

Supporting Unemployed People



inou

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



INOU Annual Report 2025

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Chairperson's Welcome



*Joanne Farrell
INOU Chairperson*

Welcome to the 2025 Annual Report of the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOU). It has been my pleasure to Chair the INOU's National Executive Committee / Board of Trustees over the past year. I would like to thank my colleagues on the NEC for their commitment and contribution to the work and development of the INOU. As you will see from the Director's and Head of Policy and Media's Reports, 2025 has been another busy year for the organisation. I would like to thank the staff of the INOU for their hard work and dedication, for which the NEC and I are extremely grateful.

The Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed seeks to support people who are or who have become unemployed, people who are furthest from the labour market, people who are dependent on a social welfare payment, to ensure that they gain access to the most appropriate supports and services. Our work includes welfare rights and welfare to work advice and advocacy; training people to deliver such advice and supports; engaging with our members on issues of concern and important developments; providing training opportunities to people who are long-term unemployed; engaging with policy makers on existing and emerging issues; working with other civil society organisations; and producing

online information and printed publications including Jobs Watch, INOU e-bulletin and the comprehensive Working for Work.

People can join the INOU as Individual or Solidarity Members: the former are people from whom unemployment is a part of their lived experience, while the latter is open to people who wish to support an organisation working on unemployment and related issues. The General Branch is the mechanism through which unemployed people can participate in the running of the INOU. The active participation of three members of the General Branch on the National Executive Committee is greatly appreciated.

The theme of the 2025 Annual Delegate Conference was the potential effects of Artificial Intelligence, digitalisation and technological change on people who are unemployed, on affiliate organisations and on society as a whole. The impact, particularly of AI, on the world of work and public services has the potential to dramatically change the nature of work and accessing employment; the conference discussed these issues and their potential impacts. I was delighted to welcome Dara Calleary T.D., Minister for Social Protection and Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht to open the conference. The INOU raised with him the importance of addressing the contemporary issues facing people who are unemployed, and others who are reliant on social welfare supports, in a world that is throwing up new challenges and opportunities.

There are ongoing issues facing the INOU's members and affiliated organisations, and these include addressing the issues of income inadequacy, whether they are facing people who are unemployed, reliant on a social welfare payment or in poorly paid employment. Access to the most appropriate range of information, services and supports

that should be available to people who are or become unemployed; people who are seeking access to education, training or employment or other social supports continues to be an issue. Over the past year concerns have arisen that information people accessed through AI was inaccurate and unhelpful – staff in the Welfare Rights and Information Service supported people to address the challenges that arose for them, but it is an issue that the INOU will need to keep an eye on through the course of our work.

In 2025 I had the pleasure of opening INOU online events, which covered a broad range of topics including skills, what resources are available through the public library system, income adequacy and the cost of living crisis, and the work undertaken by other community and civil society organisations. I would like to thank INOU members, affiliates and other organisations for their participation and engagement in these informative events.



Rebecca Gorman, INOU amongst CVP members meeting Minister Thomas Byrne



Add the 10th Alliance meeting with Senator Chris Andrews



BRIDGES project, an ESF+ funded project co-ordinated by Ballymun Jobs Centre



INOUE Out and About

Director's Report



*Bríd O'Brien
Director's Report*

In 2025 a very significant development took place, on March 31st Jobseeker's Pay-Related Benefit (JPRB) was introduced. For many years, the INOU had sought the re-introduction of a pay-related element to Jobseeker's Benefit and the restoration of its duration to pre-2008 levels – 12 and 15 months depending on how long the person seeking the payment had been employed. The JPRB introduced in 2025 is different, there is no additional payment for an adult or child dependent. The duration for someone who has worked between two and five years is 26 weeks; and for someone who has worked more than five years it is 39 weeks. The payment rate varies from 50% to 60% of previous earnings, with a maximum payment of between €300 and €450, depending on duration and length of time on the payment. Details of the JPRB were published in the 31st edition of the INOU's Working for Work (p22-p26).

This section of the annual report gives a description of how the INOU is governed; the work undertaken in 2025 through our Welfare Rights / Welfare to Work team; Membership and Development team; Training Services team; and the INOU's Community Employment Programme. The INOU's policy and media work, including working with other organisations on issues of common concern, is given in the

Head of Policy and Media report; while the Finance Report describes the organisation's income and expenditure for the year.

I would like to thank the INOU's National Executive Committee / Board of Trustees for their ongoing support and guidance of the work of the INOU; to thank my staff colleagues for their commitment, dedication to the work and ethos of the organisation; and to thank the organisations who worked with us on many of our online events throughout 2025, their insights and knowledge are greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank our funders for their support throughout the year: the Department of Social Protection; the Department of Rural and Community Development; Pobal; SOLAS; the City of Dublin Education and Training Board; and INOU affiliated organisations.

Governance

Since 28th February 2020, the INOU has been registered on the Public Register of Charities, the organisation's Charity Number is 20205369. The INOU's Charitable Purpose has 5 main strands:

- The prevention or relief of poverty or economic hardship through the provision of a comprehensive welfare rights / welfare to work information, advocacy and training service.
- The advancement of education through the provision of training / education and acting as a sponsor of employability programmes such as Community Employment (CE) and two Local Training Initiatives (LTI).
- The advancement of community welfare including the relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health or disability through the provision of information on welfare, work, education and training and also directly supporting

unemployed people and organisations working on unemployment.

- The advancement of community development including rural or urban regeneration by supporting community based organisations in their work through the provision of training and information services with a view to enhancing the capacity of organisations to provide services and supports to unemployed people and other people experiencing social and economic exclusion.
- The integration of those who are disadvantaged and the promotion of their full participation in society by way of representing the interests and views of all unemployed people and their dependents at a national level; campaigning for an acceptable standard of living for all unemployed people and their dependents and by campaigning towards the achievement of full employment at an acceptable rate of pay.

The INOU is compliant with the requirements of the Charities' Governance Code and we continued to maintain and adhered to the organisation's governance and oversight framework throughout the year.

Board Meetings

The National Executive Committee / Board of Trustees met on ten occasions in 2025. Board Members / Trustees have overall responsibility for governing the organisation – that is formally directing and regulating the affairs and policies of the organisation. The Board is also the Legal Employer and have particular responsibilities in this regard. The day to day operational management of the organisation is delegated, by the Board, to the INOU Director and Senior Management Team colleagues.

Two Board Development sessions were also held during the year. The first focused on the development of the INOU's Strategic Plan 2025-2029, which is available on our website, and the public Covid 19 pandemic evaluation. The second explored Public Sector Duty; Key Policies and Procedures; INOU Risk Register 2025.

Annual Delegate Conference / Annual General Meeting

The Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOUE) held its Annual Delegate Conference (ADC) on Wednesday 28th May in the Ashling Hotel in Dublin. The theme of the conference was the risks and potential of AI, digitalisation and technological change. The potential effects on people who are unemployed, on affiliate organisations and on society as a whole. The impact, particularly of AI, on the world of work and public services has the potential to dramatically change the nature of work and accessing employment; the conference discussed these issues and their potential impacts.

Joanne Farrell, INOU Chairperson, welcomed Minister Dara Calleary and delegates to the conference



Jonny Pardoe and Maeve Harkin, Louth Local Development Company holding INOU Banner at ADC with Bríd O'Brien and John Farrell

noting the importance of addressing the contemporary issues facing people who are unemployed, and others who are reliant on social welfare supports, in a world that is throwing up new challenges and opportunities.

In his opening address Dara Calleary, Minister for Social Protection and Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht noted that *"The Government is committed to ensuring that Ireland will continue to be a global leader in the development and adoption of new digital technologies. Digitalisation and Technological Change is something that has become a driving force for my department. In addition, our Public Employment Services is learning and evaluating where Generative AI can best support the delivery of employment services to jobseekers and to employers."*

In responding to the Minister's address, Bríd O'Brien, INOU Director noted the importance of addressing income adequacy properly; the need for a pro-active and supportive social welfare system; the need to ensure that there is a smooth transition from welfare to work, and back if required; meaningful and accessible education and training options; build on the capacity of employment programmes; the importance of choice underpinning people's options; addressing the stigma associated with unemployment; the urgent need to introduce socio-economic status as a new ground into Ireland's equality legislation; a person centre public employment service open to everyone of working age; and ensure that technological change is inclusive, that it does not exacerbate social and economic inequalities.

Four motions were debated at the Conference including:

- The INOU General Branch calls on the Government to keep their promise to ensure that the Living Wage replaces the National Minimum Wage and to align the Living Wage with the Minimum Essential Standard of Living (MESL).
- The General Branch calls on the Government to ensure that unemployed people have access to the full range of information, services and supports that are available to them when they become unemployed or sign-on.
- The INOU calls on the Government to deliver wrap around employment and support services that really meet the needs of people who are unemployed, regardless of whether they are on a social welfare payment, and to ensure any use of AI in the public employment service involves service users in the decision-making and evaluation processes of its usage.
- The INOU demands that the Government benchmarks all social welfare rates at a level which is sufficient to lift people above the poverty line and provide them with a Minimum Essential Standard of Living; and to reverse the doubling of the penalty rate for people on a Jobseekers payment, introduced in 2024.

In the roundtable discussions at the Conference, delegates further discussed the issue of technological change across six different topics from the perspective of their work and / or lived experience. These topics included welfare to work barriers and improving welfare to work supports; quality training and education; adequate levels of income; employment services; jobs; and vulnerable groups. The discussions were used to inform the INOU's policy work, in particular our 2026 pre-budget submission to the Government.

Membership and Member Supports

The INOU has three categories of membership: organisations can join us as an affiliate; individuals who are unemployed can join us as Individual Members; and people who employed or retired can also join us Solidarity Members. In 2025 the INOU welcomed six new affiliated organisations including the Clondalkin Traveller Development Group; Daughters of Charity Community Services; Irish Cancer Society; EmployAbility Galway; Cherry Orchard Equine Centre; and the Carrigaline Family Support Centre. By the end of 2025 the INOU had 191 affiliated organisations in membership and 900 Individual Members. Further details can be found on the Membership page of our website www.inou.ie

Membership Engagement

We continued to deepen the levels of engagement with our member organisations and other groups throughout 2025. Over two hundred people participated at our six Discussion Forums, two of which were held in person – the first in the INOU's office in Dublin and the second in Sligo. These Forums explored the Programme for Government 2025-2030; an overview of a range of supports for Jobseeker's seeking to return to employment; the Employment Strand of the National Disability Strategy; and an overview of capacity and ability implications for jobseekers as relevant to Genuinely Seeking Work (GSW) and activation engagement. These Forums provide an important opportunity for the INOU to hear from our affiliates and other organisations how policy implementation is impacting their work and the lives of the people with whom they engage.

Almost five times as many people participated at other thematic events we held on-line throughout the year. The broad range of topics covered in-

cluded resources available in public libraries; working with vulnerable people; skills; qualifications; accessing learning opportunities; capturing progression; cost of living; adequate income; and inclusive employment. These online events were undertaken with colleagues from civil society and public services, providing opportunities for learning and practice exchanges, and how this could support the lives and work of INOU members and affiliates.

The organisations we worked with included the Vincentian MESL Research Centre; Samaritans; Fingal County Council; Rethink Ireland; ESRI; Skillnet Ireland; SOLAS; FESS; Springboard; Maynooth University; TU Dublin; Spéire Nua and Mr Price.

Individual Membership / General Branch

The INOU's General Branch meetings continue to provide important opportunities for our Individual Unemployed Members to have an input into the work of the organisation. In 2025 three members of the INOU's National Executive Committee / Board of Trustees came from the General Branch. Members participate in the wide-ranging discussions on unemployment / employment related issues at members meetings, feeding into the policy and other work of the organisation, and various online events. The General Branch met nine times in 2025; two introductory meetings were held; at a number of these meetings available resources, including JobsIreland.ie, were highlighted and discussed.

Welfare Rights Information and Advocacy Service

The Welfare to Work Section provides a comprehensive, confidential and independent welfare rights information and advocacy service. The section provides these services through a telephone helpline, by e-mail, attendance at in-person events,

distribution of publications and directly through the INOU websites. 2025 was another year of very significant demands on our information and advocacy services. The organisation's advocacy and representation services supported over 9,000 people with their queries during the year, including almost 2,000 advocacy queries which can be complex and take time to resolve. The in-person events included recruitment fairs; work and skills events; specific thematic events, at which copies of the publication *Working for Work* and Back to Work Support leaflets are distributed and individual queries considered.

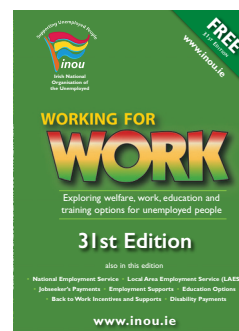


Brid O'Brien, Director of the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed with Minister Dara Calleary.

Working for Work

Working for Work is the most comprehensive guide to social welfare entitlements and education, training and employment options for unemployed people and others distant from the labour market. In 2025 the 31st edition was published in hardcopy and online and distributed across the community and voluntary sector and relevant public services. The

INOU engaged with the Department of Social Protection; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; and the Revenue Commissioners in completing content for the production of this edition. Amongst the significant changes introduced was the new Jobseeker's Pay-Related Benefit (JPRB). Towards the end of 2025 considerable work was undertaken on producing the 32nd edition of this publication.



Training Services

The INOU delivers a significant suite of training programmes to a very diverse group of individuals and organisations including people who are unemployed; people in employment; people participating on employment and training programmes; organisations in the community and voluntary sector; service providers in the statutory, profit and not-for-project sectors. Twenty-nine training programmes were delivered in 2025 with 795 participants, most, though not all, were delivered online, supporting a wider participation of people and organisations from across the country. These programmes included the INOU's two QQI accredited programmes in Information, Advocacy and Advice; and Welfare Rights. Thirteen bespoke training sessions; seven bitesize sessions which facilitate participants to brush up on their knowledge and delve into a specific topic in more depth; four non-accredited programmes which included an introduction to Ireland's social welfare system. In 2025 the INOU undertook further work as part of the QQI processes for our two validated programmes.

Building Futures

Building Futures programme, a Local Training Initiative, is a QQI accredited programme with participants working towards a level 5 major award in Community Development. This course includes eight core modules including volunteer work and an eight week work placement. The programme draws on participants' life experiences to enable them to become community workers, peer educators, support workers and mentors as well as a range of other employment opportunities.

The 15th year of this programme was completed in August and eleven learners received their QQI certification at a graduation ceremony in the Mansion House, Dublin. The recruitment process for the 16th year of the programme was completed over July and August and ten new learners commenced their induction and training in September.

One learner stated that:

"Professionally and educationally, this programme opened doors for me that I thought were closed for good. Clear guidance on training courses and further education has equipped me with the knowledge to make informed decisions about my ongoing development. I now feel significantly more prepared to navigate the job market and embrace continuous learning."

Shaping Futures

Shaping Futures is a QQI accredited programme with participants working towards a QQI Level 4 major award in Employment Skills. This course is targeted at people who have experienced long-term unemployment and who have the potential and desire to progress into employment or further

education. The course includes nine modules, volunteer work and an eight week workplace internships. While on the programme participants receive one-to-one support and guidance to help identify their ideal career path.

The sixth year of this programme was completed in August and nine learners received their QQI awards at a graduation ceremony in the Mansion House, Dublin. Following the recruitment process, thirteen learners commenced their training in September for the 7th year of this programme.

A learner on this programme noted that:

"I had never expected to have gotten the spectacular amount of direction, support and guidance from this course. I have been given the opportunity of finding my motivations & passions, strengths, and meeting an amazing group of people that I am honoured to have spent such valuable time with and have helped me develop as a person with passions I had struggled so much to find in the past."

Links with Employers

The organisation continues to monitor job announcements and to place key information about job opportunities on the Jobs Watch section of the organisation's website www.inou.ie. Nearly 13,000 jobs were highlighted in 2025. The organisation also linked with almost ninety companies creating jobs to inform them of the incentives available to recruit unemployed people; these leaflets were also distributed at Jobs Fairs and other in person events the INOU attended. In 2025 the INOU ran a number of online events focusing on inclusive employment practices. These events were run in partnership with Mr Price, Spéire Nua and TU Dublin – covering employment opportunities for people with criminal

convictions; and entrepreneurial opportunities for people with disabilities.

Intreo Partners Local Area Employment Service

In 2025, following discussions with the Contracted Public Employment Service (CPES) in the Department of Social Protection, the INOU undertook research into unemployed people's experience of the Intreo Partners Local Area Employment Service (LAES). The organisation worked with two LAES, one urban and one rural, to organise four focus groups. In one area 19 people took part in the two Focus Groups, and in the other 18 people took part. INOU liaised with DSP CPES team as the project developed, a draft report was written up and submitted to them for consideration and discussion. This project will be completed in 2026.

Community Employment Programme

The INOU has been a sponsor of a Community Employment Programme (CEP) for the last twenty-nine years. Participants are based in our offices at Araby House; Learning Hub in the South Inner City; and at

the Ozanam Centre, Mountjoy Square. The focus of the CE Programme continues to be on supporting participants to gain key skills, competencies and work experience in order to enhance their progression outcomes. The numbers allocated to our CEP in 2025 was 21 participants and a CE supervisor. CE participants support the work of the organisation in the following areas: maintenance of the INOU's two buildings; welfare rights and welfare to work information provision; financial and training services administration; Jobs Watch page; and IT support.

Staff

At the end of the year, the INOU Staff Team comprised:

Directly Employed staff:	13
Community Employment staff:	11
Jobs Initiative staff:	1
Number of staff who left during the year:	9
Number of staff in receipt of a salary of more than €60,000 per year:	1



Marie O'Reilly DSP presented the INOU with the Community Employment – Celebrating 30 Years Award.

Head of Policy and Media Report



Rebecca Gorman
Head of Policy
and Media

Context

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) is the official source for employment and unemployment estimates in Ireland. According to the LFS for Quarter 4 2025 the unemployment rate stood at 4.4%, with the numbers of people unemployed increasing over the year by 10.4% to 128,200. Women accounted for 46.1% of the unemployed in Q4 2025, 2.1 percentage points higher than in Quarter 4 2024. The unemployment rate for young people aged 15-24 years was 9.8%, decrease of 0.1 percentage points over the year. Young people accounted for 27.3% of the unemployed in Quarter 4 2025, a decrease of 2.8 ppts. The unemployment rate for people aged 25-74 years olds was 3.6%, an increase of 0.4 ppts from Quarter 4 2024.

36,200 people were long-term unemployed, that is to say unemployed for more than one year. The long-term unemployed rate increased by 0.2 percentage points over the year to 1.2%. Women accounted for 38.7% of the long-term unemployed in Q4 2025, a decrease of 10.9ppts compared to Quarter 4 2024. The number of men considered to be long-term unemployed has increased from 14,200 to 22,200, a 56.3% increase over the year.

The Potential Additional Labour Force (PALF) captures people who may not fit into the official definition of unemployment, whereby people have to be actively seeking work for the previous four weeks and available to take up work in the coming two weeks of the survey. In Q4 2025, PALF stood at 111,400, an increase of 2,300 from a year earlier. The CSO noted that *“Of those who stated that they wanted to work but were not seeking work or available for work in Q4 2025, 30.3% said this was due to education or training. This compares to 25.0% a year earlier. Persons not seeking work due to own illness or disability accounted for 27.6% of the total in Q4 2025, down from 32.0% in Q4 2024.”*

Over the year the number of people employed in Ireland increased by 2.0% to 2,833,100 people. The employment rate was 74.5%, an increase of 0.2 percentage points over the year. Full-time employment increased by 2.5% to 2,250,500 people, accounting for 79.4% of those in employment. Women accounted for 41.7% of people in full-time employment in Quarter 4 2025, 0.2 percentage points lower than Q4 in 2024. Over the year part-time employment decreased by 1,900 people to 582,600: within this figure, part-time underemployment decreased by 3.6% to 121,300 people. In Q4 2025 women accounted for 67.1% of people in part-time employment, and 62.1% of people who were underemployed.

Over the year the Labour Force rose by 2.4% to 2,961,300 people. The labour force consists of people who are in employment plus people who are unemployed. Two factors influence changes in the Labour Force: the demographic effect (+44,000) and the participatory effect (+24,800). The participation rate in Q4 2025 was 65.8%, an increase of 0.3 ppt from Q4 2024. The participation rate mea-

sures the share of the total population aged 15 years and over who are in the labour force. Over the year the participation rate increased by 0.4 ppts to 71.0% for men and for women increased by 0.2 ppts to 60.8%.

From these figures, concerns can arise from seeing both unemployment rates increase alongside increasing labour participation rates, driven mainly by demographic change and inward migration. This may indicate widening gaps to enable participation in the labour market, and mismatches for people looking for work and the quality employment that is available to them. Other issues to be considered are challenges to accessing employment for young people as patterns of employment are changing and proactive policy responses are required; and the sharp increase in the numbers of men deemed long term unemployed reported in Quarter 4 2025.

Policy Developments

The INOU's Head of Policy and Media represents the INOU at the newly established Trading for Impact Stakeholder Engagement Group, which oversees the National Social Enterprise Strategy for 2024-2027. The group met three times in 2025, discussing, among other items, the implementation of the Strategy, verification of social enterprises in Ireland, the establishment of specific working groups, and shaping national awards and conferences for social enterprises.

The INOU is a member of the Access and Inclusion Subcommittee of the National Apprenticeship Alliance. With the guidance of the Subcommittee, the NAA are building further data gathering exercises for evidence-based decisions. Actions were identified as part of the analysis of the 2024 national survey of apprentices. Work is progressing in improving access to the Access to Apprenticeship bursary to

support learners, as well as informing targeted work for under-represented groups in accessing apprenticeships. Inputs were also provided as part of the OECD evaluation of the current Action Plan for Apprenticeships.

The INOU continues to participate in the Lifelong Guidance Advisory Group. This work included informing the agenda of the annual National Forum, at which a learner from a previous INOU Building Futures programme spoke on his experience of lifelong guidance and learning; feeding into the development of the National Mapping of Guidance Services; and discussing the overall progress on the National Strategic Framework for Lifelong Guidance 2024-2030.

At the Department of Social Protection's annual Social Inclusion Forum, the INOU facilitated the workshop focussing on disabled people; and participated in a consultation event facilitated by the Department of Social Protection to inform the next Pathways to Work Strategy. The HPM represented the INOU at two civil society roundtables hosted by the Central Bank of Ireland. She also engaged in the Social Partners meeting with the EU Commission as part of the European Semester process for Ireland. The Head of Policy and Media represented the INOU at the AMIF (Asylum Migration and Integration Fund) and the EIST (Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training) Programme Monitoring Committees, both of which oversee the provision of ESF+ funding. While the Director continued to represent the organisation on the PEIL Monitoring Committee, the previous ESF programme.

Amongst other events the Head of Policy and Media participated in the national Civic Forum hosted by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht; the National

Women's Council stakeholder consultation on Ireland's obligations under CEDAW¹; and the Sustainable Development Goals National Forum held in Croke Park.

The Labour Market and Advisory Council (LMAC) met three times in 2025. The INOU participated in these meetings which covered labour market developments; the development of the next Pathways to Work Strategy; reports from the LMAC's two sub-groups – evaluation; and employers; engagement with other bodies on their work including the National Skills Council, ESRI in-work poverty research, OECD PIACC results for Ireland. The INOU continued to participate on the LMAC Evaluation Sub-group which met once in 2025 and discussed the proposed research into low hours of work and the Key Performance Indicators for the next Pathways to Work Strategy.

The INOU Director continued to be one of three of the Community and Voluntary Pillar representatives on the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) which met four times during 2025. Amongst the work NESC undertook covered Ireland's Energy Transition; Changing Demography: Trends, Challenges and Policy Implications; Strategic Planning and Delivery Capacity; Social Cohesion and EU Presidency; AI Power, Promise and Peril. NESC established a Working Group on the evolution and impact of remote and hybrid working in Ireland, on which the INOU is the CVP representative, which met twice in 2025.

The Director represented the INOU at the National Economic Dialogue; the Department of Social Protection's Pre-Budget Forum; and met with Louise O'Reilly, Sinn Féin spokesperson on Social Protection and Rural, Community Development and the

Gaeltacht to discuss Budget 2026. On behalf of the INOU she participated in the roundtable discussion hosted by the independent COVID-19 Evaluation and made a submission to them later on in the year.

Working in partnership

The INOU worked with colleagues in the Community and Voluntary Pillar (CVP) in a variety of work areas in 2025 including the annual CVP Think-In; the Budget 2026 meeting with Ministers for Finance and Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform & Digitalisation; completion of the submission to the Department of Foreign Affairs on the EU Presidency priorities, and a meeting Minister Thomas Byrne on same. The INOU also participated in CVP Linkage Groups and Bilateral meetings with the Departments of Social Protection; Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht; and a newly re-established bilateral with Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation. The INOU HPM organised two meetings of CVP Linkage Group for the Department of Children, Disability and Equality, and in conjunction with the Department organised two bilateral meetings.

During 2025 the Head of Policy and Media continued to work with colleagues in the Community Platform. The Platform made a submission as part of the Department of Social Protection's consultation on the successor strategy for the current Roadmap for Social Inclusion. The HPM was a member of the Platform's working group on the issue of consistent poverty and contributed to a paper on the topic which was then used in a Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection, Rural and Community Development. The Platform published its 4 tests for Budget 2026, and the HPM was engaged in the process of a handover of the coordination of the Platform from EAPN Ireland to Community Work Ireland.

¹ United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

As part of the Add the 10th Alliance, the INOU continued to seek the inclusion of a new ground in Ireland's equality legislation: one that would cover socio-economic status. The HPM represented the Alliance in the Pre-Legislative Scrutiny process of the proposed Equality Acts; following this, the Joint Oireachtas Committee agreed that a ground of socio-economic status be added in the legislation as one of its 32 recommendations. We await the drafting of the final Bill and bringing the Bill for approval to the Oireachtas.

The HPM gave inputs and was interviewed as part of the BRIDGES project, an ESF+ funded project coordinated by Ballymun Jobs Centre. The project aims to adapt and transfer elements of successfully tested approaches to meet the specific needs of hard-to-integrate Long Term Unemployed, identified in the Regions of Berlin (DE), Vienna (AT), Bologna (IT) and Dublin (IE). She engaged in a policy roundtable coordinated by Age Action and participated in two Parliamentary party meetings on the topic of Early Childhood Education and Care as part of the Together for Public Alliance, which is coordinated by the National Women's Council. She was interviewed as part of ATD Ireland's "Building Bridges" report, which highlights inclusive practice in education, training and employment. The HPM also participated in a workshop, led by the National Skills Council, on mapping the skills ecosystem in Ireland from a user's perspective; as well as a workshop as part of an EU project which aims to prepare for the green a digital transition.

During 2025 the INOU HPM represented the organisation at the meetings of the FIT Choose Tech-Coalition for Tech Apprenticeship Access and Inclusion; the Maynooth University led Lifelong Guidance Practice Advisory Group; the Energy Poverty Net-

work led by Friends of the Earth; and the Better Europe Alliance to discuss the annual report to EU Commission on the EU Semester process.

The Director participated in the Solidarity Network, which held its first annual event on March 5th exploring the role civil society plays in realising transformative change. She also participated on the IPRT's Research Advisory Group on the financial impact on children and families in Ireland when a family member is imprisoned, which was published in November; and on the Advisory Committee for the work of the Vincentian MESL Research Centre. In November she represented the INOU at the new Irish Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, hosted and led by FIT.

Communications

Media work completed during 2025:

- RTÉ News contribution regarding the introduction of the new Jobseeker's Pay-Related Benefit.
- RTÉ News coverage of the 2025 Annual Delegate Conference, focussing on the theme of the impact of AI and digitalisation on people in unemployment.
- Irish Independent engagement on Budget 2026 and Jobseeker's Pay-Related Benefit.
- Appearance on RTÉ Drivetime programme on the impact of the removal of once-off payments in Budget 2026.

Article topics published in 2025:

- Analysis of the new Programme for Government.
- Analysis of CSO figures on Monthly Unemployment.

- CSO Live Register figures.
- Jobseeker’s Pay-Related Benefit.
- Survey of Income and Living Conditions 2024.
- Quarterly Labour Force Surveys.
- 2025 Annual Delegate Conference.
- Equality Legislation and the Add the 10th Alliance.
- INOU Pre-Budget Submission 2026.
- Analysis of Budget 2026 measures.

In 2025 the INOU published five issues of the e-bulletin:

February: A brief overview of the INOU’s submission to the SOLAS Further Education and Training Strategy 2025-2029; an input from Pavee Point; a contribution from someone’s personal experience of unemployment; a summary of the key commitments in the 2025 Programme for Government; and inputs from the INOU local training initiative and online events for our members.

April: An input from Kildare County Employment Centre; a brief overview of the INOU Submission to inform the Department of Social Protection’s Statement of Strategy; an overview of the new Jobseeker’s Pay-Related Benefit and Social Welfare decisions; as well as an update on activities under the motions passed at the 2024 Annual Delegate Conference and the Central Bank of Ireland’s new Consumer Protection Code.

July: Brief Overview of the INOU submission to the Department of Social Protection’s Roadmap for Social Inclusion; reporting on the 2025 Annual Delegate Conference; an input from Galway Rural

Development and Ballymun Job Centre; activities as part of the Add the 10th Alliance; INOU participation at the annual Lifelong Guidance Network event; learner experiences in the INOU Shaping Futures and Building Futures programmes; and an overview of the recently published “Equality and Discrimination 2024” report from the CSO.

October: Updates from our members Aontas, WorkEqual, and EmployAbility Clare; INOU policy submissions to the COVID-19 Evaluation and the Department of Social Protection’s “Pathways to Work” Strategy; an overview of the newly published Government Disability Strategy; statistics on skills mismatches in the labour market; and an overview of the new INOU Strategic Plan, 2025-2029.

December: Inputs from our members EmployAbility Clare and FIT; INOU priorities for the Irish Presidency of the EU; an overview of two reports on career guidance; a description of the ESF+ BRIDGES project that the INOU has contributed to; and noting the visit of the Slovenian Institute of Adult Education to the INOU’s Learning Hub.

Submissions

The formation of a new Government in 2025 led to a productive year for the INOU in terms of policy submissions as new Strategies began to take shape. For the Department of Social Protection, submissions were made as part of consultations on the Department’s Statement of Strategy 2025-2028; the Successor Strategy to the Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025; the next Pathways to Work Strategy and the Department’s Prebudget Forum.

For other Departments, INOU submissions were made to the Department of Children, Disability and Equality on their Statement of Strategy; Department of Rural and Community Development and the



Rebecca Gorman, INOU representing the Add the 10th Alliance at Joint Oireachtas Committee on Children and Equality



Minister Dara Calleary addressing the ADC

Gaeltacht’s Strategy on the Community and Voluntary Sector; and the Department of Foreign Affairs’ consultation on Ireland’s EU Presidency.

The INOU completed an online questionnaire on the Periodic Critical Review of SOLAS; put forward submissions as part of SOLAS’s 2025-2029 Further Education and Training Strategy; a survey was submitted to the EU Fundamental Rights Agency consultation regarding Civic Space; and a submission to the Independent COVID-19 Evaluation Public Consultation.

The INOU published its 2026 Pre-Budget Submission in the summer, with the aims of influencing political priorities and supporting people in unemployment and others distanced from the labour market. This was launched and circulated to the Oireachtas representatives. Towards the end of the year the INOU then published its analysis of measures included in Budget 2026.

In January, May, and September the returns to the Lobbying Returns for the period September to December 2024; January to April 2025; and May to August 2025 were completed.



INOUE Out and About with DSP Intreo



INOUE Out and About

Board of Trustees/National Executive Committee (NEC)



Board of Trustees / National Executive Committee (NEC)

The National Executive Committee / Board of Trustees is the governing body and Board of Directors of the INOU. NEC members are elected from amongst the wider membership of the organisation at the Annual Delegate Conference / AGM and normally serve for an initial term of two years. There were 10 NEC / Board meetings held during the year and two Board Development sessions. We are very grateful to all the members of the National Executive Committee for their support to the work and running of the organisation.

INOUE Officers Board

Officers Board

Joanne Farrell	Chair
Mick Creedon	Treasurer
Evanne Kilmurray	Vice Chair and Company Secretary
Lisa Connell	Vice Chair
Brid O'Brien	Director

Nominating Organisation

Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre
Ballymun Jobs Centre
Inner City Enterprise
ICTU

National Executive Committee (NEC)

Philip Fitzsimons	INOUE General Branch
Breda Murphy	EDI Centre, Longford
Michelle Kelly	Staff Representative
Brendan Sherlock (Co-opted)	INOUE General Branch
Yvonne Browne (Co-opted)	National Employability Service
Michael O'Mahony (Co-opted)	INOUE General Branch
Paul Ennis (Co-opted)	Southside Partnership DLR LAES

We would like to thank the Staff Team for their commitment and dedication to the work of the organisation and also to thank those staff who left during the year.

Senior Management Team

Director	Bríd O'Brien
Head of Policy and Media	Rebecca Gorman
Financial Controller	Amanda Kelly

Finance Team and Administration Team

Book Keeper	Carol Thornton
Finance Administrator	Urszula Belmaati

CE Supervisor	Laura Rossney
Office Administrator	Allison Harris
Housekeeper	Dinah Donegan
Caretaker	Dessie Divine

Welfare to Work Team

Manager Welfare to Work Section	Robbert J. Lynch
Senior Information Officer	Robert Kelly
Information Officers	Michael Birmingham / Derek McNeill
Admin Support Worker	Ezra Roque

Training Team

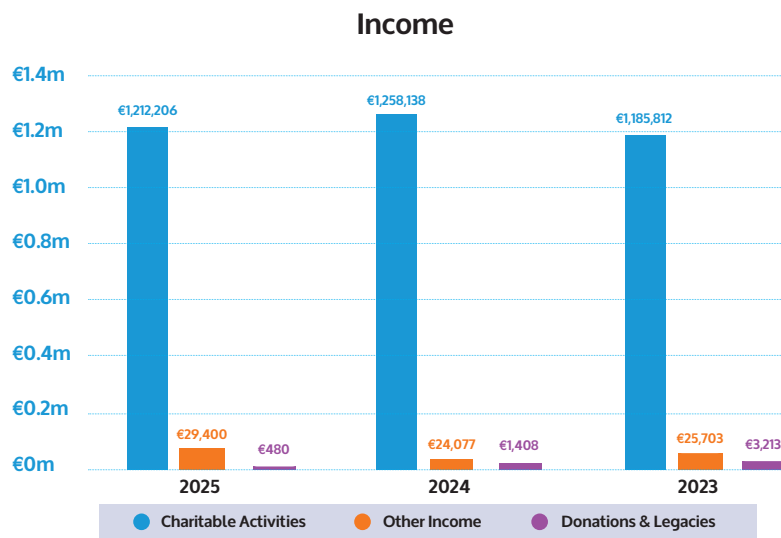
Head of Training Services	Michelle Kelly
Building Futures LTI Co-ordinator	Nicole Curran
Assistant LTI Co-ordinator	Aisling Byrne
Shaping Futures LTI Co-ordinator	Emma Cooray
Training Administrators	Breda Owens/Chris Smith
Trainer	Gerry McCaughey

Membership and Development Team

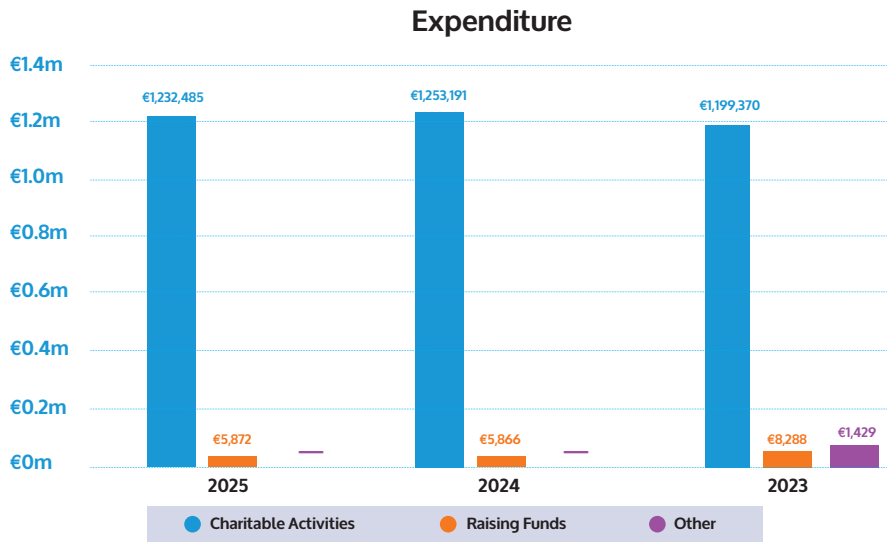
Membership / Project Worker	John Farrell
Admin Support Worker	Ray Brennan
Jobs Researcher	Daniela Calota
CE Worker based at Ozanam House	Bogdan Bondarenko

Staff who left in 2025	Antonino Campanella, Lorraine Hannon, Olena Sorenko, Özgün Ademhann, Richard Wilson, Rusha Lamichhane, Séamus Clarke, Sinead Boyle and Veronica Aurette
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The INOU are reporting a surplus for the year of €3,729 (2024 €24,566). The total income recorded for the year was €1,242,086 (2024: €1,283,623) and expenditure of €1,238,357 (2024: €1,259,057). Of this total income, €1,065,611 was secured from government grants and funding which represents a total of 86% of the organisation’s income. The balance of the income recorded is self-generated income arising largely from the INOU’s popular training programmes; which include both QQI and non QQI courses and our popular bitesize training courses. Our training income for the year was €101,595 representing an increase of 15% from our 2024 training income. This increase in our unrestricted income, coupled with general cost savings throughout the year, resulted in the overall surplus.



Total expenditure for 2025 amounted to €1,238,357 (2024: €1,259,057), representing a decrease of €20,700 (1.6%) compared to the prior year. This reduction reflects savings achieved by the INOU through prudent cost management during the year. While the organisation continues to carefully manage its expenditure, ongoing inflationary pressures remain a challenge.



At the year end, total reserves amounted to €297,677, comprising €4,799 in restricted reserves and €292,878 in unrestricted reserves. Restricted reserves represent income received for specific purposes as designated by donors, these funds are not available for the general activities of the organisation. Unrestricted reserves, by contrast, are available freely to support the organisation’s ongoing operations and objectives. The directors have a reasonable expectation that the organisation has sufficient resources to continue its operational activities for the foreseeable future, being a period of at least twelve months from the date of approval of the financial statements. Accordingly, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

The INOU would like to acknowledge and thank its funders for their continued support throughout the year, which has enabled the organisation to deliver on its aims and objectives. In particular, we would like to thank the Department of Rural and Community Development, the Department of Social Protection, Pobal, SOLAS, the City of Dublin Education and Training Board, and all affiliated organisations.

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2025

	Unrestricted Funds 2025	Restricted Funds 2025	Total Funds 2025	Total Funds 2024
	€	€	€	€
Income from:				
Charitable Activities	146,595	1,065,611	1,212,206	1,258,138
Other Income	28,066	1,334	29,400	24,077
Donations & Legacies	-	480	480	1,408
Total Income	174,661	1,067,425	1,242,086	1,283,623
Expenditure on:				
Charitable Activities	165,670	1,066,815	1,232,485	1,253,191
Raising Funds	5,872	-	5,872	5,866
Other	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure	171,542	1,066,815	1,238,357	1,259,057
Net movement in funds	3,119	610	3,729	24,566
Reconciliation of Funds				
Balances Brought Forward at 1 Jan 2025	289,759	4,189	293,948	269,382
Balances Carried Forward at 31 Dec 2025	292,878	4,799	297,677	293,948

Statement of Financial Position for the Year Ended 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
	€	€
Fixed Assets		
Premises Improvements	4,348	4,828
Computer Equipment	7,203	963
Fixtures and Fittings	8,317	10,983
	19,869	16,774
Current Assets		
Debtors	56,139	51,744
Bank	403,352	417,126
Total Current Assets	459,491	468,870
Total Assets	479,360	485,645
Current Liabilities	(181,682)	(191,696)
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	<u>297,677</u>	<u>293,948</u>
Represented By:		
Accumulated Funds: Unrestricted	292,878	289,759
Accumulated Funds: Restricted	4,799	4,189
Total Accumulated Funds	<u>297,677</u>	<u>293,948</u>



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The Scheme to Support National Organisations is funded by the Government of Ireland through the Department of Rural and Community Development

