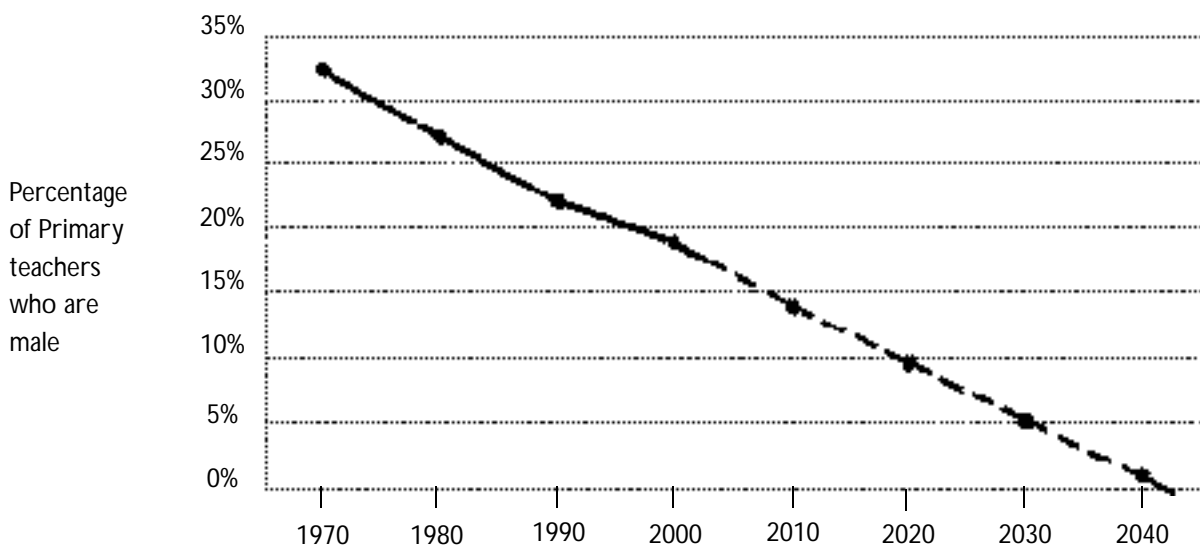




Gender Imbalance in Primary Teaching

– A Discussion Document

The Demise of the Male Primary Teacher?





an INTO publication

Gender Imbalance in Primary Teaching

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Foreword

The continuing steep decline in the number of male entrants to primary teaching has been of concern to the INTO for some time. Although part of an international trend in the developed world, we should not accept the growing gender imbalance as being inevitable.

For reasons of balance in the work environment, of providing children with role models of both sexes, and of protecting the status and conditions associated with primary teaching, we wish to see participation by persons of each gender.

In promoting our policy on gender imbalance, this booklet discusses some changes which will generate debate and will be contested. This is to be welcomed; the INTO sees this issue as a key one for education and the teaching profession, and welcomes debate on proposed solutions.

There is an urgency associated with this matter. If current trends continue, men will have disappeared from our primary school classrooms before the middle of this century.

A number of people who had significant roles in researching and preparing this publication merit our thanks. The INTO Equality Committee raised gender imbalance as an issue for our 2003 Congress and have examined drafts of the ongoing work. An Equality Committee - Education Committee sub-group met on a number of occasions and oversaw the report's development. Tony Carlin (Official in INTO's Northern Office) conducted research in that jurisdiction and has drafted a complementary booklet to be published by INTO in Northern Ireland.

Special thanks to Noel Ward (Senior Official - Equality) who took responsibility for this project and for drafting this report. For their work in preparing this booklet and for seeing it through to production, we are grateful to Lori Kealy (Publications Official) and Suzie Lynch at our Head Office.

We hope this publication will prompt both debate and action to tackle gender imbalance in primary teaching.

John Carr MA (Ed)
General Secretary
April 2004

Introduction

INTO Congress 2003 noted with concern the growing gender imbalance in the primary teaching profession. Congress also instructed the CEC to examine the causes and implications of gender imbalance for the teaching profession and to demand that the Departments of Education, North and South, take proactive steps to audit the gender profile of teachers and ensure the promotion of equality of opportunity.

This Report is presented on foot of the INTO Congress 2003 resolution.

The issue of gender imbalance, and specifically the low proportion of male entrants, is an international phenomenon in teaching and in particular in primary teaching. The General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTC), for example, expressed concern that the 2002-2003 new entrant statistics showed that 92% of probationers in primary schools were women. In a press release of 13 December 2002, the GTC referred to "figures that confirm that male entrants to teaching are in serious decline" (sic). In the Canadian state of Ontario, 1999 figures showed that one in five teachers at the primary/junior level was male and that the high percentage of male teachers over the age of 55 indicated that the gender gap in Ontario classrooms would become a "chasm".

In the United States of America, the National Education Association (NEA) has produced a report showing that the proportion of male teachers across sectors stands at 21%, a 40-year low. In the USA also, a national non-profit organisation, MenTeach, serves as a centre of research, education and advocacy, with a commitment to increase the number of men teaching children in early education. This organisation operates a website containing materials on gender imbalance in education at www.menteach.com.

The experience is similar in Australia. In 2003, the Equal Opportunity Commission rejected an application from the Catholic Education Office of the Archdiocese of Sydney for a temporary exemption under the Australian Sex Discrimination Act 1984 to allow it to take positive action to encourage male high school students to become primary school teachers. And the Queensland Government has devised a Strategic Plan to attract, recruit and retain male teachers in its State Schools for the period 2002-2005. This plan's target is to assist "in the creation of a diverse workforce by increasing the number of male teachers to 35 per cent by 2006".

The Teacher Training Agency in Britain has undertaken a campaign to seek to increase the number of male applications for teaching. The campaign included advertisements with slogans such as "Could you be a male model?". In addition, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) in 2002 held a symposium on 'Men Teaching in Primary and Early Years' and published its report under the title 'Man Enough to Teach - in Primary and Early Years'.

The Minister for Education and Science in Dublin has this school year established a Committee to advise on strategies and initiatives which might be undertaken to increase the number of males entering primary teaching. The INTO is represented on this

Committee which first met in October 2003. One of the terms of reference of the Committee is to examine the study 'Gender Differences in Patterns of Entry into the Colleges of Education' conducted by Dr Sheelagh Drudy and others, based on research undertaken in the late 1990s. The Drudy Report will also be referred to in this document.

A 1991 Report by the INTO Equality Committee - *Male / Female Imbalance in Primary Education* - examined this issue some years ago. The Report looked at the historical background to gender imbalance in primary education, contributory factors towards such imbalance and reported on the findings of a study of 1,000 Leaving Certificate students. That document is also a valuable resource in drafting this report.

The evidence that the feminisation of primary teaching is an international phenomenon, together with the outcomes of a number of pieces of research, suggests that this trend can only be understood in the context of wider social changes and phenomena, including those affecting the socialisation of boys and the division of caring responsibilities. This will be discussed further below.

Male / Female Imbalance - Current Situation (Republic of Ireland)

The current statistics on primary teachers, by gender and promoted positions, are as outlined in Table 1. These show that just 17.5% of primary teachers are males and that females are under-represented in promoted positions.

Table 1: Statistics on Men and Women in Primary Schools (Rep. of Ireland)

Post	2003/2004			
	Male		Female	
Principal	1638	(49%)	1677	(51%)
Deputy Principal	360	(15%)	1996	(85%)
Vice Principal	13	(10%)	123	(90%)
Assistant Principal	217	(25%)	652	(75%)
Grade A	17	(25%)	50	(75%)
Special Duties	946	(16%)	4907	(84%)
Teacher	37	(13%)	254	(87%)
Grade B	48	(27%)	131	(73%)
Privileged Assistant	-	-	4	(100%)
Principal (Personal Basis)	1261	(10%)	11582	(90%)
Unpromoted Teachers				
Sub-Total	4537	(17.5%)	21376	(82.5%)
Total	25,913			

While the numerical imbalance is not a new phenomenon, it is one which has become more marked in recent years. By comparison with the male teaching complement of 17.5% for 2003-2004, the percentages for the years 1990, 1980 and 1970 were 22%, 27% and 32% respectively. If this statistical drop of 5% per decade in the proportion of male primary teachers were to continue unchecked, by about 2035 there would be the unlikely scenario of no males in primary teaching in the Republic of Ireland!

Age profile statistics (Table 2) demonstrate the momentum of the growing gender imbalance. While the total demise of the male teacher is, in reality, unlikely, the statistics on teachers of 30 years of age and over, coupled with the position in the colleges of education, indicates that the proportion of male primary teachers will reduce to below 10%.

Table 2: Age Profile of Teachers, by Gender (Rep. of Ireland, March 2004)

	FEMALE TEACHERS	MALE TEACHERS
Between 21 and 30 years	90%	10%
Between 31 and 40 years	85.3%	14.7%
Between 41 and 50 years	80.8%	19.2%
Between 51 and 60 years	73.7%	26.3%
Between 61 and 70 years	78.8%	21.2%

Membership statistics for INTO (Republic of Ireland) indicate that, at March 2004, 1417 (43.1%) of our primary schools do not have a male teacher on staff.

Although male teachers are currently in a small minority, they are clearly not a disadvantaged minority. Their over-representation in promoted posts, while gradually reducing over recent years, together with the much smaller proportion of male teachers on the lower points of the salary scale, gives rise to a gender pay gap in primary teaching. Figures provided by the DES show that, at January 2004, the average salary of a male teacher (at €49,700) was €7,400 greater than the average of a female teacher.

The advantage of male teachers, on average, in terms of promotion and salary is not, however, the central focus of this Report. Nonetheless, both the continued auditing of trends in these areas, and proposals for more equal outcomes, are relevant in considering gender imbalance matters.

Male/Female Imbalance - Applicants for Teaching

For the purposes of this report, the INTO contacted the Central Applications Office (CAO) concerning applicants to primary teaching (Republic of Ireland) in 2003 and for a number of earlier years. The CAO provided statistics regarding applicants who selected the B Ed. Programmes in St Patrick's College, Mary Immaculate College, Marino, Froebel or Church of Ireland College in the relevant years.

The CAO figures for 2003 applicants for primary teaching, with the corresponding figures for 2000-2002 inclusive are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Applicants for Primary Teaching (CAO) by Gender

YEAR	FEMALE	%	MALE	%	TOTAL
2003	3,879	84.1	733	15.9	4,612
2002	3,566	83.4	709	16.6	4,275
2001	3,223	85.9	528	14.1	3,751
2000	3,290	85.5	560	14.5	3,850
TOTALS	13,958	84.7	2,530	15.3	16,488

This table indicates a serious gender imbalance at the stage of application for primary teaching. The highest proportion of male applicants was in 2002 at 16.6%. Similar figures provided in the Drudy report (at Table 1.1 therein) show that males as a percentage of total applications to the primary colleges of education exceeded 19% in 1993, but have never reached that level subsequently.

Male / Female Imbalance - Teacher Training Courses and Colleges

As part of this study, the INTO contacted each of the Colleges of Education seeking statistical information regarding new entrants and current enrolments broken down by gender.

This information is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Colleges of Education - Current (2003-2004) Enrolment by Gender, B. Ed. Undergraduates

COLLEGE	FEMALE	%	MALE	%	TOTAL
St. Patrick's	1,095	90.6	114	9.4	1,209
Mary Immaculate	1,039	88.8	131	11.2	1,170
Froebel	185	92.5	15	7.5	200
Marino	301	90.9	30	9.1	331
Church of Ireland	96	100	0	-	96
TOTALS	2716	90.4	290	9.6	3,006

These figures indicate that less than 10% of B Ed. students currently in Colleges of Education are male. They show the serious level of gender imbalance among prospective primary teachers over the years ahead.

In order to establish whether a different pattern applies in respect of Post-Graduate Diploma in Education students, the Colleges were also asked for statistics on current populations on this course. These figures are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Current (2003-2004) numbers of Post Graduate Diploma in Education students by College of Education and Gender

COLLEGE	FEMALE	%	MALE	%	TOTAL
St. Patrick's	161	88.5	21	11.5	182
Mary Immaculate	103	88.0	14	12.0	117
Froebel	53	86.9	8	13.1	61
Marino	89	89.9	10	10.1	99
Church of Ireland	n/a	-	n/a	-	n/a
TOTALS	406	88.5	53	11.5	459

The figures in Table 5 show that under 12% of the post-graduate diploma students in Colleges of Education are male. While a slightly higher proportion of male entrants enters teaching through the post-graduate diploma route, based on these statistics a serious imbalance is evident here also.

The position in respect of the Hibernia College course which was recognised in 2003 is similar. Of the 197 students who commenced their course in the latter half of 2003, 18 (9.1%) were males. A second group selected and registered comprises 178 female (89.9%) and 20 male (10.1%) students.

Between Application and Allocation

The most significant factors giving rise to gender imbalance clearly occur at a stage in a student's education before s/he has the opportunity to apply for primary teaching. Nonetheless, it is also clear that there is a striking disparity between the number of male applicants for primary teaching (averaging over 15% across the years 2000-2003) and the number of males who enter Undergraduate B Ed. Programmes (currently less than 10%).

What happens to those would-be male primary teachers between the application and the allocation of places stages?

There is, in the first place, a disparity in points scored as between male and female Leaving Certificate candidates. In their study of the Leaving Certificate results for 2003, the CAO indicated that females significantly outnumbered males at all the points levels which affect entry to primary teacher education. Girls are simply scoring more points at the Leaving Certificate examination.

The requirement to have a grade C or better at honours Gaeilge is also one which disproportionately impacts on male applicants. At the 2001 Leaving Certificate higher level papers, for example, two thirds of the exam candidates taking honours Gaeilge were girls and of those who took that level, 81.8% of girls received grade C or better, compared to 74% of the smaller number of boys. Figures in Table 6 show the ongoing effect of the Gaeilge requirement.

The Gaeilge Requirement

The statistics indicate that the Gaeilge requirement serves in part as a gender-biased filter. The debate about the level of Gaeilge required of entrants to primary teaching is a wider, controversial one. Gaeilge is the only subject where intending teachers are required to take an honours paper - there is a wide disparity between minimum subject requirements in respect of different subjects for B.Ed. entry, which at present include C grade on Higher Course Gaeilge, C grade at Ordinary Course English and D grade at Ordinary Course Mathematics. It may be asked how a student teacher with a D grade at Ordinary Level Mathematics is deemed capable of teaching the primary curriculum, whereas the same student is deemed incapable of becoming a teacher without C grade Higher Level Gaeilge.

The Gaeilge requirement is a challenging one which excludes the great majority of Leaving Certificate students from considering a career in primary teaching. At the 2003 Leaving Certificate, just over 15,000 students (27% of all candidates) sat the Gaeilge examination at Higher Level. This was the same number who took Higher Level French, and less than the numbers sitting Higher Level Business (16,031), Geography (21,776) and English (32,382).

Table 6 indicates a consistent pattern of female candidates taking Honours Gaeilge in far greater numbers - and in a ratio of about 2:1 - compared to male candidate. The Table also demonstrates that

only a minority of candidates of either gender tackles Honours Gaeilge, but that there is a significant gender difference when these figures are broken down as percentages of all candidates of that gender. Some 34% of female Leaving Certificate candidates sit Honours Gaeilge, but only 20% of male candidates do so.

Table 6: Leaving Certificate Examination

Year	Total Candidates	Male Candidates %	Honours Gaeilge			
			Candidates by Gender and %		Candidates as % of Candidates of that gender	
			Male	Female	Male	Female
2003	56237	47.8	5235 (34.7)	9867 (65.3)	19.5%	33.6%
2002	55437	47.6	5120 (34.4)	9781 (65.6)	19.4%	33.7%
2001	56686	47.3	5408 (34.4)	10311 (65.6)	20.2%	34.5%
2000	60733	47.1	5923 (34.9)	11035 (65.1)	20.5%	34.6%
1999	62839	47.4	6087 (35.3)	11134 (64.7)	20.5%	33.7%

Table 7 looks at the success rates, by gender, of Honours Gaeilge candidates securing the minimum requirement for primary teaching. It is clear that girls are consistently outperforming boys in this area.

Table 7: Leaving Certificate - Honours Gaeilge

Year	No. Candidates by Gender		No. (and % of that gender) Securing Grade C or better	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
2003	5235	9867	4079 (77.9%)	8064 (81.7%)
2002	5120	9781	4121 (80.5%)	8361 (85.5%)
2001	5408	10311	4000 (74%)	8435 (81.8%)
2000	5923	11035	4501 (76%)	9134 (82.8%)
1999	6087	11134	4732 (77.7%)	9431 (84.7%)

At the 2003 Leaving Certificate, 80% of the students taking Honours Gaeilge secured the minimum requirement for primary teaching - a total pool of 12,143 potential teachers.

Of the total number of male Leaving Certificate candidates in 2003, 5,235 (19.5%) took honours Gaeilge, compared to 9,867 (or 33.6%) of the females. The 12,143 students securing the Irish language requirement in 2003 comprised 8,064 females (81.7% of those taking the honours paper) and 4,079 males (77.9% of those sitting the paper).

By comparison, with the 12,143 securing the required standard (for primary teaching) of Gaeilge in 2003, the other minimum subject requirements were complied with by 48,625 students in the case of English and by 43,582 in the case of Mathematics.

Gender Imbalance - Northern Ireland Statistics

Figures on applicants to teacher training colleges, and regarding current enrolment on programmes, were also sought for Northern Ireland. These are showing patterns similar to those in the Republic of Ireland.

Table 8 shows enrolments for the years 1999-2003 on the B.Ed. programme (primary and secondary) at Stranmillis University College in Belfast.

Table 8: Stranmillis University College - B.Ed. Entrants 1999 - 2003 Inclusive, by Gender

YEAR	FEMALE	%	MALE	%	TOTAL
2003	152	77.2	45	22.8	197
2002	168	85.3	29	14.7	197
2001	171	82.2	37	17.8	208
2000	143	76.9	43	23.1	186
1999	158	84.5	29	15.5	187
TOTALS	792	81.2	183	18.8	975

These figures show that, over the five years, the proportion of male entrants never reached one in four and overall was less than one in five. While separate figures for the primary and secondary students in the B.Ed. course were not available for each year, the 2003 statistics indicate that the gender imbalance is greatest at primary level. Whereas the secondary B.Ed. entrants were 53.7% female and 46.3% male in 2003, the primary-level B.Ed. entrants were 83.3% female and 16.7% male.

Available statistics on appointments in Northern Ireland also confirm that gender imbalance is a feature in that jurisdiction; the statistics further show that imbalance is greater at primary than at post-primary level. Figures were obtained from the Council of Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) in order to examine appointment trends.

From 1996-2002, 3,235 teaching appointments (principal and vice-principal appointments are excluded from these figures) were made in Northern Ireland's Catholic Maintained Schools. Of those appointed, 2,554 (79%) were females and 681 (21%) males.

Table 9, which relates to 2002-2003, shows that the appointment imbalance is greater in primary schools.

Table 9: Catholic Maintained Schools, N. Ireland - Appointments to Teaching Posts by School Level and Gender of Appointees (CCMS Report 2002-2003)

LEVEL	FEMALE	%	MALE	%	TOTAL
Primary	206	86.6	32	13.4	238
Post-Primary	198	73.1	73	26.9	271
TOTALS	404	79.4	105	20.6	509

Data relating to the gender profile of the teaching force across sectors was received from the Department of Education (Northern Ireland). The figures include all teachers, together with principals and vice-principals paid by the Department, but excluding the voluntary grammar schools.

This information is presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Teachers in Service, Northern Ireland, 2002-03, by Sector, Promotion Level and Gender

	Primary		Sec./Grammar		Special		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Principal	483	423	138	48	20	32	641	604
Vice-Principal	189	423	158	102	19	43	366	568
Other Teachers	825	6841	2616	4739	121	628	3562	12322
Total: %:	1497 16.3%	7687 83.7%	2912 37.3%	4889 62.7%	160 18.5%	703 81.5%	4569 25.3%	13494 74.7%

The proportion of males among Northern Ireland's primary teachers (16.3%) as shown in the above table is broadly similar to that in the Republic of Ireland (17.5%). Of the teachers employed in nursery schools in Northern Ireland, all 215 are female.

Further analysis of the above figures carried out by INTO in Northern Ireland indicates that women teachers who are appointed

as principals tend to be in the nursery sector, smaller primary schools or in special schools.

Early Childhood Education/Studies and Gender Imbalance

The Northern Ireland comparative figures between nursery, primary and post-primary levels indicate that gender imbalance increases as the age of children being taught decreases.

In order to explore this trend further, the conductors of degree programmes in Early Childhood Education/Early Childhood Studies in the Republic of Ireland were contacted. On the CAO degree course list for 2003, there were five degree courses (with final points requirements in the range 310 to 390 points) in the area of Early Childhood Studies/Education. Just two of the providers responded to the INTO query. Statistics received (Table 11) confirm an age-related trend.

Table 11: Degree Programmes in Early Childhood Studies/Education - Current Enrolments by Gender

COURSE	FEMALE	%	MALE	%	TOTAL
U.C.C. - BA (ECS)	173	98.3	3	1.7	176
C.I.T. - BA (EC)	37	100	0	-	37
TOTALS	210	98.6	3	1.4	213

Gender Imbalance - A Problem?

INTO Congress 2003 clearly indicated that, for INTO members, the growing gender imbalance in primary teaching is a problem for the profession. It must be acknowledged, however, that there may be little reason to view the imbalance as a problem, but instead to view it as a phenomenon which has no marked impact on primary education or on the profession.

It is not necessary, in the light of INTO policy, here to argue at length whether the gender imbalance presents a problem for the profession or for primary education. Drudy, however, identifies three issues where increasing levels of feminisation may be problematic. These are:

- (1) The issue of equality in the labour market,
- (2) The socialisation of pupils,
- (3) The hidden curriculum of schooling which raises questions of what pupils learn about male/female relationships if the teaching profession, and its management structures, are highly sex-differentiated.

It is also clear that INTO members continue to raise concerns about gender imbalance in primary teaching. These concerns often relate to our society where many children are being raised in one-parent families and where that parent is generally female. The need for male role models in the early years of a child's education and development has regularly been articulated as a reason to address the male/female imbalance in primary teaching. This is a contested area and research is not unequivocal about the social impact of schooling. Another concern which has been voiced is related to salary and conditions of employment in a profession as gender imbalanced as primary teaching is becoming.

While teaching is a profession where the teacher's primary role is the development of pupils' knowledge and skills, there is (in law and in practice) also a duty of care owed to pupils. There is a serious question about the impact on all children of seeing only females in the caring role.

While little research has been reported on male role models in education, a number of studies may be cited in support of the position that a gender balance in the profession is a desirable and important aim. *Connell (1996) - Connell, R.W., Teaching the Boys, in Teachers' College Record, 98(2)* - provides a conceptual framework derived from research into the education of boys which points to the need for male role models in primary schools.

Research conducted within Education Queensland showed that there is concern about the lack of male role models in the teaching profession for young boys (*Queensland Government: Male Teachers Strategy, 2002-2005*).

Professor Bruce Carrington of Newcastle University has referred to "some evidence for the potential benefit of male role models; in particular where teachers had shared the same experiences as pupils they could have some influence on pupils". Overall, however, he referred to the positive role model concept as "ambiguous" (*NUT 2002: "Man Enough to Teach" - Symposium Report*).

This ambiguity is reflected in the punctuation of a headline in a Times Educational Supplement (5 March 2004) review of the subject: "Wanted? Male Role Models". This article quotes teachers and academics on either side of the debate.

Whether based on arguments related to equality in the labour market, pupil socialisation, the 'hidden curriculum' of gender differentiation, or other factors, INTO has consistently argued that the increasing gender imbalance in teaching is a phenomenon giving rise to serious concern and which must be tackled in the interests of the profession and of education.

Positive Action to Tackle the Imbalance - Either Desirable or Possible?

It is clear, in retrospect, that the maintenance of single-sex colleges of education into the 1970s operated as a measure of positive discrimination in favour of male candidates for teaching.

A big question in current debate is whether it is desirable or legally possible to put in place positive action measures to increase the number of males entering teaching. Has the situation reached a stage where government should legislate to ensure that a minimum proportion of teachers from each gender will be in place?

In raising this question, it is important to acknowledge that positive action measures are already in place at entry to primary teaching. These operate in favour of students from the Gaeltacht and of entrants to the Church of Ireland College. In both cases, the measures provided for entry at a level some 40 CAO points below the wider standard in 2003.

Positive action measures might operate in a similar manner in respect of gender, with an entry standard set so as to ensure a defined proportion of candidates of each gender. Another approach would involve the setting of a minimum entry standard and the prescription of gender quotas in respect of all those scoring above that minimum level.

Whether gender quotes or positive action measures are desirable is a moot question. On the one hand, it can be argued that trends show that male primary teachers are almost an 'endangered species' and that radical action which will guarantee a minimum level of gender balance is required. Positive action with an established minimum gender balance (at least 20% of each sex, for example) will by definition achieve this. Such measures are already in place in respect of two groups of potential teachers; in addition, the State applies gender quotas to certain aspects of its own activity, including appointments to state boards. Provision is also made in schools' boards of management and on job interview boards for each gender. On the other hand, it will be argued that positive action measures are inequitable (as they demonstrably are) and disproportionate. One's view on this argument will be strongly influenced by where one stands on whether, and to what extent, serious gender imbalance in teaching is a problem.

The legality of gender-related positive measures is also open to question. The Employment Equality Act 1998 states that its provisions are "without prejudice to measures to promote equal opportunity for men and women" but goes on to refer "in particular" to inequalities which limit women's opportunities (Section 24.1). In January 2004, the Government published amending legislation in the form of the Equality Bill 2004. In its published form, this Bill amends the 1998 Act in a number of ways, including substitution of a new Section 24.1. The proposed wording will allow measures to ensure "full equality in practice between men and women in their employments" as well as "specific advantages" to "make it easier for an under-represented sex to pursue a vocational activity" (Section 15). If enacted, this provision would appear to strengthen the possibility of positive action to tackle gender imbalance in teaching.

Roots of Imbalance

The INTO report of 1991 examined five main contributory factors to the male/female imbalance in primary teaching. These were:

- (a) Traditional attitudes to male/female roles in education,
- (b) The ending of the gender quota system in the Colleges of Education,
- (c) Growing diversity of career opportunities,
- (d) The B Ed. qualification, and
- (e) Role models and stereotyping.

The 1991 report examined the institutionalised sexism in parts of *Rules for National Schools* which were in operation until 1975 and which indicated that men's perceived role in primary education was limited to the teaching of older children, especially boys. The quota system which operated in Colleges of Education up to 1975 had also served to artificially increase the proportion of males in primary teaching. The opening up of third level education, following the introduction of free second level education in 1967, and the growth in career opportunities, were argued in that report to have encouraged young men, in particular, who might have chosen teaching as a career to opt for the business world where rewards were more overt and immediate. The specificity of the B Ed. Degree course, which provided for no career choice other than primary teaching, was also suggested as a deterrent to male entrants, as was the perpetuation of male/female imbalance through few male role models in primary teaching.

The stereotyped pattern of roles and responsibilities in wider society undoubtedly influences prospective candidates for primary teaching. Teaching is one of the caring professions and much evidence indicates that caring roles, and in particular those involving caring for children, are highly gender stereotyped. The Economic and Social Research Institute has indicated (letter to INTO, 15 May 2002) that in National Labour Force Surveys (which are based on very large samples of households), among those who report their primary occupation as "engaged in home duties" only about 1.5% are male. A survey of childcare practices conducted by ICTU and reported on in 2002 indicated that childcare was primarily a female responsibility among workers. One finding, for example, showed that of those respondents who stated that they handled child care responsibilities on their own, 16.1% of females reported that they did this compared to 3.3% of males.

Skelton and Hall (2001) argue that the absence of men "helps to transmit the message that it is only women who are involved in the emotional, social and intellectual development of young children". They believe that men "should be actively encouraged" as early years professionals (Skelton C. and Hall H., *The Development of Gender Roles in Young Children : A Review of Policy and Literature; EOC, UK, 2001*).

There has been a failure over a long period of time to promote the career of primary teaching, particularly among potential male entrants. The unique value of, and opportunities provided within, a teaching career are not being promoted across broad society, nor amongst second level students including at an age before which they make irrevocable decisions about subject choices and therefore career opportunities.

Arising out of these considerations and the facts of the growing imbalance as reflected in the figures above, INTO makes a number of recommendations.

Issues for Discussion

The issues below fall into three broad categories:

- (1) Publicising and promoting teaching as a career.
- (2) Direct measures to increase the number of male entrants.
- (3) Qualifications and conditions.

It should be emphasised, at the outset, that measures to address male/female imbalance in primary teaching, and to increase the number of males entering teaching, do not detract in any way from the enormous contribution of women teachers in our primary schools. The INTO further repeats and endorses the statement contained in the 1991 report by our Equality Committee that "the considerable and continuing contribution of women to primary education should not just be confined to the area of classroom teaching".

The INTO recommends debate on each of these issues in seeking to secure an improved gender balance in teaching.

1. Issues regarding publicity/promotion of primary teaching

The establishment of a unit or a service dedicated to the promotion of primary teaching as a career should be considered. This might be modelled on the Nursing Careers Centre (www.nursingcareers.ie) which is organised under An Bord Altranais. On the establishment of the Teaching Council, it should be an immediate priority to put in place such a Teaching Careers Centre, but it should not have to wait for the establishment of the Council.

The Minister for Education should establish a group including representatives of INTO, of career guidance teachers, of the Colleges of Education and of school management, as well as from his own Department, with a view to devising a promotion/publicity campaign.

The DES, in cooperation with the partners in education, should immediately produce a brochure for second level school students promoting primary teaching as a career. This brochure should be sent to all schools; in particular, 'all-boys' schools (from where a tiny proportion of entrant teachers come) should be targeted, as should students in the early years of second level school, as well as those approaching the Leaving Certificate examination.

Male role models should be used in material promoting primary teaching. While the role models in such material should not only be males, the highlighting of males in classroom teaching, to an extent disproportionate to their current numbers, is necessary in order to tackle the imbalance.

2. Direct measures to increase numbers of males in primary teaching

While the B Ed. pre-service degree should remain the main entry route to primary teaching, a greater proportion of mature students should be provided for in the B Ed. programme enrolments, graduate entry opportunities through the Graduate Diploma should be continued, and a diversity of paths into primary teaching is to be encouraged. Evidence shows that there is a greater proportion of males among such categories of students.

Gaeilge is the only subject where a grade C at higher level is required to enter primary teaching. There is evidence that the requirement filters out a number of male candidates each year between the application for primary teaching and the allocation of primary teaching places stages. In order to meet concerns about the standard of Gaeilge among primary teachers, other approaches are possible. Included among these approaches are a requirement to meet a standard higher than the entry standard before completing the initial teacher education programme - previously in place for graduate entrants - or a reformed Scrúdú Cáilíochta examination for teachers educated within the State, as well as those educated outside.

Legal advice is required regarding positive action measures to increase the number of males in primary teaching. We note that at present there are positive action measures in place based on Gaeltacht residency and on the religion ground. Legal advice is necessary on other positive action measures in order to establish their validity having regard to equality legislation and EU directives on equality, and provision for positive action therein.

A positive action programme, to provide for a minimum entry level to teacher education of 20% of each gender, should be considered and, if agreed, be subject to review at intervals of five years thereafter.

3. Qualifications and conditions

The Pre-Service Degree for primary teachers should become a more versatile qualification so that entrants do not feel that they are entering a single qualification for a single type of school.

Conditions of service in primary education should be improved, in particular where such conditions can be compared unfavourably with other levels of the education service or with other careers. Urgent improvements which are required include a substantial shortening of the incremental salary scale and an ending of the anomaly which sees principal teachers at second level more favourably treated than their primary counterparts.

Avenues of mobility and opportunities for diversification should continue to be available to primary teachers, and these should be highlighted in material publicising and promoting teaching as a career.

APPENDIX: Equality in Education - The Northern Ireland Perspective (Report by I.N.T.O., 2004)

Conclusions and Recommendations from N.I. Report (published separately)

INTO has reached the following conclusions in relation to the promotion and provision of equality of opportunity for serving teachers, vice principals and principals within the education sector in Northern Ireland. These are:

- Women apply to university to study and train as teachers in greater numbers than men. Male students tend to show a preference for training within the post primary sector.
- The education system continues to attract significantly more females than males. This is shown by figures related to university entrants and appointments made to schools within the Department of Education (DE) database. This may influence the pay levels that teachers attract in future as professions which are predominately female tend to be lower paid than comparable male professions.
- While women form the majority of the teaching workforce, the principal and vice principal positions are more likely to be filled by men
- Women principals are found mainly in nursery, special and small primary schools
- Male principals are found mainly in large primary schools, and most post primary schools.
- Management allowances are awarded on school based criteria. The award of such allowances is not based on any standardised criteria across the education sector. There is no monitoring or equality proofing of such allowances.
- The impact of the LMS (Local Management of Schools) funding system for schools is a major factor in the promotion and provision of equality of opportunity in schools. LMS may create barriers to the achievement of equality in pay and promotion for serving teachers.
- Training and awareness for those involved in the recruitment and selection process is a purely voluntary matter.
- There is little if any training on the operation of agreed procedures relating to the pay and terms and conditions of serving teachers.
- Best practice from other areas of the public sector is not utilised within the education sector
- There is no central body involving all the education partners that can address the issues of equality of

opportunity and promote an equality culture within the education sector.

- Monitoring of certain aspects of equality occurs centrally. It is difficult to ascertain how this monitoring has assisted in the issue of pay and policy development for serving teachers.
- The role of trade unions in the area of promotion of equality is perceived as minimal and is mainly confined to consultation on equality schemes and generalised consultation through existing employer / trade union structures.

Arising from these conclusions, INTO makes the following recommendations:

- Establish an overarching committee involving the education partners to examine and develop central strategies that will address the issues of equality of opportunity and equal pay in education.
- Commission research into the barriers faced by women teachers in particular which prevent them from applying freely for higher graded posts in schools.
- Commission research into the factors which influence men to apply in smaller numbers than women to train as teachers
- Examine pay structures for equality and equal pay issues, including a pay audit of new and existing payment systems.
- Establish a mandatory training programme for School Governors involved in the recruitment, retention and promotion of teaching staff.
- Review existing recruitment and selection procedures to identify barriers to appointment and recruitment and selection procedures
- Review and research the impact of Local Management of Schools (LMS) school funding mechanism on equality issues in teachers' salaries.
- Review pay appeal mechanisms to ensure compliance with the Equal Pay Act.
- Review 'family friendly' policies and initiatives to assess their take up rate and how they actually meet their stated aims.
- Improve maternity, paternity and adoption arrangements to those currently provided in other areas of the public sector.
- Review and implement best practice from other areas of the public and private sectors to enhance the working lives of serving teachers.

- Establish practices and procedures which fully involve the recognised teachers' unions in policy development and initiatives to improve the overall equality culture within the education sector.