



TEACHERS' UNION OF IRELAND / AONTAS MÚINTEOIRÍ ÉIREANN

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***2021: a return to remote teaching and learning***

# A Word from the President – Martin Marjoram

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TUI PRESIDENT, MARTIN MARJORAM

Dear Members,

### Continuing challenges

As we enter the second month of 2021, our hope for a very different year from the last and our optimism regarding the vaccine rollout are tempered by real concerns about the severity of the latest surge in COVID-19, the difficulties of emergency remote teaching and the possibility that pressure on the political and educational systems may lead to the adoption of unwise policy.

### Successful campaign to protect health and safety of members

Regrettably, the new year opened with ill-considered decrees risking severe difficulties in some education settings, with a lack of decisions causing equal risk elsewhere. A concerted TUI campaign of direct engagement with decision makers, lobbying by members and strong messaging in the media played an important role in reaching satisfactory outcomes across our workplaces. The health and safety of members and their families as well as our students remain central to all of our considerations. Announcements of a rushed reopening of schools, as well as Youthreach and other centres, along with a lack of clear direction that saw apprentices arriving in classrooms having travelled from various corners of the country, all at the height of an explosion in COVID-19 infections, required a sustained and determined response from TUI. I want to thank members for your help in lobbying TDs and senators which, along with the actions of our Executive Committee and officials, played an important role in ensuring that sense prevailed.

### Emergency remote teaching

The delay in a return to face-to-face teaching of course presents its own difficulties. I am acutely conscious of the

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challenges you face with emergency remote teaching and I will continue to use all opportunities to highlight your ongoing work and the magnificent contribution you have made and continue to make to the nation's COVID-19 response.

### State examinations

The delay in reopening schools has generated unhelpful speculation regarding the State Examinations. TUI remains committed to state-certified, externally assessed examinations and, in all of our engagements, has unfailingly stressed the importance of the various leaving certificate programmes, the additional components of assessment across a range of leaving certificate subjects, and the great value of the Junior Certificate. Since late last year, the General Secretary and I have represented you in a confidential process of engagement regarding the state examinations, including contingencies and adjustments which may be necessary in the light of the COVID-19 crisis. This process, involving the teaching unions, the Department, the Inspectorate, the State Examinations Commission, the management bodies, and parent and student representatives, is ongoing and has provided a forum to promote the consistent TUI position outlined above. However, at time of going to press, focus has shifted considerably to calls for calculated grades (possibly in addition to written examinations) and, even worse from our, or indeed any, reasonable perspective, so-called "predicted grades" meaning teachers taking full responsibility for grading our students without any process of standardisation or external moderation. We will continue to resist unwise policy proposals and have made clear the significant, in some cases insoluble, difficulties which would arise from them. Last year's breach of trust regarding class rankings has been neither forgotten nor forgiven, while we are also mindful of cynical efforts to lever from the COVID-19 crisis a permanent abolition of state certified examinations.

### Annual Congress 2021 – a remote event

Last November, the TUI Executive decided that Annual Congress 2021 will take place remotely. This was seen as the only viable

decision and developments since the turn of the year have regrettably provided far more confirmation of that judgement than we would ever have wanted. The Preliminary Agenda is in preparation as I write and all of the necessary details and documentation will issue to Branches and members as required. Thanks are due as ever to the Standing Orders Committee and TUI officials and staff whose work makes this possible, and to Branches for formulation and submission of motions. We look forward to this vital landmark in our democratic calendar, though regretful that we cannot yet return to meeting and congregating as normal.

### Establishment of Munster Technological University

Since 1st January 2021, two of our largest workplaces, IT Tralee and Cork IT, have been dissolved and the Munster Technological University established in their stead. The achievement of Technological University status is only made possible by the expertise and the extraordinary work over decades of academic staff in Munster whom TUI is rightly proud to represent. However, we are dissatisfied with the industrial relations legacy of the former employers, in spite of the sterling efforts of local TUI representatives to reach honourable settlements, and we will be steadfast in defence of the agreements, both national and local, which underpin the TU process.

### Building Momentum - Executive recommends rejection of proposals

The new proposed public sector agreement, Building Momentum, will be the subject of a ballot of members in the near future. The TUI Executive Committee is recommending rejection of the proposal because it signally fails to resolve the scandal of pay discrimination against colleagues employed since 2011. While we welcome the first modest pay increases proposed for public servants in more than a decade, the proposal includes only one inadequate measure specific to the pay equality imperative, namely an increment skip at point 12 for those appointed to the teacher's pay scale since 2011 (or a skip at the next increment if point 12 has already been reached). While scandalously stated

in language which will allow this measure not to be applied to future colleagues, this proposal will in any case only solve a fraction of the problem for lesser paid teachers leaving a gap of €80,000 in career earnings still unaddressed. Furthermore, there are no measures at all specific to the other recruitment grades TUI represents in Youthreach and in Adult and Further and Higher Education. Besides two general 1% pay increases this and next October, the equivalent of a further 1% pay increase is set aside either to increase salary further or for a "sectoral bargaining fund", whereby a union or group of unions can divert this money into solving outstanding issues and adjudications, essentially inviting members to pay for the resolution of their own problems.

Besides balloting on the proposal itself, you will also be balloted to renew the union's industrial action mandate as a means to progress our pay equality campaign. As ever, we ask that you vote YES to renew this mandate with the assurance that industrial action will be taken as a last resort and with all possible protections for the interests of members. Further details on the proposals and the ballots will issue soon.

### Important - please update your contact information

As our workplaces are shut, it is essential for the conduct of our ballots that you update the contact information which TUI has for you. Even if your information has not changed, you must access the system to confirm the information in order for us to be able to post you a ballot paper. Please take the opportunity by clicking the [link here](#) and note that the "Union Reference" field is not a required field if you do not have your TUI number to hand.

The difficulties of the times have required a longer message from me than usual. Important supporting information on many of the key issues is available in the rest of this edition.

With every good wish for the safety and health of you and your families,

*Martin Majoram*



# TUI recommends rejection of proposed public service agreement because of its failure to end pay discrimination

In a meeting that took place on 15th December 2020, the Executive Committee of the TUI unanimously decided to recommend rejection of the new public service agreement proposals, *Building Momentum – A New Public Service Agreement 2021-2022*. The decision was taken because of the failure of the proposals to finally and completely end the pay discrimination affecting those in 'new entrant' grades employed since 1st January 2011.

The practicalities of conducting our ballot are clearly impacted by the current COVID-19 restrictions. The details are under consideration and will be notified to branches and members shortly. Full details, including arguments for and against the proposals, will issue to members in advance of the ballot. In a second, concurrent ballot, members will be asked to renew the union's mandate for industrial action in order to further advance our campaign for an end to pay discrimination.

The Union acknowledged and welcomed the fact that these proposals provide for general pay increases, the first for public servants in over ten years. In taking the decision, TUI also recognises the severe financial difficulties caused by the pandemic to so many working people. However, ten years on from the imposition of cuts to 'new entrant' pay, the Union could not recommend acceptance of proposals that would continue to see colleagues paid lesser rates of pay for carrying out identical work.

## What do the proposals provide for in terms of pay?

- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 1% or €500, whichever is greater, on 1st October 2021.
- The equivalent of a 1% increase in annualised basic salaries to be used as

a Sectoral Bargaining Fund to be applied in whatever form on 1st February 2022.

- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 1% or €500, whichever is greater, on 1st October 2022.

## What additional measure does the agreement provide for 'new entrant' teachers?

Under the agreement, 'new entrant' teachers who have been recruited since 1st January 2011, after progressing to point 11 of the teaching salary scale will, on their next increment date, move to point 13.

'New entrant' teachers, recruited since 1st January 2011, who have already reached point 12 or higher on the teaching salary scale, will on their next increment date after the commencement of the Agreement, move one point further than they would under normal incremental progression.

## What does the agreement provide for the other recruitment grades in which TUI represents members employed after 1st January 2011?

While the proposals provide a limited improvement for second level teachers appointed after 1st January 2011 (see above) they do nothing to redress the ongoing pay discrimination in other 'new entrant' grades represented by TUI including Assistant Lecturer, Youthreach Resource Person, BTEI Adult Educator, Adult Guidance Counsellor/Co-ordinator, Adult Literacy Organiser and Community Education Facilitator other than the slight advantage applying to

points of scale under €50,000 of receiving €500 increases instead of 1%.

## 'Corrosive effects of pay discrimination continue to damage education professions'

In announcing its decision, the union once again highlighted the recruitment and retention crisis that exists in second level schools as a result of pay inequality.

'It is now the tenth anniversary of the unilateral imposition of cuts to 'new entrant' pay, but despite progress, its corrosive effects continue to damage the education system,' TUI President Martin Marjoram said.

'Regrettably, the limited measures contained in this proposed agreement will not end the ongoing scandal of pay discrimination for second level teachers employed on or after 1st January 2011 and the proposed agreement does not address it at all for the other recruitment grades in which TUI represents members.'

'There has been a teacher recruitment and retention crisis at second level for many years now as a result of pay discrimination, with a survey carried out in over 130 second level schools last year showing that over the previous twelve months, 97% of schools had experienced teacher recruitment difficulties while 77% had advertised positions to which nobody applied.'

'As recently as February 2020, TUI's 19,000 members, including those not personally affected by pay inequality, took strike action over the continuing injustice.'

'Even with this proposed agreement, the largest pay discrimination would still occur in the early years of employment. New entrants to second level teaching would still earn €6,500 or 15% less upon appointment than someone who entered the profession prior to 2011. The loss in career earnings would still be over €80,000.'

# TUI welcomes establishment of MTU, but outstanding industrial relations issues must be addressed and ongoing consultation with Union essential

The TUI has welcomed the establishment of the Munster Technological University (MTU), highlighting the significant contribution made by members to the process. However, the Union has warned that outstanding industrial relations issues must be addressed.

Simon Harris TD, Minister, Department of Further and Higher Education Research, Innovation and Science, (DFHERIS) approved the designation date of the 1st January 2021 for MTU, formed from the merger of Cork Institute of Technology and Institute of Technology Tralee. MTU is the second technological university to be established in Ireland, the first being Technological University Dublin in 2019. Other consortia of institutes are currently in the process of pursuing technological university status.

In advance of the establishment of MTU, the two institutes agreed a recruitment and selection process for the position of President. The successful candidate was Professor Maggie Cusack, Dean of Faculty of Natural Sciences University of Stirling, Scotland, UK.

TUI has secured resources to facilitate active branch engagement including consultation and negotiation relating to the development of technological universities.

The union has created inter-branch structures to allow members have a direct input into the development of their technological university. Clearly, meaningful local consultation and dialogue is critical to progressing plans to become a technological university, and where local negotiations have not progressed, industrial relations concerns can arise.

The designation of MTU is welcome and the significant contributions made by TUI members to achieve a technological university in Cork and Kerry must be recognised. The union notes that the road to MTU was difficult. With the assistance of the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), a number of industrial relations matters have been addressed.

Currently, the two Branches (Cork Colleges and Institute of Technology

Tralee) are preparing to ballot members on the WRC proposal regarding Phase 2 of the Memorandum of Understanding. In addition, members will have a second ballot for industrial action should the WRC proposal be rejected.

TUI members in Cork Institute of Technology and the Institute of Technology Tralee have always been central to the development of a model of higher education provision that will work best for students and the broader community that they serve.

MTU management should be aware that TUI members are willing to contribute to the development of the technological university. However, all outstanding industrial relations matters must be resolved. The new technological university has a unique opportunity to work in partnership with members in a positive and constructive manner, underpinned by real and ongoing consultation; failure to do so would represent a lost opportunity. TUI will be insisting that all agreements, national and local, are adhered to by MTU and by the Department.

# TUI makes donation to Debenhams workers and calls for definitive action from Government to end protracted dispute

In December, the TUI made a €12,000 donation to the Debenhams workers still on the picket line. The donation, which was proposed and accepted by the Union's Executive Committee, was a small practical expression of solidarity with these workers.

TUI has echoed the call of Mandate trade union for immediate, definitive action from the Taoiseach and the Government to end the protracted dispute which has now lasted for several months.

We also fully support the demand of Mandate and the ICTU that legislation be implemented to give effect to the Duffy/Cahill report which could prevent other workers suffering a similar scenario in the future.

In addition, TUI commends the workers on the inspirational courage and resilience that they have displayed for over six months.

At the time of going to print, ex-Debenhams workers have voted overwhelmingly against proposals put to

them by Labour Court Chairperson Kevin Foley. The proposal document stated that the Government would establish a €3m training, upskilling and business start-up fund, but crucially, prevented the workers from accessing cash from the fund.

Elected shop stewards from Debenhams will now determine the next steps in their campaign for a fair redundancy package and changes to legislation to ensure workers are not treated like this in the future.

# Annual Congress 2021 to take place remotely

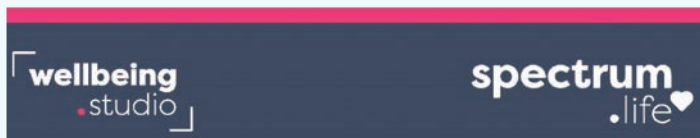
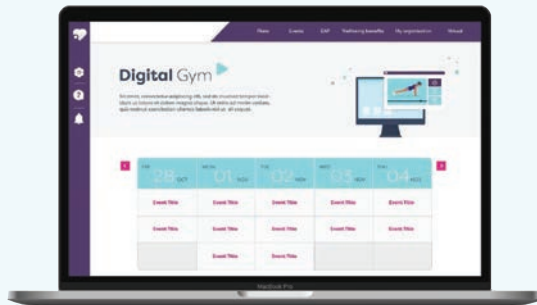
Due to the ongoing restrictions as a result of the national health emergency, TUI's Annual Congress will take place remotely in April 2021. The event had been due to take place in Killarney, Co Kerry.

Keep an eye on the Union's communications channels for updates and full details on the schedule and format of the event.

In 2020, TUI's Annual Congress took place online on 22nd June 2020, with a Special Congress taking place on 7th November 2020.



## Digital Wellbeing Series and Digital Gym now available to all school staff



Employee Assistance Service (EAS) provider Spectrum.Life is launching a Digital Wellbeing Series and Digital Gym for all school staff.

This service is streamed through the Wellbeing Together Online Portal (Desktop version).

### Digital Wellbeing Series:

The school community will have access to a monthly, theme based, 4-part series focused on a seasonal and relevant issue, delivered by a health and wellbeing presenter, and joined by a relevant expert.

### The Digital Gym:

This provides up to 4 gym classes per day, be it HIIT training, yoga, mindfulness, Pilates and more. Access recordings or join the live class.

### How do I access these services?

Register for the Department of Education Wellbeing Together Online Portal:

<https://wellbeingtogether.spectrum.life/login>

To register for the first time, use organisation code: yVIUI17

For anyone experiencing difficulties signing up to the online portal/app please contact [support@spectrum.life](mailto:support@spectrum.life).

For anyone experiencing issues in accessing the Digital Series, or Digital Gym when on the portal please contact [hello@spectrum.life](mailto:hello@spectrum.life).





# YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Dear Member,

During the periods of school/college/centre closure owing to COVID-19, it is not possible to conduct workplace ballots or forward information to workplaces. Therefore, it is essential that **the TUI has your correct up-to-date personal contact details so that you can:**



- **Participate in Union ballot and /or surveys.**
- **Receive Union advice and guidance.**

Please use the link [here](#) to enter your contact details.

Alternatively copy and paste this URL

<https://www.tuiservices.ie/updatesmydetailsshortcut.aspx>

into your browser and complete the form.

If you have any questions please contact [updatesmydetails@tui.ie](mailto:updatesmydetails@tui.ie)

**The information requested is essential and required to enable the union provide a service to members and will be used for balloting and communications purposes.**

The information will not be used for marketing. The union does have GDPR data sharing agreements with some companies in order to provide specific services to members. TUI complies with GDPR and respects members' privacy. Further details are available on our website. If you are not a member of TUI and have received this letter/email/text please notify the Data Protection Officer [dpo@tui.ie](mailto:dpo@tui.ie) to have the matter amended/information corrected.

# An international overview - what is the impact of COVID-19 on the profession and on education workers?

**The following is an excerpt from a research document by Education International (of which TUI is an affiliate) titled COVID-19 and Education: What Do We Know So Far? - A briefing for Education International member organisations**

The conversation about the impact of COVID-19 in education has rightly tended to focus on school/education institution closures and the related interruptions to learning, and implications for the wellbeing and welfare of students. However, failure to consider the changing nature and conditions of teaching as well as education support provides an incomplete picture of the impact of the pandemic on school communities and on education systems as a whole.

Education unions are playing a crucial role in analysing and addressing the impact on the workforce, shedding light on the changing conditions of work and the necessary investment and support structures for the profession. Many unions have collected data in their national contexts, highlighting changes in expectations and pedagogical practice; lack of training and support;

a reported decrease in self-efficacy and job satisfaction; an increase in workload and stress; and a negative impact on staff wellbeing and mental health.

While there is no global evidence about the impact of the pandemic on workload, stress levels and wellbeing among education staff, data collected by Education International and its members to date suggest a dramatic impact on teachers as well as on education support personnel.

Based on data from the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), the OECD has argued that work-related stress is an important predictor of teacher attrition. In view of the increase in work-related stress among teachers due to the pandemic, the OECD makes the following recommendations:

*“Governments must ensure that teachers feel compensated for the additional stress they are experiencing by giving them satisfactory working conditions. Ensuring that teachers are enabled to participate in school governance and given support to participate in continuous professional development are two ways to achieve that in this difficult period of continuous change.”*

## **Teacher policy: government responses**

One data source on teacher policies is a survey on the COVID-19 responses of Ministries of Education conducted by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics in collaboration with UNICEF and the World Bank. The data was collected June-September 2020 and includes findings from 149 countries.

Some of the findings highlighted here diverge from the experiences shared by education unions. The full data set includes data provided by national Ministries:

- 63 million primary and secondary teachers were affected by school closures. In three quarters of countries, teachers continued to teach during the closures and the majority of these countries reported no changes to teacher salaries or benefits;
- 1 in 3 countries recruited additional teachers to support remote learning during the closure of schools and their reopening, mostly high- and upper-middle-income countries;
- 1 in 4 countries reported recruitment of additional staff such as cleaning and administrative personnel during the reopening of schools;
- 66% of countries reported that teachers received instructions on how to deliver lessons through remote learning;



■ 1 in 3 countries reported providing their teachers with ICT tools and free internet connectivity to facilitate their work during the school closures;

■ Psychosocial and emotional support was provided in more than half of high- and upper-middle-income countries, and in 26 per cent of lower-middle-income countries.

## A new digital reality: the changing nature of teaching and learning

EI's survey about the future of work in education, *Teaching with Tech: the role of education unions in shaping the future*, included questions on the impact of the pandemic. The survey confirms that new digital technologies were introduced in education in most countries following school/education institution closures, and suggests that this was done without consulting education unions: 45 % of responding unions had not been consulted at all, while 29 % had been consulted on a few aspects.

Reflecting on the role of unions in assessing technologies already in use, almost three quarters of respondents said they are not involved and that there are no structures or processes in place for union involvement.

The survey also shows that a majority of respondents considered that teachers' training needs on digital technologies were insufficiently met or not met at all, highlighting the use

of digital technologies in teaching and learning as the most urgent area for training.

As for the impact of digital technologies on health and wellbeing, respondents considered workload intensification the greatest concern, followed by work-life balance and health concerns. A third of respondents indicated that teacher wellbeing in relation to digital technologies was not addressed in any policy instrument in their country.

## Conclusions

Data and evidence continue to be collected, particularly at the national level, and over time we will know more and better understand how the SARS-CoV-2 virus is transmitted and risks are best mitigated. However, it will take a considerable amount of time before we know the full impact of the pandemic. In the interim, education unions have a crucial role to play in contributing to assessments of the impact on this generation of students, on the workforce and on equity within, and quality of, education systems. This is why Education International called on governments to conduct equity audits of education systems and institutions in light of the pandemic as a matter of urgency and developed a Guide to support member organisations in their advocacy and efforts in this direction.

The perspectives of the people within the profession are essential for understanding the impact of the pandemic on teaching and learning, as

well as on the new conditions in which teachers and education support personnel are now working. The experience and expertise that the profession has built in addressing the COVID-19 crisis over these months of emergency response is invaluable to charting the way forward.

In addition to undertaking research and surveying members, education unions can highlight areas for further research, particularly related to the rights, status and conditions of teachers and education support personnel. Unions are strategically positioned to make use of social and policy dialogue to engage with governments and make the case for more and better data and evidence to inform educational policymaking that advances and protects the human rights to universal education and to decent work in a new COVID-19 reality.



# Strong maths and science performance in international study a tribute to Irish students and teachers

The TUI described Ireland’s strong showing in the latest Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) - published in December - as a tribute to the commitment and dedication of Irish students and teachers.

The union highlighted that Irish school communities are operating at a considerable disadvantage compared to many international counterparts due to unacceptably low investment levels at second level.

In welcoming the findings, TUI called for Government to match the commitment of students and teachers by investing appropriately in the sector.

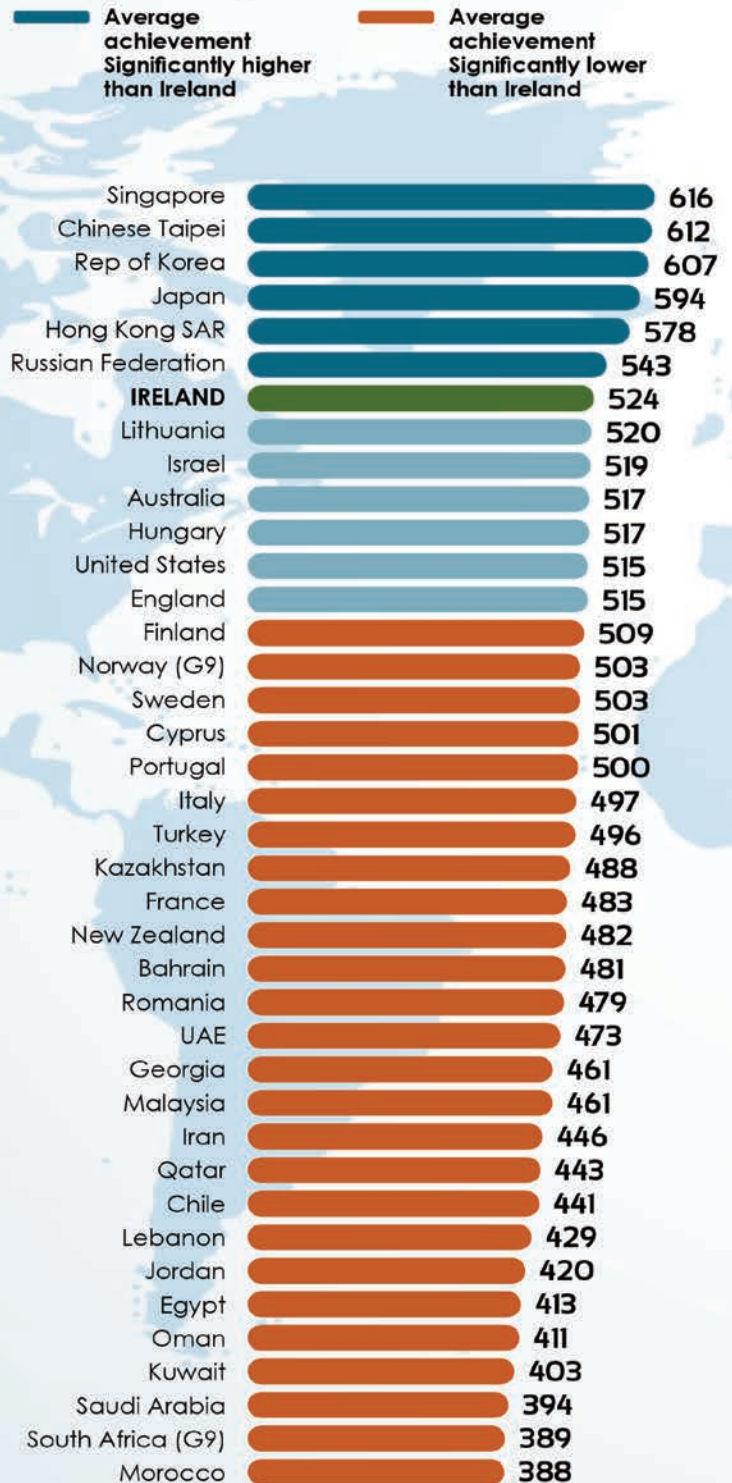
TUI President Martin Marjoram said that the 'strong showing by Irish students in this latest TIMSS report is a tribute to the excellent quality of teaching and learning in our schools. At second year, Irish students were the top-performing EU country in Mathematics while the performance in Science was also very impressive.'

'However, it is high time that our policy-makers matched the commitment of students and teachers. A succession of governments have paid lip service to the concept of an education system that meets the requirements of all learners while allowing funding to the sector to stagnate. In recent months, the various additional challenges foisted on schools by COVID-19 have put into sharp focus the unsuitability of many buildings and other facilities for modern teaching and learning,' he added.

TUI highlighted that the crisis of teacher supply will worsen in second level schools until the scandal of discriminatory pay affecting those appointed from 2011 onwards is eliminated. Maths and the Science subjects are among the areas where schools are having severe difficulties recruiting and retaining teachers.

The results are all the more remarkable when examined in the context of investment levels at second level. The latest OECD Education At A Glance report shows Ireland's spend at second level to be the lowest of the 36 countries for which figures are provided. This illustrates a shameful and sustained lack of acknowledgement by Government of the value of education to the individual, to society and to our economy.

## Mean country scores: Mathematics

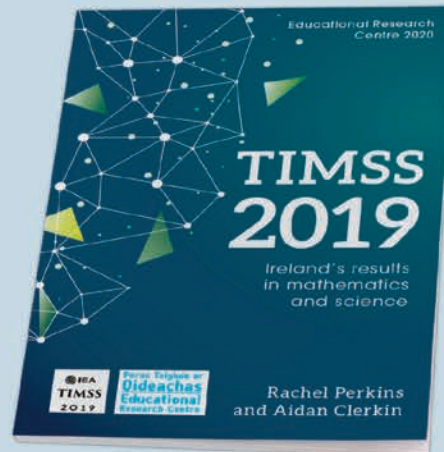
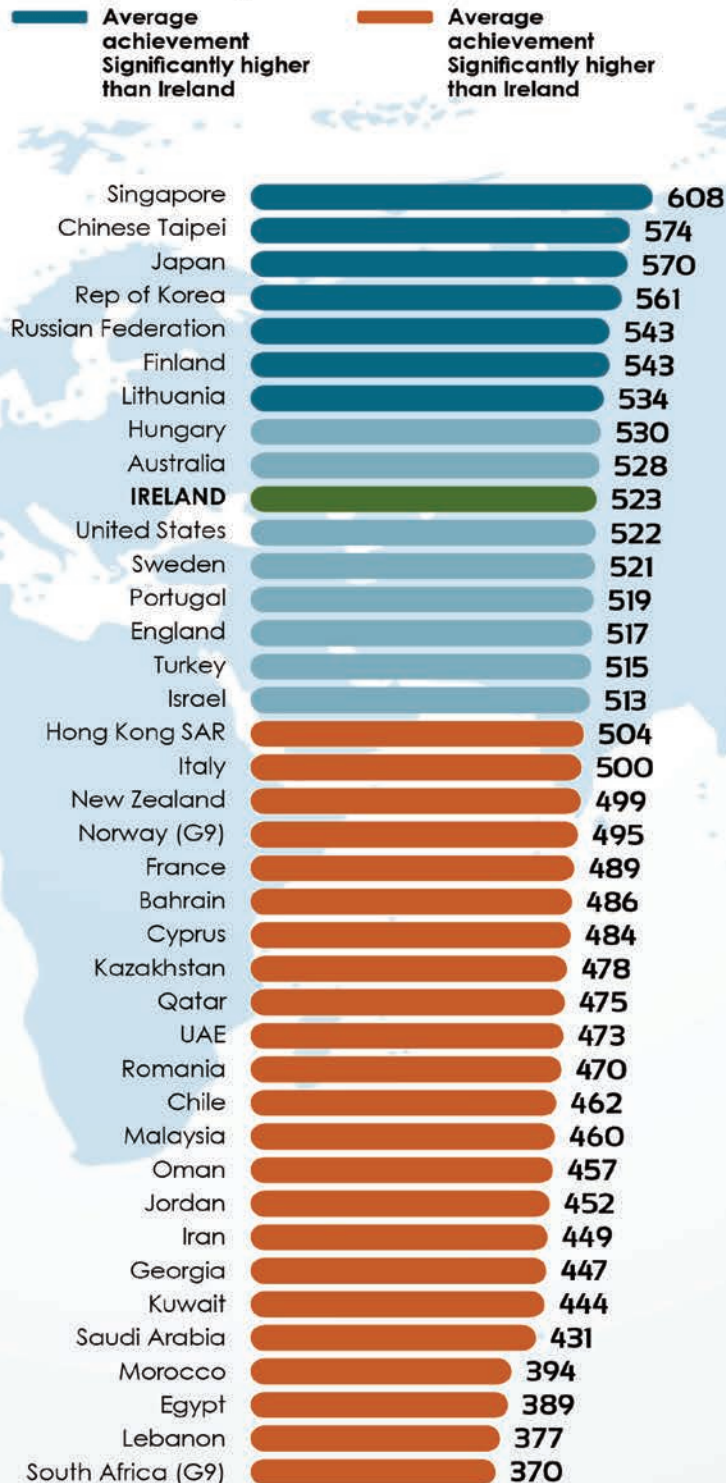




## The findings showed that:

- » Ireland is the top performing EU country in Mathematics at second year in post-primary
- » The performance in Science second year is significantly above the TIMSS centre point
- » The performance of Irish students in Mathematics and Science has remained stable and strong over the last four years

### Mean country scores: Science



## What is TIMSS?

Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is one of the world's largest studies of educational achievement. It assesses the Mathematics and Science skills of students at fourth class in primary school and in second year at post-primary school level.

In 2019, 672,000 students from 64 countries and 8 benchmarking participants in total participated in TIMSS. Thirty-three countries, including Ireland, participated at both primary and post-primary level.

In Ireland, TIMSS was implemented in March and April 2019 in 150 primary schools and 149 post-primary schools around the country. Schools were randomly selected and invited to participate as a representative sample. Approximately 4,118 second year students completed tests of Mathematics and Science, together with a background questionnaire.

The TIMSS assessment has two dimensions for Mathematics and Science: content areas and cognitive processes.

At Second Level, there are four content areas for Mathematics. These are Number, Algebra, Geometry, and Data & Probability.

There are four content areas for Science. These are Biology, Physics, Chemistry, and Earth Science.

Cognitive processes refer to the skills needed for students to answer questions correctly. These are Knowing, Applying, and Reasoning. Knowing is the least complex of these processes and Reasoning is the most complex.



# Emergency Remote Teaching & Learning in a COVID-19 context

## Guidance for TUI members\*

### Partial or Full School Closure owing to COVID-19

#### **The school is required to close on foot of public health advice, what is expected of me?**

All teachers who are medically fit to work, including SETs, are available to work remotely and should provide emergency remote teaching to all students in their subject class/es or on their caseload.

Substitute teachers should be arranged to provide remote teaching for students in classes whose teacher has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and is medically unfit to work or is absent owing to another illness and is on sick leave.

#### **All students in a class/year group are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements. What do I do?**

You should provide emergency remote teaching to all students in your class/es in the year group, using the school's digital platform(s) or other agreed method as outlined below.

### School is open as normal but student/s medically advised to self-isolate or restrict movement due to COVID-19

**A student is on medically certified COVID-19 absence, i.e. advised to self-isolate or restrict her/his movement.**

#### **Does a teacher have to teach that student remotely?**

Not necessarily. A number of options are available, one or more of which can be used:

##### 1) Peer Support

A peer could be nominated within the class to update the student who is medically certified to remain at home owing to COVID-19. The student who is at home may feel well enough to submit work to the teacher either electronically or via post.

##### 2) School's Digital Platform

The student may access lesson content via the school's digital platform if a teacher wishes to upload content and the student has access to a digital device.

##### 3) Posting Learning Materials

The teacher may, if s/he chooses, send learning content to the student via post.

##### 4) Live stream a class

The teacher may, if s/he chooses, live-stream her/his class to the student/s at home.

##### 5) Blend direct teaching and self-directed learning

The teacher may, if s/he chooses, use a combination of both direct teaching by the teacher and the assignment of independent learning tasks for completion by the student/s.

##### 6) Support from very high-risk teachers who are working from home

Some teachers have been certified as being at very high-risk from contracting COVID-19 and cannot therefore return to a physical school setting. These teachers are being facilitated to work from home and may be used to support the student/s.

A teacher who undertakes this role does so within her/his timetable, i.e. provision is made within her/his normal class contact hours to engage in supporting students who are learning from home.

Schools should ensure that teachers who are facilitated to work from home are provided with an appropriate digital device and the requisite training.

##### 7) Support from Local Education Centre

Schools may seek the assistance of their local Education Centre to source a teacher to meet the needs of student/s medically certified to stay at home owing to COVID-19. Local education centres will co-ordinate/ connect teachers from other schools to assist.

##### 8) Support from other schools/within ETB

A group of schools - for example, schools within one ETB or schools within a local geographical area - may decide to organise a cluster of teachers and to match students and teachers.

##### 9) Support from other teachers within the school

Schools may use their existing, allocated teaching resources to meet the needs of students who are at home due to COVID-19.

##### 10) Support from a teacher who is restricting her/his movement

A teacher within the school who has been advised to restrict her/his movements but is medically fit for work can support emergency remote teaching and learning for individual students or classes, in line with Circular 0049/2020.

## Role of the Subject Teacher

### **What is the role of the subject teacher (i.e. the teacher within the school who is not working remotely) in facilitating students who are learning remotely?**

Subject teachers who decide that they themselves can most appropriately address the practicalities of adapted, emergency education provision may share key teaching points of lessons and activities with the student/s using the school's online digital platform.

The subject teacher can also provide or recommend resources, including books and/or packs of materials, that are relevant to the planned lessons, for use by the student.

In circumstances where a subject teacher in the school decides that s/he cannot appropriately address the adapted education provision, s/he may, at his/her discretion, co-ordinate the support for the student through liaising with a designated teacher with expertise in the subject who is supporting the student remotely.

In circumstances where a subject teacher in the school decides that s/he cannot appropriately address the adapted education provision and there is no designated teacher with relevant subject expertise available from the student's own school or indeed from another school in the local area, the local Education Centre will advise the school of the teachers available in the region who have the required expertise.

Should this approach be taken, the subject teacher should advise the teacher who is teaching the student of the topics the student has covered to date and periodically check-in on the student's progress.

### **If a subject teacher decides to support a student learning remotely, what happens?**

Such a teacher could, using technology:

- allow the student to connect remotely (using school-supported digital devices) to the live class taking place within school.
- send the student video recordings of practical activities, or links to such recordings. These videos may be

sourced on-line. They are not a recording of the teacher's lesson/s. ■ provide regular opportunities for the student to interact with her/his peers in the relevant subject classes through online video conferencing and/or collaborative learning activities, such as project work, which can be carried out online.

### **If a teacher working in the school is supporting student/s learning remotely, is there any change to her/his teaching contract?**

No. Such a teacher is only required to teach the number of hours s/he is contracted to teach with her/his school/ETB.

## Role of a teacher assigned within a school/ETB to assist students who are learning from home

### **As a teacher assigned by the school to assist students working remotely, what do I do?**

As designated teacher you will be teaching the students remotely and will be allowed further time, from within timetable, to ensure frequent contact with the subject teacher(s). You should strive to support the learning experiences for the student in the subject in a way that aligns with the learning of the student's peers in her/his subject class, insofar as possible and practicable.

## Supports

### **What supports should a school put in place to enable a student who is on a medically certified COVID-19 absence to engage remotely?**

School management should arrange for the student (and teacher) to have access to relevant digital technology and other resources, as appropriate.

Following appropriate consultation with staff, school management must also set clear, reasonable expectations about the level of support the school can provide to both the student and her/his parents/guardians.

### **If a teacher engages remotely with a student, what additional supports will be given if the student also has special educational needs?**

The Special Education Teacher (SET) should plan to provide any additional support. The support should be as closely aligned as possible with that which would normally be available in the physical setting of a school.

## Communication with Parents/Guardians

### **Will a teacher who is teaching the student/s remotely be required to meet regularly with parents/guardians?**

Regular contact/check-ins with parents/guardians and students will be essential to establish how the students are experiencing the adapted, emergency education provision.

The conduct and frequency of contacts/check-ins must be clearly communicated to parents/guardians. This contact will be scheduled in a manner that is consistent with the right of teachers to personal/discretionary time and cannot give rise to additional workload. The designated teacher should liaise with the subject teacher on the progress of the student.

## Consultation on adapted education provision

### **Who decides which option/s to use?**

Consultation, on a whole-staff basis, must take place at school level in relation to the option/s most appropriate for enabling engagement with parents/guardians and students. Consultation is very important as teachers will know best which option (or combination of options) will be most appropriate for their students.

Schools will select the most appropriate approach/es for their individual context following consultation and agreement by staff. It is acknowledged that different



approaches may be needed owing to a range of factors, including the ICT skills of teachers and students.

### What is Consultation?

Being presented with decisions as a fait accompli or being told what is going to happen is not consultation. Consultation must be a genuine engagement that seeks to reach agreement regarding matters raised (either by management or staff). All the information necessary for fully-informed decision-making should be provided.

## Very High-Risk Teacher working remotely

**If a teacher (medically certified as being at very high-risk from COVID-19 and, therefore, working from home) is supporting student/s from other schools, is there any change to her/his teaching contract?**

No. The contractual relationship with the teacher's own school/ETB is unaffected and a teacher therefore is guided by the policies of her/his own school. Such a teacher is only required to teach the number of hours s/he is contracted to teach with her/his base school/ETB.

**If a teacher (at very high-risk and working from home) is supporting student/s from other schools using all her/his contracted hours, is s/he required also to teach her/his normal class/es in her/his base school?**

No. Such a teacher, teaching remotely from home, is only required to teach the number of hours s/he is contracted to teach - nothing further.

If the teacher's normal contracted hours are part-time, s/he may undertake additional hours up to a maximum of 22 hours per week (inclusive of 21 hours 20 minutes of class contact and 40 minutes of Junior Cycle professional time) provided that the additional hours are agreed, reflected in a revised contract and in salary.

## Recording of Lessons

**If a teacher decides/is assigned to support students who are learning remotely owing to COVID-19, is s/he required to record her/his lessons and send them to the student's?**

No. Teachers are not required to do this and are advised not to do so. Students should, as far as possible, interact with the teacher online during and in accordance with the normal timetabling of her/his subject in the school.

A teacher could, using technology:

- allow the student to connect remotely (using school-supported digital devices) to the live class taking place within school.
- send the student video recordings of practical activities or links to such recordings. These videos may be sourced on-line. They are not a recording of the teacher's lesson/s.
- provide regular opportunities for the student to interact with her/his peers in the relevant subject classes through online video conferencing and/or collaborative learning activities such as project work which can be carried out online.

## Teacher Self Isolating or Restricting her/his movement

**As a teacher who has been advised to self-isolate/restrict my movement, what is expected of me?**

Any teacher who is medically fit for work but has been advised to restrict his/her movements is available to work remotely in line with Circular Letter 49/2020.

*\*This guidance is based on consultation, at national level, with the Department of Education, relevant statutory agencies, management bodies and the TUI.*

Source document 'Guidance on Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning in a COVID-19 Context for Post-Primary schools and centres for education' can be found at: TUI's School Re-Opening Drive - <https://tinyurl.com/lyb34t5sk>

## Early school-leavers or students who are anxious about COVID-19

**Are schools required to adapt education provision for students who are anxious about returning to school or students who are in the high-risk category (not "very high-risk")?**

No. However, schools are required to engage with these students in the same manner as they would have done prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Are schools required to adapt education provision for students who are at risk of early school leaving?**

No. However, schools are required to engage with these students in the same manner as they would have done prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**If I have a student who is at risk of early school-leaving or is anxious about returning to school, should I record her/his attendance/absence in the usual fashion?**

Yes. Where students have not returned to school, despite the efforts made by schools and others, Educational Welfare Officers will engage with, encourage, and support these students and their parents/guardians to facilitate a return to school.

## School policies

All school policies that are relevant to emergency remote teaching must be updated, for example, data protection, ICT acceptable usage and child protection policies.



# TUI in the media

**TUI representatives have engaged with the media in relation to a number of issues of concern to members recently. A small sample is set out below.**

The Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI) is to oppose the proposed new public service pay agreement. The TUI leadership said "the limited measures contained in the proposed agreement will not end the ongoing scandal of pay discrimination for second level teachers employed on or after 1st January 2011." - **Irish Times 15/12/20**

Teachers' Union of Ireland general secretary Michael Gillespie said that the delay in reopening must be used to ensure that schools are as safe as possible.

"Now that this announcement has been made, it is vital that the additional time be used to investigate what additional safety measures and enhancements may be required in schools," he said." - **Irish Examiner 31/12/20**

'The European Centre for Disease Control has said that the new variant is 50-70% more virulent, so we have serious concerns about schools re-opening in that situation.' - **TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie, Today With Claire Byrne 4/1/21**

'The right place for everybody is face-to-face, and schools should open as soon as possible, but in a sustainable manner. Schools stayed ahead of the curve before Christmas, but contact tracing was key to this. That is what worries us most is that the contact tracing isn't in place. Schools are in a better place in terms of remote learning than they were last March and April.' He highlights that broadband is a problem in many areas while some students,

particularly in Deis schools, are reliant on phones for remote learning, which is not ideal. - **TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie, RTE's Morning Ireland, 5/1/21**

'The proposed opening of schools for some students will bring larger numbers of people into confined spaces at a time when the unambiguous public health advice is to do the exact opposite. We think this is dangerous, it's risky, it's gambling and we weren't consulted about it.' - **TUI General Secretary Michael Gillespie, RTE's Drivetime 6/1/21**

'We were not consulted in this. We've no confidence that this plan can be implemented safely and practically as early as next Monday.'

'It's never too late to do the right thing, and we think we need a period of consultation and emergency remote teaching for a short period of time while we see where exactly we are with this unprecedented level of infection, particularly to see how far it has extended into the school community.'

'There is a level of concern rising, quite frankly, to people being terrified, that I've never seen before in all my time as a union representative. At a time like this, at the most acute crisis we face with this virus, this is not the time to shift from a consultative approach to just having ministerial decrees with no consultation in advance.' - **TUI President Martin Marjoram, RTE's Morning Ireland programme 7/1/21**



TUI PRESIDENT MARTIN MARJORAM, RTE'S PRIME TIME, 21/1/21

'We've had hundreds of members contacting us about what they see as a reckless decision, and one on which we were not consulted, which cannot be implemented either safely or practically.' - **TUI President Martin Marjoram, Virgin Media News bulletins 7/1/21**

'We've no confidence that this can be done safely. We have to remember that schools are workplaces, they are employers, they have an obligation to their employees in terms of health and safety.' - **TUI Assistant General Secretary Joanne Irwin, Today FM's Last Word programme 7/1/21**

The Teachers' Union of Ireland has welcomed the decision "now taken, somewhat belatedly, by Government to finally do the right thing". It said its members would not be attending their workplaces for in-school teaching next Monday, "or on subsequent days, but will be available to provide emergency remote teaching and to support their students including, in particular, students with special educational needs". - **Irish Times, 8/1/21**

'This was a ministerial decree. That's not the way to bring people with you.' - **TUI President Martin Marjoram, Sunday Business Post, 10/1/21**

'There is tremendous trust and confidence in the traditional Leaving Cert, for all its flaws.'

The introduction of calculated grades so early in school year would place 'enormous stress' on school community.' - **TUI President Martin Marjoram, Newstalk's The Pat Kenny Show, 16/1/21**

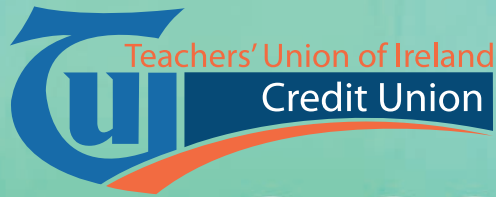
'Important to acknowledge the amount of work going on right now in terms of remote teaching... all the feedback is that it's going much better than the last time it had to happen... we will continue to engage with Government in order to deal with issues...' - **TUI President Martin Marjoram on RTE's Prime Time programme, 21/1/21**



MARTIN MARJORAM, RTE NEWS, 7/1/21



MARTIN MARJORAM, VIRGIN MEDIA NEWS 7/1/21



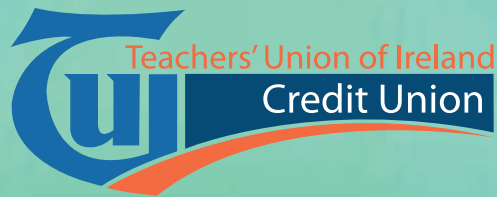
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Thursday, July 18

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# Help protect what matters most

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## Great News!

The TUI Income Continuance Plan has been reviewed and the 2021 review brings great news for members:

- ✓ **Reduced** cost of membership
- ✓ **Same** great benefits
- ✓ **New** Health and Wellness Initiatives
- ✓ **New** Tax Return Service for Disability Benefit Claimants

## New lower cost of membership

The cost of Plan membership will reduce from **1.70% to 1.62%** of gross salary from 1st February 2021 for the next 4 years, **making it even more affordable for members!**

## Key benefits of the Plan:

- ✓ Replacement income of up to **75% of salary** if you can't work due to illness\*
- ✓ A once-off lump sum of **25% of salary** if you are diagnosed with a Specified Illness\*\*
- ✓ Death Benefit of **twice** your annual salary
- ✓ A Claims Service you can trust

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To be eligible to claim from the TUI Income Continuance Plan, you must meet the definition of disablement as defined in the policy document and exhaust the Plan's 'Deferred Period'. The Deferred Period is the amount of time that must pass before Disability Benefit becomes payable. Other terms, conditions and exclusions apply. \*Up to 75% of salary less any other income which you may be entitled to e.g. half pay, Ill Health Early Retirement Pension, Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration, State Illness or Invalidity Benefit, after you have exhausted the deferred period of the Plan. \*\*To claim for one of the covered Specified Illnesses, you must meet the criteria of that illness as defined in the Policy Document. Please contact Cornmarket for the policy definition of each Specified Illness and its pre-existing conditions. Terms, conditions and exclusions apply. †Source: Cornmarket, November 2020.

Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. A member of the Irish Life Group Ltd. which is part of the Great-West Lifeco Group of companies. Telephone calls may be recorded for quality control and training purposes.

The Plan is underwritten by New Ireland Assurance Company plc.

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16330 TUI ICP Review Advert 01-21



# HAS YOUR CLASS ENTERED THE CIF DESIGN CHALLENGE?

We're calling on second level school students to unleash their creativity and design A Home for Everyone

**Thank you to all schools, teachers and students who have signed up so far to explore the exciting skills that a career in design, engineering and construction holds.**

**Winners will showcase their design to the CIF (Construction Industry Federation) and the Minister for Housing, plus they will win prizes for their school and themselves.**



**DON'T MISS OUT, SIGN UP NOW.  
VISIT [WWW.CIF.IE/CIFCHALLENGE](http://WWW.CIF.IE/CIFCHALLENGE)**

Entries close on March 19th, 2021.

# Updates provided by the Teaching Council

## Contacting the Teaching Council

The Teaching Council currently operates a number of dedicated phone lines and email inboxes. These are managed both on-site in the Council offices and off-site with a view to providing continuity of service. Currently the phone lines are open from 10am-12pm and again from 3pm-5pm. These times were chosen to align with teachers' morning breaks and after school while providing time for Council staff to follow up on any queries. The Council is receiving a very high volume of emails and phone calls. Where possible teachers are asked to email the Council including their Teaching Council Registration number (TCRN) on all communications.

## Updating Contact Details

The Council is asking teachers to log onto My Registration to double check that their contact details are correct and to update them if necessary. Teachers who have eircom emails will be asked to update their information. Also a number of shared email accounts have been identified and communications will be issued to those involved requesting them to create an individual email account.

## NQT Fast-track Summer Registration Process

The past summer was particularly challenging and the Council redesigned and implemented an online registration process to ensure that the increased number of NQTs would be registered in time for the start of the 2020/2021 school year. This was further compounded by the delay in final exam boards in the colleges due to the pandemic resulting in a 2-4 week shorter registration period. Having invested

considerable effort in IT system development and upgrade, testing and additional staffing the process rolled out, resulting in the registration of over 3,400 summer graduates by September.

## Standard Registrations

The Council continues to receive an unprecedented high volume of applications for registration. In approximately 30-50% of cases the initial application is incomplete resulting in delays to the individual involved and others. Therefore applicants are advised to read the Guidelines which accompany the application form in advance of submission to the Council.

The standard processing times for applications is 6-8 weeks for teachers holding Irish accredited qualifications. If teachers hold qualifications gained outside the State this timeframe extends to 12 weeks. This is to allow for the qualifications to be assessed to ensure comparability to the standards set down by the Council. These timeframes are similar to those of other regulatory bodies both within and outside the State and they adhere to the legislative requirements as set out by the EU Directive 2005/36 EC as amended. These processing timeframes only commence once a fully complete application including supporting documentation is received.

## Re-Vetting

The mainstream re-vetting of teachers on a three-year cycle re-commenced in October 2020 when 8,000 of the circa 40,000 teachers who have a renewal date in March 2021 were requested to apply for re-vetting. The majority of these teachers have now complied and will be able to renew their registration in March. Teachers who are requested to submit a re-vetting application are advised to do so

in a timely manner so that they can renew their registration when it falls due. Re-vetting notifications are issued to the relevant teachers 6 months in advance of their renewal dates. Teachers who are currently registered or previously registered with the Council may submit the required documentation including a scanned signed consent form by email.

## Droichead

The Droichead process has continued to grow again this year with more NQTs applying every week. As of 19 November 2020, there were 2,607 NQTs availing of the process in 1,287 schools, of which there were 1,365 post-primary teachers across 507 post-primary schools. Any NQT who commenced the process in the 2019/2020 school year, but was unable to complete that process before June, should submit their Form D with the details of the completed elements. This will be attached to the teacher's record and will be banked so that only the outstanding elements have to be completed at a future date.

## Registration Database

The Teaching Council is working on the development of a new replacement database which will support the streamlining of processes. The system once implemented will allow full online processing of applications and offer efficiencies in terms of the application processes/timelines. Currently the system is at development and early testing with a view to going live in Q2 2021. Further communications will be issued to all registered teachers, unions, managerial bodies nearer the time.



## GAA Museum launches free history resources for second level schools to remember Bloody Sunday

The GAA Museum at Croke Park has launched a free new suite of interactive learning resources for second level schools to enhance students' knowledge and understanding of the events around Bloody Sunday 100 years on.

The history resources, offering three ways to learn, are available free of charge to all second level schools. They include an education pack, a series of online video and podcast lectures from leading Irish historians and an interactive virtual classroom session with a GAA Museum Tour Guide on the topic of Bloody Sunday.

The resources have been launched as part of the GAA Museum's Bloody Sunday centenary programme commemorating the 100th anniversary of the tragic events that unfolded on November 21st 1920, and their impact on Irish history.

The education pack, which contains biographies of significant figures in the history of the GAA, can be posted to teachers in hard copy or sent digitally via email, and can be used to accompany existing curriculum



textbooks. The online resources include a video and podcast lecture series with leading Irish historians speaking about the events of Bloody Sunday, the War of Independence and other key moments in Irish history and sport. These informative and thought-provoking talks were recorded as part of the GAA Summer School and Lecture Series and will be of particular interest to teachers with Leaving Certificate history classes and may inspire further research or study as part of the students' special topic.

Presentation topics include 'Atrocity and Atonement: The Civil War and the Rise of Kerry's Greatest Team' (video) with Dr Richard McElligott (DKIT); 'Setting the scene: Overview of the

War of Independence in Ireland, 1920' (podcast) with Prof Diarmuid Ferriter (UCD); 'Killing and Bloody Sunday Morning' (video) with Dr Anne Dolan (Trinity College); and 'Sport and Revolution: The Irish Case,' with Dr Will Murphy (DCU).

To ensure the learning resources are fully interactive and engaging, the GAA Museum has created a virtual live classroom session with a GAA Museum tour guide. These sessions which will complete the learning experience, include an overview of the events of Bloody Sunday, a short film about the GAA Museum's new 'Remembering Bloody Sunday' exhibition and a Q&A session. The virtual classroom sessions will be conducted via Microsoft Teams, must be booked in advance and are subject to availability. They will also require good internet connection but can be tailored to teachers' class times.

For more information on the schools programme, visit [crokepark.ie/bloodydaysforschools](https://crokepark.ie/bloodydaysforschools)

## Ireland's largest student enterprise programme launched

The Local Enterprise Office's Student Enterprise Programme is in its 18th year, with over 220,000 students having taken part since it began in 2003.

The final usually takes place in Croke Park, but as with the 2020 final, the event will take place again online on Friday 14th May 2021. A new ambassador was also announced for the programme - Olympian and entrepreneur, Derval O'Rourke.

The enterprise education initiative, funded by the Government of Ireland through Enterprise Ireland and delivered by the 31 Local Enterprise Offices in local authorities throughout

the country, saw over 29,000 students from almost 500 second level schools across the country take part in 2019/2020.

The students will compete across three categories - Junior, Intermediate and Senior - and judging takes place virtually via electronic submissions. Each student enterprise is challenged with creating, setting up and running their own business, which must show sales of their service or product.

The programme will also include two additional categories that students can enter. These are the "Most Creative Business Idea" video competition for

the Senior category and the "My Entrepreneurial Journey" category for the Junior and Intermediate categories.

Since the Student Enterprise Programme began in 2003, over 220,000 students have taken part, learning key skills on how to create a business idea, start a business and grow a business. The Student Enterprise Programme also has new range of online resources for 2020/2021 at [www.StudentEnterprise.ie](http://www.StudentEnterprise.ie), which will feature regular blogs and houses a full range of Student Enterprise resources for students and teachers.

# The importance of middle leadership in our schools

Teaching is complex and so too is school leadership. This was never so true as we navigate our way through our current crisis. Of note over the past few months has been the recognition of the heroic role senior leadership have played combined with a growing recognition of the essential contribution that middle leaders (those teachers with and without posts of responsibility) have offered in meeting our more recent challenges.

More than ever the role of middle leaders is seen as a key driver of school development where a focus on teaching and learning is at the core of what we do in our schools (*DES, Circular Letter 0003/2018, Management and Leadership in Our Schools*). Given the busy world of teaching our Postgraduate Programme in Middle Leadership and Mentoring at MIC Thurles adopts a user-friendly, blended programme of online and face-to-face engagement. The programme is offered to all aspiring and existing middle leaders irrespective of school or workplace setting. You chose whether you wish to work online, face-to-face or a combination of both.

In turn we are flexible in relation to assessment modes so as to suit your context and your ambitions. Whether you wish to stay in the class and find out more about leadership/mentoring or you wish to aspire to middle and senior leadership positions, this course may be of interest to you and/or to your colleagues. It intentionally pays attention to you, where you are and

where you want to be. We invite you to develop both as a person and professionally. We focus on real life context-sensitive areas to which you wish to apply your existing and emerging leadership and mentoring skills. We place a strong emphasis on change wisdom because we know leadership can be a challenging yet a rewarding and a positive experience.

We are endorsed by the Centre for School Leadership and by others in the educational world. We adopt a very local but also global perspective with international guest speakers joining us such as Michael Fullan as well as drawing on local school and business leaders. More information on our programme is available at the link below. The programme runs on Saturdays (approximately 10 Saturdays across the academic year) and has a pathway of accreditation that commences with a Certificate

Programme, advancing to Masters and ultimately PhD awards.

Sometimes leadership is about others and then there comes a time when you start to give it some serious thought and you realise that sometimes it's about where you want to be, and other times it's about who you want to be where you are.

As Head of School and a TUI member I am very proud of our programme. To find out more the link below will assist and in turn feel free to contact me at Finn.omurchu@mic.ul.ie or call on 086 1414 633.

<https://www.mic.ul.ie/school-of-education-post-primary/programme/graduate-certificate-in-middle-leadership-and-mentoring>

## Pilot voluntary redeployment scheme for post primary teachers

The Pilot Voluntary Redeployment Scheme 2021 will be available to permanent/CID teachers who are employed in post primary schools:

- in counties Galway, Roscommon and Wicklow who wish to be considered for redeployment to a school in any location.

- outside of Dublin and who wish to be considered for redeployment into a school in Dublin

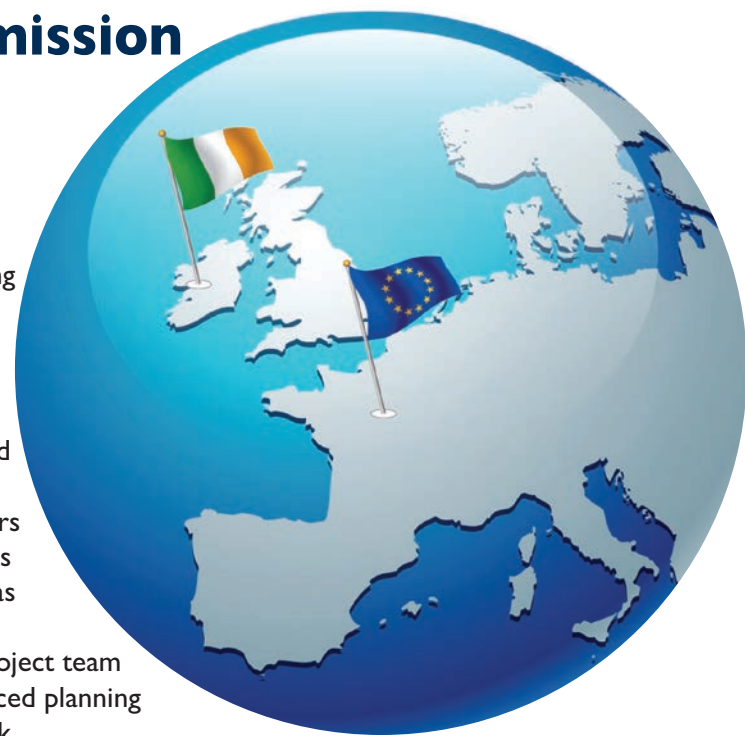
Full details of the scheme will be posted on this website when they become available.

*Have we got your correct up-to-date personal contact details?*

*See page 7 for details*



# Update on European Commission Erasmus+ projects



Erasmus+ projects provide excellent opportunities for teachers and students to visit different European countries to learn and experience education and training from a range of perspectives.

TUI has actively engaged in the European Commission Erasmus+ project since 2014. The Union has hosted study visits, seminars and conferences for teachers to come to Ireland and has encouraged networking between schools and colleges with a view to exploring project ideas. TUI has also engaged as a partner in consortiums developing project proposals and submitting applications. Information about Erasmus+ can be obtained from Léargas (for schools, VET, FET and Adult Education) and the Higher Education Authority (for Institutes of Technology and Technological Universities.)

## New Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership project 'Sustainability'

The Union is a partner in this project with organisations from seven European countries (Sweden, Romania, Iceland, Spain, Belgium, Germany and France). The lead partner is Hälsinglands Utbildningsförbund from Sweden. The project will focus on exploring how to include the sustainability agenda

into post-primary education and training courses. During this 24-month project the partners will produce and pilot learning materials and develop electronic resources for teachers and trainers to access freely. The project was awarded a budget of €292,711 and the project team has already commenced planning and preparation work.

## COVID-19 impact on Erasmus+ projects

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the union had to suspend some activities relating to the development of mobility projects. Preliminary exploratory visits were held with Graafschap College (the Netherlands) and Laois Offaly Education and Training Board with a view to establishing both teacher and student mobilities. Due to the current travel restrictions the project is paused and will recommence when it is safe to do. Also, commencement of the Innovations in VET Teaching Practice mobility project had to be postponed. It is hoped this project will commence when it is safe to travel again. The project facilitates the mobility of 24 members who are teachers from the consortium to visits schools and centres in Iceland, Prague, Sweden and Germany.

## Nearing completion

The Erasmus+ Know-Hubs Project (which commenced in 2018) is due to finish soon. The project explored 'Knowledge Centres' and how they can contribute to young adults' career development in rural regions. The project produced an e-book, a toolkit for trainers and a mentoring programme. The project materials will be made available free of charge from the following link: <https://know-hubs.eu/>

*If you want to discuss Erasmus+ project ideas contact TUI Assistant General Secretary Aidan Kenny.*



# Erasmus+

# Consider supporting a fellow teacher in Ethiopia

Ambo Lazarist Deaf School (ALDS) is a school for deaf children in Ambo, Ethiopia supported by Ethiopia Deaf Project (EDP) Ireland.

Recently the Ethiopian Government implemented a pay increase for teachers which effectively doubles their salaries from €100 to €200 a month.

This increase is well deserved but unfortunately ALDS does not receive any support from the government to run the school, so this must be covered by EDP. Therefore, we are looking for your help.

We would like to invite TUI members to consider supporting a teacher at the school. Four of the teachers are themselves deaf, including the principal, and act as wonderful role models for the children. **If you could give €10 a month (or more), it would go a long way towards helping us cover a teacher's salary.**

<https://edp-ambo.com/donate/#teacher-support-subscription>

Maybe your students would like to get involved in fundraising to support the teachers of ALDS or maybe they would be interested in helping support some of our students?



TEACHING A CLASS

For further information check out our website <https://www.edp-ambo.com> or contact us at - [ethiopiadeafproject@gmail.com](mailto:ethiopiadeafproject@gmail.com)

We know that you more than anyone will appreciate just how vital it is for a school such as the ALDS to retain the skills and expertise built up among the teachers since the school's establishment.

ALDS was opened in 2012 with the assistance of Irish people including EDP in response to the desperate situation of the rural deaf children. Such children are often stigmatised, considered cursed and incapable of learning and sometimes are hidden away for fear of the shame they may bring on the family.

The Rural Outreach Team at the ALDS have visited many of the rural districts surrounding Ambo to inform parents of deaf children about the school. This has resulted in ALDS now having 70 deaf children attending the school. They have met up to 200 other deaf children who, due to distance from the school, are unable to access education and plans are being developed to provide a boarding facility.

EDP Ireland are a subcommittee of Vincentian Lay Missionaries (VLM). EDP's sole remit is to raise funds to ensure the continued running of the ALDS.

A short video showing the huge difference the teachers are making in the lives of deaf children can be viewed at the link below:

<https://youtu.be/RxbTpYXYGqw>



IN-SERVICE TRAINING DAY!



## Sheila O' Driscoll – an appreciation

Sheila O'Driscoll was an inspirational educator, with deep rooted values of care and respect, who devoted her professional life to meeting the needs of students who sought 'a different way'. Graduating from UCG in 1973, Sheila's teaching career brought her to Mountrath and Kilrush before moving to the Comprehensive School in Shannon, where she taught English and French.

Sheila was a gifted teacher: "All the students just wanted to be in her class". She was a great colleague whose kindness, generosity, quick wit, professionalism and love of people was much appreciated by both new and established teachers and later by the wider teaching community when she moved to the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC).

It was in the CDC as project manager and later as director that Sheila gained national recognition for her work in many innovative curriculum projects including Community Based Learning where she made work experience an integral part of learning. She was a key person in the development of Senior Certificate and played a prominent role with the NCCA in its evolution to the national Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA). Subsequently Sheila became national coordinator of the LCA Support Service.



Sheila gave great support to schools, teachers and her national support team, working tirelessly to ensure that every student had the opportunity to reach their potential. She had a great empathy with students for whom the traditional curriculum was not suitable.

A first-rate facilitator, Sheila used her persuasive powers to bring teachers on board in realising the many different ways of learning and teaching. She advocated for experience-based learning and was pivotal in introducing continuous assessment which ensured students received credit for ongoing work. Her life's work in opening up education access for all will be long remembered. The successful implementation of Leaving Certificate Applied in hundreds of schools is part of her legacy and is testimony to her passionate commitment to enhancing students' educational experience.

Sheila through her kind heart and generous spirit enriched the lives of many students and teachers countrywide. She is mourned by her many friends and colleagues and of course by her beloved family – her husband Eugene, son Dan and daughter Maeve.

Suaimhneas síoraí dí.

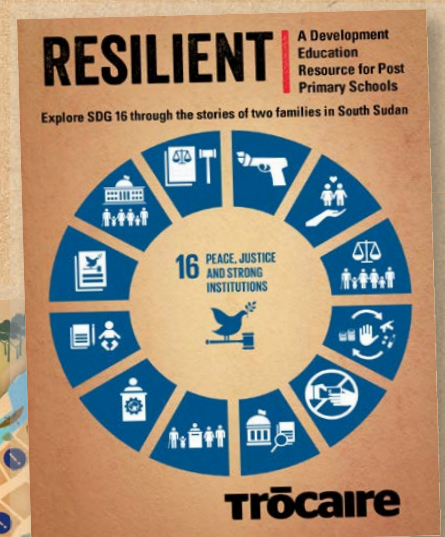
## FREE CROSS-CURRICULAR DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION RESOURCES!

Explore the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focusing on SDG 16, with your students using activities, games, photos and videos.

These cross-curricular resources examine how people and families in South Sudan show resilience to survive in the most difficult situations and times.



## trócaire



Log onto [trocaire.org/our-work/educate/peaceandjustice/](https://trocaire.org/our-work/educate/peaceandjustice/) for more resources and information about our **Game Changers Competition** for young people who want to change the world, and believe games are a way to do this!



# RMA News

It is early January as I prepare this article, so I would like to begin by wishing everyone a very happy and safe New Year even though we may be well into 2021 when you get to read this. These are difficult times and I urge you all to stay safe.

## Pension Restoration

As you know, pensions up to €54,000 have already been fully restored, while pensions between €54,000 and €75,000 will be fully restored as and from July 2021. Those with pensions above €75,000 will have them fully restored from July 2022. Minister McGrath announced this to the Dáil in compliance with the terms of the 2018 – 2020 Public Service Stability Agreement and as part of the latest proposed public service agreement - “Building Momentum”.

## Legislative Amendments

Since 2019, Deputy Brid Smith (People before Profit) has been working on amendments to the 1990 Industrial Relations Act which would facilitate access to the Labour Relations Commission for retired workers or their

representative organisations. That process is ongoing, and she hoped to have the first stage of those amendments on the floor of the Dáil before Christmas. Amendments include several to the 1990 Industrial Relations Act, and also amendments to the 1946 Industrial Relations Act and the 1990 Pensions Act. Cross-party support for the amendments will be needed to have them passed, and it will require lobbying to achieve this.

The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform Michael McGrath has informed the Alliance for Retired Public Servants that he will meet with them as soon as it is possible given the current restrictions, so hopefully this meeting takes place as there are number of items of concern to the Retired Members’ Association which we wish to discuss with the minister.

## Branch Matters

During the current restrictions due to COVID-19, it is not possible for RMA branches to organise or hold meetings. However, I urge RMA branch secretaries to keep in contact with their members by electronic means.

## Spring Break

At its meeting (via Zoom) in November, the RMA Management Committee decided to cancel the spring break in the Rose Hotel, Tralee in March due to the uncertainty as to what restrictions would be in force. Hopefully we will be able to get back to our regular Spring and Autumn breaks in 2022.

## Building Momentum

The terms of the proposed Agreement are available on the TUI website. It should be noted that the proposals in it preserve ‘parity’ until the end of 2022, i.e. pensioners will benefit pro-rata from the pay increases. However, the proposals contain provision for 1% to be allocated to the sectors to settle outstanding issues. Should the application of this 1% be used for the purpose of increasing allowances or restoring increments rather than for an adjustment to pay, it would not be of benefit to retired public servants.

**Dan Keane,**  
**RMA Secretary**



## TUIRMA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2020/21

If you have not paid your annual membership for 2020/21 please do so as soon as possible. You can pay your renewal subscription by:

- sending a cheque to the Treasurer: Tim O’Meara, Ballynaveen, Emly, Co. Tipperary or
- electronic transfer using the bank details below.

**Name** (Block letters) \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**TUIRMA Membership Number:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Found on envelope address label)

**Method of Payment:** Cheque  Electronic transfer

### TUI RETIRED MEMBERS’ ASSOCIATION BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS

**Name of Bank:** Permanent TSB **Address:** 12 -13 O’Connell Street, Dublin 1

**BIC:** IPBSIE2D **IBAN:** IE54IPBS99060180049890

**DO NOT LEAVE IT TO OTHERS**

*Join our team and be involved in ensuring your legitimate entitlements in retirement*



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# Crossword

€250 prize for the first correct answer drawn from the entries

**Only one entry per member.**  
 Photocopies can be submitted.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace \_\_\_\_\_

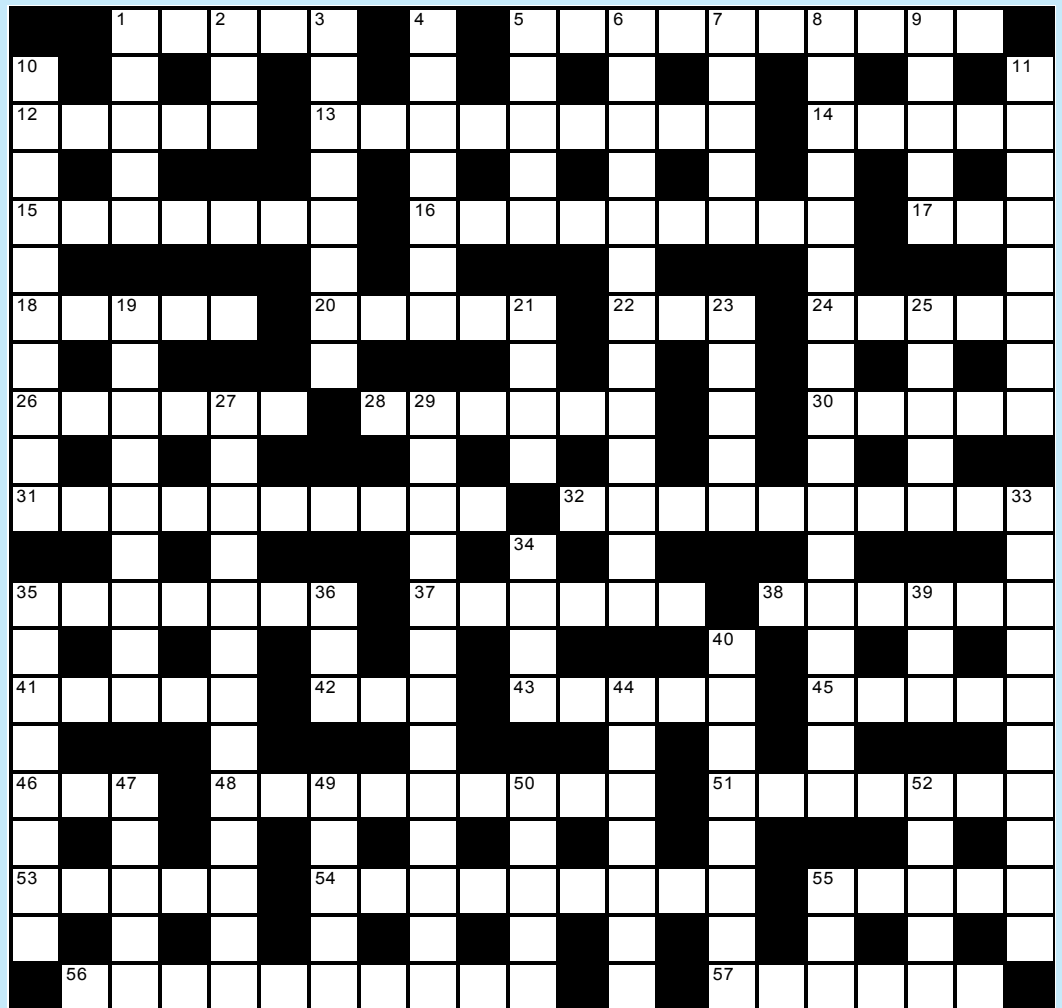
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number \_\_\_\_\_

TUI Branch \_\_\_\_\_

Send entries to  
 TUI Crossword February '21,  
 TUI, 73 Orwell Rd, Rathgar,  
 Dublin 6, D06 YP89.

Closing date for entries:  
 Friday, 19th March.



**ACROSS**

- 1 Last letter of Greek alphabet (5)
- 5 A person who lends money at interest in exchange for personal property that is deposited as security (10)
- 12 A daughter of one's brother or sister (5)
- 13 A powerful cardiac stimulant obtained from foxglove (9)
- 14 More than is needed, desired, or required (5)
- 15 Telephone set with the mouthpiece and earpiece mounted on a single handle (7)
- 16 A game in which a child tosses a stone into an area drawn on the ground (9)
- 17 Rhyming lyrics are chanted to a musical accompaniment (3)
- 18 Flow in a circular current, of liquids (5)
- 20 A moving component of an electromagnetic system in the electric motor. (5)
- 22 Original and of a kind not seen before (3)
- 24 Put into service (5)
- 26 The jurisdiction or office of an abbot (6)
- 28 The Great -----, 1963 American World War II film (6)
- 30 Rowdy Roddy -----, Canadian wrestler and actor (5)
- 31 A feeling of thoughtful sadness (10)
- 32 A conventional or formulaic conception or image (10)
- 35 On or relating to the underside of an animal or plant; abdominal (7)
- 37 The distance covered by a step (6)
- 38 Reimburse or compensate (6)
- 41 Put down or press the foot, place the foot (5)
- 42 A local and habitual twitching especially in the face (3)
- 43 ----- 2000, 1995 hit by band Pulp (5)

- 45 English ruling dynasty 1485 to 1603 (5)
- 46 A field covered with grass or herbage and suitable for grazing by livestock (3)
- 48 An official of the Communist Party, especially in the former Soviet Union or present-day China, responsible for political education and organisation. (9)
- 51 A glassy thermoplastic or type of paint (7)
- 53 The body excluding the head and neck and limbs (5)
- 54 Social movement whose stated goal is to help producers in developing countries achieve better trading conditions (4,5)
- 55 Kindly endorsement and guidance (5)
- 56 Baked clay thrown in the air from a trap as a target for shooting (4,6)
- 57 Quick and light in movement or action; agile (6)

**DOWN**

- 1 Billy ----, R&B artist who had a hit with "When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Get Going" (5)
- 2 Each of a pair of globular organs of sight in the head of humans and vertebrate animals. (3)
- 3 Of or relating to the process of hearing (8)
- 4 1978 hit song from Billy Joel (3,4)
- 5 Construct, build, mount (3-2)
- 6 Acquainted with or related to people with prestige or influence. (4-9)
- 7 Annoy continually or chronically (5)
- 8 Device which projects an image over the speaker's head (8,9)
- 9 ----- the Dragon, 1973 Hong Kong-American martial arts

- action film starring Bruce Lee (5)
- 10 Curb Your -----, American sitcom starring Larry David as himself (10)
- 11 Someone who pays a levy to fund various public expenditures (8)
- 19 Disequilibrium (9)
- 21 --- Madrid - hugely successful Spanish football team (4)
- 23 A small thin crisp cake or biscuit (5)
- 25 Herbaceous plants, often grown for their colourful flowers. (5)
- 27 Mutually opposed or inconsistent (13)
- 29 Acting with less concern for yourself than for the success of the joint activity (4-9)
- 33 The theory that all knowledge is based on experience derived from the senses (10)
- 34 ---- Pitt, US actor and producer (4)
- 35 The state of being strong and active; energy. (8)
- 36 Overall circumstances or condition in life (3)
- 39 A short-neck lute-type, pear-shaped stringed instrument with 11 or 13 strings (3)
- 40 Asian bean plant; The most highly proteinaceous vegetable known; used in a variety of foods and as fodder (4,4)
- 44 A person working in the service of another (7)
- 47 The first of four months to have a length of 30 days (5)
- 49 A jurist who interprets Muslim religious law (5)
- 50 A smooth fabric of silk or rayon; has a glossy face and a dull back (5)
- 52 Established by or founded upon law or official or accepted rules (5)
- 55 Point, say at 56 across (3)