionary public spending. The government estimates there will be in the order of €1 billion available for Budget 2017 and Congress proposes raising an additional €1 billion through a series of growth-friendly tax measures. If we continue with the 'low-tax, low spend model' our public spending will be among the lowest in the European Union by 2021.

2. Raise the Social Wage

To begin the process of social repair we need to invest now to deliver the services our citizens deserve, to raise the Social Wage and boost living standards. These include: health, education, childcare and housing.

3. Tackle the housing emergency

Existing policy approaches and the market has failed to resolve the housing emergency. In such

circumstances, the needs of the citizens require that the state must step in and allocate €1 billion to a major programme of home building and accelerate the Vacant Site Levy and introduce Compulsory Purchase Orders.

4. Decent work and the Living Wage

Wage suppression, greater insecurity at work and lower living standards are no basis on which to rebuild an economy and a society. Work must provide citizens with decent incomes and workers should be able to deal with employers on an equal and fair footing, to win better conditions. The Living Wage of €11.50 per hour must become the floor for pay in the economy.

In addition, Congress has called for an end to the special 9% VAT rate for the tourism sector, which has already cost the state some €2.1 billion in revenue foregone.

Ms King said: "It is wrong that the sector should continue to benefit from this, while it is also home of high levels of precarious work and low pay. In addition, employers in the sector refuse to cooperate with state bodies – the Joint Labour Committees – designed to improve pay and conditions in the sector.

"It is beyond bizarre that they should continue to enjoy this special deal while refusing to engage," she added.

Congress has also proposed that Budget 2017 should:

- Increase employers' PRSI (on the portion of salaries above €100,000) to help fund childcare services;

- Abolish Personal Tax Credit for high earners;

- Introduce a Recurring Net Wealth Tax;

- Reform Capital Taxes and Tax Break

The full Congress submission is available to download: <http://bit.ly/Pre-Budget2017>

“People deserve an inclusive equality-proofed budget that places welfare & betterment of majority at its very core...”

DO YOU HAVE A MANDATE-THEMED STORY OR PIC? Email us at news@mandate.ie

ICTU issues double warning over TTIP and CETA deals

Picture:RollingNews.ie

THE Irish Congress of Trade Unions has said that the proposed TTIP and CETA trade deals "pose an insidious threat to democratic institutions" and were "less about creating a trade deal than clearing obstacles for investors."

The CETA and TTIP trade deals are being negotiated between the European Union and Canada and the United States, respectively.

Speaking at the July 1 launch of a new Congress briefing paper on the proposed treaties - titled No Deal: Why Unions Oppose TTIP & CETA - Congress President Brian Campfield said: "These propositions are being sold to the public as simple trade deals with exaggerated claims about boosting job creation and economic growth.

"But their real purpose is to clear obstacles and impediments that might stand in the way of investors, such as workers' rights, human rights and environmental concerns.

"Through the Investor State Dispute Resolution (ISDS) mechanism these deals pose an in-

sidious threat to all democratic and collective institutions, giving investors secret courts to ensure their rights take precedence over all other social and civic concerns."

Addressing the likely impact on public services, ICTU vice-president and deputy General Secretary of Impact, Kevin Callinan said: "These deals will lock in privatisation and liberalisation of public services, preventing elected governments from changing or reversing policies pursued by previous administrations. That is fundamentally undemocratic."

Also speaking at the launch, Unite Regional Secretary Jimmy Kelly warned: "These deals are so far reaching in their implications that they should be subject to a popular vote and the verdict of the people.

"All the evidence to date is of massive public opposition to these deals. They should not be allowed to come into effect by sleight of hand or by ignoring the popular will."

Read report at www.ictu.ie/download/pdf/no_deal.pdf



Unite Irish Secretary Jimmy Kelly speaking at launch, flanked to his right by ICTU President Brian Campfield

70,000 workers are on minimum wage

NEW research from the Nevin Economic Research Institute, based on an analysis of hourly earnings in 2014, has estimated that 70,000 workers are on minimum wage in the Irish Republic.

The paper, titled *Employees on the Minimum Wage in the Republic of Ireland* and published in July, also profiles minimum wage workers by gender, by work sector and by employment status (whether they work on a full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary basis).

The data, which is for 2014 (the lat-

est information available), complements an earlier NERI paper on the issue published in 2013.

The key findings in the latest report found that of the 70,000 workers on the minimum wage:

- Most are women (73%)
- Most are aged in their 20s and 30s with a large proportions of these employees working in sectors such as accommodation and food as well as wholesale and retail.

The paper's author Micheál Collins, pictured right, told *Shopfloor*: "Relative to employees in general, mini-

mum wage workers are also more likely to be on temporary contracts, work less than 20 hours per week, work part-time and be in the private sector.

"And overall, those on the minimum wage represent 5% of all employees, with 34,000 working full-time on the minimum wage."

A Minimum Wage of €5.58 per hour (IR£4.40) was introduced for experienced adult workers in Ireland under the National Minimum Wage Act 2000.

Since then the rate has changed on nine occasions before reaching €9.15



in January 2016. The Low Pay Commission has since recommended a one per cent increase in the minimum wage. Micheál Collins added: "Establishing a profile of the lowest paid workers in society facilitates a better understanding of the labour market and the socio-economic context of current considerations of changes to the minimum wage."

It is understood the Low Pay Commission is considering whether a further revision to the rate is appropriate.

Check out the report at: <http://bit.ly/2b3Bw4H>

...such an insult to low paid workers

- Mandate blasts 10c/hr minimum wage rise
- 'Low paid workers are being left behind'

Picture: David Gonzalez Romero (CC BY 2.0)

By David Gibney
Mandate communications officer

MANDATE has strongly condemned the Low Pay Commission's recommended 10 cent per hour increase in the minimum wage calling it an insult to low-paid workers and the most vulnerable in our society.

More than 70,000 workers depend on the minimum wage to ensure a basic standard of living for them and their families, but have been badly let down by this recommendation.

The current minimum wage is €9.15 per hour which would increase by 1.09% to €9.25 if accepted by the Government. The trade union representatives on the Low Pay Commission objected to the recommendation and sought a higher increase in the minimum wage, details of which are available in the Commission's Minority Report.

General Secretary John Douglas said: "No matter what way you look at this recommendation, it falls well short of what is needed to ensure that work pays and that poverty levels are tackled.

"When this proposed increase is compared with the Living Wage, the median wage or the 26% growth and 'recovery' Ireland is apparently experiencing, it shows that low-paid workers are being left behind.

"The current *Programme for Government* clearly states that it supports



“The reality is that Irish workers are underpaid by comparison with their EU counterparts and we needed a much higher increase in the minimum wage in order to catch up”

reducing poverty levels by increasing the minimum wage to €10.50 over the next five years.

"At the rate that the Low Pay Commission has recommended, it would take 13 years to achieve that target, not taking into account inflation over that period. This illustrates the commitment the Low Pay Commission has towards tackling poverty."

The recommendation by the Low Pay Commission would see a minimum wage worker earning an extra €3.91 per week if they are receiving full time work. However, according to the union, when this is combined with the Government's decision in July to defer legislation which would prevent the exploitation of zero and low hour contracts, the recommendation does very little to help low paid workers.

"The Living Wage is currently set at €11.50 per hour. At this rate, it'll take 23 years for a minimum wage worker to achieve a basic living standard – and that's if the cost of living doesn't go up one cent in that period of time," said Mr Douglas.

"At a time when workers represented by trade unions in the retail sector are achieving pay increases of between 2-3%, along with secure hour contracts, this is evidence, if needed, that you cannot rely on government or a commission to award you a decent pay increase. Your best

way to secure decent pay and working conditions is by joining a union."

Mr Douglas addressed criticisms of employers' representatives to the minimum wage increases saying they've always been against low paid workers improving their living standards. "Yet again we have employers' bodies complaining about a measly

increase in the minimum wage in order to catch up. As usual, employers are comparing headline minimum wage figures with other EU countries and ignoring the low employers' social insurance rates afforded to Irish businesses, which is obviously not comparing like with like."

Mr Douglas cited some facts for em-



10c increase in the minimum wage as if it is going to shut down businesses all over the country. With a straight face they're using small and medium enterprises as an example of the impending employment apocalypse, saying they cannot afford a 1% pay increase and will have to shut down. This irresponsible posturing is nonsense. If employers have a genuine concern about their business, they can plead inability to pay which is provided for under the legislation."

Mr Douglas explained, "The reality is that Irish workers are underpaid by comparison with their EU counterparts and we needed a much higher

employers' representatives to dwell on from Unite's report on low pay:

● Ireland has the highest proportion of low pay in the EU15

● Almost one in four workers in the Irish economy are classified as low paid.

● Retail workers in Ireland would need an 18% pay increase to reach the average retail worker in the EU15.

● Workers in accommodation, food and services would need a 35.5% increase to reach the average small open economy in Europe.

● Of all of those at risk of poverty, 12% are at work.

Retail workers deserve a 'fair share of growth'

●Mandate call as grocery sector sales figures fly up...

By David Gibney
Mandate Communications Officer

RETAIL workers should get their "fair share of any growth" in the Irish supermarket sector, Mandate has claimed.

The call came after the latest data published by shopping behaviour analysts Kantar Worldpanel showed strong growth for Dunnes Stores in particular.

The retailer increased sales by 6.3% to draw level with grocery giant Tesco.

The two stores now account for 21.6% each of the Irish grocery market, which continues to grow rapidly overall with sales up 3.7% year on year during the past 12 weeks.

General Secretary John Douglas told Shopfloor: "The new Kantar figures show that the grocery sector is recovering and that sales are up year-on-year."

"This is very positive but it's important that workers receive their fair share in the growth of the sector, particularly in the context of the sacrifices made by tens of thousands of retail workers during the economic crisis."

He added: "The challenge for all of us is to ensure that all retail workers join their union and collectively bargain for that fair share for their valuable contribution to the profits of their employers."

Race to the bottom

"Every worker who is not in a union is pulling wages and conditions of employment down, whereas every worker in their union is helping to combat the race to the bottom and is generally improving the con-

ditions of workers in the retail sector across Ireland."

Kantar Worldpanel Director David Berry said "larger shopping trips" had boosted sales for Dunnes with the retailer "successfully tempting shoppers to add more expensive items to their baskets, with the average price per item rising to €2.05 – an increase of 12% on last year."

However, SuperValu remains Ireland's largest grocer with a 22.4% share of the market, increasing sales by 3.1% year on year. This is the

third consecutive month where growth for the retailer has been above 3%, helped by shoppers adding more items to their baskets on average every time they shop.

While Tesco has seen value sales fall by 2.3%, it continues to sell more items, with volume sales 1.9% higher than the same time last year.

According to Kantar, the performance gap between value and volume sales reflects a lower average price point at Tesco, in part a result of its *Staying Down Prices* campaign.

Picture: Frankie (CC BY 2.0)



Members in Arcadia set to be balloted on deal

FOLLOWING the conclusion of talks earlier this year which resulted in members in Arcadia having the option of being issued with employment contracts giving them greater certainty over working hours, negotiations aimed at delivering a pay increase and introducing one national pay scale started in June.

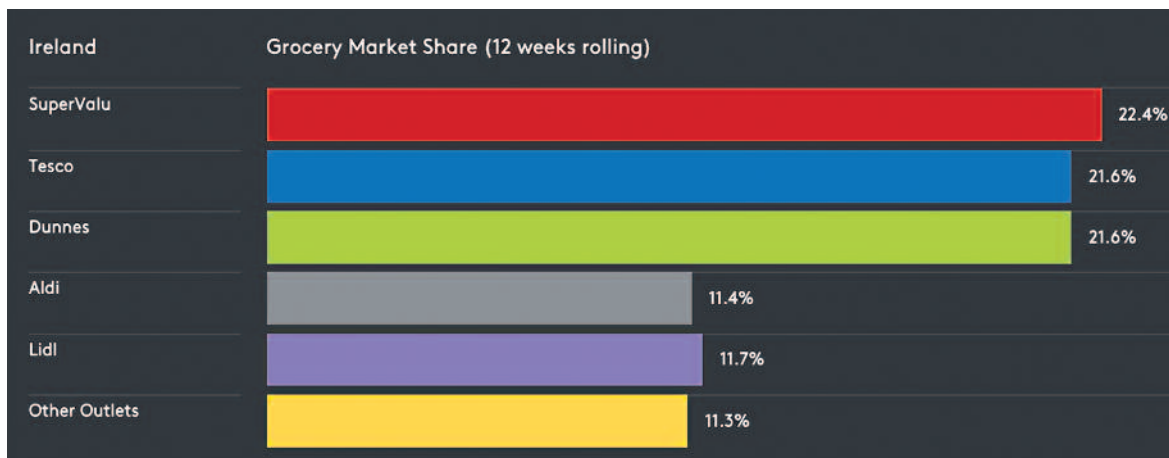
These talks are expected to conclude shortly with proposals set to go to a ballot of all members in October/November.

Workers in Arcadia – which operates Topman, Topshop, Dorothy Perkins, Miss Selfridge, Evans, Burtons and Wallis – have not received a pay increase since 2009.

Divisional Organiser Brendan O'Hanlon told Shopfloor: "The proposals are to be welcomed and are another positive development in a company which has faced serious trading challenges over the past number of years."

"The possible introduction of a national pay scale which will see increases ranging from 1.5% to 3%, while modest, will undoubtedly be viewed as progress."

He added: "However, ultimately it will be the members of Mandate who will determine whether or not they are acceptable or not."



Union Representatives Introductory Course

The Union Representative Introductory Training Course is for new shop stewards/union representatives. The course aims to provide information, skills and knowledge to our shop stewards/union representatives to assist them in their role in the workplace.

COURSE CONTENT:

- Background to Mandate • The role and responsibilities of a Shop Steward/Union Representative • Examining disciplinary/grievance procedures
- Developing negotiating skills • Representing members at local level • Communication skills/solving members' problems
- Organising, Recruitment and Campaigns • Induction presentations.

CERTIFICATION AND PROGRESSION:

Members who successfully complete this course will obtain a Mandate certificate. They may progress to a Union Representative Advanced Course and to other relevant training courses offered by Mandate.

If you are interested in this course, please contact your Mandate official or Mandate's Training Centre at **01-8369699**. Email: mandateotc@mandate.ie

Boots workers accept 3% pay deal

MANDATE members working for Boots Retail Ireland have voted overwhelmingly in favour of accepting pay proposals which will see them receive a 3% pay increase from November 1, 2016.

The proposals will replace the previous pay agreement which gave workers a 2% increase and which is due to expire in October 2016.

Commenting on the development, Divisional Organiser Brendan O'Hanlon told *Shopfloor*: "These proposals are designed to not only increase our

members' pay but to simultaneously bring about through agreement a singular national pay scale in Boots to replace the current two pay scale structure."

Under the terms of the agreement members on the pre-2009 pay scale will have the option of moving to the post-2009 scale with various compensatory buyouts depending on what point of the scale the employee happens to be on.

Mr O'Hanlon said the proposals stood as a good example of "how eq-

uity can brought about in the workplace" through "positive constructive engagement" with union representatives.

Boots, like many other retailers, sought to introduce lower pay scales following the economic crisis in 2008 in order to deal with the challenges facing them in the marketplace at the time.

However, through various pay agreements over the past three years the number of staff choosing to remain on the pre-2009 scale has sig-

nificantly reduced, bringing the introduction of one national pay scale ever closer, and helping toward developing a more equitable workplace.

Meanwhile, in a separate development, talks between union representatives and Boots management over working patterns and numbers of hours are due to start at the end of October.

As part of the union's ongoing commitment to negotiate greater certainty over members' earnings and desire for a better work-life balance,

Mandate is conducting a nationwide survey of all its members to find out their views on the issue.

Mr O'Hanlon continued: "We know from an agreement reached in 2010 that this issue is an extremely high priority for our members in Boots."

"We are committed to negotiating agreements which will give retail workers much greater certainty over their contractual working hours and the need to couple this with a better work-life balance."



Dublin Airport is experiencing soaring passenger numbers providing a 'positive background' to talks

Picture: Yuichi Shiraishi (CC BY 2.0)

Upbeat assessment of DAA talks progress

NEGOTIATIONS are continuing with Dublin Airport Authority about the potential composition of proposals which, if successful, will see the introduction of a new model agreement, dealing with internal problem solving mechanisms, business change principles and pay-related matters.

The talks involving representatives from Mandate, SIPTU and IMPACT trade unions started in April. Progress has been reported on modules dealing with problem-solving mechanisms and business change principles.

As *Shopfloor* goes to print, potentially complex discussions around a potential pay model are still at a relatively early stage, with issues such as pay increases, performance pay and profit-sharing all on the agenda.

The negotiations come on the back of the payment of a 4% pay increase awarded following a Labour Court hearing and the early return of pay cuts imposed under the terms of the Cost Recovery Programme Agreement brokered in 2010.

Commenting on the discussions, Divisional Organiser Brendan O'Hanlon said: "We are at a delicate stage in proceedings and as is the case in these type of multi-layered negotiations, nothing is agreed until everything is agreed, so while progress has been made in some areas, our members will decide whether or not any proposals which may emanate from the negotiations are acceptable or not."

He added: "Passenger numbers are literally soaring year on year which is great for all concerned and provide a positive background against which the negotiations can take place – in stark contrast to where we were at seven years ago."

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Eavesdropping on our past



Long hours and low pay: women bakers at work
Picture: Poole Collection, NLI



Pictures courtesy of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and National Archives



Dangerous and difficult work: boot manufacture (above) and (main pic) construction gang laying rail tracks
Pictures: Mason and Poole Collections, NLI

By Padraig Yeates

Labour historian and journalist

IT WAS at the Irish Trade Union Congress in Clonmel Town Hall on May 27th, 1912 that James Connolly proposed that it establish a political wing, which ultimately led to the establishment of the Labour Party. What is less well known is that he faced strong opposition from some delegates in both the nationalist and unionist camps.

For instance, George Greig of the Amalgamated Union of Labour in Belfast warned that "if the resolution was carried it would have a very disturbing effect on trades unions, and it would lead to the shedding of many members." Some British-based unions did indeed fail to attend the 1913 conference in Cork.

What clinched the debate in Clonmel was Connolly pointing out that Irish workers had been excluded from the benefits of the British Health Insurance Act in 1911 because nationalist and unionist politicians had blocked it to protect vested interests in the medical professions, private hospitals, the Catholic Church and among employers who were unwilling to pay a ha'penny a week contribution for each employee.

Paying the price

Workers had lost out, Connolly pointed out, "because they had no organised means of expressing themselves politically." Today workers living in the 26 counties are still paying the price as we experience the mayhem and expense of the HSE and a plethora of private insurance companies while workers in Britain have the NHS.

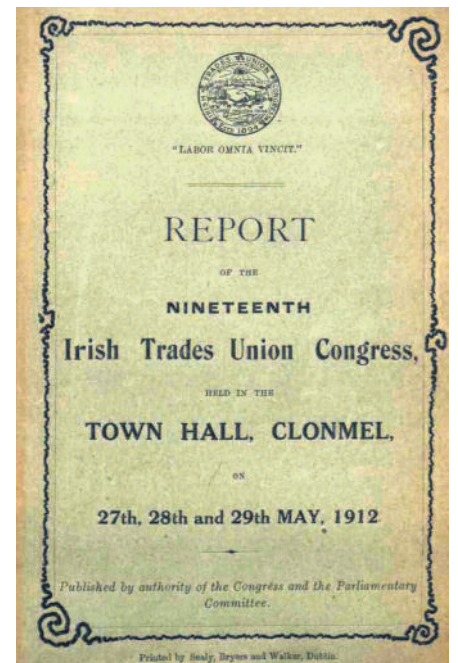
Details of the 1912 debate are contained in the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party archives from 1901 to 1925 that have just been put on line by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions in partnership with the National Archives.

It is one of many nuggets that shed light on the problems facing Irish workers in the formative years of modern Ireland, when many fateful decisions affecting our futures were made.

Another example is the debate on the Treaty election in 1922. Labour never contested the 1918 general election because it was not ready for the challenge and it looked like it would duck the Treaty election as well in 1922.

On February 21st that year, the ITUC&LP held a special delegate conference to decide if it should field candidates. Delegates fell into four main groups: those who wanted to leave a clear field for the pro and anti-Treaty blocs within Sinn Féin, those who felt elections were a distraction from the real work of trade unions protecting workers on the shop floor, those who wanted to pursue a socialist revolutionary path and those who wanted to contest the election.

In reality it boiled down to the leadership of



At the 1912 Congress James Connolly highlighted how vested interests had blocked Irish workers from benefiting from the 1911 British Health Insurance Act

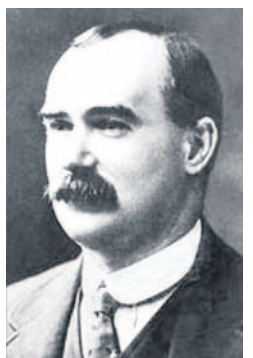
most trade unions, who wanted to contest the election in the hope of influencing the shape of the new Irish Free State and those who wanted to continue the struggle.

The problem with the latter groups was that they were far from agreed on the way forward, or even what the struggle was. Walter Carpenter of the Irish Garment Makers, a veteran of the 1913 Lockout Army, gave one of the clearest speeches against participating in the election when he advocated that workers "should seize the mills, the creameries, and the railways. Russia did not bring the Workers Republic into operation by going into parliament. No, but through the direct actions of Lenin and Trotsky".

Tom Kennedy of the ITGWU who, like Carpenter, was a veteran of the Lockout, caught the dominant mood among delegates when he said, "It was all right talking about the Workers Republic but when they went before the working class electors the question they would have to decide was 'whether you are for peace or war', and whether you are prepared to support the element prepared to carry the Treaty into effect, or oppose it and put up with the consequences". There was no stomach for war. Delegates reflected the general mood in the country by voting by 104 to 49 to contest the election.

Many other issues confronted these delegates 100 years ago that were not that different from today, including a chronic housing crisis, a lack of 'nursery schools for infants', exorbitant prices for school books, campaigns for 'a living wage' and abolition of 'the half-time system of labour' that represented the zero-hour contracts of the day with the added exploitative twist of extending to children. There were also concerns about the retention of women in jobs that had previously been a male preserve when the war ended. Not all of it in their favour!

Up until now these archives, which also contain a vast store of information on social and economic conditions, were only available to a few dedicated scholars. You can access them online at <http://centenaries-ituc.nationalarchives.ie/>. They are well worth a click.



“ These archives which also contain a vast store of info on social & economic conditions can be accessed online ... they are well worth a click ”

Would you scrap the Universal Social Charge

The Government is promising tax cuts in the form of reductions to the USC. But at what cost will those cuts take and are they fair or will they lead to more socio-economic problems for retail workers?

IF YOUR income is less than €13,000 you pay no Universal Social Charge (USC). Once your income is over this limit, you pay the relevant rate of USC on all of your income. For example, if you have income of €13,000 you will pay no USC. If you have income of €13,001 you will pay 1% on income up to €12,012 and 3% on income between €12,012 and €13,001. See **FIGURE 1**

The USC raises €4 billion in revenue every year and is the most progressive income tax – meaning the higher your income, the more you pay.

The Irish Government says it intends scrapping the Universal Social Charge (USC) over the coming years – which is a scandal considering the crisis we are currently experiencing with homelessness, housing, healthcare, education among other areas.

Should the USC be abolished, the money to fund our public services and social protection would have to come from somewhere else. Documents recently drawn up by the Department of Finance for the Irish Government explained four options available for the replacement of the USC:

Option A: Property / Capital Taxes		
Increase Local Property Tax by a multiple of 6	€2,640m	
Increase commercial stamp duty by 1.75%	€173m	
Increase stamp duty on shares from 1% to 3%	€964m	
Increase Capital Gains Tax from 33% to 43%	€114m	
TOTAL	€3,997m	
Option B: Indirect Taxes		
Increase petrol and diesel by 18c per litre	€617m	
Increase excise on beer by €1.50 per pint	€975m	
Increase excise on spirits by €1 per half glass	€330m	
Revert 9% tourism-related VAT rate to 13.5%	€350m	
Increase 0% VAT to 5%	€462m	
Increase 13.5% VAT to 15.5%	€616m	
Increase 23% VAT to 25%	€636m	
TOTAL	€3,986m	
Option C: Income Taxes		
Increase 20% income tax to 25%	€2,755m	
Increase 40% income tax rate to 45%	€1,230m	
TOTAL	€3,985m	
Option D: Corporation Tax		
Increase 12.5% corporation tax to 19.75%	€3,986m	

The other option not listed is to not replace the USC and face cuts or stagnation in public services including health, housing, education, transport, pensions, social welfare, childcare, etc.

In the Department's briefing document, they state: "Regressivity: The USC is a progressive tax, therefore abolition of, or substantial reductions in the USC would be regressive. For example if the USC were abolished a person on minimum wage would benefit by c.€316, whereas an employee earning €150,000 would benefit by over €9,500."

Check out **FIGURE 2** and **FIGURE 3** which show how much a worker in each wage category pays in USC.

FIGURE 1

Standard rate of USC (2016)	
Rate	Income band
1%	Up to €12,012
3%	From €12,012.01 to €18,668.00
5.5%	From €18,668.01 to €70,044.00
8%	From €70,044.01 to €100,000.00
8%	Any PAYE income over €100,000
11%	Self-employed income over €100,000

FIGURE 2 USC CONTRIBUTIONS BY INCOME

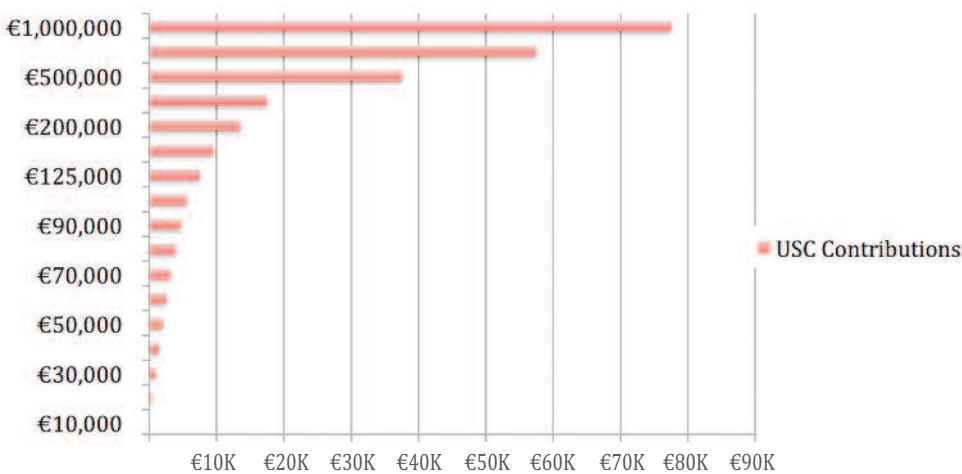


FIGURE 3

Income Per Year	USC Paid	Income after USC	% of income
€10,000	0	€10,000	0.00%
€20,000	€393.06	€19,607	1.97%
€30,000	€943.06	€29,057	3.14%
€40,000	€1,493.06	€38,507	3.73%
€50,000	€2,043.06	€47,957	4.09%
€60,000	€2,593.06	€57,407	4.32%
€70,000	€3,143.06	€66,857	4.49%
€80,000	€3,941.96	€76,058	4.93%
€90,000	€4,741.96	€85,258	5.27%
€100,000	€5,541.96	€94,458	5.54%
€125,000	€7,541.96	€117,458	6.03%
€150,000	€9,541.96	€140,458	6.36%
€200,000	€13,541.96	€186,458	6.77%
€250,000	€17,541.96	€232,458	7.02%
€500,000	€37,541.96	€462,458	7.51%
€750,000	€57,541.96	€692,458	7.67%
€1,000,000	€77,541.96	€922,458	7.75%

In **FIGURE 4** you can see the percentage of the workforce and their contributions to the USC.

Or, putting it simply, 75% of all USC contributions come from those earning less than €50,000 with those earning less than €50,000 contributing only 25%. See **FIGURE 5**

Furthermore, 60% of USC contributions come from those earning more than €70,000 and 43% come from those earning more than €100,000 per year.

The reason for such a high contribution from high earners is because the USC has very few tax avoidance loopholes for the wealthy to exploit, unlike income tax. Low paid workers cannot avail of income tax loopholes because many of them do not earn enough to pay tax in the first place. See **FIGURE 6**

To give a greater understanding of the benefits the current USC (€4bn) could provide, here

are some examples of what the government could invest in, should the charge be maintained:

1. **Employ 133,000 nurses.**
2. **Hire 23,391 hospital consultants.**
3. **Employ 129,000 secondary school teachers.**
4. **Build 24,000 homes per year.**
5. **Double the contributory pension for all pensioners.**
6. **Multiply the entire government housing & homelessness plan by a factor of four for the next five years.**
7. **Scrap water charges and multiply investment in the infrastructure by approximately 700%.**

Furthermore, investment in the above – in both capital and current expenditure – would have the direct benefit of increasing employment, which would obviously reduce unemployment and therefore social welfare payments while increasing spending in the local economy, giving a boost to the retail, bar and

hospitality sectors.

Abolishing the USC would benefit the highest earners most, and evidence shows that higher earners spend less in the local economy, meaning retail would receive less benefit squeezing the industry further and putting pressure on employers to cut costs – usually labour costs.

Before Budget 2016, the *Irish Times* MRBI Poll asked the question: "How should the Government spend the promised €1.5bn in the budget? What one thing would you like to see the Government do with some of this money?"

● 27% answered saying investment in healthcare – including the hiring of nurses and doctors.

● A further 31% said they wanted the government to scrap water charges, increase funding for education, increase social welfare, increase the state pension, invest in childcare, invest in back to work schemes and create employment and invest in roads.

● 12% said they wanted investment in housing.

● Only 8% said they wanted to cut or scrap the USC.

In reality, keeping the USC would mean having the capacity to appease the wishes of 70% of the population's demands, while abolition of the USC would appease only 8%.

Furthermore, the list of representative bodies opposed to tax cuts is growing. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) has opposed a cut in the USC, as has employers' group IBEC. Also, in recent days the relatively conservative Economic Social Research Institute (ESRI) has publicly warned of the dangers of tax cuts at a time of economic growth, where there are rising levels of personal consumption and retail sales combined with an acceleration in employment growth: "This suggests that economic activity does not need to be further stimulated by reducing personal taxation levels."

So why is it the narrative that we should cut the USC?

Almost all of the commentators and politicians advocating the abolition of the USC would benefit disproportionately from such a decision. For instance, cutting the USC would mean a substantial increase in take home pay for many people who do not depend on public services:

- A TD would benefit by €4,523;
- A government Minister by €10,145;
- The Taoiseach would benefit by €12,370;
- RTE's highest paid presenter, Ryan Tubridy, would benefit by €37,142;
- Richie Boucher – CEO of Bank of Ireland – would benefit by €64,982.

● Meanwhile, an average retail worker on €25,000 per year would only benefit by €668.

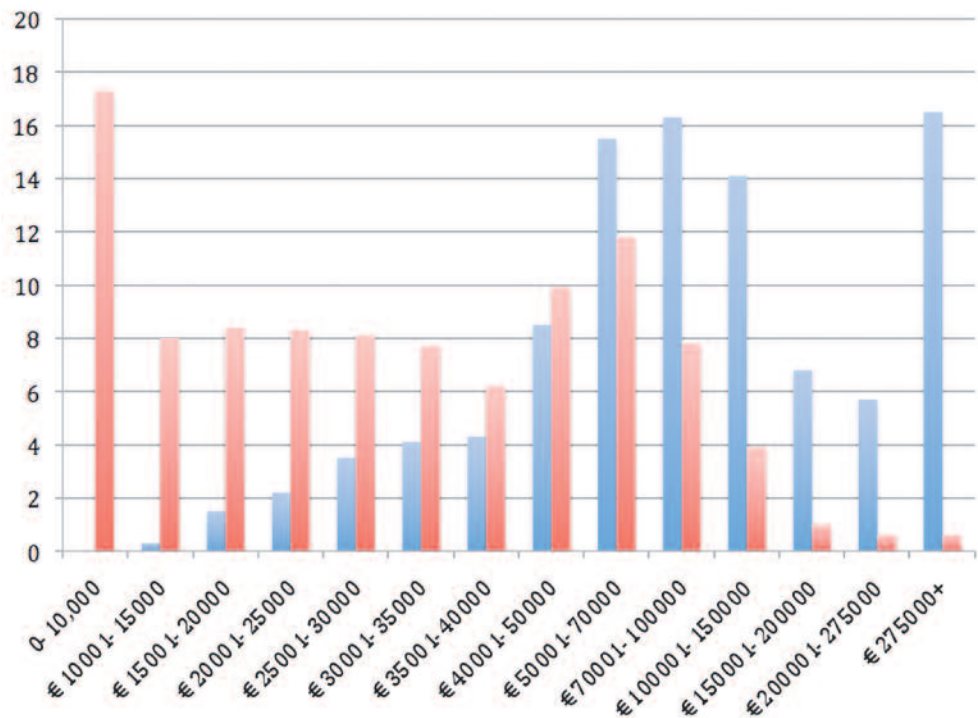
Bear in mind that it is retail workers and other low-paid workers who would lose out on the State's capacity to fund social security transfers and decent public services. To illustrate this point further, the USC allows the State to hire two nurses based on Richie Boucher's (Bank of Ireland CEO) contribution alone. Without those nurses, low-paid workers would no doubt receive reduced care levels while relying on public health services. And as we know, low-paid workers are unlikely to be able to afford private health care.

What should be done with the USC?

In terms of achieving a fairer, more equitable society, it makes sense to continue the Universal Social Charge but the income from it should be ring-fenced to provide better vital public services in health, education, housing, transport and also social security. Rather than scrap the USC, as has been proposed by Fine Gael, over the next five years, the USC's €4 billion in revenue could do all of the following (granted, this is

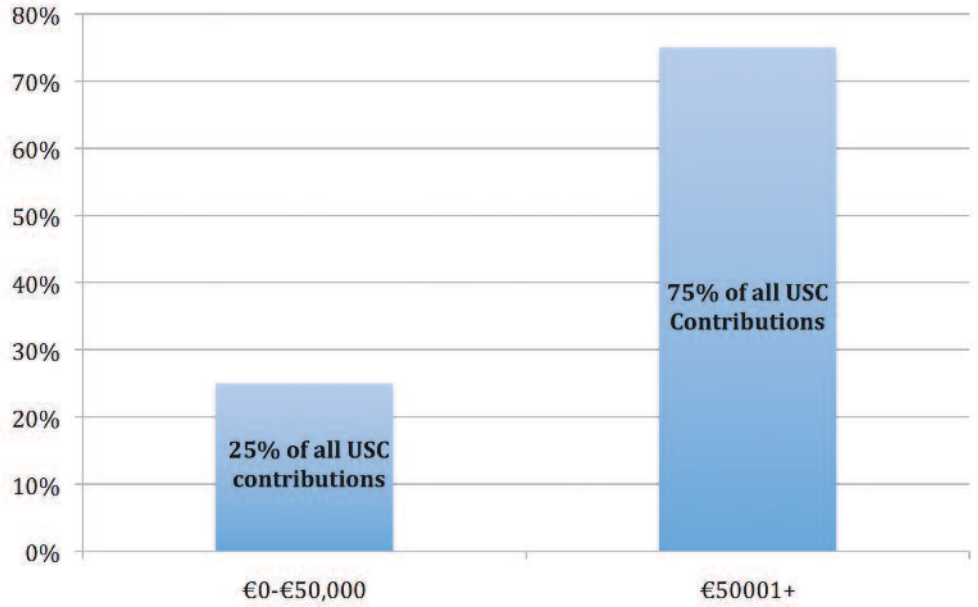
or invest in public services and the future?

FIGURE 4



Red = total workforce as a percentage
Blue = Total intake of USC contributions as a percentage.

FIGURE 5



what would be possible if it was abolished overnight):

- Implement refundable tax credits which would cost €140m but would benefit 113,000 low paid workers and 240,000 people, including their dependents. 91,000 people living below the poverty line would benefit and it would lift many thousands out of poverty while also producing a stimulus for the local economy, which is where low paid workers spend all of their income.
- Instigate a public housing programme and build an extra 6,000 homes per year for the next

five years (€1bn approximately).

- Increase funding for water services by €500m allowing the scrapping of domestic water charges which was set to raise only €271m per year. This combined with commercial water charges and general taxation could increase water funding to €1bn per year and save hundreds of millions on water meter installations and administration.
- Increase funding for the public healthcare system by €1 billion which could help to eliminate waiting lists and save lives. For instance, 4,300 people have been waiting more than 3

FIGURE 6 TAX RELIEFS – INCOME TAX V USC

Income / Relief	Income Tax USC	USC
Entry point	€11,000 – self-employed €16,500 – employee €24,750 – single parent/ single-income couple €33,000 – two-income couple	€13,000
Exemptions	Individuals aged 65 where income is below €18,000 (single) or €36,000 (couple) Artists’ income – first €50,000 (subject to High Earners Restriction) Rent-a-room relief (max €12,000) Childcare service relief (max €15,000) Child benefit and certain means-tested social welfare payments	All social welfare income subject to DIRT
Pension	Contributions Relief at marginal rate, subject to limits	No relief
Medical expenses	Relief at standard rate	No relief
Medical insurance	Relief at standard rate, subject to limits	No relief
Mortgage interest relief	Relief at standard rate, subject to limits, for qualifying 2004-2012 loans	No relief
Employment & Investment Incentive	Relief for investments up to €150,000; Not currently subject to High Earners Restriction	No relief
Foreign Earnings Deduction	Foreign Earnings Deduction Relief for income earned while working abroad in a qualifying State; Subject to High Earners Restriction	No relief
Home Renovation Incentive	Tax credit for 13.5% of qualifying renovation works Not subject to High Earners Restriction	No relief
Living City Initiative	Relief for refurbishment cost of older buildings in qualifying cities; Not subject to High Earners Restriction	No relief
Special Assignee	Relief Programme Relief for a proportion of income earned by high-income employees assigned to work in Ireland; Not subject to High Earners Restriction; No relief Tax Strategy G	No relief
Start Your Own Business Relief	Exemption for profits of up to €40,000p.a. for 2 years for previously unemployed person who sets up a qualifying business; Not subject to High Earners Restriction	No relief
Taxsaver Commuter Tickets	Relief at marginal rate	Relief from USC

months on a potentially lifesaving colonoscopy, whereas those with private insurance will have tests done within 12 days. That waiting list could be entirely eliminated if the political will was there.

- Increase funding for education by €1bn which would allow us to reduce our class sizes from the highest in the EU with 25 pupils per teacher, to a target of the EU average of 20.
- The remaining €360 million could be spent on social security, mental health, and public transport, among other areas in dire need of investment.

The increased income from employment in the above and the extra spending in the local economy - which would bring in VAT and excise duties - could be spent fast tracking the Metro North and other capital investment projects – increasing employment in construction and indirect industries.

In summary, maintaining the USC could help Ireland to tackle some of the major crisis our country faces in terms of housing, healthcare, education, jobs and at the same time boost the real economy.

BLOW THE WHISTLE ON THE BAD BOSSES



10 REASONS TO JOIN MANDATE

1. An organising and campaigning union:

Mandate is focused on building an activist base to protect and improve employment conditions. Through better organised workplaces and the power of the collective strength, we will deliver justice for working people.

2. Modern and effective training:

Mandate provides free courses to help you learn new skills, improve existing skills and develop you and your prospective career. We negotiate agreements with employers to pay for attendance at courses and also to provide reasonable time off for employees to attend them.

3. Campaigning for success:

Mandate is a progressive campaigning union fighting on issues that really matter to our members, their families and society in general. Mandate campaigns challenge social injustice at all levels of Irish society.

4. Protection at work:

Highly trained and skilled Mandate officials provide professional advice and assistance, where appropriate, on a variety of employment issues.

5. Safety at work:

Mandate health & safety representatives are trained to minimise the risk of workplace injuries and ensure that employers meet their legal obligations at all times.

6. Better pay:

Year on year, Mandate campaigns for and wins pay rises for its members. Mandate also campaigns to close the widening gender pay gap in Irish society.

7. Legal protection:

Mandate has won significant legal compensation for members who are injured as a result of an accident at work.

8. Mandatory pensions:

Mandate has secured pension schemes with a variety of retail employers and will campaign to secure mandatory pension schemes for all members working in the private sector, particularly those on low wages.

9. You're less likely to be discriminated against:

Mandate has won agreements with employers on respect and dignity at work policies and procedures. Mandate will continue to campaign for tougher laws to make it illegal to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, age, disability or sexual orientation.

10. You're less likely to be sacked:

Membership of Mandate protects you and strengthens your voice in your workplace.

Together we're stronger



JOIN MANDATE TRADE UNION ONLINE AT <http://www.mandate.ie/Contact/Join.aspx>

NEWS

Justice gong for Tesco workers

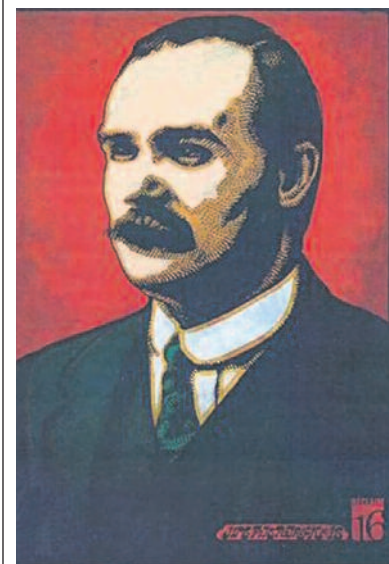


LABOUR Party Justice spokesperson Brendan Howlin (third from left) presents the annual Thirst For Justice Award to Tesco workers in recognition of their fight for decent pay and fair working condition. The presentation was made at the Tom Johnson Summer School held at Wynn's Hotel in Dublin in June. SIPTU and Mandate members jointly accepted the award. Mandate members pictured (from right) are Willie Hamilton, Anna McDermott, Carol Harris and Dolores McKenna



Mandate's newest arrival!

CONGRATULATIONS to Mandate Industrial Officer Keith Pollard and his partner Claire Keegan on the birth of their baby girl Grace. Grace has already applied for Mandate membership and will be joining the Youth Committee soon!



Don't miss your chance to get iconic 1916 print

THERE is still a chance for you to get one of these limited edition (250) prints by Jim Fitzpatrick, which we are sure will become as iconic as Jim's Che Guevara print. The edition is printed using the Giclée process using archival inks and museum quality paper. Print size is 30cm x 42cm (sold unframed). There is a high demand for this historic print, the last 10 are available now, first-come, first-served basis, get your order in fast. You can pay by cash/cheque/postal order by contacting Sandra Stapleton at ssapleton@mandate.ie or phone 087 6323178 today!

Some bosses are stealing from workers with no consequences

WHAT would happen if you stole some money from your employer? You'd be immediately dismissed with the possibility of criminal proceedings against you, and rightly so.

But that's not the situation for many retail employers who routinely steal from their employees and face absolutely no consequences, other than returning the money stolen if they get caught.

Imagine walking into a bank and robbing it, but on the way out you get caught by the Gardai. Rather than arrest you, the Gardai instruct you to put the money back and go on your merry way. Well that's what happens to employers.

According to the *National Employment Rights Authority Review* for 2015 (only nine months from January – September), there were 275 workplace inspections in the retail sector and employers had a compliance level of 48%. That means more employers were breaking the law than abiding by it.

Even more frighteningly, out of those 275 inspections, the unpaid



David Gibney

“If this is the unpaid wages recovered for only 275 inspections, and the retail sector employs more than 200,000 workers, how much more is being scammed from workers..?”

wages recovered amounted to a whopping €255,893. That equates to €900 in unpaid wages per inspection, on average.

How are employers able to get

away with this level of abuse? Because the penalty for them if they get caught is to simply pay back the workers what they've stolen from them through wage theft.

If this is the unpaid wages recovered for only 275 inspections, and the retail sector employs more than 200,000 workers, how much is being scammed from workers and in turn from the Revenue through lost income taxes, PRSI payments, and extra spending in the economy? How much of an advantage does a non-compliant company get over fair employers who pay their workers correctly?

What would resolve this pressing issue is simple.

Firstly, put criminal penalties on employers who steal from their workers. Secondly, allow trade unions right of access – as they have in Australia and New Zealand – in order to do workplace inspections on a larger scale.

If we're serious about *Making Work Pay*, then we need to make sure workers are not being abused and stolen from.



Picture: Mark Strozler (CC BY 2.0)

TRIBUTE Daniel McCarthy, RIP (1990 – 2016)

A short life, well lived...

ON Wednesday 7th September 2016 I stood as part of the large congregation in The Church of the Assumption in Ballyphehane, Cork, and sadly witnessed the use of a Mandate Trade Union flag in a manner that I never anticipated or ever wished to see. The flag in this instance was draped across the coffin of Daniel McCarthy as it made its way to its final resting place at St Oliver's Cemetery in the city.

For those of you who never had the privilege of knowing Daniel, I want to use this space to reflect on what in my opinion was the remarkable contribution of a young man which not only touched but positively changed the lives of those who were lucky to have made his acquaintance during his short life.

On Saturday 3rd September 2016 after barely reaching the age of 26 years, Daniel, in the presence of his loving parents and brother, passed away following what was a very short but traumatic illness. It's hard to believe that Daniel was a delegate at this year's Biennial Delegate Conference which took place in Galway last April.

It was clear to see that there he was at his happiest representing with pride and determination the interests of his fellow workers in Penneys, the Cork Local Council and indeed all Mandate members throughout the retail sector. This broad commitment is so clearly evident in the picture accompanying this article which shows Daniel actively participating in the Decency for Dunnes Workers Campaign.

Daniel worked in Penneys, Patrick Street, for nearly 10 years. He quickly became involved in the local union structure becoming

a principal shop steward in a relatively short period of time. He was also a delegate to the Cork Trades Council, our own Local Cork Council and a pivotal member of the Penneys National Negotiating Team.

When he joined the national team he made it his number one priority to do away with the under-18 rate his priority, he himself had passed this age threshold and although he had nothing to gain personally he did not allow it to dent his enthusiasm and commitment.

At the time Daniel made the abolition of the under-18 rate his priority, he himself had passed this age threshold and although he had nothing to gain personally he did not allow it to dent his enthusiasm and commitment.

Selfless qualities

You see, this was the mark of the man because he principally saw his role as a union activist was to progress the interests of the common good and never allow personal gain or advancement take priority. These selfless qualities are remarkable and rare in one so young and furthermore they are essential for the survival of a healthy and relevant trade union movement. While these traits can be acquired and developed, they were very much part of Daniel's character and it is clear they were instilled in him by his parents, Patricia and Don, from an early age.

Being a trade union activist came natural to him; in fact, you could say that it was in his DNA. He also had a tremendous capacity to communicate with people in a way which quickly developed a mutual bond of trust; a privilege which he never took for granted or

abused. He was as honest as the day was long and never backed off when he believed the pursuit of an issue was just and fair. Alternatively, he had the innate sense not to embroil himself or his fellow members in matters that were futile and clearly unwinnable. For these qualities, he won the respect of both workers and management alike.

Whether it was during his school days, playing for his beloved St Finbarr's GAA Club or while at work in Penneys, it was clear from the open and genuine display of grief at his funeral that Daniel had won the love and affection of many who, like us here in the union, will take a long time to deal with the sorrow and pain that his passing at such an early age brings.

It is an indisputable fact that as an individual Daniel will be irreplaceable. However, here is the irony – he never saw himself acting in an individual capacity; instead he clearly understood the importance of solidarity and the power of collective strength.

As we start to cope with the immense challenge of filling the vacuum created by his passing we can pay no greater honour to Daniel's memory than for us to apply these concepts to all aspects of our daily lives as we deal with family, friends, workmates and fellow union members.

A genuine commitment to these values will ensure that we will never forget the contribution made by a special young man from Cork who I am honoured and privileged to have known and worked with in his capacity as a committed and proud member of Mandate Trade Union.

Gerry Light, Assistant General Secretary



Irreplaceable: Daniel McCarthy

Gerry Light

Assistant General Secretary
Mandate Trade Union

VIEW *from the* SHOPFLOOR

Misdirected anger

MY ATTENTION was drawn recently to an article which appeared in our most popular Sunday newspaper. The piece was headed 'Strike action is a bitter pill at the bottom of the ladder' with a sub heading of 'Generations who still want more make life hard for millennials'.

In essence the article was an attempt to contextualise recent industrial disputes from the perspective of younger people or as the journalist referred to them as "Celtic Tiger Cubs" or "Generation Emigration".

The thrust of the article is that the spate of current industrial disputes is "maddening" for younger generations. Many of the points made justifying the general sense of frustration, unfairness and betrayal being experienced by young workers have merit and are difficult to argue against.

In considering the situation presented it would be wrong for the trade union movement to glibly set these feelings aside; instead we must carefully examine why so many of our young people feel this way and help them explore through constructive engagement the real source of their problems and, more importantly, how they might effectively tackle and overcome them.

Downward spiral

The article further suggests why the anger of young people is directed at strikers while they are caught in a vicious downward spiral because, "bank collapses and economic devastation and continuous financial threats have leveraged our futures against Mike Ashley's zero hour contracts and a culture of job hopping". Additionally, it is suggested that young workers "could go on strike in search of better working conditions, but battling against contracts that run out every 12 months, we are reminded we are instantly replaceable".

This is the point in the article where we are presented with the logic as to why young people are so ill-disposed to striking workers when it is claimed that "many of those striking or looking at taking industrial action are on secure contracts and sit in safe positions compared to those of us at the bottom of the employment ladder". This apparent and, some might say, understandable resentment must be replaced by a desire to aspire to these so-called better terms and conditions of employment and seek out the ways and means of how this might be achieved. Let's be clear, very few workers are handed decent terms and conditions of employment by

benevolent employers. In many instances, they or previous generations, had to fight to achieve them and on an ever increasing basis they continue the fight to maintain them.

History has shown that the most effective way of applying collective strength and winning advances is for workers to be members of a trade union. Sadly, many workers in the private sector have drifted away from this belief only to be rewarded by employers with low paid, insecure jobs.

The future is indeed bleak if the approach of young workers is to negatively target other workers who are prepared to stand on picket lines in order to defend decent terms and conditions of employment. Surely these workers should be seen as champions of a common cause and not as some sort of parasites who are a scourge on society.

There is no doubt that the changing nature of work has been quite dramatic over the last decade and precarious contracts of employment have fast become the norm. In many instances these types of contracts are being offered by businesses who could well afford to do better by their workers.

It is an indisputable fact that they exist in the main in non-unionised employments based in the private sector. It is no coincidence that the spread of these unscrupulous work practices continues to grow while trade union membership levels are falling.

One can only imagine the doomsday scenario that would exist if this decline continues to the point where some business leaders get their way and make unions so powerless that they become a thing of the past.

The struggle facing young and non-unionised workers today is difficult and probably more complex than ever before. Largely, the capitalist system is motivated by the selfish pursuit of profits which are rarely distributed in a proportionate and fair manner to the workers who are responsible for generating them.

The system also encourages both individualism and materialism and attempts to recognise and reward the contribution of workers by mischievously calling them 'stakeholders', 'partners' and 'associates', thus falsely implying some kind of equality of esteem.

Internal forums are set up to facilitate engagement with workers but these are principally designed by employers as effective tools to monitor and control rather than to award workers what is rightfully theirs. Of course the real motivation behind this deliberate and carefully constructed approach is to discourage workers from seeing themselves as part of a truly independent collective which has, if it so desires, the potential to fight for and win better terms and conditions of employment for all.

In the world of work everything has changed, but nothing has changed. The fundamental struggle between capital and labour continues. However, the former is gaining a dominance of control at a pace rarely witnessed in the past. This is manifest in the quality of employment contracts being offered and will continue to escalate until workers, whether they are young or old, seek to redress the balance of power in their favour.

This will not be achieved by bemoaning the current state of play and dangerously turning the sights on fellow workers who are standing up for decent working conditions. Such an attitude surely accelerates the so-called race to the bottom and is not in the interests of workers and society generally.

So my advice to young disgruntled workers is not to grin and bear it, but rather do something about it. Come together, join a trade union and make positive change happen not only for your generation but for generations to come.



ANALYSIS

2016 Living Wage: no change yet lots of change...

By Micheál Collins
Economist

THE 2016 Living Wage for the Republic of Ireland has been calculated at €11.50 per hour by the Living Wage Technical Group. The rate is unchanged from 2015.

Over the past year there have been decreases in living costs for most items included in the Living Wage calculation. However, these decreases have been wiped out by increases in housing costs. The overall effect is an unchanged hourly Living Wage rate of €11.50.

The Republic of Ireland Living Wage was established in 2014 and is part of a growing international set of similar figures which reflect a belief across societies that individuals working full-time should be able to earn enough income to enjoy a decent standard of living.

During the last year there were decreases in the costs associated with many of the items included in the Living Wage calculation. In particular changes in energy and transport costs decreased the cost of the weekly minimum expenditure.

A reduction in the Universal Social

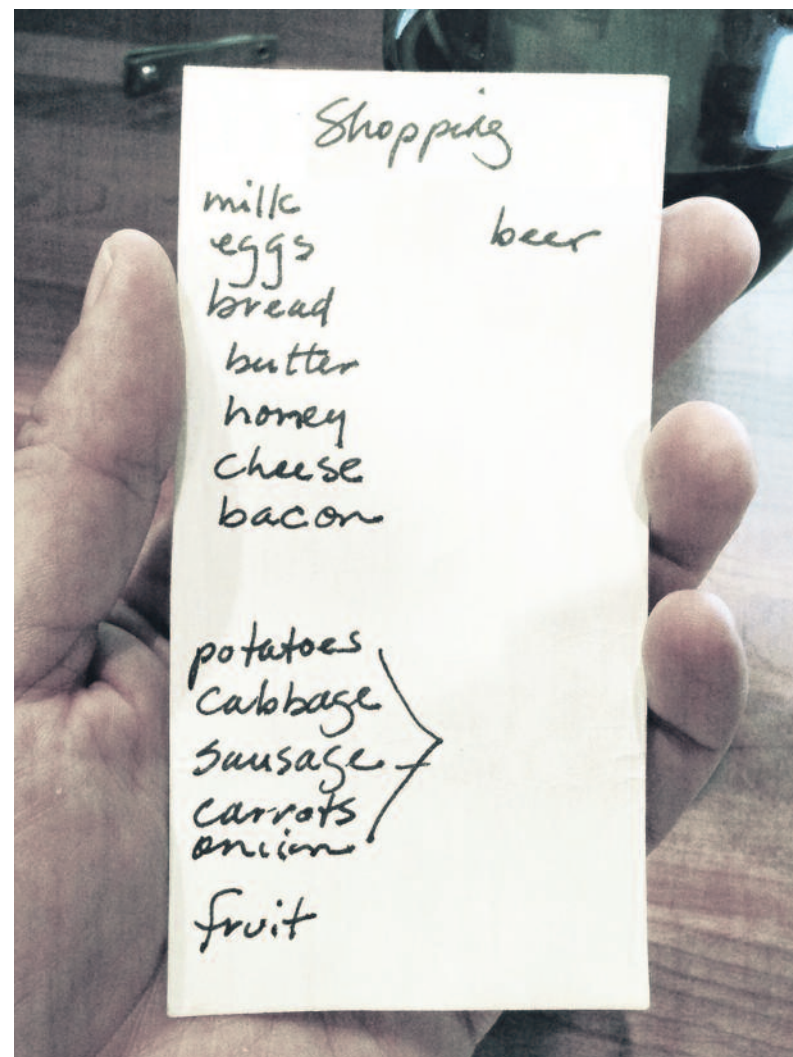
Charge (USC) paid by an employee on the Living Wage also impacted on the calculations as the amount of USC collected from these employees decreased.

However, the effects of these decreases in living costs and increases in post-tax income were outweighed by increases in some areas of expenditure.

Most notable were increases in housing (rent) costs with higher rental costs in Dublin being the significant driver of the overall increased expenditure costs. Outside Dublin, housing costs moved by between €2.24 and €8.93 per week, but the increase in Dublin was €19.62 per week.

As housing costs are the largest component of weekly expenditure in the living wage calculation, such substantial increases wipe out the effects of decreases in all of the other living costs. Full details including the new 2016 document are available on the Living Wage website www.livingwage.ie. Check out <http://bit.ly/2bqQXTF>

Dr Micheál Collins has recently left NERI to join the School of Social Policy and Social Justice at UCD



Picture: swanks (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Pay claim, working hours review and guarantee for Labour Court

By **Gerry Light**
Assistant General Secretary

1. Pay claim for 2016

On March 30th, 2016 your union served a claim on your employer seeking the following:

- 3% pay increase;
- guaranteed minimum increases in hourly rates of pay; and
- A review of working hours to include the creation of a number of full-time jobs.

Dunnes Stores management have failed to respond to the claim served on your behalf leaving your union with no option but to refer the matters outlined to the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC).

Even though your employer was contacted by the WRC over the past number of months, they declined to respond to a request to engage with your union.

Accordingly we are left with no option but to refer the claim to the Labour Court for their consideration and this we have done as a matter of urgency.

2. Claim for security of weekly working hours

One of the key objectives of the ongoing *Decency for Dunnes Workers* Campaign is our fight for better weekly hours. As part of our one-day

dispute in 2015 we won from Government the introduction of new legislation which allowed the Labour Court to issue legally binding recommendations. Your fight for improved hours was one of the first referred to the Court under this legislation and we are currently working through the process since the preliminary hearing on June 1st, 2016.

While it might appear to be taking a long time, your union is as determined as ever to achieve a successful outcome for you and your fellow members.

3. Legislation/political updates

Again as a consequence of our ongoing *Decency for Dunnes Workers* Campaign we continue to lobby politicians in an effort to bring about legislative changes that support our objectives.

To this end Sinn Féin introduced a bill on banded contracts which was passed by the Dail on July 7th, 2016. The Labour Party are about to introduce a bill in the Seanad which also attempts to guarantee workers the right to the hours that they actually work as opposed to those that appear as a minimum on their contract.

In conclusion, I want to reassure you that your union will continue to fight for fair and



Flashback to 2015:
Douglas Court strikers

proper treatment for our members employed in Dunnes. Surely all Dunnes workers are entitled to their fair share from a business that continues to grow sales and profits.

Together we must remain committed to achieving the objectives that have been priori-

tised by all Dunnes members. Success, although slow, will happen. However, in order to ensure it does happen, we must continue to maintain strong membership levels and a renewed determination to organise if we are to make lasting and positive change in Dunnes Stores.

NEWS

Warning: homeless crisis now out of control

By **David Gibney**
Mandate Communications Officer

IRELAND'S homeless problem – particularly in Dublin – is now “out of control”.

Figures released by the Simon Community reveal a massive 32% increase in the number of people sleeping rough on the streets of the capital inside the last year.

More people are now homeless in the city than in 2014, the previous peak year.

The Dublin Simon Community counted 168 rough sleepers in the middle of Dublin city centre on the night of Tuesday, September 20 and another 60 people sleeping on the floor of the Merchant's Quay Night Café.

That figure of 228 eclipses the previous record of 168 sleeping rough throughout the four Dublin local authority areas.

According to a new report by the Institute of Population Health at TCD, the average age of death for a homeless woman in Dublin is 38 while it is 44 for a man with one homeless death occurring every two weeks.

And Dublin Simon Community CEO Sam McGuinness pointed out that it is impossible to count the number of people sleeping rough in the Phoenix Park.

“We need more move on accommodation. We need to push on and make sure that anything that can happen, will happen,” he told RTE's *Morning*



Picture: Sascha Kohlmann (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Ireland. Meanwhile, the number of children in Dublin without a permanent home rose past 2,000 for the first time last month. Homelessness campaigner Fr Peter McVerry told RTE's *News at One*: “We have almost one thousand families who are homeless with 2,020 children who are homeless. That is an appalling indictment on a country like Ireland.”

Fr McVerry welcomed Minister for Housing Simon Coveney's plan to tackle housing, but pointed out that it

was not going to kick in for some time and suggested that by the time it did, the numbers of homeless people would be much worse than they are now. The 2,020 children are drawn from 993 families currently in emergency accommodation, an increase from just under 1,900 in June and a 71% hike since last July.

Fr McVerry said: “The conditions they are living in are absolutely appalling with many living in hotel bedrooms.” And he warned that leaving

families in these conditions for a long time would affect them for the rest of their lives. Fr McVerry claimed two measures were required immediately.

“I think we need emergency legislation to prevent the banks and landlords from evicting families, particularly those with children, into homelessness. They should not be allowed to put families on to the streets unless they have been offered and accepted alternative suitable accommo-



‘Appalling’: Fr McVerry Tax cuts: Michael Noonan

dation. Secondly, we need compulsory purchase orders on empty buildings lying around the place and not being used.”

Mandate General Secretary John Douglas called the figures released by the Simon Community a shameful indictment on successive governments that exposed a lack of political will to address the crisis.

He told *Shopfloor*: “How are the Government and the media talking about tax cuts when we have more than 2,000 children in emergency accommodation and more than 200 people in Dublin without a roof over their heads?”

“How can Michael Noonan promise €75m in inheritance tax cuts for some of the wealthiest in our society while others are still losing their homes on a daily basis? This shows the priorities for our politicians, many of whom are living in a bubble.”

Peace hopes after half century of bloodshed...

● 220,000 dead ● Land reform & political guarantees but death squads are still active...

AFTER two years of secret talks and nearly four years of formal negotiations brokered by Cuba, the chief FARC negotiator, Ivan Marquez, and the head of the Colombian delegation, Humberto de la Calle, have signed a historic peace agreement at a ceremony in Havana bringing to an end to more than 50 years of war that has seen over 222,00 deaths and millions of internally displaced.

Iván Márquez, the FARC's top negotiator, said: "We have won the most beautiful of all battles: [the battle] of peace for Colombia. The battle with weapons ends and the battle of ideas begins."

Whether the deal is accepted depends upon a popular plebiscite to take place on October 2. The deal is designed to address both the root causes of the conflict while laying out a calendar for the disarmament and demobilisation of the FARC. The deal is comprised of six parts:

1. Reform of the rural economy and eradication of rural poverty.
2. Guarantees for political participation and broadening of democratic rights.
3. Ceasefire and disarmament of the FARC and their reincorporation into civilian life.
4. Solution to the problem of illicit crops and drugs.
5. Truth, justice, no-repetition and reparations for victims of the armed conflict.
6. Implementation and verification of the final peace agreement.

Crucially the agreement states that the government must address the huge inequalities in wealth, land ownership and income that characterise Colombian society. In turn the FARC will move its estimated 7,000 fighters from the hinterland into 'disarmament camps' to be overseen by the United Nations, where the demobilised guerrilla fighters will receive 90% of Colombia's minimum wage as they dis-arm and attempt to re-integrate into society.

The deal also includes reparations to victims and sets up a transitional



justice system for crimes committed during the conflict and although an amnesty will be granted for less serious offences, it will not cover the worst atrocities.

The agreement nonetheless faces serious challenges, not least a lack of agreement on prisoner release and the ongoing activities of paramilitary death squads. If you were to read about the conflict in the western press you might be led to believe that the conflict was between Marxist guerrillas and state security forces, what is rarely mentioned is the role of Colombia's right-wing paramilitary death squads who are notorious for their brutality and who have been responsible for the vast majority of the human rights abuses that have occurred in the country in the past 25 years:

Chainsaw massacres

"They are infamous for their use of vicious violence, including massacres with chainsaws, brutal torture, sexual violence and cutting off of limbs as tactics designed to instil fear and terror among those they target. The scale of their violence is astonishing and it is estimated that the paramilitaries have killed around 150,000 Colombians and displaced hundreds of thousands more." – Justice for Colombia

Of most concern is the open secret that these right-wing groups are directed by a network of wealthy landowners, business figures, senior military officers and drugs traffickers that is known as the 'United-Self Defence Forces of Colombia', or AUC in its Spanish acronym.

Since the commencement of the so-called 'Paramilitary Peace Process' in 2002 the Colombian government's official line is that these paramilitaries



Confrontation: Youths from Marcha Patriótica in stand-off with Colombian riot police during a protest in 2012

have demobilised, but this is not the case and thousands of activists, trade unionists and peasants have been murdered as these groups continue to function with impunity across the country. Their existence and links to the deep state pose a very real threat to the peace process.

In the latest report from the human rights observatory, Somos Defensores revealed that 35 human rights activists were killed in the first six months of 2016. There were 232 death threats, 21 attempted assassinations, 13 arbitrary arrests and one disappearance. The report states that paramilitary groups are responsible for the majority of attacks, 68% of cases, while the army was responsible for 10% and the FARC 0.1% of cases.

Working tirelessly at the centre of the peace process is Mariela Kohon and the team at Justice for Colombia, a trade union sponsored NGO set up in 2002 in response to the appalling human rights crisis in Colombia, and particularly serious abuses of trade unionists.

And in 2014, a number of Mandate representatives visited Colombia as part of trade union fact-finding tour.

Key to this trip was an investigation into the impact of the EU-Colombia Free Trade Agreement which, it was felt, would reward human rights violations and through increased investment in mining would increase land grabs and forced displacement of local indigenous groups.

The north of Ireland has also played its part with both the DUP and Sinn Féin involved in advising and supporting the process with the final agreement clearly drawing on the shared experiences of the Good Friday Agreement.

While we must, of course, celebrate this first stage of the peace process, there is no doubt that very real difficulties lie ahead. As with other peace processes around the world, there is the very real likelihood that we will see the 'double transition' from conflict to peace and, simultaneously, from a decidedly undemocratic capitalism to an ostensibly democratic, neoliberal capitalism that will be characterised not by social justice and equality but by free trade zones, privatisation and deepening inequality.

Added to this economic threat is the very real fear of a return to conflict;

LATEST: REFERENDUM SHOCK

At the time of *Shopfloor* going to print, the Colombian people rejected the peace deal in a referendum by a margin of 50.23%. This has led to confusion and uncertainty over the future of the deal but indications are that the ceasefire will continue as both sides attempt to achieve a historic peaceful settlement.





Pictures: Comisión Nacional de Comunicaciones Marcha Patriótica (CC BY-ND 2.0)

Sealing the deal: Cuban President Raúl Castro grasps the arms of Colombian President Santos and FARC-EP leader Timoleón 'Timochenko' Jiménez as they shake hands following the signing of a bilateral and definitive ceasefire agreement on June 23 in Havana



only days after the peace deal was signed Cecilia Coicué, a member of the Marcha Patriótica movement, was murdered in the region of one of the proposed demobilisation areas.

FARC and human rights observers have pointed to the dangers of these attacks in undermining the entire peace agreement and their fear is well founded. In 1985, the FARC created a political wing, Patriotic Union, in

order to negotiate a peace. Over the following few years they were exterminated with more than 5,000 members murdered by the AUC. The signs are ominous, since the deal was signed, right-wing death squads have murdered 13 human rights activists.

Mandate welcomes peace accord

MANDATE has warmly welcomed the peace agreement between the Colombian government and guerrilla group FARC.

National Coordinator for Training Aileen Morrissey told *Shopfloor*: "Horrific is the only way to describe what we saw and experienced in Colombia. "Even with the troubled past we've had on this island, it is difficult to comprehend the human rights abuses perpetrated on Colombians over the last number of decades, so we have to welcome this peace agreement and hope that both sides honour their commitments to it."

General Secretary John Douglas, who was also part of the 2014 trade union delegation to Colombia, said: "We must stay vigilant in the initial stages of this peace agreement and ensure that this peace lasts. This is a fragile process and a fragile time for Colombia but we hope that not only does the peace continue but that the commitment to tackle poverty and improve democratic and human rights is enhanced."





Flashback: Dunnes Stores strikers on an Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement march through Dublin in 1986
Picture: An Phoblacht

Out of the mouths of workers...

By Brendan O'Connor
Researcher NUIG

THROUGHOUT July and August, current and former officials and members of Mandate have been interviewed as part of a project documenting the history of trade unionism in the retail sector in the second half of the 20th century.

This period includes significant events including the Dunnes Stores anti-Apartheid strike, the change from the UDWC to IDATU, as well as the growing casualisation of employment within the sector through the introduction of Sunday and late night trading, as well as the replacement of the union's branch structure with company-level negotiations.

Funding for the initiative comes from Irish Centre for Histories of Labour and Class at NUI Galway.

The primary objectives of the project is to document the changing working conditions within retail since the 1960s as well as the history of trade union organisation in the sector during this period by creating an archive of interviews which will be available to labour historians for future research.

As well as the Dunnes Stores anti-Apartheid strike, various changes and mergers under the general secretaryship of John Mitchell in the 1980s and the subsequent merger with INUVGATA to create Mandate will form part of the archive detailing the ac-



Picture: James Cridland (CC BY 2.0)

counts of individuals who played an active role in these events.

Oral history serves an important role in labour history research. Interviews allow researchers to view events through the eyes of those who lived through them in ways that documents can't. This is particularly important when looking at labour history as other than trade union archives, the available documentary evidence often does not reflect or

look favourably on working class perspectives.

Through these interviews it's possible to examine the challenges faced by retail workers using personal experiences to create a more detailed narrative from the perspective of workers and how union members and organisers adapted to changes within the retail trade.

This period was one of reorganisation for trade unions representing the

“ Oral history serves an important role in labour history research. Interviews allow researchers to view events through the eyes of those who lived through them in ways that documents can't ”

tail workers, as union structures adapted to the arrival of supermarkets and shopping centres, the extension of trading hours and the increased use of part-time contracts.

Unsurprisingly the 1984 Dunnes Stores anti-Apartheid strike was identified as a topic of interest by myself and John Cunningham.

Strike legacy

Through this project we have been able to collect several accounts of the strike detailing the various aspects of the dispute, from its beginning to the eventual conclusion, as well as its legacy as the central pillar of Irish anti-Apartheid activism.

Through the accounts of members of the National Executive, Dunnes Stores workers who went on strike, and ordinary members this project has documented every aspect of the strike and in broader terms how the union's decision not to handle South African goods was experienced in other stores, and how it related to IDATU's efforts to increase the union's public profile during the

1980s. The various changes to trade union organisation in the retail industry such as the restructuring of the union following the change from IUDWC to IDATA and the decline of branch level negotiations, as well as the amalgamation with INUVGATA were in many respects reactions to changes in the nature of the retail trade.

Changes such as the impact of shopping centres and supermarkets on the retail trade and on the union's branch structures, and the impact of casualisation on retail workers since the 1980s, were recurring themes in many of the interviews.

This project helps to archive the strong tradition of trade unionism in the retail industry which has adapted to various challenges throughout the 20th century, and was always proactive in promoting workers' rights. This project has archived these experiences for use by labour historians of the future ensuring that the voices of those who made this history will be part of that narrative.

SHOP STEWARDS TRAINING PROGRAMME

Course Title	Course Dates	Duration	Location
Union Representative Advanced Senior	October 3/4/5	3 days	OTC Dublin
Union Representative Introductory	October 10/11/12	3 days	OTC Dublin
Training Development 1	October 17/18/19/20/21	5 days	OTC Dublin
Trade Union Representative QQI Level 5	November 14/15/16	3 days	OTC Dublin

If you are interested in attending any of these courses, please contact your Mandate Union Official or Mandate Organising & Training Centre on 01-8369699.
OTC = Mandate Organising & Training Centre. Please note venue dates may vary.



Participants in the Trade Union Representation course held in September – back row from left: Gerard Halligan (Argos Longford), Kamil Pruszkowski (Penneys Drogheda), Denis Campion (Tesco Ballincollig), Front row, from left: Charles Lasana (SuperValu Tramore), Amanda Broderick (Penneys Wilton), Sandra Reape (Penneys Ballina), and James Sheikh (SuperValu Swords)



Shop steward Tom Coughlin with assistant shop steward Michael O'Connor in Brown Thomas, Limerick. Michael has just retired after 45 years in Brown Thomas having spent the past 25 years as assistant shop steward and local activist for Mandate. Divisional Organiser Karen Wall told *Shopfloor*: “We would like to wish Michael well in his retirement and thank him for his efforts in furthering the trade union movement in Limerick.”



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Children at the Christ the King School in Nairobi's Kibera slum.

Charity no: CHY 5883 / Charity no: XR 10431

Water charges... bad for the economy, environment & society

By David Gibney

Mandate Communications Officer & R2W Coordinator

"The Irish system of paying for water and sanitation services through progressive taxation and non-domestic user fees is an exemplary model of fair, equitable and sustainable service delivery for the entire world."

These are the words of internationally renowned environmentalist Maude Barlow, the world's leading expert on water and sanitation provision.

The fact of the matter is, irrespective of what you've been told, domestic water charges are economically inefficient, environmentally unsound and socially destructive.

Economically inefficient

Domestic water charges increase the cost of water supply enormously. The largest increase in expenditure comes from the installation of more than one million water meters. This has already cost more than €500m, and the first stage of that programme hasn't yet been completed.

Once the meters are installed, you need to pay for the maintenance, administration and replacement of the meters, which Gerry Concannon, Senior Executive Engineer for Water, says will almost double the cost of water supply per domestic unit.

Then factor in the costs for posting bills which, according to Irish Water, has come to more than €5.6 million in one year. The company has also spent €90 million on consultants and €2.85 million on advertising. So now we have the continuing costs of hundreds of millions of euro and Irish Water hasn't fixed one leak or treated one drop of water. Right2Water believes all this money should be spent on upgrading outdated infrastructure, fixing leaks and incentivising water saving devices.

In 2011, Engineers Ireland put it perfectly in a presentation to government when they said: "The proposed expenditure on water metering would mean spending more than €1 billion which we don't have on something we don't need."

Conservation

The reason we 'don't need' water meters, as Engineers Ireland pointed out, is because there is no environmental benefit to having them. In two years of public debate on this issue, neither the government nor Irish Water have provided one shred of evidence to show that water meters provide a positive environmental outcome.

In fact, the evidence that we do have counters this claim. For example, in the UK, Germany, and the Netherlands it has been found that metering makes little difference to the amount of water used by families. While consumption dropped initially following the installation of meters,



Picture: William Warby (CC BY 2.0)

after a relatively short time this was reversed with families returning to the pre-metered level of consumption.

Furthermore, Irish Water estimates that Irish individuals use 54,750 litres of water per year. The average usage for a single person in the UK is 68,405 per year, approximately 20% more, and the UK has had water meters since the late 1980s.

Not surprisingly, the Irish government has admitted it never investigated whether introducing water charges would have a negative effect on the environment. When you consider the manufacturing process be-

hind one million water meters, their installation – where hundreds of vans are driving around the country burning fuel and drilling holes in the ground – and then the postage of six million letters in six million envelopes, among other activities, you'd have to wonder what kind of negative footprint the water charges policy is having on our environment for no water conservational benefit.

Social impacts

Simon Coveney, the Minister with responsibility for water, refused a minor alteration to the Expert Commission on Water's Terms of Reference, which would have allowed the

Commission to report on: "The social implications of funding water services in the short, medium and long term – including water poverty, future privatisation and potential water shut offs for low income families."

The reason this was denied is obvious. Domestic water charges wreak havoc across the world and infringe on human rights almost everywhere they have been implemented.

In the UK, 23 percent of families now live in water poverty. Since Margaret Thatcher privatised the UK water industry in 1989, the price of water has gone up by more than 313% – double the cost of all other goods.

The price of water in five US cities – Austin, Charlotte, Chicago, San Francisco and Tucson – ballooned by more than 50% over five years, five times higher than inflation. In Detroit, 70,000 families have had their water shut off for being unable to pay their rising bills. The same has occurred to families in Hungary, Cyprus, Paris, Rome and the Czech Republic.

The reason this is happening is because water is fast becoming the most profitable industry in the world and a very effective tax avoidance industry.

In Britain, for example, 19 private water firms made profits of more

than €2.4 billion in 2013 and paid €2.18 billion to shareholders, while only paying £74 million in tax. That's an effective tax rate of three percent.

The largest, Thames Water, made more than €2.11bn between 2008 and 2013, paying more than €1.65 billion to shareholders and paying €2.7 million in tax, an effective tax rate of 0.128%. In 2013, it was one of seven firms not to pay any corporation tax at all.

Citigroup Chief Economist Willem Buiter explained: "Water as an asset class will, in my view, become eventually the single most important physical-commodity based asset class, dwarfing oil, copper, agriculture commodities and precious metals."

Credit Suisse put it a bit more frighteningly: "Water is a focus for those in the know about global strategic commodities. As with oil, the supply is finite but demand is growing by leaps and unlike oil there is no alternative."

When water is commodified, it inevitably leads to privatisation and a breach in human rights. Some might think this couldn't happen in Ireland? Remember, the original plan for water charges by Fianna Fail and the Green Party, and then the Fine Gael and Labour Government's plans. They wanted to introduce water charges at an average rate of between €400-€500 per year. That would have meant your average retail worker, hospitality worker and pensioner would immediately have been thrown into water poverty as they'd be spending more than three percent of their income on water. And the Minister at the time, Phil Hogan said, if you couldn't pay your water bill, your water would be turned down to a trickle.

Privatisation

Domestic water charges will lead to privatisation in the future. If you doubt that, then ask yourself why the Irish government stubbornly refuses to give us a referendum to enshrine ownership of our water in the Constitution. Even if a future government didn't want to privatise, the EU and the IMF have a history of forcing countries to sell off their water in times of economic turbulence, just like they did to Greece and Portugal in recent years. They couldn't do it to Ireland during our bailout because there was no revenue-raising stream. Instead, they instigated the first step, the installation of meters.

Since the election, the government has kicked the can down the road with the hope of resurrecting this regressive and socially destructive policy in the future. The fact is if we had a functioning democracy, water charges would already be abolished, not suspended, and abolished for good.



Picture: Sinn Féin (CC BY 2.0)

Time for us to join the dots...



Niall Crowley

"IRELAND needs a dramatic change of direction – does anybody really want it?" This was the question posed above an article by David Gibney of Right2Change in the June edition of *Shopfloor*. The answer is so obvious, there seemed little point in the one page article. The article was, however, compelling. Of course we want dramatic change, but does our current practice across civil society actually reflect this?

David Gibney suggested: "Politics is broken, of that, there is little doubt, but if we don't do anything about it, we are contributing to the disasters of the future."

He posed the useful challenge that "if we are to truly build a movement that can achieve positive change, we all have a responsibility to play our part because the opponents of change and the advocates of the status quo are organised and very powerful."

He left no room for doubt in stating "the alternative is to continue to operate in isolation and advocate based on narrow self-interest which has led to the destruction of so many lives over the last number of years."

This is a crucial debate that demands an urgent and practical response from all in civil society organisations. It is a debate that Claiming Our Future has sought to



Thought-provoking: flashback to David Gibney's comment piece in the last issue of *Shopfloor*

“The challenge has been posed. The ideas are there. The urgency is evident. Now is the time for leadership in building a more connected and powerful civil society”

promote. In effect, cross-sectoral civil society movement building was central to the formation of Claiming Our Future in the first place. There is, however, a strange and silent reluctance. Claiming Our Future has not succeeded and will close at the end of this year. It offers some hope to see Right2Change taking up this theme.

The final deliberative event of Claiming Our Future was held in June on the theme of future prospects for

and challenges to civil society in this context of broken politics. Our understanding of broken politics was of a politics that is unable to address the big issues in our society such as inequality, climate change, precarious work, poverty and the degradation of our public services.

Broken politics presents a challenge to civil society and how we pursue the change needed in our society.

The fragmentation of civil society

was a big focus in the debates. This fragmentation is not new but it was seen as having increased over the years of austerity. It is evident across the different sectors of civil society between trade unions, community groups, global justice groups, cultural groups and environmental organisations. We will do the odd project together, but there is little evidence of sustained networking behind the achievement of a common societal vision despite our shared values of equality, solidarity, environmental sustainability, and social justice.

There was a strong and shared concern for connection and collaboration. Support structures would help connection and collaboration. New forms of organisation would allow a cross-pollination of ideas and strategies between the different sectors.

Clarity of purpose

A clarity of shared purpose and vision would underpin connections. Our shared values should provide an effective framework for this.

Ultimately there is a need to create more opportunities to come together across different sectors, to develop new types of communication, to build a shared consciousness, and to work together to mobilise people for change.

There was commitment to build a different and more connected civil society into the future with a range of propositions made. We could build solidarity by contributing to each other's campaigns. A task force of 'alliance builders' could assist in this.

We could develop new spaces and structures where different sectors could connect at local and at national

levels. We could use our own media to inform and stimulate this networking. Finally, a shared long-term vision could be agreed and serve as a source of connection and collaboration.

These were the ideas that emerged from a lively and creative event that benefited from perspectives from across all sectors of civil society. The design of the event mixed formal inputs and group discussion with an array of creativity that reflected a new form of collaboration between the worlds of culture and of activism. All this offers hope for the future.

There is always a 'however'. Is the energy and creativity there to forge a new type of movement based civil society? As David Gibney argues, we have failed our values and our mission if it is not. Yet, of the 250 people who booked into the conference, only 130 turned up. Few attended the follow on reflection meeting.

There is always a 'but'. There is a drive for change. Blue Drum are organising a deliberative event on 'The legacy of community arts and culture and its agency for transformation now' in Galway on October 16 and 17 as a follow on to the debates. Claiming Our Future will publish a video piece on the event and a series of blogs on reactions to the concluding propositions and the way forward.

The report of the event is being widely circulated by organisations from all sectors and is drawing attention to the urgency for action.

The challenge has been posed. The ideas are there. The urgency is evident. Now is the time for leadership in building a more connected and powerful civil society.

NEWS

ONE Cork gets down to the brass tacks...

ON August 25, ONE Cork ran the first in a series of 'State of the Nation' events. The event was open to all and posed the question – *Are we working to live or living to work?*

Dr Tom O'Connor, Economics and Public Policy Lecturer from Cork Institute of Technology, kicked off the conversation. What followed was an impressive discussion ranging from economics to workers' rights to perceived student apathy.

The event was aimed at those between the age of 18 and 35, and

everyone was welcome regardless of union membership status.

You can catch up on what was said over on Twitter at [#sotn](https://twitter.com/sotn) [#onecork](https://twitter.com/onecork)

Given the success of the event, ONE Cork is to run a second 'State of the Nation' event in October. More details will be posted on www.onemovement.work shortly. You can also follow ONE Cork on Twitter [@onemovementcork](https://twitter.com/onemovementcork) or on Facebook facebook.com/onecork



Dr Tom O'Connor kicks off discussions at the 'State of the Nation' event



DO YOU HAVE A MANDATE-THEMED STORY OR PIC? Email us at news@mandate.ie

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Irish-based multinational accused of union-busting in the Philippines

● Irish unions call for reinstatement of 98 sacked workers

By David Gibney
Mandate Communications Officer

FOUR Irish trade unions – Mandate, Unite, the Communications Workers' Union and OPATSI, the plasterers' union – have called on Galway-based multinational C&F Group to reinstate 98 workers sacked in the Philippines for joining a trade union.

On May 26, the workers, many with three to 12 years service, registered their union with the Department of Labor and Employment. The very next day the company abruptly offered a redundancy programme.

The union obtained its certificate of registration on May 30, 2016 and on June 6 filed for representation rights for the workers for collective bargaining purposes. On that day, management said they were subjecting 98 workers to "retrenchment," or laying-off, of which more than 63 are union officers or union members.

Three days after the lay-offs, the company hired 55 new agency-supplied workers on top of the 50 agency workers already employed at the plant.

Since the workers were dismissed, they have been on strike outside the factory. It is the first ever industrial action in the economic zone in the Philippines and has been in place for more than eight weeks now.

Speaking on behalf of the workers, Esmeraldo Ison told *Shopfloor*: "What has happened to us is very disappointing. Many of us have worked for this company for several years and we have been sacked for trying to avail of our international human rights."

He explained that the workers have filed for illegal dismissal cases but that process could take up to 10 years. "We need our jobs so we can feed our families. We cannot wait three or four years for this to reach



Stop union busting! Protesting workers outside the C&F Tooling plant in the Philippines

the courts. We want to be reinstated immediately."

Mandate General Secretary John Douglas described the actions of management at C&F as deplorable.

He said: "This is a clear case of union-busting and it's embarrassing that it's an Irish firm with Irish management involved in this type of exploitation."

"The Managing Director of C&F, John Flaherty, needs to do the right thing and ensure these workers are reinstated immediately and compensated for any losses they have incurred due to the alleged behaviour of his management team in the Philippines."

The trade unions have also set up an online petition calling on C&F

Tooling to reinstate the 98 workers.

The unionised workers are demanding that the company:

- Reinstatement unconditionally all the 98 workers summarily and discriminatorily terminated;

- Recognise and respect the rights of the workers to organise and to collectively bargain;

- Respect the right of the workers for a one-day rest in a week and stop the inhumane practice of continuous and excessive long hours of work.

- Investigate and impose disciplinary action on a number of named managers.

- Lastly, for management to make corrective actions to address the violations of the Electronic Industry Citizenship Coalition (EICC) Code of Conduct.

C&F Manufacturing Phils. Corporation is an Irish-owned subsidiary of C&F Tooling Ltd. of Galway, Ireland. They have operations in Ireland, Germany, Czech Republic, USA and the Philippines.

According to the company website, C&F Group had a turnover in excess of \$100m in 2007 and the company supplies components to multinational corporations including IBM, EMC, APC, Ingersoll Rand, Glen Dimplex, Sanyo and Hitachi Koki.

C&F Group's code of ethics include:
FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION
IN CONFORMANCE with local law,
participants shall respect the right of all workers to form and join trade unions of their own choosing, to bargain collectively and to engage in peaceful assembly as well as respect the right of workers to refrain from such activities. Workers and/or their representatives shall be able to openly communicate and share ideas and concerns with management regarding working conditions and management practices without fear of discrimination, reprisal, intimidation or harassment.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

IBEC should shift attitude on pay

Dear Editor

My son, who used to work in Clerys, got a job in Applegreen with a contract of between 18 and 36 hours a week. He was told at his interview there were three shifts operating a day – 7am to 3pm, 3pm to 11pm and 11pm to 7am.

However, now the shop is open, it turns out his roster has four-hour shifts each day. Working a four-hour shift effectively means that he is earning less than if he was on social welfare that day. The rate of pay is

minimum rate – €9.15 an hour. A social welfare payment of €188 a week is divided by five days instead of six. How is anybody expected to better themselves working under these conditions?

With people expected to work like this, the economy won't improve. More of a burden is being imposed on the state with the Government picking up the difference between low pay and a proper living wage.

IBEC's view that €11.50 an hour is too much is a disgrace. I wonder how

many IBEC people live on €9.15 an hour or, for that matter, on €11.50 an hour.

Why are employers allowed to do this? When people are taken off the live register, employers are entitled to get a payment from the state.

Why doesn't the state ensure that these jobs are permanent and full-time, instead of employers taking advantage of people wanting to work for a decent wage?

Yours,
Maureen Deans



'Journalism is not a crime': NUJ Irish Executive Council Chair Gerry Carson (fifth from left) and NUJ Irish Secretary Séamus Dooley with IEC members outside the Turkish Embassy in Dublin. Picture: Maxwell Photography

Coup does not excuse abuse of human rights



Séamus Dooley
Irish Secretary, NUJ

"YOU cannot defend democracy by abusing human rights." That was the stark message from the National Union of Journalists on August 24th when we met Turkish First Counsellor Isil Güler Ileri to discuss recent attacks on media freedom in that country.

Media freedom has been under attack in Turkey for a long time but the government is now using emergency powers invoked after this year's failed coup to clamp down on the media.

The NUJ has been working with the International Federation of Journalists in monitoring the situation in Turkey and have received detailed reports from our four sister unions in Turkey.

The government has issued decrees ordering the closure of 131 media organisations, including three news agencies, 16 television channels, 23 radio stations, 45 daily newspapers, 15 magazines and 29 publishing houses.

Journalists are being issued with arrest warrants and deprived of their rights without due process. Under the

Under the state of emergency, the authorities can hold suspects in detention without charge for 30 days. There is an unending revolving door through which journalists are processed

state of emergency, the authorities can hold suspects in detention without charge for 30 days. There is an unending revolving door through which journalists are processed.

Throughout 2015 the authorities cracked down dramatically, taking over many privately-owned news outlets and arresting journalists under far-reaching anti-terror laws but now the coup is being used as cover for appalling abuse of journal-

ists and trade union leaders. The situation regarding the pro-Kurdish journalists and their media is especially worrying. For many years, they have been targeted and the country's anti-terror laws have been abundantly used against them.

Of particular concern is the banning of *Ozgur Gundem*, the pro-Kurdish daily. All its journalists were taken into custody and tortured.

We understand that 22 of them were released but editor-in-chief, Inan Kızılkaya and executive editor Bilir Zana, are still under custody and one member of its advisory board, Aslı Erdogan, a renowned writer of literature, was subsequently arrested.

All this is made possible by use of the Turkish anti-terror law, known as Terörle Mücadele Kanunu, or TMK, which contains a definition of terrorism that most experts agree is too broad and too vague, giving zealous prosecutors and judges the ability to imprison and try them as if they were members of the PKK.

As a trade union the NUJ is gravely concerned at the decision to prosecute Disk Basın-Is officials for expressing solidarity with journalists at *Ozgür Gundem*. The first trial of board member Ayşe Dükan is scheduled for September 20th.

This strikes at the heart of the rights of journalists and trade unionists: the right to free expression and free assembly.



Picture: William John Gauthier

SKILLS FOR WORK

Interested in a computer training course?



Do you have a desire to improve your communication through computer skills but never got around to it?

Communications through Computers

Starting from scratch this course helps you to use a computer and builds confidence for communicating on-line.

Mandate Trade Union in conjunction with Skills for Work is offering free training.

The courses are to encourage members back into learning and training whilst aiming towards a FETAC level 3 Award.

If you are interested in doing a Communications through Computers course, contact:

Mandate Training Centre
Distillery House
Distillery Road
Dublin 3

Phone: **01- 8369699**

Email: **mandateotc@mandate.ie**

Courses are free and open to members who have not achieved Leaving Certificate or who have an out of date Leaving Certificate. You can also achieve a FETAC Level 3 Award. Skills for Work is funded by the Department of Education & Skills.

Picture: European Parliament

Trade Development (Full & Part-Time) Training Programmes 2016/17

FULL-TIME PROGRAMME:

DT417: BSc (Honours) degree in Bar Studies – Management & Entrepreneurship

Full details go to:

www.dit.ie/study/undergraduate/programmes/dt417

PART-TIME PROGRAMMES (CPDs)

Bar and Beverage Operations Studies 1 (Course Code TFBO 1024)

This programme enables the learner to develop a deeper understanding of bartending for the licensed and hospitality industries. It is in this context that this 12 week part-time course will help prepare candidates (or apprentices) for future roles as bartenders.

Class Day/Time: Thursdays 9am to 1pm or 2pm to 6pm
(12 Weeks: Starting 15th September 2016)

Room 107 – D.I.T, Training Bar, Marlborough Street, Dublin)
Subjects covered: Bartending practices, Customer care, Responsible service of alcohol (RSA), Foundation Cocktail Making, foundation wines studies, beers and draught dispense mgt, professional & industry associations, Licensing laws, Hygiene and bar procedures including equipment use.

Award: CPD of the Dublin Institute of Technology in Bar and Beverage Operations Studies 1.

Successful candidates are also eligible to apply for the Bar and Beverage Operations Studies 2 (TFBS 1023).

Course and Examination Fees: Available on request
Enrolment/Application: Early August / September 2016,
To apply: Tel: (01) 402 4344 or email: scaft@dit.ie

Bar and Beverage Operations Studies 2 (Course Code TFBS 1023)

This programme builds on the knowledge and skills gained from Bar and Beverage Operations Studies 1 and continues to help the learner develop a deeper understanding of bartending for the licensed and hospitality industries. It is in this context that this 12 week part-time course will help prepare candidates for future roles as bartenders.

Class Day / Time: Monday 3.30 – 7.30 pm or Wednesday 3.00-7.00 pm

(12 Weeks: Starting 23rd January 2017, Room 107 – D.I.T, Training Bar, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1)

Subjects Covered: Role of the bartender, Flairtending, Intermediate Cocktail Making, Operational Food Safety, Bar & Cellar Operations, Cash Controls and payment systems, Barista skills, Classic bartending practices, Hot Drinks, Dietetic Cocktails, stock taking procedures and bar merchandising.

Awards: CPD of the Dublin Institute of Technology in Bar & Beverage Operations Studies 2. Successful candidates are also eligible to apply for the TFBO 3021 Bar & Beverage Management Studies 1 course.

Course and Examination Fees: Available on request
Enrolment/Application: Early August / September 2016,
to apply Tel: (01) 402 4344 or email: scaft@dit.ie

Cocktail Making Course

(Course Code TFBS 1021)

Developing the skills, art and ability required to prepare and serve a range of cocktails in a professional manner is one of the keys to both entertaining customers and providing a profitable source of revenue. Course classes consist of a tutorial and a practical cocktail making session. Candidates who successfully complete this 12 week course will be competent and confident in serving a range of classic cocktails and contemporary mixed drinks utilising a variety of techniques and styles. Successful candidates are also eligible to apply for the TFBS 2021 Advanced Cocktail Making course.

Class Day / Time: Thursday 9.00 am – 12.00 am
(12 Weeks: Starting 26th January 2017, Room 107 – D.I.T, Training Bar, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1)

Subjects covered: Evolution of Cocktails, Responsible Service of Alcohol, Identification and use of Cocktail Equipment, Classic and Flair Tending Styles of Cocktail Making, Preparation and Service of Classic and Contemporary Cocktails, Costing techniques, garnishing techniques, special master classes.

Award: CPD of the Dublin Institute of Technology in Cocktail Making.

Course and Examination Fees: Available on request
Enrolment/Application: Early Aug/ Sep 2016 or early January 2017, to apply Tel: (01) 402 4344 or email: scaft@dit.ie

Bar and Beverage Management Studies 1 (Course Code TFBO 3021)

The fact that the licensed industry has remained so popular is a tribute to the quality of the product. The bar manager plays a central role here, managers must be first class merchandisers, superb people managers and be au fait with profit and stock margins. It is in this context that this 12 week part-time course will help prepare candidates for future roles as bar and beverage managers.

Class Day / Time: Monday, 12.00 – 3.00 pm
(12 Weeks: Starting January 23rd 2017, Room 107 – D.I.T, Training Bar, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1)

Subjects Covered: Role of bar management, Managing Quality Control, Managing RSA programmes, Supervisory Management & Training techniques, Licensing Laws, Managing Cocktails, Stock Control, Waste Management, Marketing & Promotions, managing health & safety in prevention of conflict & violence, research and case study analysis.

Award: CPD of the Dublin Institute of Technology in Bar and Beverage Management Studies 1.

Course and Examination Fees: Available on request.
Enrolment / Application: Early Aug/ Sep 2016 or early January 2017, to apply Tel: (01) 402 4344 or email: scaft@dit.ie

Cocktail Making: One Day Course

This one day (six hours) module introduces the learner to the principles and practices of cocktail making including a range of classic and contemporary mixed drinks.
Class Day / Time: The module will be offered in a one day six hour block that may include one afternoon and evening or one full day (6 Hours in total) – DIT, Training Bar, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.

Award: Cocktail Making – Certificate of Attendance of the Dublin Institute of Technology

Course and Examination Fees: Available on request.

(Group / trade bookings are also most welcome)

Enrolment / Application: Early Aug/ Sep 2016 or early January 2017, to apply Tel: (01) 402 4344 or email scaft@dit.ie

Additional CPD Part-time trade development courses are also available in the following fields of study;

- International Beer & Draught Dispense Management Studies (Code: TFBS 1023) - starting 12th September 2016.
- Spirits and Liqueurs Studies (Code: TFBS 1026) - starting 12th September 2016.
- Advanced Cocktail Making (Code: TFBS 2021) - starting 23rd January 2017.
- Wine Studies (Code TFBS 1025) - offered in both semesters – September 2016 & January 2017.
- Advanced Wine Studies (Code TFBS 4021) - offered in both semesters – September 2016 & January 2017.

For Further details regarding full-time & part-time trade training courses contact:

School Administrator,

**School of Culinary Arts & Food Technology,
College of Arts & Tourism,
DIT, Cathal Brugha Street, Dublin 1.**

Email: scaft@dit.ie Tel: 01-4024344

or

**Mr. James Murphy, MSc, MA, Mgt Dip,
Trade Development Programmes Co-ordinator, Lecturer,
Bar Management Studies,
College of Arts & Tourism,
DIT, Cathal Brugha Street, Dublin 1,
Email: James.p.murphy@dit.ie Tel: 01-4024453**



Carer's leave – your questions answered

Carer's leave allows a worker to leave their employment temporarily for up to 104 weeks to provide full-time care for people in need of full-time care and attention. The leave is unpaid, explains **Réamonn McDunphy**, but people who take carer's leave have their jobs kept open for the duration of the leave.

Do you have a family member, relative or friend with a disability or illness which has caused them to require full-time care and attention?

Full-time care and attention means that they require continual supervision and frequent assistance throughout the day in connection with normal bodily functions or continual supervision in order to avoid danger to themselves.

Do you need to take a break from work to provide that care?

If so, you may be entitled to Carer's Leave and Carer's Benefit.

What is Carer's Leave?

Carer's Leave is a form of unpaid leave available to people who have been in their current job for at least 12 months and who need to

take a break from work to provide full-time care and attention to someone. You can apply for one continuous period of 104 weeks or for a number of periods not exceeding a total of 104 weeks and you will have your job kept open for you for the duration of the leave.

What is Carer's Benefit?

Carer's Benefit is a social welfare payment, based on your PRSI contributions, payable to employees who take carer's leave or end their employment to give full-time care and attention to a person needing that level of care. It is payable regardless of any other income you may have.

How much is it?

Carer's Benefit is payable at €205 per week. If you are single parent, you can get an additional €29.80 weekly per qualified child you

have. If you are married, in a civil partnership or cohabiting, you may get an additional €14.90 weekly per qualified child you have as long as your spouse/partner's income does not exceed €400 per week.

How do I qualify?

You must be aged 16 or over and under 66, have been working at least 16 hours a week (or 32 hours a fortnight) in 8 of the 26 weeks before you apply or the start of your Carer's Leave.

You must have at least 156 contributions paid at any time between your entry into insurable employment and the time you make your claim for Carer's Benefit and:

39 contributions paid in the Relevant Tax Year; or

39 contributions paid in the 12-month period before the start of Carer's Benefit; or

26 contributions paid in the Relevant Tax Year and 26 contributions paid in the year before that.

The Relevant Tax Year is the second last complete tax year before the year in which you make your claim.

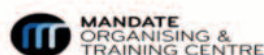
How long is it payable for?

Carer's Benefit is payable for a maximum of 104 weeks for each person you care for. You can take it in one go or for a number of periods not exceeding a total of 104 weeks.

Where can I get further information?

Further information and an application form [CARB1] can be obtained from www.welfare.ie, by email to carers@welfare.ie by phone to 043-3340000 or in writing to Carers Section, Department of Social Protection, Government Offices, Ballinalee Road, Longford.

Réamonn McDunphy works in the Carer's Benefit Section at the Department of Social Protection



Trade Union Representation (QQ1 Level 5)

This course for shop stewards/union representatives who have completed the introductory course or who have relevant experience.

Course content:

- Understanding Mandate's structures
- Overview of Mandate's rules
- Industrial Relations institutions and mechanisms
- Mandate's Organising Model
- Negotiations & Collective Bargaining
- Understanding Equality and Diversity
- Developing induction presentation skills
- Introduction to Employment Law
- Identifying issues and using procedures

Certification and Progression: Members who successfully complete this training course will obtain a Mandate certificate. They may progress to the QQI Level 5 Certificate in Trade Union studies or other relevant training courses offered by Mandate.

If you are interested in this course, please contact your Mandate official or Mandate's Training Centre at 01-8369699. Email: mandateotc@mandate.ie



House Committee Training Course

This House Committee course is designed to assist members in their role as Mandate Trade Union representatives and to build on their skills and expertise as a House Committee member. This three-hour course is delivered to House Committee members with a minimum of five in attendance and held at a time that suits you in a location convenient to your workplace.

Course Content:

- Background to Mandate Trade Union.
- A stronger union workplace.
- Organising your workplace.
- Development of effective communications.
- Building your network and involvement in Mandate Trade Union.

If you are interested in this training please contact the training centre at:

**Mandate Organising and Training Centre,
Distillery House, Distillery Road, Dublin 3**
Tel: (01) 836 9699 Email: mandateotc@mandate.ie

A very harsh place to live



Dr Rory Hearne

TASC's recent report on inequality *Cherishing All Equally 2016*, shows that Ireland is a deeply unequal country, that economic inequality is worsening despite the economic recovery, and for those experiencing inequality, particularly children, Ireland is a very harsh place to live.

Economic inequality has become a major issue with the dramatic rise in wealth of the super-rich while the majority suffer austerity, debt and stagnant wages.

In Ireland, inequality rose during the recession and austerity and is continuing to rise despite the economic 'recovery'. For example, it has been top income earners who have gained the most from increases in employment income in recent years.

Unequal employment

The share of gross income going to the top 1% of earners increased from 34% in 2011 to 39% this year. And over half of the increase in total income (€21bn) that has taken place over the last five years has gone to the top 10% of earners alone. While the bottom 50% of earners received just 6% of that increased income.

This is likely to be resulting from a more unequal employment market with an increase in low paid jobs, low hours employment, and precarious work. The Minimum Wage, for example, remains 20% lower than the living wage of €11.50 per hour.

Ireland's progressive income tax and social protection spending does reduce this 'gross' income inequality (which is the highest in the EU) and results in a net income inequality at the EU average. However, Ireland's net income inequality has also risen in recent years, and an accurate assessment of economic inequality in a country requires inclusion of other measures (such as wealth, poverty, public services, taxation, cost of living, among others) which TASC provides in this report.

In relation to the distribution of wealth, Ireland has also become much more unequal. Over the last three decades the top 10% have increased their proportion of net wealth from 42% to 54%, while the share of net wealth held

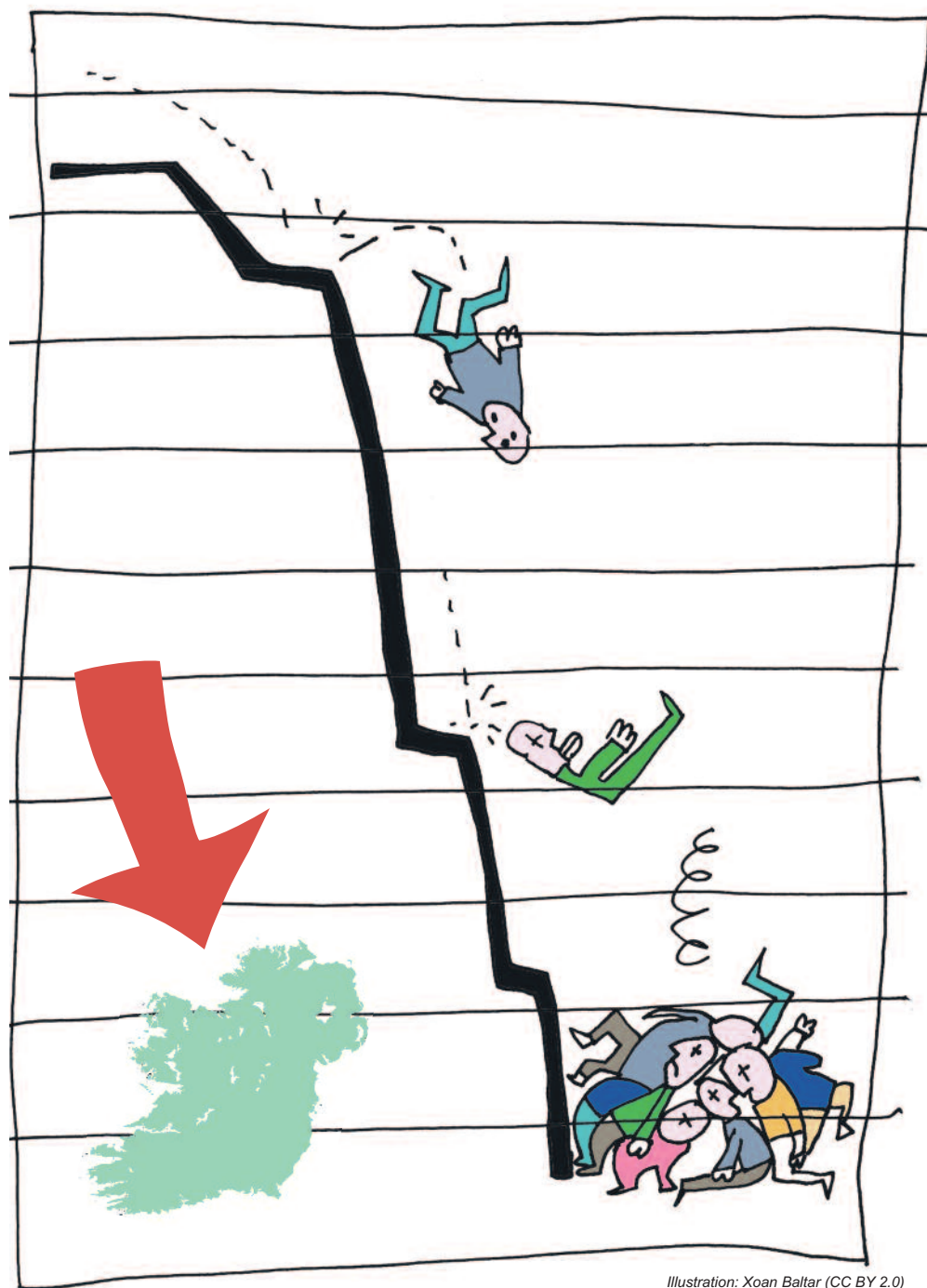


Illustration: Xoan Baltar (CC BY 2.0)

by the bottom 50% has halved (from 12% to 5%). The recession and austerity period resulted in a dramatic increase in poverty and, despite the recovery, these levels continue to increase. At 36% child deprivation is double the 2007 rate, while 58% of lone parents suffer deprivation, up from 35% in 2007.

This means over a third of Irish children live in households experiencing two or more types

of material deprivation such as being unable to afford to heat their homes, buy new clothes, have sufficient food or socialise with friends and family. We can see the profound impact on inequality on children's educational development and wellbeing. By just three years of age, children in higher income families perform, on average, better educationally than children from lower income backgrounds with a 1% in-

“This means over a third of Irish children live in households experiencing two or more types of material deprivation such as being unable to afford to heat their homes, buy new clothes, have sufficient food or socialise with friends and family”

crease in household income predicted to lead to a 5.1% increase in educational test scores.

While at just the age of nine, children from more disadvantaged backgrounds are more anxious, less happy and report poorer behaviour than children from wealthier backgrounds. This is not because children from lower income backgrounds are born less intelligent or unhappier than higher income children but because of the detrimental impacts of multiple economic inequalities (like housing, health, poverty, family stress) on their lives.

By age 13, children have internalised their experiences of inequality by reducing their expectations. Only 36% of children at age 13 from the bottom income decile expect to achieve a third-level education in contrast to 65% of children from the top income decile.

Gender inequalities

Women in Ireland are also disproportionately affected by economic inequality with a concentration of women in low paid, part-time work, and unpaid care work. Gender inequalities result in women being underrepresented in more senior positions in employment and politics.

Ireland's high level of economic inequality results from our neoliberal economic model that is based on low tax, low public spending (our government expenditure as a percentage of GDP is now the joint lowest (along with Lithuania) in the EU) and free-market capitalism (facilitating the maximum profiteering by private corporations).

Without significant changes in policies that set out to make Ireland a more equal country then things are going to get much worse for the majority of people in this country.

Dr Rory Hearne is a Senior Policy Analyst with independent progressive think tank, TASC, and lead author of the report, *Cherishing All Equally 2016*. See the full report *Cherishing All Equally 2016*, at <http://www.tasc.ie/publications/cherishing-all-equally-2016/>

NEWS

ICTU: new mandatory pensions system only option

MORE than 200,000 people at work now will face 'unexpected hardship' in retirement because official indifference and the complacency of financial institutions has seriously eroded the value of their pensions, Congress has warned.

Congress official Fergus Whelan, pictured right, made the comments ahead of the Changing the Pensions Landscape conference at the Mansion

House, Dublin, on September 29.

He said: "It is now clear that the serious crisis in Irish pensions will only be resolved by the creation of an entirely new system of universal, mandatory pension provision. The current system is untenable."

Mr Whelan pointed out that many at work today in Ireland will slide into poverty in retirement, while others will

barely make ends meet. "But this will not happen because they failed to make adequate provision for their retirement. Instead they are victims of poor regulatory oversight, official indifference and complacency in the financial sector."

He said the Pensions Authority's most recent report reveals that from a peak of 1,500 healthy Defined Benefit

pension schemes a few years ago, with nearly 300,000 active members, only 429 vulnerable schemes remain, covering little more than 100,000 active members.

"While the Defined Benefit model is in decline internationally, it is our belief that the scale of the losses suffered by Irish workers is far greater than elsewhere."



Majority back Argos pay proposals

FOLLOWING on from a recent set of discussions between Argos and Mandate a set of proposals have been accepted by a significant majority of members.

The agreement provides for the restoration of previous cuts to public holiday and Sunday premiums as well as a framework for both sides to engage further on the issue of working



hours and pay frequency. Mandate's David Miskell told *Shopfloor*: "The

agreement represents a step forward in that some restoration of previous cuts have been achieved. While there is much work to do it is to be welcomed that it has been possible to reach such an agreement at this time." Both the company and Mandate restated their commitment to work together within the parameters of the collective agreements.

B&Q Knocknacarra pay issue for WRC

AN issue around pay at B&Q Knocknacarra has been referred to the Workplace Relations Commission.

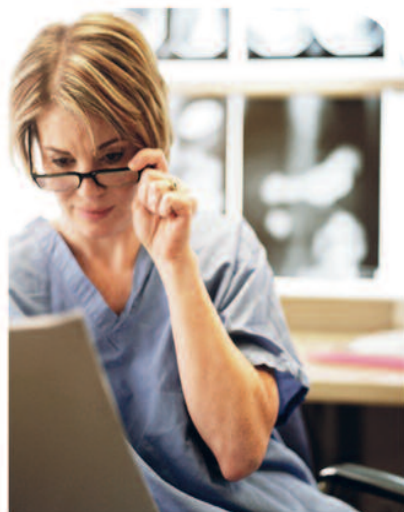
The matter relates to the payment of a 3% pay rise that was recently given to staff in B&Q on foot of a claim by Mandate.

It appears a decision has been made not to pay the increase to some workers in the store because they are on different rates to the pay scale based on their

experience. Divisional Organiser David Miskell described the move as "particularly unfair".

He said: "It was many years since staff had a pay increase before Mandate made the claim it did. To deny it to a relatively small group of workers is unreasonable behaviour. It will now be necessary to take this through the Industrial Relations machinery with a view to bringing about an acceptable resolution."

HEALTH SAFETY REPRESENTATION



AIM OF THE COURSE

The purpose of this course is to equip participants with the knowledge, skills and competence to enable the learner to promote and maintain safety and health in the workplace and represent workers on health and safety issues.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Learners on completion will:

- Understand the concepts of the promotion of safety, health and welfare in the workplace
- Be familiar with the core health and safety legislation
- Describe the role, the rights and the function of the Safety Representative
- Understand the duties of employers and the role of the HSA
- Understand the importance of the safety statement, hazard identification and risk assessment
- Explain the fire hazards, their sources and the requirement for the fire prevention controls
- Understand the communication process and effective participation at meetings
- Outline factors of accident causation, describe prevention strategies and policies



WHO IS THE COURSE FOR?

The course is designed for newly-appointed Safety Representatives in the workplace. It will be appropriate for those already in the role or those interested in taking on the role who may not have had adequate training. The course will also benefit more experienced reps who may want a refresher course.



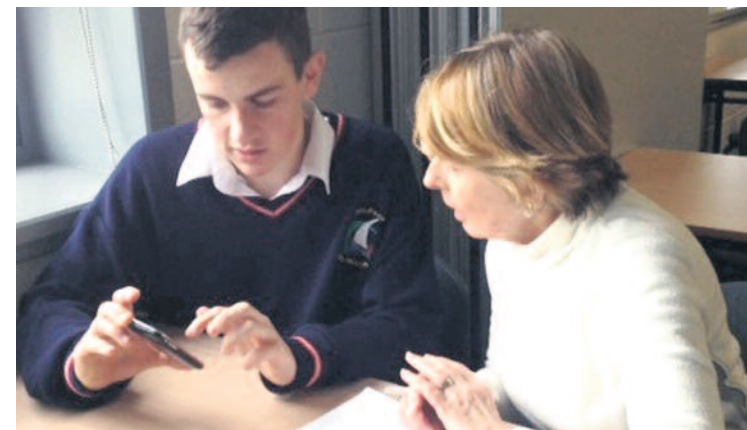
For further info and booking log on to www.ictu.ie/unionlearning and search courses for HS or contact Pauline Corr at (01) 889 7707 email pauline.corr@ictu.ie

DATE Sept 26 - 30
VENUE MANDATE
OTC Distillery Rd, Dublin 3

DATE Oct 11, 12, 13, 25 & 26
VENUE IMPACT
Fr. Matthew St, Cork

DATE Nov 7 - 11
VENUE SIPTU
Church St, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

121digital training FREE private lessons for members of Mandate



Dear Mandate member

you or a family member may be interested in this

FREE 121digital training. Each learner chooses their own course content; learns at their own speed; there is no exam. Each learner has their own tutor. Lessons are private. We meet in a group. The 121digital programme engages the young (secondary school students and university undergraduates) as tutors to share their digital skills with adults living and/or working in the local community. Learners bring their own device (laptop /tablet /smartphone) to lessons. 121digital lessons take place in your local secondary schools, IT colleges and universities and also in libraries, community centres and youth centres and are run during the working day (in schools) and in the evenings in other centres.

The 121digital programme has engaged 2,000 volunteers to train 2,000 learners, so far but places are limited – so book early. 121digital training centres maintain a waiting-list of learners for future courses.

121digital was established in 2010 and since 2014 is supported by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR), hence our programme is recognised by the Government and is part-funded for its work in the community.

When completing their end-of-course questionnaires, learners report improved communication with family and friends and access to services. They report feeling more safe and secure online and a resulting improved self confidence.

"My (digital device) is my friend, now. I can send emails and attachment. I called my grandson on Skype. I can find information online," they tell us. Months and/or years later learners return with another device (laptop, tablet, or a new smartphone) for another course. Visit the website www.121digital.ie for more information and call your local 121digital training centre to book.

Regards

Fintan Mulligan
121digital
fintan.mulligan@121digital.ie
Tel: 086 8199 752

Do your bit on the Shopfloor!



SHOPFLOOR KEEPS
YOU INFORMED...
HELP KEEP US
INFORMED BY
EMAILING **STORIES**
& **PICTURES** ABOUT
YOUR WORKPLACE

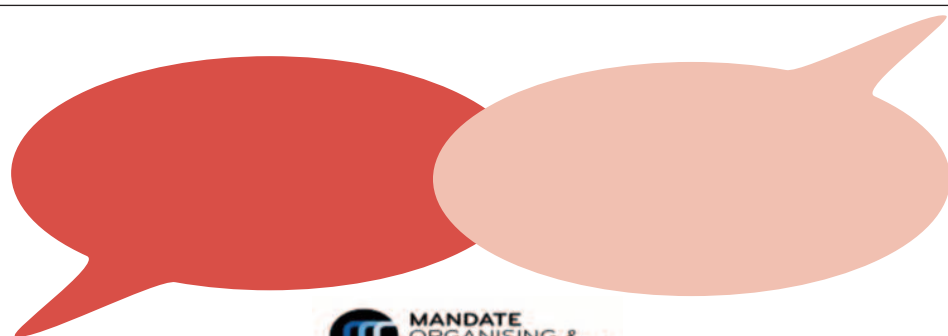
Please contact **SHOPFLOOR** at news@mandate.ie
or post your article to **Shopfloor, Mandate Trade Union, 9 Cavendish Row, Dublin 1**

Pay restored at O'Tooles Supervalu in Tuam

STAFF at O'Tooles Supervalu, Tuam, have had their pay restored recently following on from previous cuts.

Welcoming the move David Miskell, Mandate representative for the Galway area, said: "Given that staff were willing to work with the company through difficult times, it is now appropriate that this restoration has taken place."

Some further discussions are continuing over increments and Industrial Relations procedures.



MANDATE
ORGANISING &
TRAINING CENTRE

Learn English with Mandate for free!

Mandate, your trade union, is offering English speaking classes for members. The course is for members who while speaking some English have never had the opportunity for formal training. In the course you will learn the basic grammar and improve your vocabulary. You will have the chance to correct those mistakes that your workmates are too polite to tell you about! Improved language skills can add to your confidence and improve your quality of life.

Training is **free** to Mandate members. If there are 10 Mandate members who wish to attend this training, classes will take place in a location near to your workplace.

If you are interested please contact:
Mandate's Training Centre
on **01-8369699**

Places are limited and are allocated on first come, first served basis

This training course is designed for YOU!



MANDATE
ORGANISING &
TRAINING CENTRE

Word Processing QQI Level 5

What you'll learn...

- Word processing common uses, for example: document formatting, graphics tables and mail merge.
- Create documents applying a range of processing features.
- Use proofing tools such as spell-check, thesaurus and search/replace.
- Learn File Management facilities.

Training is free to Mandate members. If there are 10 Mandate members who wish to attend this training, classes will take place in a location near to your workplace.

Contact: **Mandate's Training Centre** on **01-8369699** or
apply online at **www.mandate.ie**

Places are limited and are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

'Enforced Flexibility' in the workplace



MANDATE Assistant General Secretary Gerry Light, James Wickham, Director of TASC (Think-tank for Action on Social Change), and Mandate National Co-ordinator of Training and Development Aileen Morrissey at the launch of the TASC report, titled *Enforced Flexibility? Working in Ireland Today*.

The report was supported by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Mandate's Aileen Morrissey helped to co-ordinated the report for the trade union movement.

President Michael D Higgins and ICTU General Secretary Patricia King both attended the launch. The report identifies huge problems with the growing nature of flexible work which, in many instances, is forced on workers by employers. Mandate's activities in relation to the 'decent work' agenda have highlighted some of the problems associated with precarious work. The union continues to campaign for solutions to the issue, both legislative, and through collective bargaining.



Bar Workers 3-hour training course



Bar workers have identified training that they need and Mandate Trade Union is designing and developing this Training which will be delivered in three 3-hourly courses.

The course content is to raise awareness in the following areas:

- Health and Safety in the workplace
- Health and Safety for the individual
 - Personnel safety as a bar worker
 - Legal entitlements for bar workers
 - Know your employment rights
- Identification of further training requirements for bar workers

Venue: Mandate Training Centre, Distillery Road, Dublin 3

Dates: Tuesday 20th September 2016;

Tuesday 4th October 2016; Tuesday 25th October 2016

Time: 12 noon - 3 pm

Eligibility: Mandate Trade Union members

Places are limited. To secure your place phone Mandate Training Centre at **01-8369699** by **Friday 9th September 2016**
There is no release sought for this course.

STAY
CONNECTED
www.mandate.ie



Union Representative Advanced Senior Course

The Union Representative Advanced Senior Training Course is for union representatives who have completed the Introductory and Advanced course and who have experience as a union

Course content

- The history of trade unionism
- The emergence and development of the market system
- The impact of globalisation
- Free trade and open markets in a modern society

Certification and Progression: Members who successfully complete this training course will obtain a Mandate certificate. They may progress to the FETAC level 5 Certificate in Trade Union studies or other relevant training courses offered by Mandate.

If you are interested in this course, please contact your Mandate Official or Mandate's Training Centre at 01-8369699. Email: mandateotc@mandate.ie



Personal & Professional Development

Mandate Training Centre, Distillery Road, Dublin 3

Training is free to Mandate members. If there are 10 Mandate members who wish to attend this training, classes will take place in a location near to your workplace.

- How to communicate your needs and wants
- Finding the right information that will steer you in the right direction
- The environment in which we live and work
- The social, political and economic landscape of trade unions
- Media ownership – who is telling you what and why
- Social Media – What it is all about
- How to write a good application form and designing a CV
- Strengthening abilities to engage and influence

Contact **Mandate's Training Centre** on **01-836 9699** or apply online at **www.mandate.ie**
Training is **free** to Mandate members but courses are also open to Mandate members who are currently unemployed.

Places are limited and are allocated on a first come, first served basis.



HMCA & MANDATE TRADE UNION A 20 YEAR AFFINITY PARTNERSHIP

Since 1996 Hospital and Medical Care Association (HMCA) have been providing a range of membership benefits to members of Mandate Trade Union and their families.

HMCA were formed in 1978 as a specialist provider of membership benefits and our success relies on the quality of plans which are all supported by a first class customer service and claims handling team. All of the plans are offered on a voluntary and optional basis and as part of your membership with Mandate Trade Union.

As part of our affinity partnership with Mandate Trade Union, HMCA have also contributed to the Mandate Trade Union Benevolent Fund which we are delighted to help support. Once a member has subscribed to a plan then HMCA pays a sponsorship payment, which Mandate pay into their Benevolent fund.

HMCA are continuously looking to offer new products to provide to members and their families that are cost effective and will provide necessary protection when needed. With this in mind, we have recently introduced the low cost Care Starter Cash Plan and Care Cash Plan, both these plans are designed to offer tax-free cash benefits towards, in-patient and day-case hospital admissions, dental, optical, consultations, x-rays, scans, physiotherapy, complementary medicine and much more..

The full range of plans available for Mandate Trade Union members include: -

- ✓ Care Cash Plans
- ✓ Life Plan
- ✓ Dental Plan
- ✓ Personal Accident Plan
- ✓ Travel Plan
- ✓ Vehicle Breakdown Recovery

You can visit the HMCA website at www.hmcaireland.ie or enquire online at www.hmcaireland.ie/mandate.htm for full details of all of the plans.

You can also phone the office in Dublin at **01 6130316** for an informal discussion on your requirements.

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Connect with Mandate

www.mandate.ie

Picture: Rodrigo Senna (CC BY 2.0)



MANDATE MEMBERS HOME & MOTOR INSURANCE

JLT Ireland is offering a home and motor insurance solution for MANDATE Members

Features include:

- Competitive rates
- 24 Hour emergency and claims helpline
- Flexible payment solutions.

For further information on Mandate facilitated insurance solutions please contact:

JLT Ireland
1800 200 200
www.mandate.jltonline.ie



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Gaza kids were pitch perfect!

THE Gaza Kids to Ireland initiative, long in the making and supported financially and logistically by a number of groups and individuals, has been a real success, full of fun and football.

The warmth and solidarity shown to our visitors by thousands of people all over Ireland has been overwhelming; they met a huge welcome wherever they went. Indeed, we could have brought them to every county in Ireland such was the interest in and enthusiasm for their visit.

Bringing the group from Al Helal football academy was always going to be complicated, but it became really onerous due to obstacles Israel put in our path.

Initially a group of 22 travellers was due to arrive in Ireland for a 12-day visit on July 13th, flying from Amman, Jordan, via Istanbul; but their permits to leave the besieged Gaza strip weren't granted by Israel, necessitating the postponement of the programme.

When the permits were finally granted in late July, we had to try to reschedule everything very late, for a shorter visit – July 29th to August 8th.

Worse than the delay was the cruel refusal to issue permits to the entire group. One child from the group of 15 players, 13-year-old Karam Zidan, was prevented from travelling to Ireland, as were five of the seven adults due to travel – two coaches, a journalist, an administrator and the only woman, a specialist in children's mental health.

Apart from the sad blow this represented for us and for them, having just two adults with 14 children who had never before left Gaza – and who spoke very little English – made things very tough.

If Israeli authorities intended to cause maximum disruption to the project by this decision, they very nearly succeeded. However, the travellers and those left behind decided the trip should go ahead; and due to the brilliance, kindness and boundless energy of Al-Helal chairman Ayed Abu



The Al-Helal boys fly the flag...

With the Galway United mascot at Eamonn Deacy Park



Enjoying some fun off the pitch...

Ramadan and coach Moammed Al-rawagh, alongside the voluntary efforts of many people in Ireland, the kids had constant support.

We were also very lucky that Azeez Yusuff from Sport Against Racism Ireland (SARI) joined us for the duration of the trip, as a coach, mentor and friend.

Those prevented from travelling were never far from our thoughts, especially Karam. He was wounded in the 2009 attack on Gaza, so it seems

likely the apartheid state didn't want people in Ireland to hear about his injuries. Left behind, however, he was an even more vivid reminder of what was done to him, and what is done to thousands of other Palestinian children, by Israel. "We are all Karam" was a constant refrain.

The kids from Al-Helal football academy played games against Ballybrack FC, Kinvara United, Nenagh AFC, Nenagh Celtic and Pike Rovers (and beat them all!). They were also guests

of Galway United for their league win over Dundalk – that night, the boys were the guard of honour, played on the pitch at half-time and met the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins.

The Palestinian community in Ireland and the Palestinian diplomatic mission here, including Ambassador Ahmad Abdelrazek, were enthusiastic supporters throughout the visit. SARI and Shamrock Rovers helped create a great evening of beach football on

Dublin's Sandymount Strand.

Existing organisations such as Nenagh Friends of Palestine, who hosted the children for half their visit, and the Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign, in Limerick and elsewhere, were vital to the project; more ad-hoc groups in Ballybrack, Kinvara, and Sandymount worked quickly and tirelessly to organise events. And there were not enough mealtimes to visit all the restaurants that offered to feed the children!

“Those prevented from travelling were never far from our thoughts, especially Karam. He was wounded in the 2009 attack on Gaza, so it seems likely the apartheid state didn't want people in Ireland to hear about his injuries”

Gaza Action Ireland hopes to continue working with Al-Helal and with football in Gaza, including supporting the development of the game for girls in the territory. We hope more visits, in both directions, will become possible.

This grassroots project couldn't have happened without widespread support for fundraising, organising and hosting. It's been absolutely brilliant. Of course, unions played a role too, in supporting fundraising, giving gifts and organising, including the Wexford Council of Trade Unions who hosted the kids for a day, some even acted as chauffeurs to the kids, who won the hearts of all.

SKILLS FOR WORK *Interested in doing a personal finance or maths course?*

Do you have a desire to improve your personal finance skills? Or maths skills? But never got around to doing it?

Personal Finance and Maths course



Starting from scratch this course helps you to improve your maths and personal finance. Mandate Trade Union in conjunction with Skills for Work are offering members the opportunity to attend training. The courses are to encourage members back into learning and training while aiming towards a FETAC level 3 Award. If you are interested in doing a Communications through Computers course, contact:

Mandate Training Centre, Distillery House, Distillery Road, Dublin 3

Phone: **01-8369699** Email: **mandateotc@mandate.ie**

Courses are free and open to members who have not achieved Leaving Certificate or who have an out-of-date Leaving Certificate. You can also achieve a FETAC Level 3 Award. Skills for Work is funded by the Department of Education & Skills.

**DECENCY
FOR DUNNES
WORKERS**



MANDATE

**CONTINUING TO CAMPAIGN FOR
SECURE HOURS AND DECENT CONTRACTS
IN THE RETAIL AND BAR TRADES**

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