

10 May 2023

To: All Branch and District Secretaries (Rep. of Ireland and Northern Ireland)

Re INTO Conferences and Events

A rúnaí, a chara,

The CEC met this week as the organisation embarks on another year of work. We had a very full agenda and also met with Northern Committee, who are campaigning strongly for a fair pay offer and for an end to stringent budget cuts. Northern Committee expressed sincere gratitude to all members who have shown solidarity with teachers in Northern Ireland. We reviewed annual congress and began planning for our pre-budget 2024 lobbying campaign.

I now write to thank you most sincerely for your work in encouraging the delegates from your branch/ district to attend and participate in the various sessions at annual congress 2023 and to update you on forthcoming events.

Branches, Districts and national committees were entitled to send 1014 delegates to this year's event in Killarney. Even though some branches failed to fill their delegations, 814 delegates were registered to attend the three-day event.

It was clearly obvious from arrival time on Monday afternoon that we had many new delegates this year and that attendance levels were significantly higher than last year at the same venue. The active participation by delegates was also higher than at Congress 2022.

139 individual delegates spoke at Congress 2023, an increase from 120 or 15% on last year. The gender breakdown of speakers was 62% female and 38% male. As to be expected, many delegates spoke more than once and on more than one topic. 48 different branches were represented by speakers (up from 37 last year). In advance of next year's event in Derry City we will endeavour to encourage even more branches to provide speakers.

Similar to 2022, many speakers were from National Committees (CEC, EDC, EQC, PDC), nevertheless, 50% of the speakers identified themselves on the podium as a branch representative. In relation to District officers, 10 speakers identified themselves as District officers, making a total of 15 contributions with officers from District 14 making 7 contributions. In total, 48 different branches were represented by speakers to one motion or more – this was up from 37 in 2022. The following branches were most active: Blanchardstown, Drogheda, Athboy/Trim, Ennis, Mullingar, Dublin Tolka and Dublin North City.

The participation of delegates at Congress is vital for the decision-making process. Delegates are there to represent the other members of their Branches/Districts. Every branch/ district has a role to play in ensuring that their delegates attend and participate in this vital process. When comparing this year's card vote with last year's the number who voted increased by two thirds. However, at the time of that important vote nearly 300 delegates did not vote and the hall was not full, so we must continue to monitor and increase attendance levels.

In that regard I thank you once again for your massive effort to date and exhort you to repeat that effort in the coming year again.

INTO Conferences 2023-24

We will have five national conferences and Northern Conference within the next year.

- September 2023 Principals' and Deputy Principals' Conference - Wexford
- November 2023 Consultative Conference on Education- Tullamore
- January 2024 INTO Youth Conference- Sligo
- February 2024 INTO Special Education Conference- Portlaoise
- March 2024 INTO Northern Conference - Belfast

Branches and Districts will be seeking declarations of interest from potential delegates at meetings in May, October and January. I am asking you for your ongoing cooperation in driving home the message regarding the importance of increasing attendance and participation levels at all INTO events including branch meetings. The very successful INTO Equality Conference which was held in February provided the opportunity for many members to attend their first union conference. Please remind those who attend meetings of your branch/district that all members are welcome to seek places on their branch delegations to INTO conferences.

Pre-Budget 2024 Lobby Campaign

We will be holding our national lobby day at Buswell's Hotel, Dublin on Wednesday 14 June. This will be followed by intensive local lobbying in each Dail constituency during September. We will be seeking names of lobbyists to carry out this important work at local level and we ask you to ensure that your branch participates. Training will be provided.

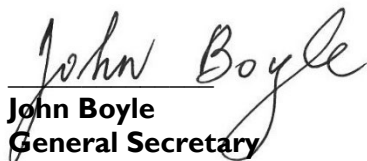
Officers Briefing ROI Branches and Districts

We will hold an officers' briefing at the Gresham Hotel, Dublin on Saturday 16 September 2023. Arrangements will be posted on the Officers' Extranet next month.

Finally, I ask that you and your fellow officers check the membership strength within all schools, seek to ensure that every school appoints a staff representative and advise your District Secretary of the number of teachers working in your branch who have not joined the INTO. When looking at a union's strength the key starting point is the level of its density. As student teachers begin entering the workforce in a substitute capacity and as newly qualified teachers begin their careers it remains critical that they are actively recruited.

Thank you for volunteering for the INTO and best wishes for the next year.

Yours fraternally,


John Boyle
General Secretary