



**Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI) Response to the
Joint Committee on Education and Skills
(January 2018)**

TUI represents teachers and lecturers (17,000+) employed by Education and Training Boards (ETBs), Voluntary Secondary schools, Community and Comprehensive (C&C) schools and the Institutes of Technology.

Executive Summary

Ireland has an internationally acknowledged, high-performing education system. However, that is being undermined by a crisis in teacher recruitment and retention. The crisis has been documented in separate research carried out by a number of national authorities and agencies. It has also been referenced on a number of separate occasions during 2017 (and in recent days) by the Minister for Education and Skills. The scale of the crisis will increase further in the coming years as the number of students in second-level rises by approximately seventy thousand by 2025.

The research clearly indicates that the crisis has emerged since discriminatory pay scales were introduced in 2011 and was exacerbated both by cessation of payment of qualifications allowances in 2012 and the increase from one to two years in the duration of the post-primary teacher training qualification – the Professional Master of Education (PME) from 2013. The single most important element of any viable solution to the crisis is the elimination of pay discrimination against new and recent entrants to the profession by way of restoration of common pay rates for all teachers, including the restoration of relevant qualification allowances to pre-2011 levels.

In September 2016, there was explicit recognition that pay is at the heart of the problem, when the Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI), the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), the Department of

Education and Skills (DES) and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) reached an Agreement to incorporate the value of the Honours Primary Degree allowance into the salary scale for teachers appointed since 2011 – one of the allowances that had been withdrawn in 2012. This was recognised as an interim measure; part of an ongoing process towards pay equality.

The key points made in this submission are that:

- the cuts to pay and conditions inflicted on new entrants in 2011 and exacerbated by further cuts in 2012, have had the effect of sharply reducing the attractiveness of teaching as a profession with the result that the number of applicants for initial teacher education has dropped dramatically
- those same cuts have led to a rapid rise in the number of recently qualified teachers emigrating. The emigration rate of recently qualified post-primary teachers is now five times what it was in 2008
- service to students in schools is suffering severe disruption because of timetable changes necessitated by the lack of qualified teachers, including teachers for substitution (with a resultant fracturing of delivery and absence of continuity for students)
- students are losing out on educational opportunities both inside and outside of school
- Departmental agencies and support services cannot recruit staff due to teacher shortages and the difficulty in engaging qualified substitutes
- student numbers are rising rapidly at precisely the same time as the attractiveness of teaching is falling dramatically
- the crisis is not restricted to a small number of subject areas; it is a burgeoning problem
- the teaching profession in Ireland is highly respected and highly qualified. The high quality of the Irish education system is a public good of strategic national importance. It is vital that high standards are maintained. In that regard restoring pay equality is necessary
- Short-term patches/fixes have failed in other jurisdictions. They will delay rather than provide a solution
- There are worrying trends in the age profile of the teaching profession. The average age of post-primary teachers is 41.1. Over 15% of teachers are over the age of 55 but only 7% are under the age of 25.

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 Ireland has an internationally acknowledged, high-performing education system (Teaching Council, 2010; OECD, 2013; DES, 2013; OECD, 2009; NAPD, 2016; Comhairle na nOg, 2017, Growing Up in Ireland, 2017, IPSOS MRBI Trust in the Professions Survey, 2017) despite spending relatively modestly on education (OECD, 2015). The National Action Plan for Education states that education is central to many of our ambitions as a nation:

“Excellent and innovative education and training are the pivot around which personal fulfilment, a fair society and a successful nation should revolve. It is central to sustaining economic success and in converting economic success into building a strong community.”(DES, 2016)

- 1.2 Excellent and innovative education require a high quality teaching profession. The research evidence is unequivocal: the quality of teaching in schools is the single most important school-level variable in student achievement and the promotion of quality schooling (OECD, 2005).

The quality of teaching is determined by a range of factors: recruitment into, and retention within, the profession; attractiveness of teaching as a profession; status of teaching in society and, especially, the pay and conditions for teachers, upon which status and attractiveness of the profession are significantly dependent – and increasingly so in a labour market in which alternative graduate entry opportunities are better paid than teaching.

- 1.3 Until relatively recently, Ireland was one of a handful of countries in the OECD which did not face pronounced recruitment and retention problems in teaching. That situation has now changed. The introduction, since 2011, of reduced pay scales for all new entrants to the public service has been exacerbated in the case of teachers by the simultaneous cessation (2011) of incremental recognition for pre-service training and the abolition of qualification allowances for those first appointed on or after 1st February 2012. This combination of cuts in the pay rates available to teachers has inexorably created a recruitment and retention crisis.

Section 2: Recruitment issues for the education sector

2.1 There are recruitment issues in the education sector at all levels - primary, post-primary, further and adult education and higher education.

2.2 Post Primary

The problem is pervasive in relation to the recruitment of teachers at post-primary level. It is manifested every day in the widespread inability of school management to obtain substitute teachers for casual and part-time vacancies and, increasingly, for vacancies arising from the absence of teachers on approved leave, on assignment to Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) and Behavioural Support Service (BSS) positions or on maternity leave. It is further manifested in the inability of school management to fill employment posts, including posts that are full-time and, in some instances, permanent.

2.2.1 Application Patterns

Recruitment trends in teaching are best measured by examining data on entry into the profession – trends in applications for third level teacher education programmes – and data on exit from teaching in Ireland. Data on entry into post-primary teaching is provided by the Central Applications Office (CAO) for under-graduate degree programmes and the Postgraduate Applications Centre (PAC) for post-graduate programmes, such as the Professional Master of Education (PME). Entry trends since 2011 indicate a dramatic collapse in applications. The collapse is of the order of 50%-66%, depending on college.

It is also worth noting that during a time of high unemployment in the Irish economy generally, the attractiveness of and applications for teaching fell dramatically in spite of the fact that (due to demographics and the allocation metric of the Pupil/Teacher ratio) there was a sharp increase in the number of teachers (i.e. in employment opportunities in teaching). It is evident that the primary deterrent was pay inequality, which was correctly interpreted by school leavers, graduates and their families as clear evidence that the profession was being downgraded by government in spite of public rhetoric about the centrality of education to the nation's well-being.

2.2.2 Evidence of Recruitment Difficulties

There are multiple sources of evidence of recruitment difficulties across the education sector. Authoritative sources include school management bodies, the Teaching Council, the Department of Education and Skills, the Higher Education Institutions and the Higher Education Authority (HEA).

- The **Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS)** represents 96 community and comprehensive schools. An ACCS survey in early 2017 showed an under-supply of teachers in Irish, Modern Languages, Home Economics, Maths, Science, resource and guidance counselling. Some 96% of schools that responded to the survey reported “*difficulties in recruiting part-time or temporary teaching cover*”. The difficulty was most acute in Irish (67% of respondent schools), Modern Languages (51%), Maths (30%), Home Economics (26%) and Science (20%). Initial findings of a later ACCS survey confirm the significant shortages in teachers of Modern Languages, Irish and Home Economics. However, shortages are not confined simply to these areas, with reported shortages now beginning to appear in all subject areas but most notably the Sciences and Maths. As part of the survey, schools identified where, following advertising and re-advertising, there were no applicants for positions. Schools are now engaging unqualified personnel to teach subject specialisms. There are a number of vacancies that have not been filled since September 2017.

The survey also identifies problems in recruiting for Pro-Rata Part-Time contracts which run either for the full year or for extended cover periods such as Maternity Leave etc.

It is also increasingly difficult for schools to have subject-specific substitute teachers available for casual substitution. Critical state services such as the State Examinations are being impacted by the absence of qualified substitutes to provide subject-specific cover for the Leaving Certificate Oral and Practical Examinations. It is extremely difficult to find cover for mandatory Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provision for the implementation of key public policy initiatives such as Junior Cycle Reform.

- **Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)** represents 241 vocational schools and community colleges and several hundred further and adult education centres. It also

conducted research in 2017 on teacher shortages. The findings of this ETBI Survey (May 2017), which measures the relative scale of difficulty in filling teacher positions, echo the finding of the ACCS survey.

In its Budget 2017 submission and also in its submission to the DES Statement of Strategy 2016-2018, ETBI stated that: *“Currently there are serious shortages of second-level teachers in a range of subjects, in particular: Home Economics, Irish, Physics, French, German and teachers capable of teaching through the medium of Irish. In the case of Home Economics, where it is virtually impossible to recruit a qualified teacher to cover maternity leave, the situation will be further and very seriously exacerbated in a few years’ time because there will be no graduates in one year because the four-year course is being extended to a five-year course.*

The shortage of qualified teachers in some subject areas has resulted in students in their Leaving Certificate year, for example, being left without a qualified teacher in specific subjects for months on end. Quite naturally, students and their parents are alarmed by this and, of course, they blame the school management authority for something that is totally outside its control.”

- The **Joint Managerial Body (JMB)** - represents 374 voluntary secondary schools. It produced a report on teacher supply problems in May 2017, following a similar exercise in 2016. The key findings of both reports were as follows:

Top Ten Most Challenging Subject Areas to Fill (in order of reported difficulty)

<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
1. Irish	1. Irish
2. French	2. French
3. Home Economics	3. Maths
4. German	4. Home Economics
5. Maths	5. German
6. Physics	6. Physics
7. Spanish	7. Science
8. Physical Education	8. Spanish
9. Science	9. Career Guidance

- The **National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD)** is a professional body for school leaders. It provides the www.subteacher.ie service for schools and teachers. The most common subjects for which substitutes are sought are Irish, Mathematics, Science and French. The sixth most common search was for 'Any' subject teacher. Users of [subteacher.ie](http://www.subteacher.ie) usually use the 'Any' search category when they can't find a qualified substitute in a particular subject, and are simply then trying to find any qualified teacher - essentially just to supervise a class rather than teach it. This is especially troubling when it is possible that the classes being supervised rather than being taught may actually be preparing for State Certificate examinations.
- The everyday difficulties of recruiting teachers and of sourcing substitute teachers is frequently cited by the **Principals' and Deputy Principals' Association (PDA)**, of the TUI. Examples include:
 - An Education and Training Board (ETB) that is struggling to find both teachers of German and Irish, with one school reporting that only one of the four teachers currently teaching Irish is qualified to teach Irish. This individual is developing department plans, Junior Cycle plans and assisting the other teachers as they carry out their teaching responsibilities.
 - Other ETBs having difficulties filling posts in Home Economics, Irish, Maths and languages.
 - A Community and Comprehensive school in Dublin finding it so hard to attract applicants for a post in Home Economics that it offered accommodation to any successful applicant.
 - A Youthreach Centre that has not been able to recruit a Woodwork teacher since September.

A further indication of the problem is that the number of retired teachers returning to the classroom has increased dramatically in recent months as principals struggle to cover brief absences. This resulted in the Minister for Education and Skills encouraging retired teachers to maintain their registration with the Teaching Council. A report in the Irish Times on

November 27th 2017 cites a spokesperson for Minister Bruton as acknowledging that “schools have reported shortages of teachers”. On October 25th 2017, the Minister stated:

“I am aware of certain reported difficulties in recruiting substitute teachers at primary level and in a number of particular subjects at second level. There are difficulties in developing a reliable model of teacher supply at second level, which was recognised in the work of the Teaching Council. This is because teaching is competing with many other sectors for graduates in areas such as maths, science, and Irish.”

On October 17th 2017, Minister Bruton stated that:

His Department “has been made aware that there may be difficulties for schools in recruiting teachers of certain subjects, including teachers of modern languages.”

On June 9th 2017, Minister Bruton stated that he was:

“aware that some schools are experiencing difficulty in recruiting substitute teachers”, and that he is “committed to examining all possible means of addressing this issue”.

These acknowledgements that there are acute difficulties that have continued into 2018 – Irish Times editorial of 9th January 2018.

2.2.3 Post-Primary: Entry trend

The majority of applications for post-primary teaching are processed via the PAC. Since 2011, there has been an alarming and unprecedented decline of 62% in applications.

The output of graduates from these programmes has also declined by 27%.

Those who apply for initial teacher education through the PAC have already completed a three/four year primary degree in, for example, arts/science/business. Upon graduating from their undergraduate specialism, they will make a hard-nosed decision about what career they would like to pursue, but also what career is likely to provide them with financial security.

A frequently overlooked aspect of the drastic salary cuts imposed on new entrants in 2011 and 2012 was the fear that it could happen again. It is hardly surprising that that sense of

fear, combined with a sense of injustice at being on a different salary scale to their colleague teachers, led many to decide not to apply for initial teacher education.

It is clear from the above that there are serious difficulties in recruiting graduates to the teaching profession. It is also clear that differential and discriminatory pay scales for those who entered the profession since 2011 constitute the single most important contributory factor to these difficulties.

One can also reasonably surmise that the difficulties are exacerbated by the actual and the opportunity costs created by the longer period of teacher training (now two years for the Professional Master of Education - PME) and by the absence of full-time and permanent posts (despite implementation of the Ward Report recommendations and Circular Letter 59/16). The combination of factors has made the teaching profession unattractive. Graduates have done the maths and teaching comes up short.

2.3 Further and Adult Education

2.3.1 The recruitment problem also afflicts this sector. Further education cannot recruit suitably qualified teachers for certain modules; for example, social care, digital media and the STEM disciplines. Because of the specialist nature of their disciplines, which are typically vocationally oriented, teachers working in further education will often have had extensive practical and industry experience in addition to their teaching qualifications. The pay cuts and the removal of qualification allowances have made it significantly more difficult to recruit teachers with the requisite industry/vocational background.

2.3.2 Because of the resultant shortages, schools and centres are increasingly reluctant to release teachers to engage in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) external authentication, which is a mandatory part of the QQI assessment processes, as management is unable to get qualified substitution cover.

2.4 Third-Level

2.4.1 Problems are also emerging in the Institute of Technology sector. For example, some Institutes of Technology have reported difficulties in recruiting staff at Assistant

Lecturer level – the entry grade. In a number of cases, advertisements have not attracted any applications and the posts have had to be re-advertised.

2.4.2 The cuts applied and the lengthening of the pay scale of the Assistant Lecturer grade in 2011 have had the effect of deterring the qualified and expert practitioners currently working in the private sector from considering a career in the third-level sector.

2.5 Initiatives to address these difficulties

2.5.1 Initiatives to alleviate difficulties in the recruitment of teachers include:

- Establishment by the NAPD and the Irish Primary Principals' Network (IPPN) of an online substitute service for teachers and schools
- Publication by the Minister for Education and Skills of the Report of the Technical Working Group on Teacher Supply in June, 2017
- Announcement by the Minister for Education and Skills of short-term measures in June and October, 2017. They include:
 - encouraging retired teachers to stay on the Teaching Council Register
 - increasing limits for employment for teachers on career break
 - informing schools that student teachers may be employed in schools for up to 5 consecutive days

2.5.2 However, a lesson already learned in other jurisdictions is that short-term measures have not rectified and will not rectify the situation. A systemic solution is required; a solution that recognises the causal link between pay inequality and the developing recruitment and retention crisis.

2.5.3 In September 2016, there was explicit recognition that pay is at the heart of the problem, when the TUI, the INTO, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) reached a collective Agreement to incorporate the value of the Honours Primary Degree allowance into the salary scale for teachers appointed since 2011 – the allowance had been withdrawn in 2012. This was recognised as an interim measure; a step towards pay

equality in the profession and the elimination of pay discrimination against new and recent entrants.

2.6 Report to the Teaching Council by DNM Analytics

2.6.1 The DNM Analytics study, commissioned by the Teaching Council, shows that the average age of post-primary teachers is 41.1. The most stark finding from the DNM study is that more than 15% of teachers are over the age of 55 but only 7% are under the age of 25. It is clear that a demographic problem is developing apace in the teaching workforce just as a demographic boom happens in student numbers. The same study shows that the average age of qualification as a post-primary teacher has steadily risen and now stands at over 26 years of age.

2.6.2 The current pay rates for new and recent entrants are not sufficient to attract the necessary number of high quality graduates into a profession from which you first derive an income in your late twenties; an income that has been set by government at a lower level than the income of your colleague teachers first appointed before January 2011.

Section 3: Retention issues

- 3.1 There are significant and growing retention issues. Data on exit from the teaching profession is provided by the Higher Education Authority Graduate Destination surveys. These studies indicate sustained increases in emigration to teach abroad. Between 2008 and 2014, the emigration rate of recently qualified post-primary teachers increased steadily, from 4% in 2008 to 18%-21% in 2014. This trend shows no sign of abating.
- 3.2 Evidence has shown that in instances where new entrants (i.e. those appointed since 1st January, 2011, on reduced pay rates) have applied for and been refused career breaks, they have opted to resign their positions because their pay rates and the career-average single pension scheme for public servants are such that there is no incentive for them to remain in their positions in Irish schools. In income terms, teachers judge it to be more beneficial to resign their positions, work abroad for a number of years and, possibly, then return to teaching in Ireland, bringing with them incremental credit in respect of relevant teaching service abroad.
- 3.3 There is also growing evidence of teachers being drawn to better paying jobs in industry. This is especially the case for teachers of Science, Home Economics and Modern Languages. This has been acknowledged by Minister Bruton in his remarks in October 2017 and since. Another recent trend is the movement of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (i.e. STEM) teachers to new careers in relevant areas of the economy or, in some cases, teachers in those disciplines being drawn back to such careers in industries where opportunities collapsed and jobs were lost during the recession.
- 3.4 The most shocking findings of the HEA surveys are the figures for those recently qualified teachers who ended up:
1. teaching abroad;
 2. working abroad in a non-teaching role or
 3. working in Ireland in a non-teaching role.

The proportion of recently qualified post-primary teachers who emigrated after qualification rose fivefold between 2008 and 2013/2014. The only credible explanation for this extraordinary change is the severe pay cut imposed on new entrants in 2011 and 2012.

Section 4: Effects of the shortage of Post-Primary teachers:

4.1 Some of the effects are:

- students missing out on learning either because no teacher is available or because a teacher with a recognised subject specialism is not available
- students experiencing fractured service as a consequence of having several different teachers in particular subject areas, with resultant problems of lack of continuity, an absence of attention to individual learning needs of students, disruption of the learning culture in the class/school, decreased student motivation and diminished discipline
- subject loss and/or restriction of subject options for students
- curtailment of out-of-class learning activities, e.g., debates, enterprise education, Transition Year projects and cultural events
- curtailment of sports, games and other extra-curricular activities
- difficulty encountered by teacher unions in securing release of union members to participate in curriculum development groups established by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). If chronic teacher shortages mean that teachers cannot participate in essential curricular development work then a real danger arises for the integrity and relevance of curriculum
- the absence of subject specialist teachers to cover for colleagues who are engaged in work for agencies related to the DES. This poses significant risk to a number of DES initiatives. For example, continuing professional development is provided by agencies such as Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT), the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) and the Special Education Support Service (SESS). Each of these three agencies is heavily dependent on full-time and part-time secondees. These secondees deliver the essential training to teachers that enables them to provide best service to students. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult for JCT, PDST or SESS to get agreement from schools to release teachers to take up full-time or even part-time roles with the agencies as the schools fear not being able to find a qualified substitute teacher. Similar problems have been encountered by the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) in relation to the mandatory Droichead (teacher induction) programme
- teachers unable to attend Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as they have to cover for teacher shortages in their schools

- student teachers being deployed to teach at too early a stage during their school placement
- student teachers being allocated exam classes
- State Examinations Commission (SEC) having extreme difficulty in recruiting examiners to assess those elements of the state certificate exams that are conducted during school opening days due to refusal by school management to release teachers owing to the lack of substitutes. As a result of the difficulty encountered by the SEC in recruiting examiners, it has had to launch multiple rounds of recruitment. It has encountered particular difficulty in securing release of teachers to act as examiners for State Oral Examinations in languages, or for Practical Examinations in, for example, the Technology suite of subjects
- teachers in the Further Education sector being unable to engage in QQI external authentication as management is unable to get substitution cover.

4.2 Across all sectors, staff shortages and teacher churn negatively impact on the overall climate of the school/centre in terms of disrupting the necessary continuity, making collaborative teamwork impossible, increasing pressure on school management regularly to revise timetables and other aspects of the school calendar; increasing teacher workload and associated stress; curtailment of out-of-class activities for students; reduction of support structures for students and rendering the process of integrating students with special needs and international students very difficult.

4.3 It must also be stressed that staff shortages undermine the relationships between the school and parents and can lead to unnecessary misunderstandings as to why students had a “free class” or “were sent to other teachers’ classes”.

4.4 There is also a high risk of even more dramatic impacts on schools/centres if teacher shortages persist. For example, the rate of loss of subjects and/or of subject option lines available to students will increase. Programmes such as the Leaving Certificate Applied, which cater for particular cohorts of students, could be dropped by schools. Newly developed subjects may not be available as widely as anticipated. For example, Politics and Society was introduced in 2017 and both Computer Science and Physical Education will be introduced as examinable subjects in September 2018. There is a real risk that such subjects will not be

widely available across schools if, because of the lack of teachers, schools are forced to reduce subject choice rather than increase it. Furthermore, teacher shortages lead to a degradation of pastoral/student support systems as teachers with pastoral duties have to cover other gaps in provision. There is also a growing concern arising from the ageing of the teacher force in some subjects.

Leading-edge courses, specifically designed to prepare students for today's and tomorrow's world are in jeopardy. For example, only eight computer studies teachers registered with the Teaching Council between January 2017 and September 2017.

4.5 Danger of de-professionalising teaching

A key element of teaching's attractiveness is its reputation as a pillar profession. It is losing that reputation. It is now seen by an increasing number of those graduates we need to recruit and retain as a low-status, poorly paid job to which one, if wise, should not commit. Parents, including parents who are teachers, are advising their daughters and sons not to choose teaching as a career. The medium and long-term effects on quality in the education system, and inevitably on society, of allowing this trend to develop are truly frightening.

As a matter of urgency a solution (as opposed to hit-and-hope patches) is required and it must address the root cause of the problem – pay inequality.

Section 5 – the Technical Working Group’s (TWG) 2015 Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations 1 and 2 – establishment of a Standing Group to review the future supply needs of schools and seek to offer suitable advice to the Minister on future needs of students in Irish schools.

5.1.1 The TUI agrees that such a group would be useful given that the TWG experienced difficulty in gathering Data on post-primary due to differing payroll systems and the subject-based nature of the sector. However, the TUI believes that membership of the Standing Group should be expanded beyond the mooted “staff from the DES, HEA and the Teaching Council” and should include representatives from the teacher unions and management bodies. Furthermore, the TUI, noting the current crisis in teacher supply and also that the TWG report was written in 2015 and that the crisis has deepened since, believes that, while accurate data is essential, urgent policy responses are required without further delay. The improving economic situation (ESRI, 2017; OECD, 2017; IMF, 2017; EU Commission, 2017; IFAC, 2017) means that Government is in a position to make a meaningful contribution to solving the teacher supply crisis by eliminating discriminatory pay.

5.2 Recommendation 3 – collection of relevant information from all schools over the next two years to provide a historical context against which to judge the emerging figures provided in this TWG Report and to secure a reliable planning model.

5.2.1 As with recommendations 1 and 2, the TUI agrees that reliable data should be gathered and available. However, data collection cannot now be used as a reason or justification for further delay in tackling the crisis. It is interesting to note that the two-year timeframe (2015 to 2017) envisaged in this recommendation has now expired. Significant empirical data has been gathered by many relevant organisations over the last two years and, indeed, much of that data is cited in this submission. The TUI believes that the DES must, as a matter of urgency, use the data in this submission to draw up plans to solve the teacher supply crisis and that pay equity must be central to those plans.

- 5.3 Recommendation 4 - staff responsible for the Department's ETB Payroll Shared Services Project should ensure that the configuration of ETB payroll data is undertaken in such a way that it can easily be collated with the equivalent data from the other two sectors.
- 5.3.1 The TUI agrees with this recommendation.
- 5.4 Recommendation 5 - develop further the working model and to support the initial years of development by the Group described above.
- 5.4.1 Again, the TUI agrees, providing that this does not give rise to delay in addressing the crisis in recruitment and retention.
- 5.5 Recommendation 6 - future policy on teacher supply should incorporate the placing of a strong priority on the stability of supply and on the collaboration between all providers of initial teacher education. This policy should also recognise Cosán, the Teaching Council's forthcoming framework for teachers' learning.
- 5.5.1 The TUI recognises that this is not an easy matter for any Minister to take forward and suggests that this recommendation be carried out in consultation with the stakeholders. The TUI agrees that the publicly funded higher education institutions (HEIs) must be involved in any discussion regarding caps or limits on places in initial teacher education. The publicly funded HEIs are already effectively capped due to budget cuts and staffing restrictions. However, those restrictions do not apply to a private - for profit - college which is also training teachers. This is grossly unfair on public education institutions. Moreover, as noted by Clarke, Kenny and Loxley (2015: 11), the third level sector as a whole experienced a 29% reduction (€385,688,801.00) in budget from 2007 to 2014. When the funding is disaggregated per sector the cuts experienced were; IoTs 32% (-€170,719,711.00), Universities 26% (-€200,610,172.00) and Colleges 24% (-€14,358,919.00). During the same period staffing numbers in the public sector HEIs were reduced by 10%.

5.5.2 The issue of Cosán is one that is currently being discussed by the teacher unions and the Teaching Council so it would be inappropriate to comment in detail at this point on that recommendation.

5.6 Recommendation 7 - HEIs be invited to consult with the DES and the HEA as to what actions they can take in the short term to begin to alleviate imbalances in supply, based on the best available data.

5.6.1 Again, the TUI agrees that the publicly funded higher education institutions (HEIs) must be involved in any such discussion but notes the context of the severe funding cuts imposed on higher education in recent years and that, currently, public policy inappropriately confers advantage on private providers of Initial Teacher Education (ITE), such as Hibernia.

5.7 Recommendation 11 (post-primary) - the extent of oversupply and undersupply in various subjects, and any consequences for “out of field” teaching be clarified by the Standing Group as a matter of initial priority.

5.7.1 The TUI supports proposals for gathering of reliable data but this must not be used to delay the implementation of the measures, in particular pay equality, that are urgently needed to address the crisis that now exists.

5.8 Recommendation 12 (post-primary) - once the work outlined in Recommendation 11 has been completed, it should inform future policy decisions on the management and co-ordination of teacher supply. In addition, and subject to any new, emerging priorities as identified by the Standing Group in the context of State policies and changing curricular needs, steps should also be taken to reduce any imbalance in post-primary subject supply.

5.8.1 As with recommendation 3, the TUI contends that significant empirical data has been gathered by many relevant organisations over the last two years. Much of that data is cited in this submission.

The most efficient and effective way for the DES to give effect to Recommendations 11 and 12 (and indeed also Recommendation 13) would be to address the pay equality issue as a matter of urgency. The problem is not solely, even primarily, one of imbalances in post-primary teacher supply. Rather, it concerns the fact that teaching, per se, is no longer attractive as a profession/career, largely because of discriminatory pay rates.

5.9 Recommendation 13 (post-primary) - the most accessible data on individual subject teaching in the post-primary sector is that supplied to the Inspectorate through individual school timetables from all sectors for all schools. In order for this data to be more easily accessible and useful for the purposes of a teacher supply model, the TWG recommends that it be submitted to the DES in a manner from which relevant, anonymised information on teacher deployment by subject can be more easily extracted.

5.9.1 The TUI agrees. Indeed, it had been our understanding that work in this regard was already quite advanced.

5.10 Recommendation 14 (post-primary) – the State should work with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that the output from programmes of teacher education will reflect the needs of the system as determined by the ongoing work on teacher supply.

5.10.1 Again, the TUI agrees. The teacher unions, as stakeholders, should be involved in such discussions.

Section 6- Key messages

- 6.1 The Department of Education and Skills is projecting that student numbers at post-primary level will rise from 378,000 in 2016 to 450,000 in 2025. This increase in demographics alone will require the appointment of over 4,000 additional teachers by 2025.
- 6.2 The DES currently receives approximately 1,000 notices of retirement from post-primary teachers per year. Hence, over the 9 year period from 2016 – 2025, 9,000 new teachers will be required to back-fil vacancies caused by retirement.
- 6.3 That means that 13,000 new post-primary teachers (approximately 1,500 per year) are needed to cover the demographic increase and the filling of retirement vacancies.
- 6.4 That number does not take account of the need that will arise to replace teachers who leave the profession early for whatever reason – to emigrate to other jurisdictions, because of better employment opportunities etc. This however, is a growing number because of the retention issues outlined above.
- 6.5 The Teaching Council has registered 1,500 new entrants to teaching in both 2016 and 2017. Based on these patterns the supply of teachers will be insufficient to match the increased demand.

An absolute requirement to address this important issue is the elimination of pay inequality as a matter of priority and urgency.

Glossary

ACCS	Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
HEI	Higher Education Institution
INTO	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
JCT	Junior Cycle for Teachers
JMB	Joint Managerial Body
NAPD	National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals
PDST	Professional Development Service for Teachers
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
SEC	State Examinations Commission
SESS	Special Education Support Service
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
TUI	Teachers' Union of Ireland
TWG	Technical Working Group

References

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