



IRISH NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED

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PRESS RELEASE

INOU marks 30th Anniversary with a major conference on 'Best Practice in the Delivery of Employment Services'

On November 30th, 2017 in Wynn's Hotel, Dublin the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOU) marked its 30th Anniversary with a major conference on the theme of '*Best Practice in the Delivery of Employment Services*'.

On behalf of Minister Regina Doherty, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Health with responsibility for Health Promotion and the National Drugs Strategy Catherine Byrne TD, delivered the opening address.

An international perspective was given by Pia Lunöe and Brita Borg, Swedish Public Employment Service, who talked to the Conference about "*What works – A case study from Sweden and principles to help inform excellence in the delivery of Employment Services*".

In welcoming the Minister to the Conference Ann Fergus, INOU Chairperson, referred to the impact of unemployment on individuals and their families. Ann said that "*as a society, we must never lose sight of the fact that work, in addition to the obvious financial benefits, gives people dignity and purpose*".

"The aim of today's conference is to explore what works best in terms of supporting unemployed people to access employment opportunities and the critical role that the employment services play in this regard", said John Stewart, INOU Co-ordinator.

John's input to the Conference described the work that the INOU has been doing over the last three years in researching unemployed people's experience of the State's Employment Services: Intreo, the service the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection provides itself; the Local Employment Service, which is provided through local development and community structures; and JobPath which is provided through the private sector.

Brid O'Brien, Head of Policy and Media with the INOU gave an input which focused on '*Setting the Context: A Policy overview*'; Helen Johnston, National Economic and Social Council explored '*Why Active Inclusion Matters: Placing the person at the heart of the service*' and the importance of addressing household joblessness; and John Sweeney, Labour Market Economist focused on the debate between just getting a job vis-à-vis getting training that leads to a better more sustainable job in his input - '*A Job, Any Job or Training*'.

There were two panel discussions chaired by Seamus McGuinness, ESRI in the morning and Paul O'Toole, SOLAS CEO in the afternoon on the themes of '*What do we need from our employment services?*' and '*Delivering a quality employment service*' respectively.

Four workshops were run before and after lunch which explored:

- Quality Guidance and Knowing your labour market –how the Employment Services can best support their staff in delivering an effective service for unemployed people
- What Employers need from an Employment Service
- Why Training and Education is essential
- How Employment Services can best assist unemployed people further distanced from the labour market