



NEWSLETTER

June 2010

Global Telesales Workers continue to join CWU

Workers in GTS continue to join the CWU. Organisers at CWU believe the increase in Union density at the Company comes on foot of recent developments which have seen the Union represent its members in GTS at both LRC and Rights Commissioner Hearings.

Union Organisers have met with Global Telesales workers on several occasions recently on a range of issues, including the Company's imminent change agenda. The decision of the Company to impose a cap on salaries has been referred to the Labour Court and the Union is currently awaiting confirmation of a date for the Hearing.

The CWU is a proactive Trade Union which always strives to resolve issues on behalf of its members in a professional and harmonious manner. The Union operates as a 'not for profit organisation' under the democratic control of its members.. Many workers join the CWU because it gives them an independent voice in the workplace.

Unfortunately, at a time when exploitation of workers is once again commonplace, many workers are unaware of their employment rights, including their basic right to join a Trade Union, a right which is in fact enshrined in the Irish Constitution.

CWU's primary role is to ensure all of its members know their rights and to assist them in exercising these rights should the need arise.

Of course there are many other benefits for workers who join Trade Unions. The CWU has a comprehensive member's benefit scheme in place which entitles members to a variety of discounts in areas such as car, home, life, health and travel insurance as well as optical and dental refund schemes. Members can

also avail of discounts in other areas such as hotel breaks. The cost of membership is from as little as €2.60 per week for part time workers and just €3.12 per week for full time workers and this payment is tax deductible.

The CWU has almost 20,000 members employed in the Communications Industry throughout Ireland, many of whom work in call centre's such as UPS, Hertz, Barclaycard and Global Telesales a. For more info contact gerard@cwu.ie

GTS issues referred to Labour Court

An ongoing dispute between Global Telesales workers and management has been referred to the Labour Court for resolution. The dispute centres around the Company's decision to introduce new salary bands which have had the effect of reducing the potential salary of some GTS workers. There have been meetings held at the Labour Relations Commission between Global Telesales management and the Communications Workers Union, the Union which represents GTS Workers. The outcome of the discussions was a referral to the Labour Court.

Workers who join the CWU are automatically entitled to Union

representation on an individual basis at disciplinary or grievance meetings with their employer. In addition, members receive free independent employment advice and representation at all third party hearings such as the Labour Court or Rights Commissioner. *For further information contact 01 8663000*

"Know Your Rights"

The CWU has recently produced literature aimed at informing new members of their rights in the workplace. This includes a handy fold out credit card size leaflet which contains relevant workplace information relating to holidays, health and safety issues, maternity leave, contract of employment and parental leave. The purpose of the leaflet is to inform workers of their entitlement at work. Many workers in Ireland come from countries such as Spain, Italy, Portugal, France and Germany and many are unsure of how the law operates in relation to employment. The CWU provides information and assistance for all of its members in the workplace.

Employers seek pay cuts for lowest paid workers

There are several other benefits that union membership brings. Virtually every work place entitlement that workers enjoy today has been achieved because of the efforts of the Trade Union movement. For example, the introduction of the right to a minimum wage, currently at €6.65 per hour, was strongly resisted by employers and many Company's are now actively

campaigning through IBEC and lobbying the Government to have it reduced. If they are successful in reducing the rate of minimum pay, the next logical step would result in additional wage cuts for the lowest paid workers in Ireland. The CWU, through its affiliation with Irish Congress of Trade Unions is committed to oppose any such move.

Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures

Disciplinary proceedings can occur when your employer is dissatisfied with your work performance or you are accused of unacceptable behaviour at work and this is raised with you formally.

A grievance is when you raise an issue about an incident or conditions at work.

• **You have the right to Union representation whether or not your employer recognises a Trade Union.**

By consulting with and being accompanied by a representative from CWU, you are ensuring that you have all of the necessary skills and experience to achieve the best possible outcome.

While availing of CWU representation you will benefit from independent advice and guidance from a union representative who understands the process, is there to protect your interests and above all, to ensure you are treated fairly.

Don't delay Join Today !!

Equality & Diversity in the Workplace

Workers have the right to equal opportunities and equal treatment. Furthermore, all workers are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace. Employers are forbidden by law from discrimination against employees on any of nine grounds set out in the Employment Equality Act 2004 which are:

- Gender
- Marital status
- Family status
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Membership of the Travelling community

It is against the law to treat someone less favourably than another person on these grounds.

If you work **part time, you are entitled to be treated in the same way as someone who works full time.** This applies to pay and opportunities, but not pension entitlements. Representatives of the CWU are trained and updated regularly in relation to equality legislation in order to keep members informed

Health and Safety

Trade Unions ensure that Health and Safety rules and regulations are adhered to. Employees are entitled to select a Safety Representative to represent them on safety and health matters with their employer. The CWU provides training courses which guarantee that they have the

knowledge and expertise to carry out inspections at work. Everyone has the right to safe working conditions and a healthy environment. The Communications Workers' Union provides training for health and safety representatives in the workplace.

What else can unions do ?

Many workers in Ireland are members of a Trade Union. In fact there are nearly 800,000 people that have joined a Union. It is a reasonable question to ask what do Unions do, or what have they ever achieved? The truth is, if you look at the history of this country, there are things we take for granted such as the 40 hour work week, the minimum wage, paid overtime, healthcare benefits, child labour laws, paid leave, maternity leave, health and

safety legislation, none of which would be in place without the efforts of Trade Unions over many years. Unions and their members have put their shoulders to the wheel and made life better for working people when they were being taken advantage of. Today, even if you're not in a union, you are still benefitting because there's a Union out there, putting pressure on employers to do the right thing. The reality is we have the most

anti-union administration in living memory. Unions are not trying to drive employers away, especially in this current climate where jobs can easily be moved overseas. Most unions are very responsible in terms of wanting to see employers succeed, but what they do expect is that if a Company is making profits that the company will share some of the profits with the workers who contributed to its success.

Would you like to know more ?

The CWU is a Trade Union which has 20,000 members throughout the communications industry in Ireland. Our members work in various companies in a variety of roles, we have postmen, delivery and logistic staff, technicians, cleaners, team leaders, managers in addition to the

many members who work in call centres such as Barclaycard, UPS and of course Global Telesales. The CWU provide training for members who would like to take a more active role in the Union. Training includes a basic introduction to employment law, how to prepare and attend grievance

and disciplinary meetings as well as an outline of equality legislation. This training is available to members at no cost. If you would like to find out more about our various training programmes please contact gerard@cwu.ie or call 01 8663000.

Together we are stronger