



**The Irish National
Organisation of
the Unemployed**

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



INOUE Annual Report 2017

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Annual Report Contents

Chairperson's Report

Welcome to our 2017 Annual Report.

2017 has been a momentous year for the INOU and I have been privileged to undertake the role of Chairperson during the year that marked the 30th Anniversary of the founding of the organisation.

In 1987, a group of concerned individuals, trade unions and community groups came together to challenge the prevailing orthodoxy of the time that high levels of unemployment were inevitable and that Ireland, as a country, was too small to provide jobs for all it's people.

We marked the 30th Anniversary of the founding of the organisation in a number of ways. We created a new organisational logo for the year; 30 Years Supporting Unemployed People was the theme of our Annual Conference in May and we ran a major conference in November – *Best Practice in the Delivery of Employment Services*. I would like to thank Minister Catherine Byrne for delivering the opening address at the Conference.

2017 was also another year of very significant output from the organisation. The demands being placed on all aspects of our work continued at a consistently high level during the year. The organisation has again risen to the challenge and I want to acknowledge the tremendous commitment and dedication both of the staff team and my NEC colleagues. I particularly want to thank Anne Devlin, Building Futures Assistant LTI Co-ordinator who left the organisation in September. Anne played a



Ann Fergus - Chairperson

central role in developing the Building Futures programme which has now been running for over eight years. I know all of the staff team, my NEC colleagues and the Building Futures Participants join me in wishing Anne every success for the future. I was also delighted to welcome Anne's successor, Andrew McDonald, to the organisation.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate all of the Building Futures' learners for their achievements during the year. It was a privilege for me to again Chair the Building Futures Graduation Ceremony which was held at the Mansion House on 10th November. I would like to thank the Lord Mayor, Mícheál MacDonncha for hosting the event and for making everyone feel so welcome. I would also like to wish our Year 8 intake of Participants every success in the period ahead.

Thankfully, unemployment has continued to fall

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during the year and the numbers of people at work has steadily increased. The significant drop in the numbers of people that are long-term unemployed is also to be welcomed as is the increase in the overall number of jobs being created.

Notwithstanding the very positive developments in terms of unemployment and job creation, there are still large numbers of people who remain unemployed and one of my priorities for the INOU in the coming year is to continue to campaign for measures to support people who are long term unemployed and for measures to address youth unemployment which, whilst improving, is still a major issue.

In last year's Annual Report, I referred to the work that the organisation was undertaking on gathering feedback from unemployed people on their experience of the JobPath Service. This work was significantly advanced during the year and my colleague John Stewart, Co-ordinator, has outlined this work in more details in his report.

We held our Annual Conference and AGM on Wednesday 24th May at Wynn's Hotel, Dublin. I was delighted to welcome Finian McGrath TD and Minister of State for Disability Issues who gave the keynote address. The theme of the Conference was *Supporting Unemployed People for 30 Years*.

The theme informed the Round Table element of the Conference where delegates discussed and debated a range of questions on the challenges facing INOU affiliated organisations, unemployed people and individual members. The Round Tables also explored what the INOU can do to further support affiliated

organisations and unemployed people. The feedback from the Round Table discussions will help to inform aspects of a new Strategic Plan for the organisation which we will be developing in 2018 and I am grateful to everyone who took part in the discussions.

The following NEC members were automatically elected at the Conference:

- Mick Creedon
- Michael McNamara
- Joanne Farrell
- Breda Murphy
- Seamus Orr
- Des Bonass

Conference delegates also re-elected the Standing Orders Committee:

- Elaine Harvey,
- Frank McDonnell
- Paul Taylor

for a further year. Elections to positions on the Officers Board were held at the NEC meeting in October and I would like to thank my NEC colleagues for electing me as Chairperson for a further period of two years.

I would also like to congratulate Pdraig Malone who was elected as our new Treasurer and also Michael McNamara and Joanne Farrell who were elected Vice-Chairpersons of the organisation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Séamus Orr who stood down as Vice Chairperson. Séamus has been a longstanding member of the Officers Board and I have very much appreciated Séamus' input to the work of the Officers Board over the years.

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I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sylvia Ryan and Michael Glennon who stepped down from the NEC for all of their work in support of the organisation. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new NEC colleague, Frank Vaughan, ICTU, who joined us in September.

The INOU's key publication, 'Working for Work' was launched on 28th September and I was delighted to welcome the new Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regina Doherty, TD, to her first visit to Araby House to officially launch the 24th edition of the publication.

I wish to end by thanking my Officer Board and National Executive Committee colleagues, the staff of the INOU and all the representatives of our affiliated organisations who supported us during 2017 and I look forward to my continued involvement in the work of the organisation in the year ahead.

Ann Fergus
Chairperson



Launch of Working for Work 2017 - (left to right) Regina Doherty, T.D., Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection and Ann Fergus, Chairperson, INOU.

Co-ordinator's Report

I am very grateful to my Officer Board and NEC colleagues and the staff of the organisation for their on-going support and assistance.

2017 was another year of very significant output and activity for the organisation.

During the year, we:

- Marked the 30th Anniversary of the founding of the INOU;
- Held a major Conference on *Best Practice in the Delivery of Employment Services*;
- Published and distributed 25,000 copies of the 24th edition of Working for Work;
- Participated in numerous information events and jobs fairs;
- Tracked 335 job announcements relating to 34,394 jobs and linked in with 173 companies that announced jobs to promote employer incentives to recruit people who are unemployed;
- Met with a wide range of Ministers and Departmental Officials and other key stakeholders;
- Participated in a range of committees/structures on issues affecting unemployed people;
- Made submissions on a range of themes relating to unemployment/employment, education and training;
- Completed a very demanding calendar of training events;
- Dealt with thousands of queries through our Welfare Rights Information Service;
- Met directly with hundreds of unemployed people at the various events we attended



John Stewart - Co-ordinator

- during the year;
- Completed significant work on the third phase of the Employment Services Research Project;
- Ran a series of Focus Group Meetings;
- Ran a number of training/development/capacity building events.

Membership

We were delighted to welcome the following organisations into membership during the year:

- Waterford City Local Employment Service;
- Clondalkin Addiction Support Programme;
- Wexford Mental Health Association;
- South Tipperary Development Company;

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Membership Development

On 15th November, the organisation facilitated a Listening Skills Programme aimed at our member organisations which was delivered by the Samaritans.

The event built on an earlier event where the Samaritans delivered the programme to INOU staff who are involved in front-line information provision.

We are delighted to have established this key link with the Samaritans and we look forward to continuing collaborative work in 2018.

4 Discussion Forum meetings were held during the year in Cork, Dublin, Kilkenny and Sligo. The themes covered included Budget 2018; Social Welfare Legislation; barriers to accessing work.

Employment Services Research Project

In last year's Annual Report, I noted that we had completed our work on Phase 2 of the Employment Services Research Project. This phase involved researching the experience of people who are long-term unemployed of the Local Employment Service. We commenced the third and final phase of this work early in 2017.

This phase of the work had a focus on researching unemployed people's experience of the JobPath service. The work has been significantly advanced and is nearing completion as we come to the end of the year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the JobPath providers Turas Nua and Seetec and the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection for facilitating us in this work. I would particularly like to thank all of the unemployed people that we met during the year who attended the Focus Group meetings.

Individual Memberhip

We greatly value the involvement of Individual/ General Branch Members in the work of the organisation. Seven General Branch meetings were held in 2017. These meetings continue to provide important opportunities for Branch members to have an input into the work of the organisation and to participate in the wide-ranging discussions on unemployment/ employment related issues.

We held two INOU Introductory Meetings for our Individual Members during 2017. We also organised a series of five Career Coaching Sessions for our Individual Members during 2017. I would like to again thank Career Coach, Patricia Zemmour for delivering these excellent Coaching Sessions.

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 publications, a telephone helpline, by e-mail and directly through the INOU websites.

Throughout 2017, the demand for information and advocacy services on the section remained

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very high. During the year, the section continued to develop and refine its information provision and advocacy services in response to a growing and ever changing need.

As part of our Information and Advocacy services the section:

- Supported 26 clients in seeking Reviews of Overpayment Recovery decisions prior to making a Social Welfare Appeal.
- Supported 1 client in progressing Customer Service issues to the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) Complaints Process;
- Supported 405 clients in seeking Reviews of Decisions by Deciding Officers prior to seeking a Social Welfare Appeal;
- Supported 189 individuals in preparing appeals, both Standard and Oral hearing applications, to the Social Welfare Appeals Office;
- Supported 20 organisations and groups in assisting clients in making appeals to the Social Welfare Appeals Office.
- Attended 14 oral hearings with clients providing advocacy services at the Social Welfare Appeals Office, both in Dublin and outside of Dublin;
- Supported 1 client in preparing cases for Rights Commissioner/Employment Appeals Tribunal;
- Engaged with Bearing Point consultants undertaking research on behalf of the Social Welfare Appeals Office.

As in 2016, the diversity and range of queries was equalled by the differing sources from

which they came, with, as in previous years, a noted increase in the number of clients engaging with the Social Welfare Appeals process and seeking our assistance to request reviews prior to appeal and in making appeals.

The majority of queries received were from individual unemployed people, and those in receipt of social welfare payments, with the INOU website providing the largest numbers of referrals and contacts.

The level of queries from INOU affiliated organisations, EmployAbility, Local Employment Services, Local Development Companies, Citizens Information Centres and other organisations remained consistently high throughout the year.

The Welfare to Work Section attended a number of Jobfairs and information events, hosted / promoted by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection throughout the country, providing information and support for jobseekers.

The Welfare to Work section distributed thousands of copies of Working for Work at these events, engaged directly with jobseekers on a one-to-one basis about Back to Work supports and assisted and supported both the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and other organisations / groups in assisting clients.

Working for Work

We produced the 24th edition of Working for Work during the year. Working for Work is the most comprehensive guide to social welfare entitlements and education, training and

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employment options for unemployed people and others distant from the labour market.

25,000 copies of the book were distributed to a wide range of local community based organisations, state agencies and individual unemployed people during the year. We are grateful to the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and SOLAS for their on-going support for the publication.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regina Doherty, TD, who officially launched the publication at Araby House on 28th September.

Training

During the year, we delivered a total of 54 days of QQI training, participated in 4 on-request presentations, delivered 22 days of 'on request' training to organisations across the country and 3 non-accredited training days. These 83 training days were provided through a training Calendar consisting of 2 training modules:

- Introduction to Social Welfare
- Welfare to Work

We also ran 4 programmes at QQI Level 6, covering 3 modules:

- Social and Civil Information
- Information, Advice and Advocacy
- Training Delivery and Evaluation

The Training Unit continues to work in partnership with Community Law and Mediation in the delivery of three further

QQI, Level 6 awards, Accommodation and Housing Advocacy, Family Rights Advocacy and Employment Law Advocacy.

The Training Unit also works closely with the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb) through the Adult and Education Community Forum, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), Dublin City University (DCU) and the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL).

Building Futures

Building Futures is delivering a QQI accredited training programme and associated workplace internships which draws on participants own life experiences to enable them to become peer educators, trainers and mentors.

The seventh year of our programme was completed in 2017. 15 Participants from Dublin and surrounding areas completed nine QQI modules at levels 5 and 6 with 15 receiving QQI certification.

The programme continues to be a huge success and I am delighted to report that we continue to hold Local Training Initiative designation for the programme. We are grateful for the related supports and resources received from the CDETb.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sandra Harold and Michelle Kelly, Volunteer Tutors from DCU for their input to the Building Futures Programme.

Recruitment for the eighth year of the programme was completed in August and 15 new participants commenced training

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in September. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved with the programme.

SpringBoard

We were delighted to again host the Guidance Counsellors for the Springboard+ 2017/18 Freephone Helpline on behalf of the Higher Education Authority. I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the very significant level of expert support provided by the two Guidance Counsellors, Joan O'Reilly and Marie McManomon, to the huge numbers of unemployed people that used the helpline.

Employer Linkages

The organisation continues to monitor job announcements and to place key information about job opportunities on the Jobs Watch section of our website www.inou.ie.

The following work was undertaken in 2017:

- Tracked 335 job announcements relating to 34,394 jobs.
- Linked in with 173 companies that announced job gains with a view to promoting the range of incentives available to employers when they recruit unemployed people.
- Attended a wide range of information events and jobs fairs.
- Linked in with 2 redundancy situations.

CE Project

The INOU has been a sponsor of a Community Employment Project for the last 21 years. Participants are based both in our offices here at Araby House and at the Ozanam Centre.

The work undertaken by the CE Participants continues to be essential to the effective running of both organisations and we greatly appreciate the work undertaken by all the Participants.

We were delighted to see a number of our CE Participants progress into employment during the course of the year and the focus of the CE Project continues to be on supporting Participants to gain key skills, competencies and work experience in order to enhance their progression outcomes.

Annual Conference

We held our Annual Conference and AGM on Wednesday 24th May at Wynn's Hotel, Dublin. I was delighted to welcome Finian McGrath TD and Minister of State for Disability Issues who gave the keynote address.

The theme of the Conference was *Supporting Unemployed People for 30 Years*. The theme informed the Round Table element of the Conference where delegates discussed and debated a range of questions on the challenges facing INOU affiliated organisations; unemployed people and individual members.

The following NEC members were automatically elected at the Conference - Mick Creedon, Michael McNamara, Joanne Farrell, Breda Murphy, Seamus Orr and Des Bonass.

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Conference delegates also re-elected the Standing Orders Committee – Elaine Harvey, Paul Taylor and Frank McDonnell for a further year and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Standing Orders Committee for all their work.

Elections to positions on the Officers Board were held at the NEC meeting in October. I would also like to congratulate Pdraig Malone who was elected as our new Treasurer and also Michael McNamara and Joanne Farrell who were elected Vice-Chairpersons of the organisation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Séamus Orr who stood down as Vice Chairperson. Séamus has been a longstanding member of the Officers Board and I very much appreciate Séamus' input to the work of the Officers Board over the years. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sylvia Ryan and Michael Glennon who stepped down from the NEC for all of their work in support of the organisation.

Best Practice in the Delivery of Employment Services Conference

The organisation held a major conference on 30th November at Wynn's Hotel, Dublin. The *Best Practice in the Delivery of Employment Services Conference* marked the 30th Anniversary of the founding of the INOU.

I would like to echo our Chairperson's thanks to Minister Catherine Byrne who delivered the opening address. The Conference focused on the strategies and approaches that work best in terms of supporting unemployed people to access employment opportunities and the

critical role that the employment services play in this regard.

The Conference also provided an opportunity for us to highlight some of our findings from our Employment Services Research Project. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended the Conference – the Conference speakers, panellists, workshop facilitators, note-takers and the Conference rapporteur. I would particularly like to thank the staff of the INOU for their huge efforts in organising this very successful event. A full Conference Report is available on our website – www.inou.ie.

Funding

Details of the organisation's income and expenditure are set out in the Financial Report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Department of Rural and Community Development/Pobal, the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, SOLAS and the City of Dublin Education and Training Board for their financial assistance during the year.

I would also like to thank Eric Conroy, Financial Controller and Michael McNamara, outgoing Treasurer, for their efficient management of the organisation's financial resources.

John Stewart
Co-ordinator

Head of Policy and Media Report

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) replaced the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) from Quarter 3, 2017 with a new Labour Force Survey (LFS).

In the LFS Q3 2017 the CSO also made adjustments to take account of the information collected through the Census 2016, which resulted in a 96,400 increase in the working age population.

In Quarter 2, 2017 the number of people who were long-term unemployed, (74,700) fell below the number of people who were short-term unemployed, (78,000).

This is the first time since Quarter 3, 2010 that the number of people who were long-term unemployed, (160,400) was lower than the numbers of people who were short-term unemployed (173,400).

In Quarter 4, 2017, 144,100 people were unemployed, a decrease of 23,400 over the year, and brought this figure back to Q2 2008 levels. The overall unemployment rate in Q4 2017 was 6.1%, 1.1% less than the same quarter in 2016. 58,100 people were unemployed for more than a year, which brought this number back to Q1 2009 levels. The long-term unemployment rate was 2.5%, down 1.2% on Q4 2016.

The Labour Force is made up of people who are employed and unemployed, and the Participation Rate is the number acquired when the Labour Force is divided by the total population. So, in Q4 2017 the Participation Rate was 62.2%, a slight increase on the



*Bríd O'Brien
Head of Policy & Media*

year, 0.3%, but 5.2% lower than the highest pre-crisis levels, achieved in Q3 2007. It is important to note that to be included in the official unemployment statistics respondents must have been seeking work in the preceding four weeks, and be available to take up work in the following two weeks.

The Potential Additional Labour Force (PALF) helps to capture a fuller picture of the numbers of people seeking employment, other things being equal. It captures, for example, people who have lost heart trying to find work; people who have caring responsibilities; people who view themselves as underemployed; people who have a disability.

According to the LFS Q4 2017 there were 111,100 people in PALF. This is a much higher figure than was produced under the Quarterly National Household Survey, reflecting the wider scope of the new Labour Force Survey.

Head of Policy and Media Report

The Central Statistics Office also publishes the Live Register; and according to the December 2017 figures, there were 236,268 people on the Live Register, a drop of 14.6% over the year. The Live Register figures fell across the country's eight regions. Dublin which accounts for 24.1% of the Register, accounted for 23% of the drop. The West accounted for the smallest percentage decrease, 7.7%, while it accounts for 9.6% of the Register.

97,918 people, or 41.4% of the Register, were on it for more than a year, a decline of 18.3% over the year. A striking feature of the numbers of people on the Register for more than a year, is that the majority of them are on it for more than three years: 58.9% or 57,644 people. This figure also declined over 2017, by 18%. Looking at these figures from a regional perspective, Dublin has the greatest number of people on the register for more than three years, 14,395. The Border counties have the next highest number, 8,011; while the Mid-West has the lowest number, 4,844. All of the regions saw a decline in these figures over the past year.

In the annex to the Live Register figures, the CSO also publishes data on participation on activation programmes, which consist of employment, education and training programmes. In December 2017 there were 61,072 people participating on activation programmes, 15% lower than in December 2016. 64% of the overall decrease on activation programmes is accounted for by a 15% drop in the numbers of people participating on employment programmes. Participation on two of these programmes continued to drop dramatically: JobBridge by 100% to 0 participants; and Gateway by 92% over the

past year to 54 participants. Participation on education and training programmes also fell by 15%, to 22,331 learners.

Policy Developments

In June the INOU participated in the National Economic Dialogue (NED), which brought together the community and voluntary sector; employers; trade unions; the environmental sector; the farming sector; politicians and officials from a wide range of Departments.

The theme of NED 2017 was "*Sustainable and inclusive growth in the context of national and global challenges*". The INOU participated in two of the workshops: (i) on 'supporting labour market participation' chaired by Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regina Doherty TD; and (ii) 'delivering future skills needs' chaired by Minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton TD.

Building on the motions to the Annual Delegate Conference and the discussions held at the organisation's Regional Discussion Forums, the INOU called on the Government in Budget 2018 to: reinstate welfare payments to 2009 rates and abolish the age segregation introduced to Jobseeker's Allowance in that Budget; plan for the employment and unemployment impacts of Brexit; and re-invest in community based organisations to support their work with people experiencing social exclusion and people who are distant from the labour market.

October's Budget announced a €5 increase across all social welfare payments and the €2 increase in Qualified Child payment, which were welcome developments. Of course there was a time lag between these announcements and when they came into effect: late March 2018.

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Unfortunately, the age segregation applying to JA payments; the organisation's concerns about Brexit; and insufficient investment in community based organisations were not addressed.

The Labour Market Council met in January, February, April, May and September. Amongst the issues the Council discussed was the development of an 'Action Plan for Jobless Households'. This was published in September. One disappointing feature is its reliance on existing, more directive ways of engaging with people rather than developing more inclusive and pro-active methods.

Other aspects of the Council's work included discussing a follow-up to JobBridge; and the roll-out of JobPath. Amongst the work of the Evaluation Sub-group was engagement on the qualitative research of the Back to Education Allowance, work that was recommended by the Council given the questions raised by the ESRI's quantitative research.

The Action Plan for Jobs 2017 contained 164 actions, and the only one to talk about unemployed people was Action 131, which focused on Pathways to Work 2016-2020, the Government's activation policy document. Amongst the duties of the Labour Market Council is "Monitoring the implementation of the Pathways to Work strategy".

In the Action Plan for Jobless Households it says "In particular, progress against each of the reform actions and milestones will be monitored and reported on quarterly to the Cabinet Committee on the Economy, Trade and Jobs and to the Labour Market Council." (p3) At the last meeting of the Council in September the Department of Employment

Affairs and Social Protection noted that they were reviewing the future role of the Labour Market Council: word is still awaited.

The INOU participated in the consultation events held by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government on the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme 2018-2020, including the session focusing on the themes of enterprise, employment and education.

Participants at the INOU's Regional Discussion Forums had raised concerns about the focus of the initial programme, which they feared was not facilitating a more supportive approach for people whose distance from the labour market meant they needed a broader range of supports.

In the Action Plan for Rural Development, published by the Government in January 2017, in Action 49 they note that "the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme, SICAP, as the main social inclusion programme of Government".

Working in Partnership

The INOU continued to work with colleagues in the Community & Voluntary sector on a range of socio-economic issues and in a variety of mechanisms including:

- Better Europe Alliance, a network of national community and voluntary sector organisations and the Environmental Pillar which continued its work on the European Semester process and its implications for Ireland's policy developments and implementation.

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- Community Platform, a network of 28 national networks and organisations working to address poverty, social exclusion and inequality. In June the Community Platform ran a seminar on 'health as a right' which built on the paper the Platform published in 2016, project work of ATD Ireland, and the cross-party Oireachtas Committee's report Sláintecare.
- Economic, Social Cultural Rights Initiative which continued to call for the strengthening of these rights in Ireland's Constitution. In March ESCRI ran a conference entitled '*Making Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Meaningful*' in the Mansion House.
- EAPN Policy Group which the INOU continued to chair.
- Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice's Advisory group on their Minimum Essential Standard of Living work.
- The User Group for the TASC and FEPS two year project examining the development of different forms of precarious work and their implications for people's lives, including housing, access to social welfare, and family formation.
- The New Communities Partnership Migrant Access Programme Advisory Committee.

The Community & Voluntary Pillar (CVP) continued to meet on a quarterly basis: at the July meeting the INOU took over as CVP secretariat. The Pillar developed a document for the National Economic Dialogue in late June.

The INOU participated in bilateral meetings the CVP organised with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection;

the Housing Division of the Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government; the Community Division of the Department of Rural and Community Development; and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation.

The INOU's Head of Policy and Media (HPM) coordinated the CVP bilateral meeting with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform; and as the CVP secretariat the annual pre-Budget meeting with the Minister(s) of Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform.

In March the Department of An Taoiseach took steps to reconstitute the National Economic and Social Council (NESC). The number of representatives per pillar were reduced from four to three and the INOU HPM was elected to one of the three CVP representatives on NESC.

Three meetings took place, in May, September and December reflecting the change from monthly meetings to a quarterly arrangement.

As part of the changed format of NESC meetings, working groups will be established to move the Council's work forward, with the first such group focusing on the Council's work on jobless or low work intensity households.

The INOU HPM continued to participate on:

- the Council of the Economic and Social Research Institute;
- the Board of the Dublin Adult Learning Centre;
- the Monitoring Committee of the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020;
- and in March joined the City of Dublin Education and Training Board.

Head of Policy and Media Report

Communications

In 2017 the INOU produced five E-bulletins which covered a wide range of issues including:

- Informing readers of policy developments like the Action Plans for Rural Development; Jobs; and Education.
- Recent unemployment and poverty statistics.
- Feedback from our individual members on issues of concern for them; and an article exploring the myths around unemployment and job seekers.
- Summaries of the INOU's submissions on a range of issues including the National Women's Strategy 2017-2020; the Working Family Payment; the Seanad Special Select Committee on the UK's Withdrawal from the European Union; Budget 2018; and the Social Welfare, Pensions and Civil Registration Bill 2017.
- Focus on our affiliates including Roscrea Jobs Club Service; One Family; Waterford LES; Employment Focus' Focus Ireland's Recruitment Service; Southside Partnership LES; Kildare LES.
- Summary of the report of phase II of the INOU's Employment Services Research project; and the organisation's conference on the theme of *'Best Practice in the Delivery of Employment Services'*.
- Highlighting other developments including a 'Housing Assistance Payment' Ground Case; ATD Ireland's Stop Poverty campaign; TASC Precarious Work Project; Employment & Education for Travellers; New Communities Partnership's Migrant Access Programme.

The INOU also engaged with the print, radio and TV media on a broad range of issues facing unemployed people and how these issues impact on their lives, including:

- Income adequacy: sanctions and young people; increase in social welfare payments; levels of social welfare payments.
- Activation and participation: unemployed people's experiences of discrimination; experience of long-term unemployment; experience of services provision.
- Work: the impact of the Action Plan for Jobs 2017; proposed Family Working Payment; recruitment challenges.
- INOU events: Annual Delegate Conference 2017; *Working for Work* launch; *'Best Practice in the Delivery of Employment Services'* conference.
- Statistics: overall unemployment; youth unemployment.
- Policy: Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection's (DEASP) JobPath report; Department's Welfare Cheats, Cheats Us All campaign; Public Services Card; Budget 2018.

INOU made submissions on the following:

- **January; May; September:** Lobbying Register completed.
- **February:** submission to the National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2020.
- **March:** submission to the Department of

Head of Policy and Media Report

Employment Affairs and Social Protection's (DEASP) proposed Working Family Payment.

- **May:** submission was made on the National Risk Assessment's draft list of strategic risks lead by the Department of An Taoiseach; and on the Heads of Social Welfare Bill 2017 published by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.
- **July:** submission on the 'Social Welfare, Pensions and Civil Registration Bill 2017'.
- **July:** Pre-Budget submission to the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and participation in their Pre-Budget Forum. The submission was sent to the Government in the autumn.
- **August:** Action Plan for Jobs 2018 submission and engagement with Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation.
- **September:** submissions to Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's public consultation entitled Our Public Service 2020; and the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection's consultation on the development of their Statement of Strategy for 2017 – 2020.
- **December:** submission to the Department of Education and Skills' Action Plan for Education 2018.

INOUE spoke at:

- **January:** a presentation at Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection on the theme of 'labour activation'; National Women's Council of Ireland members meeting: focus on

National Women's Strategy development.

- **March:** a presentation on phase II of the Employment Services research at the Local Employment Service 20th anniversary seminar; at the EAPN's lunchtime event a presentation on social implications of Brexit; at the press briefing held in Buswells Hotel the INOU's HPM was one of the panellists, marking the re-introduction of Thomas Pringle Bill seeking to incorporate the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights into the Irish Constitution.
- **May:** at the DEASP's Social Inclusion Forum, 2017 the INOU gave one of the inputs in the workshop entitled "Inclusive Labour Markets – Pathways to Work 2020 Workshop"; and also spoke at the AGM of the Dublin Community Co-op, the only SICAP providers who are not a Local Development company.
- **June:** presentation to Seanad Special Select Committee on the UK's Withdrawal from the European Union.
- **November:** at the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and Maynooth University seminar entitled '*Digital Economy, New Forms of Work, and Challenges for Social Security Systems: Financing and Coverage*' the INOU participated on one of the panels; and participated on the panel on 'Promoting and Enhancing Youth Employability' at the 60th Anniversary of European Social Fund organised by the Department of Education and Skills.

Bríd O'Brien
Head of Policy and Media

National Executive Committee/Board of Directors

The National Executive Committee 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 Conference and normally serve for an initial term of two years.

There were 8 NEC/Board Meetings held during the year.

We are very grateful to all the members of the National Executive Committee for their input into the work of the organisation.

Officers Board

Ann Fergus	<i>Chair</i>
Michael McNamara	<i>Vice Chair</i>
Joanne Farrell	<i>Vice Chair</i>
Padraid Malone	<i>Treasurer</i>
John Stewart	

Nominating Organisation

Galway People's Resource Centre
INOU General Branch
Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre
Limerick Resource Centre for the Unemployed
INOU Co-ordinator

NEC

- Seamus Orr	Springlawn Residents' and Community Development Group
- Frank Vaughan	ICTU
- Des Bonass	Dublin Council of Trade Unions
- Joe Williams	INOU General Branch
- Breda Murphy	EDI Centre, Longford
- Mick Creedon	Ballymun Job Centre
- Lorraine Hennessy	INOU Staff Representative
- Brendan Sherlock (Co-opted)	INOU General Branch
- Yvonne Browne (Co-opted)	National Employability Service

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Sylvia Ryan and Michael Glennon who stepped down from the NEC in 2017 for all their support for the work of the INOU.

INOU Staff

INOU Staff 2017

We would like to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of all the staff in the organisation and also to thank those staff who left during the year.

Senior Management Team

- Co-ordinator
- Head of Policy and Media
- Financial Controller

John Stewart
Bríd O'Brien
Eric Conroy

Administrative and Finance Team

- CE Supervisor
- Book Keeper
- Finance Administrator
- Receptionist
- Cleaners

- Caretaker

Laura Rossney
Carol Thornton
Michael Quinn
Lenis Salas
Simonas Petraska /
Paul Bermingham
Hugh Gilhooley

Welfare to Work Team

- Manager Welfare to Work Section
- Senior Information Officer
- Information Officers
- Admin Support Worker

Robbert J. Lynch
Robert Kelly
Ivor Quinn / Tom McMahon
Amos Phillipson

Training Team

- Head of Training
- LTI Co-ordinator
- Assistant LTI Co-ordinator
- Training Administrator

Lorraine Hennessy
Laura Pierce
Andrew McDonald
Theresa Colgan /
Paulina Frydrych

Development Team

- Membership/Project Worker
- Admin. Support Worker
- Web Administrator
- Jobs Researcher

John Farrell
Ray Brennan
Eileen Gallen
Finbarr McGlynn

INOU Staff 2017

Staff who left in 2017:

- Pauline Murphy-Wilkinson
- Marie Carroll
- Anne Devlin
- Gary Donegan
- Stephen Longmore
- Joanne Flood
- Beata Pawluk
- Annemarie Trusca
- Alan Hall



INOU - 30 years supporting Unemployed People



ADC - Delegates at the INOU Annual Delegate Conference, Wynn's Hotel, Dublin.

INOU Financial Report

IRISH NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

For the year ended 31st December 2017

	2017	2016
	€	€
Income		
- Social Protection (DEASP) - Information and Welfare Rights	256,800	257,500
- Social Protection (DEASP) - Community Employment	229,922	210,393
- Dept. of Rural & Community Development - Social Partnership	41,448	41,448
- Pobal - Scheme to Support National Organisations	90,000	81,090
- SOLAS - Working for Work Publication	20,000	20,000
- CDETB - Local Training Initiative	85,496	93,173
- Office Rental	18,950	18,450
- Training Fees	37,650	38,002
- Other Income	15,578	17,265
	795,844	777,321
Running Expenses		
- Wages and salaries	360,518	349,187
- Community Employment Wages	214,914	204,892
- Social Security Costs	43,316	41,406
- Staff pension costs defined contribution	7,769	7,401
- INOU Other Services Costs	4,952	7,847
- Building Futures Project	15,059	17,179
- Welfare to Work Development Project Costs	2,107	2,564
- National Executive Committee	4,954	7,750
- Welfare to Work Information Support	3,096	4,891
- Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection - Sundry Projects	2,724	1,618
- Community Employment Materials & Training	5,000	4,564
- Rent	15,558	15,742
- Canteen	3,092	2,929
- Membership	1,378	1,600
- Light and Heat	5,511	6,575
- Repairs, maintenance and renovations	7,175	5,982
- Insurance	2,712	2,547
- IT purchasing and equipment	5,885	6,251
- Travelling expenses	1,355	1,248
- Annual Delegate Conference	3,537	3,254
- Legal and Professional Fees	738	2,269
- Audit Fees	4,797	4,804
- Printing and Publications (including Working for Work)	37,726	36,861
- Stationery	3,569	5,001
- Telephone	3,898	4,002
- Sundry Expenses	4,931	4,925
- 30th Anniversary event expenses	6,285	-
- Depreciation	8,182	10,601
	(780,738)	(763,890)
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	15,106	13,431



The Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed

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www.inou.ie
www.redundancy.ie

The INOU is supported by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and the Department of Rural and Community Development / Pobal (under the scheme to support national organisation in the Community and Voluntary Sector 2016 – 2019)



Department of Rural and
Community Development



An Roinn
Gnóthaí Fostaíochta agus Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of
Employment Affairs and Social Protection