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and the Origins of Public Funding Support
for Social Science Research in Ireland,
1950-1979**

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ABSTRACT

The channelling of US aid funds into a drive to increase productivity was an important feature of the reconstruction of Western Europe after World War Two. Located within the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), the European Productivity Agency (EPA) played a key role in organising this productivity drive between 1953 and 1962 by constructing a network of national productivity centres.

As an OEEC member state, Ireland joined the EPA when it was set up. But it did not take a significant part in the Agency's activities until 1959 when the government approval for the setting up of an Irish national productivity centre given almost a decade earlier was finally put into effect. At the EPA's prompting, a National Joint Committee on the Human Sciences and Their Application to Industry (HSC) – probably the first body involved in providing public funding support for the creation of a social science research infrastructure in Ireland - was also set up.

This working paper traces the history of the HSC. It examines the initiatives the HSC took in conjunction with EPA from 1959 to 1962, how it survived the EPA's demise to provide support for social science research projects after becoming a component part of the Irish national productivity centre and how a radical restructuring of the national productivity centre in the early 1970s set the stage for the demise of its role in supporting research by the end of that decade.

The paper's conclusion indicates the intended next stage of this work in progress. It also tentatively draws out the implications of this particular study for the broader understanding of how Ireland began to 'open up' its economy and society at the end of the 1950s and of the role that direct and indirect US aid played in this process.

Introduction

In 1948 the Irish state consolidated the first steps it had taken out of its position of international isolation at the end of World War Two by joining the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC). Becoming a member of OEEC was a condition of receiving U.S. Marshall Aid through the European Recovery Programme (ERP) (Raymond 1985: Girvin 1997: Whelan 2000). The state's membership continued after Ireland in 1951 ceased, on account of its continued military neutrality, to be a recipient of a flow of U.S. aid to Europe that now came with Cold War 'security' strings attached. During the 1950s the diplomatic as well as the economic importance to Ireland of OEEC membership lessened considerably as admission to the United Nations, denied when that organisation was founded in 1945, was achieved a decade later.

Against this backdrop, it is hardly surprising that Ireland's OEEC membership during the 1950s has not attracted a lot of scholarly attention. Most interest has been shown in the relationship between the Irish state's highly protected economy and the OEEC's sponsorship of trade liberalisation. O'Hearn (1989) depicts the change in Irish development strategy that took place in the late 1950s as one that was ultimately determined by the forces of world capitalist political economy and not by the Irish state. In this scenario OEEC membership obligations open the Irish state elite up to pressures that lead by the mid-1950s to Ireland being 'forced by U.S. pressure into embarking on a complete transition from protected [import-substituting industrialization] to free-trading [export-led industrialization]' (O'Hearn. 1989: 24). Difficulties attending the trade liberalization issue are also highlighted in comments made by Girvin (2002) – here Ireland is variously described as 'not an active participant in the OEEC' where 'American pressure... to liberalise also worried Irish policy makers' (Girvin 2002: 145) and 'a reluctant member through the 1950s' that 'remained uneasy concerning the liberal economic order being promoted' (Girvin 2002: 247 [footnote 14]).

By the end of the decade, however, Girvin detects the prevalence of a more positive view of the Paris-based organisation in Dublin - 'influential reports and publications from the OEEC and other international organisations were now influencing departmental officials in key positions' (Girvin 2002: 167). This can be attributed to three factors. First, Irish development strategy had by then begun to shift in the direction of greater openness. Second, troubling European integration and trade issues had migrated out of the OEEC into the new rival arenas of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Free Trade Area (EFTA). Ireland stood aloof from (or was ignored as an insignificant irrelevance by) both blocs until Britain shifted its strategic alignment from EFTA to the EEC in the early 1960s. Third, trade policy had always been only one concern – albeit a very important one - within the OEEC's field of activities. OEEC technical assistance and productivity provision also produced a significant cumulative impact on Ireland, as Daly (2002) notes in the case of agriculture:

The years between 1945 and 1958 have probably been regarded in an unduly critical light. In the Department of Agriculture there was a shift from the introspective atmosphere of the 1930s and the war years. Many Irish agricultural scientists traveled to the United States under the [European Recovery Programme] technical assistance programme and the Department became involved in international organisations such as the OECC and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation. These contacts created a greater awareness of scientific and economic trends in other countries, which resulted in a more critical assessment of domestic policies. (Daly 2002: 340)

This paper addresses the cumulative impact on Ireland of OEEC initiatives in the field of industrial productivity, focusing in particular on how support from public funds for social scientific research activity in Ireland came to be initiated within this context. Before turning to the Irish case, it first briefly refers to the explanatory framework proposed by Maier (1977) for US policy towards Western European countries after World War Two, the concept of 'politics of productivity', and, drawing in particular on the work of Boel (2003), it then sketches how a productivity drive became institutionalised within the structure of the OEEC during the 1950s.

The politics of productivity

The perspective on the Americanisation of Western Europe after World War Two put forward by Maier (1977) is summarised as follows by Boel (2003):

The politics of productivity were supposed to depoliticize social and economic issues. Enhancing their productivity Western European societies would be enabled to overcome social conflicts resulting from scarcity, as had already been accomplished in the US, according to a common American self-perception. What should move societies was not the dialectics of class struggle, but the forward-going movement from scarcity (viewed as a result of inefficient use of resources) to abundance. The means to achieve a successful transition from the former to the latter was a matter of engineering (of finding the most efficient way) and not of politics (of differing interests) (Boel 2003:12)

Technical Assistance and Productivity programmes operated as part of the overall ERP from late 1948. Here 'the aim was for European industrial and agricultural workers and managers to visit the US, experience the American way of working and living, and apply the lessons of higher productivity when they returned home' (Whelan 2000: 315-316). But in the case of at least some Irish participants there was a clear disinclination to abandon their existing faith for the new gospel (Whelan 2000: 356-357). Nor was this a uniquely Irish response: the US-orchestrated productivity crusade 'met with widespread resistance in many European circles for various reasons' (Boel 2003: 37).

The US Economic Co-operation Administration (ECA) responded to this enthusiasm deficit by seeking to implant productivity promotion structures in the states receiving Marshall Aid. A Productivity and Technical Assistance Division was created within ECA

during 1950 and 'a program was prepared to act a general guide for the [Technical Assistance Program]. The first point on this program was the creation in every OEEC country of a productivity center as a body responsible for coordinating the different productivity activities' (Boel 2003: 29). The OEEC Council passed a recommendation to this effect in March 1950. In May 1951 the US Congress added the Benton Amendment to the Mutual Security Act. This declared the policy of Congress to be:

That this Act should be administered in such a way as (1) to eliminate the barriers to, and provide the incentives for, a steadily increased participation of free private enterprises in developing the resources of foreign countries... (2) to discourage the cartel and monopolistic business practices prevailing in certain countries receiving aid under this Act which result in restricting production and increasing prices and to encourage where suitable competition and productivity and (3) to encourage where suitable the development of the free labor union movements as the collective bargaining agencies of labor within such countries. [quoted in Boel 2003: 31-32]

A year later the Moody amendment earmarked \$100 million in aid funding for carrying out programmes 'in furtherance of the objectives of [the Benton Amendment] with a view to stimulating free enterprise and the expansion of the economies of those countries with equitable sharing of the benefits of increased production and productivity between consumers, workers and owners'. The same amendment authorised the transfer of \$2.5 million dollars to OEEC for the promotion of these objectives. The OEEC was by this time divided into a majority of members who were in good Mutual Security Act standing with the USA (MSA countries) and a minority who were not (the Non-MSA countries of Ireland, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland). The larger of the Moody Amendment's earmarked sums was doled out through a series of bilateral agreements between the USA and the MSA countries. The smaller earmarked sum prompted the 1953 creation within the OEEC of an autonomous European Productivity Agency (EPA) of which all OEEC members, both MSA countries and non-MSA countries, were at least nominal members. We now turn to Ireland's response to this US-promoted European productivity drive.

A Productivity Centre for Ireland Approved but Not Created

Government approval in general terms for the setting up of an Irish national productivity centre was given in June 1950 before the collision between the Irish policy of military neutrality and the conditions newly attached to ERP funding by the US Mutual Security Act occurred. The proposal to create such a centre had come from the Department of External Affairs at the prompting of the US ECA. Approval of the proposal was subject to the 'understanding that specific proposals as to the steps to be taken would be submitted by the Minister for Industry and Commerce after consultation with the Industrial Development Authority'.¹

But neither the Department of Industry and Commerce nor the US ECA mission in Dublin saw a productivity centre having a useful function in the Irish context and matters proceeded no further until the proposal to create the EPA revived the issue early in 1953.

From the outset the addition of productivity agency to existing OEEC bodies was seen by Industry and Commerce as entailing costs that would have little offsetting benefits for Ireland and the department was inclined to have nothing to do with the new body. External Affairs, on the other hand, felt that it would be impolitic of Ireland to appear reluctant to cooperate with its establishment and argued that it would be 'difficult having regard to our membership of OEEC to disassociate ourselves from the proposed agency'.² With the EPA becoming a reality, an Industry and Commerce Departmental Conference that discussed liaison with the new agency in February 1954 'concluded that it was not necessary to establish a National Productivity Agency and it was proposed that such an Agency should not be established'.³

Minimal Irish Involvement in EPA, 1953-58

Subsequently, in the absence of a national productivity centre, Industry and Commerce served as the EPA's Irish point of contact. The Department circulated information sent to it regarding EPA projects to organisations that it considered likely to be interested but 'no special measures have been taken to publicise or advocate support for such projects and the question of participating is left entirely to the Irish interests themselves'.

Any participating interest would 'as a general rule' have to pay out of its own resources any costs incurred through its involvement that EPA did not cover. The ERP prompted innovation of Irish departmental Technical Assistance budgets had been continued after the flow of US funds to Ireland ceased but Industry and Commerce adopted a policy of not supporting EPA project participation from this source on the grounds:

that the Projects are not initiated in this country; that they are not tailored to our particular needs; that even where there is Irish participation, it is by no means certain that any national as distinct from individual advantage is gained and that, as a general principle, it seems preferable that State funds should be applied towards the cost of technical assistance projects which are initiated in this country and which are designed to deal with specific Irish problems and conditions rather than that such funds should be used to contribute towards the cost of schemes organised by the Agency and designed to deal with more general problems of countries industrially more advanced.⁴

No Industry and Commerce representatives attended any level of EPA meeting in Paris. Nor, in the absence of interest on Industry and Commerce's part, were these covered by the one-man-band Irish Delegation to the OEEC. With no Irish input into formative project design discussions at headquarters, the assertion that EPA projects were unsuited to Irish industrial needs became something of a self-fulfilling prophecy. The lack of an active engagement with Paris also meant that any Irish organisation potentially interested in participating in a particular project was likely to learn about it late in the day.

Many of the features of Ireland's mode of minimal involvement in the EPA between 1953 and 1958 are illustrated by the case of EPA Project No. 312. On 15 August 1955 an official in the Industries Division of Industry and Commerce forwarded documents

regarding this project to a colleague in the Labour Division and sought her views on the possible participation of Irish trade unionists. The reply began by noting that:

Stage A of this project appears to have passed us by unnoticed as it consisted of a meeting held in Florence last April of professors of psychology and industrial sociology and directors of research institutes from both the U.S. and Europe to hold discussions on human relations.⁵

A further, Stage B, conference was now to be held in Rome in January or February 1956 and it was envisaged by the EPA, that 'tripartite' national delegations of up to nine members consisting of employer or worker representatives and national productivity centre nominees (including human relations experts) would attend. Circulated with information by Industry and Commerce, one of Ireland's two rival trade union congresses and the Irish Management Institute (IMI) decided not to participate but the other trade union congress expressed an interest in sending delegates. Industry and Commerce then found itself pressed to notify the EPA of its own intention to participate as without employer/management or national productivity centre attendance, any trade union participants would not qualify to have half of their expenses paid by the EPA and would only be given the status of observers without speaking rights rather than that of delegates. Technical assistance funding was also sought from the Department to cover the other half of the union delegates' expenses.

A memorandum prepared for the Departmental Conference on 25 November to which the matter was referred for a direction stated that 'it was not considered that there was any case for sending a delegation from the Department as we had no positive contribution to make'. This memorandum recommended that no technical assistance grant be given and that the Irish Trade Union Congress (ITUC) 'be informed that the report of the Rome Conference will be forwarded to it when it comes to hand'. The reply sent to the ITUC on 9 January 1956 made use of the EPA's stated requirement that delegates should carry out preparatory work under specified headings that would facilitate the pooling of knowledge and experience at the conference to argue that representation of the Department could not be justified: "in view of the short notice which was given of the holding of this conference there was no time to prepare the necessary data for it.' On 26 October copies of a report on the conference were sent by the Labour Division of Industry and Commerce to both the ITUC and the rival Congress of Irish Unions (CIU).⁶

Moves to Increase Irish Involvement in EPA, 1954-58

The upsurge in Irish involvement in EPA activities that occurred after 1958 can be traced in the first instance to the unwillingness of EPA officials to accept the situation of an OEEC member state with no national productivity centre. Visiting Dublin to deliver an address to the Institute of Industrial Research and Standards (IIRS) in October 1954, Dr. Alexander King, lobbied the Minister for Industry and Commerce, William Norton, who responded by asking the Chairman and the Director of the IIRS to convene an informal committee which would examine the establishment of a national productivity centre for Ireland. Represented on this Committee, which met for the first time on 8 March 1955,

were the Federated Union of Employers (FUE), the Federation of Irish Manufacturers (FIM) the IMI, the ITUC, the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU) and the IDA as well as the IIRS. Tortuously slow progress and deep division followed as the FUE in particular obdurately raised objections to the setting up of an Irish productivity centre. Finally on 3 November 1956 the Minister was sent a draft constitution for a productivity organisation (which just failed to fit on one side of a typed foolscap page) together with a letter which explained that:

All the bodies invited subscribed to this document except the Federated Union of Employers. We expected that they would send us some communication saying why they were not willing to subscribe to the document but, as they have not seen fit to do so, we have thought it best to pass it on to you as an altogether unreasonable time has elapsed since you asked us to look into the matter. Whether there is any prospect of success for this organisation if the leading Employers' Association is not in favour of it, we must leave you to judge.⁷

The presentation of the informal committee's document coincided with the inauguration of an Industrial Advisory Council (IAC) to which its ministerial creator decided to refer further consideration of the question. A change in government in March 1957 led to Norton's departure from office and his replacement by Sean Lemass, who killed off the IAC by directing that no further meetings of the body be convened and also decided that no fresh action should be taken with regard to the setting up of an productivity centre.⁸

EPA officials were not put off by such frustrations and continued to avail of opportunities to encourage greater Irish participation in the agency's work. In September 1957 H. G. Stevens suggested to the FIM and the IMI that they consider setting up a panel to examine EPA projects and identify ones they considered suited to Ireland. Writing to the IMI Secretary he subsequently suggested that educators in advanced areas of the fields of engineering, economics and commerce as well as trade union representatives might be brought onto such a panel. The trade union section of the EPA followed up contact made at a Copenhagen seminar on productivity in ports to send V. Agostinone to Dublin where he discussed an Irish productivity centre with well-disposed leading figures in an Irish trade union movement in the process of reuniting itself and with Industry and Commerce officials at the end of November. At almost the same time Dr. King was back in Ireland at the ITUC's invitation to speak at a weekend school organised by the People's College. His speech called for the creation of an Irish productivity centre and drew attention to the fact that Ireland and Portugal were the only OEEC Member States without such a body.⁹

Applying the Human Sciences to Industry: A Specific EPA Request for Irish Action

The train of events that led to Ireland's departure from this club of two was already in motion by this time, precipitated by an EPA initiative that created a context within which the Irish interest groups that favoured greater involvement in international productivity initiatives could successfully coalesce. On May 3 1957 EPA's Director, Roger Gregoire, made 'a personal request' to the Head of the Irish Delegation to OEEC 'for your co-operation in putting into operation as quickly and efficiently as possible the Agency's

programme for the human sciences and their application in industry', Project 405. The letter specifically requested 'your appropriate national authorities to constitute a joint committee in your country composed of management, trade union and government representatives as well as social scientists'. The national joint committees would collaborate with EPA in developing a European Research Plan and 'should also take part in the preparation and execution of each research undertaken in your country, as well as discuss ways and means to disseminate the results of research and to ensure their practical application'.¹⁰

Although Industry and Commerce officials drafted a reply to External Affairs 'indicating that we do not propose to set up the Joint Committee', the Departmental Conference held on 1 July inclined towards a more positive response:

While it was felt that there was need for such a body here, it was not clear to which existing Irish Organisation might best be assigned the task of examining and appraising the E.P.A. suggestion with a view to formulating proposals for the establishment of a Joint Committee suitably adapted to Irish requirements...The Minister indicated that he favoured the idea of the establishment of such a Committee. He considered that the I.M.I. would probably be best qualified to examine and appraise the E.P.A. suggestion. He directed that the matter be discussed informally with Mr. Hegarty, Vice Chairman of the Institute¹¹

A process of sounding out the opinions of business organisations and trade unions by the Department or the IMI followed, culminating in the convening by the IMI of a preliminary meeting 'to consider the establishment of a Joint Committee to implement E.P.A. Project 405' on 14 March 1958. In addition to employer, manufacturer and trade union representatives the invitees comprised educational institutions (the two Dublin universities and the capital city's Vocational Education Committee) as well as a number of the large semi-state companies. One of the decisions taken by this meeting was to ask Industry and Commerce to invite an EPA representative to attend a further meeting at which the participants could be briefed about the project and the wider context of the agency's work.¹²

As well as responding to Industry and Commerce's request in relation to Project 405 the IMI had also been developing its own links with EPA, sending a delegation to Paris in January 1958. A deputation to Industry and Commerce that pressed for Ireland to be represented on the EPA Productivity Committee followed up this Paris visit on 30 May:

The [IMI] Council felt that there was a tremendous opportunity of getting a lot of benefits out of the EPA generally... Ireland was virtually not represented at EPA and the country's name was not even mentioned in any of the numerous publications reflecting the activities of EPA. The Council thought that Ireland should be represented... everybody at the EPA was most anxious to give real help to Ireland.¹³

Sean Lemass responded by saying that 'he had no enthusiasm for the setting up of any elaborate organisation glorifying itself as a National Productivity Centre' but admitted the shortcomings of existing EPA liaison arrangements. He suggested that the IMI might take the initiative in setting up a committee to screen EPA projects in order to identify those relevant to Ireland and said that, if this were done, he would consider having Ireland represented on the EPA Productivity Committee through this screening body.¹⁴

A week later, on 6 June, a second preliminary meeting on the implementation of Project 405 was held. For this Gregoire, who outlined the history and structure of the agency and answered questions from the other participants, had come to Dublin to represent the EPA. At the conclusion of this meeting there was general assent to the formation of a joint committee to implement the project. Complications arose, however, at a third preliminary meeting on 20 June when a change in the trade union position was signalled:

A proper Productivity Centre should be set up, which would be official, fully representative, and recognised and accepted by the government. They felt that the setting up of any other ad hoc committees to deal with particular projects would side-track the main issue of the Productivity Centre, and they therefore could not support the formation of the Joint Committee unless on the understanding that the Centre be established.¹⁵

In response the meeting's Chairman, D.A. Hegarty of the IMI, informed the participants of the screening body proposal that had been made by Lemass at his 30 May meeting on Ireland's position within the EPA with the IMI deputation. Although some of those present were favourable to the proposal as an interim measure while a productivity centre was further considered, the trade union representatives were unwilling to accept it. The meeting adjourned to allow participants to consult with their organisations. At a fourth preliminary meeting on 1 July the desirability of setting up a productivity organisation with a broad remit was agreed in the striking absence of the employer opposition that had previously stymied the proposal. The composition of this body was also agreed (see Table 1 below) as was the composition of a joint committee to implement Project 405 (see Table 2 below). At a fifth meeting on 8 July a set of eight functions for the new productivity body was specified along with four 'immediate practical aims', its general *modus operandi* was agreed upon and minor modifications were made to its composition as agreed at the previous meeting.

Notes submitted for Lemass's information before he met a deputation led by Hegarty on 11 July observed that 'the objects of the Committee have been widened very much beyond those of a Screening Committee for E.P.A. Projects. They now follow closely the functions recommended... by the 1956 Committee'. The 'wider' productivity functions had the proposed new body consulting with and advising the government on the stimulation of higher productivity in Ireland and also engaging in 'propaganda' to increase productivity and 'endeavour to bring home to all sections of the community the beneficial effects which higher productivity would have in raising the standards of living of all'. The pressure to ensure that these wider functions were included came from the trade unions. But with employers raising no objections and the immediate practical aims

formulated for the new body heavily oriented towards deriving benefit from the EPA, the approval of a Minister sceptical of the value of a productivity centre was forthcoming.¹⁶

TABLE 1

Representation on Committee “to promote productivity and to advise the Government in connection with liaison with the E.P.A.” as agreed at the Fourth Preliminary Meeting To Consider the Establishment of a Joint Committee To Implement E.P.A. Project 405 (1st July 1958)

| Organisation | Number of Representatives |
|---|---------------------------|
| Provisional United Trade Union Organisation | 8 |
| Federation of Irish Industries | 2 |
| Federated Union of Employers | 2 |
| Irish Management Institute | 2 |
| Industrial Development Authority | 1 |
| Institute for Industrial Research and Standards | 1 |
| Universities | 1 |
| City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee | 1 |
| State Sponsored Companies | 2 |

TABLE 2

Constitution of Committee to operate Project 405 as agreed at the Fourth Preliminary Meeting To Consider the Establishment of a Joint Committee To Implement E.P.A. Project 405 (1st July 1958)

| Organisation | Number of Representatives |
|---|---------------------------|
| Federated Union of Employers | 1 |
| Federation of Irish Industries | 1 |
| Irish Management Institute | 1 |
| State Sponsored Companies | 1 |
| Provisional United Trade Union Organisation | 4 |
| Universities | 2 |
| City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee | 1 |
| Catholic Workers' College | 1 |

“In the case of the University representatives, it was agreed that University College Dublin might be asked to nominate a representative skilled in psychology and Trinity College a representative skilled in medicine”. Minutes of Meeting, 1/7/1958, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment R303/7/59

Increased Irish EPA Involvement and Irish Human Sciences Development, 1959-61

The National Joint Committee on the Human Sciences and Their Application to Industry (HSC) held its first meeting in November 1958, electing as its Chairman the Rev. E.F. O'Doherty, Professor of Logic and Psychology at UCD. The Irish National Productivity Committee (INPC) was formally inaugurated in April 1959 with D.A. Hegarty, General Manager of Dublin Port and Docks Board and IMI Vice Chairman, as its Chairman. Arrangements for liaison between the two bodies were agreed between them at a 16 April meeting. Both committees would communicate directly with Industry and Commerce in relation to financial support (the Department provided both committees with secretarial support but neither had a budget. Technical Assistance grants provided the potential source of national support for their activities). All requests for EPA funding were to be routed through the INPC and the HSC was to make regular progress reports to the INPC.¹⁷

The remainder of this paper focuses on the HSC and its role in the development of social science research in Ireland. Since the HSC almost from its inception operated in tandem with the INPC, and was indeed incorporated into the structure of a reconstituted INPC in 1964, the productivity centre features prominently in what follows but only those facets of its activities that are relevant to the social science research focus are dealt with here.

The discussion begins by looking at how the HSC operated during the lifetime of the EPA under three headings: (i) efforts to create an Irish human sciences research infrastructure starting more or less from scratch (ii) the promotion of ergonomic awareness and (iii) involvement in studies of adaptation to industrial and social change, particularly in relation to the Shannon area. The post-EPA role of the HSC is the subject of the paper's final section.

At its first meeting in November 1958 the HSC decided that it would be 'desirable to narrow the field of action' and 'concentrate on a small number of important problems which are regarded as urgent by both management and labour'. A circular letter issued shortly afterwards to a range of interested bodies elicited replies suggesting a wide variety of subjects for study - 'accidents, resettlement of unfit and partially disabled workers, working conditions, job satisfaction, recruitment and training, promotion, vocational guidance, incentives, human relations etc.' Considering these responses at its second meeting in January 1959 the HSC decided 'provisionally to limit consideration to problems coming under the heading "job satisfaction" which was understood to include matters such as human relations and incentives'.¹⁸

Engaging in consideration of questions falling within these limits required the HSC to address the reality that in Ireland 'there are no persons or centres specialising in research in the Human Sciences'. When participation in a number of EPA approved projects was discussed in September 1959 the HSC agreed that the results would not justify the anticipated costs and 'that, in any event, the lack of trained personnel would make such research impracticable at the present time'.¹⁹ EPA projects that offered opportunities for

researchers to study abroad and for research institutes to obtain technical assistance were to provide the HSC with a means of beginning to overcome this obstacle.

Training for Research Workers and Funding for Research Facilities

EPA Project 7/07 Section C provided opportunities to obtain training abroad for both senior and junior researchers. The HSC put forward candidates only in the latter category. A junior lecturer in Physiology at Trinity College, Oliver Murphy, was nominated in 1959 to study for six months with Professor Metz, Director of the Work Physiology Research Unit in Strasbourg University. EPA waived its stipulated upper age limit in order to approve this nomination. No nominations were forthcoming from the universities in 1960 but in 1961 holders of postgraduate diplomas from the HSC Chairman's own department supplied four nominees, two of whom went to Britain and two to the Continent. Thomas McCarthy, a City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee official apparently earmarked to direct its Vocational Guidance Service, spent three months at the National Foundation for Educational Research while J.P. Spellacy, a teacher, spent three months at the National Institute of Industrial Psychology. Noirin Ni Bhroin, a Personnel Officer with Glen Abbey Textiles, spent six months at the Netherlands Institute for Preventive Medicine in Leiden while Miss E. Dunne went to France for three months.²⁰ This number of Irish participants appears modest yet it represented a large proportion of the available pool of suitably qualified non-medical graduates from Irish universities (see Friis 1965 Appendix 5).

Project 7/07 Section D made available 'a pool of highly-qualified consultants who would assist existing research institutes in carrying out their programmes or contribute to the setting up of research centres in countries where they do not exist or are too few'. On 19 May 1960 the HSC decided to inform EPA, through the INPC, of its interest in obtaining the services of a consultant and also 'that it would be desirable to acquaint the Minister for Industry and Commerce with the Committee's intentions' through a meeting between the Minister and the HSC Chairman.²¹

By the end of May the EPA had indicated, through the INPC, its willingness to send a consultant to Ireland upon receipt of a formal request and more detailed proposals for the review to be carried out. On 20 July, however, INPC informed EPA that the 'time may not yet be opportune for the engagement of a consultant to advise specifically on measures for the establishment of such a Human Sciences centre' and suggested instead that EPA might provide an expert to lecture in the Psychological Department of an Irish university to those engaged in technical education.²²

On 8 July the Minister for Industry and Commerce (Jack Lynch) met the HSC Chairman who told him that the Committee 'could not fulfil its intended function unless some positive steps were taken towards the provision of research facilities'. The ideal to be aimed at, O'Doherty went on, 'would be the establishment of a research unit, either as a completely independent body or in association with one of the University colleges'. A 'less expensive alternative' was also put forward: state funding of a number of research scholarships or fellowships tenable at the Department of Psychology UCD with a

suggested value in the range of £800 -1,000 each `which would be used to promote the study of specific problems recognised as being of particular importance in Irish industry'. No civil servant, apart from the HSC Secretary, appears to have attended this meeting.²³

The Minister undertook to `consider the proposals put forward on behalf of the Committee by Fr. O'Doherty'. On 28 July the HSC Secretary, who was relinquishing the post due to reassignment within the Department, drew his Departmental colleagues' attention to the fact that the full Committee had not considered the specific scholarships proposal its Chairman had made at the meeting adding that `I do not see why any funds that may be made available for research should be restricted to a Psychology Faculty. The question of applying the human sciences in industry involves spheres other than psychology, and some research projects might be more appropriately undertaken by a physiologist, an expert in social medicine or an engineer, than by a psychologist'.²⁴

By the Autumn, however, the HSC's new Secretary was reporting active support from the Committee as a whole for a research initiative with a Psychology base to the Department. A proposal for a Research Institute in Industrial Psychology, with an estimated initial establishment cost of £20,000 and an annual running cost of £7,000, was put forward at a 7 October meeting between O'Doherty, accompanied by Rev. M.J. Moloney S.J. (the Catholic Workers' College nominee to the HSC), and Industry and Commerce officials. The establishment costs should, the promoters argued, be entirely borne by the state, as they believed the trade unions would not contribute to its support `and financing by management in these circumstances might prejudice labour against the scheme'.

Two memoranda subsequently written by the more junior officials present called, in one case, for financial contributions to an institute from labour and management to be pursued and, in the other, for clarification of how the HSC proposal related to the overall European Research Plan envisaged by EPA. The conclusions of both converged on favouring moves towards the establishment of an institute and the provision of some research scholarship/fellowship funding pending this development. However neither non-state financing for an institute nor the European dimension of the role it might play seems to have been further explored. Nor was the institute proposal from the HSC at any stage referred upwards for discussion at a Departmental Conference, where the initial request for a meeting between the Minister and the HSC Chairman was considered on 30 May. Instead the only recorded action on the part of the Department took the form of a letter of 3 June 1961 from the most senior civil servant who attended the 7 October meeting (an Assistant Principal) asking the HSC to `submit detailed proposals related to a specific fellowship project' and inquiring `if a project could be selected which could be carried out in participation with E.P.A.'. ²⁵

The day before this letter issued O'Doherty had sent his research institute proposal directly to the EPA. The reply of 14 June from the Head of the Social Factors Section informed O'Doherty that EPA had no means of providing such an institute with financial assistance. The best way to proceed, it suggested, would be to select a few concrete projects dealing with issues relevant to the Irish context, such as the training of rural manpower for industrial work. EPA's Project 7/07 schemes could be used to provide

suitable study placements for the researchers who would carry out these projects on their return to Ireland and also an opportunity for an Irish person to acquire abroad the type of management skills that would need to be available in order to establish a research institute back home. But funding for the selected projects would need to be sought from Irish sources or from 'the great research foundations such as the Ford Foundation or the Rockefeller Foundation'.²⁶

In discussion at the 7 October meeting Fr. Moloney had argued that while foundations such as the Ford Foundation might be prepared to fund research projects carried out at the proposed institute once it was established by the state, it was not the practice of these foundations to provide finance for the setting up of research institutes. In the light of the Ford Foundation's role from 1959 in the creation of the Economic Research Institute (ERI), this was clearly a misconception (Daly 1997: 160-162). Industry and Commerce's Departmental Conference noted ongoing discussions with the Ford Foundation in relation to what was referred to as both 'an economic research centre' and 'a centre for economic and social research' on two occasions in late 1959 but no connection between this and the proposal brought forward by the HSC in mid-1960 for 'a centre or unit to conduct research on the human problems of work' was made within the Department.²⁷

Although the Ford Foundation's initial discussions about aiding the creation of an Irish research institute were with an Irish minister and civil servants, the organisation's reluctance to support projects directly sponsored by governments led to the Irish application for foundation funding being channelled through the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland (SSISI). Here a further missed opportunity for connection between the two research institute initiatives can be identified. At a meeting between the IMI and Industry and Commerce in December 1957, when the process of convening a preliminary meeting to consider the establishment of a joint committee to implement EPA Project 405 was still at a formative stage, the suggestion that IMI should include SSISI among the invitees had been made. This was not acted upon. Had it been taken up, SSISI would almost certainly have been represented on the HSC when it came into being.²⁸

No HSC response to the Industry and Commerce request for details to be submitted of a specific fellowship project is on file although the Committee on 16 June 1961 approved a note that its Chairman had proposed as the basis of a reply. O'Doherty also informed this meeting 'that UCD hoped to have established before the end of the year a research institute in occupational psychology'.²⁹ Replying to a request for information from the Department of the Taoiseach on 24 September 1962 the HSC Secretary stated no such institute had yet been established at UCD but that its consideration had led to the HSC's research institute proposal being 'shelved'.³⁰

Fitting The Job To The Worker

While the HSC was not in its own estimation 'a suitable body to undertake or direct research' it was better adapted to the purpose of sending delegations to or organising its own conferences and seminars. Here the EPA's promotion of ergonomic awareness

through its Fitting The Job To The Worker project provided a focal point. This project had commenced in Ireland's period of minimal EPA involvement with the two-month visit to the USA of a European mission comprising eight specialists and a European Free Trade Unions representative in late 1956. This was followed up by a technical seminar at Leyden in Holland in March 1957. To this point there was no Irish participation but by late 1958 EPA preparations for a major conference to be held in Zurich were coinciding with the Irish process of creating the HSC and the INPC.

Circulated with information, and invited to participate on the basis of footing their full costs, both the IMI and ITUC linked the two developments. For the IMI the project's 'direct interest' did not justify the cost of participating: 'at the same time should any decision be taken by the National Joint Committee set up to operate E.P.A. Project 405 with regard to participation the Institute may reconsider this decision'. Similarly declining to take part, ITUC's National Executive took the view that 'having regard to the establishment of a committee on this subject on which the Provisional United [Trade Union] Organisation is represented, that the Government should bear the expense of a representative delegation to attend this conference'.³¹ The HSC took the same view when it held its first meeting and an application for a Technical Assistance Grant to meet a delegation's expenses was soon under consideration by Industry and Commerce. To a Principal Officer in the Labour Division this seemed 'an odd kind of seminar' - 'I think it might be conveyed to them that we expect them to be a little more selective in picking out the seminars to which a team should be sent from Ireland'. In response an Assistant Secretary wrote that 'at the Departmental Conference today he [the Minister, Jack Lynch] did not think it necessary to speak to them on the lines of ... your minute...lest we might discourage them'.³² Ultimately the Technical Assistance budget paid for a five strong delegation comprising the HSC's two university representatives, an employer and a trade union nominee as well as a member of its factory inspectorate added by Department to attend the Zurich conference.

Back in Ireland the HSC organised a national follow-up conference to promote public awareness of ergonomic issues. This was held in the Rupert Guinness Hall in November 1959 with five speakers from Britain and continental Europe. This attracted an attendance of over two hundred people. At the European level the Fitting The Job To The Worker project continued with an EPA study seminar aimed at those responsible for the programmes of schools of engineering held in Liege in September 1961. The Irish delegation nominated by the HSC consisted of representatives from UCD, Trinity College and the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee's Bolton Street College of Technology. As with the Zurich conference, the HSC organised an Irish follow up to the Liege seminar to which 'teachers of engineering and architecture together with others to whom these principles [of ergonomics] may be important, e.g. industrial medical officers and engineers in national concerns' were invited. In September 1962 seven speakers from Belgium, Britain, France and Sweden addressed a Dublin seminar held over four days.³³

Studying Industrial and Social Change

In addition to events promoting ergonomic awareness, the HSC also organised a May 1962 seminar entitled 'The Impact on the Individual of Change in Industry'. On this occasion F.E. Emery from the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in London and two members of the HSC, Fr. Moloney and Dr. J. F. Eustace, a specialist in occupational health who had been co-opted onto the Committee, delivered papers.³⁴ The creation of the 'first Air-Age Industrial Development Zone in the world' at Shannon Airport in 1958 (Callanan 2000: 82-105) provided a site for HSC collaboration with European researchers interested in the concrete form industrial change was taking on the ground in Ireland. HSC Minutes and Progress Reports to the INPC refer to several meetings involving O'Doherty, Hegarty and Shannon Free Airport Development Company (SFADCO) Chairman Brendan O'Regan as a result of which 'a number of consultants were engaged by the Company, with the support of E.P.A., to assist in the application of the Human Sciences in the Company's development plans'.³⁵

In September 1960 Patrick McNabb, 'a sociologist who has been engaged by Shannon Free Airport Development Company under the E.P.A. approved scheme' was one of two HSC nominees to attend a seminar held in Groningen (Holland) on the adaptation and training of rural workers moving to industrial centres.³⁶ This was not McNabb's first visit to Holland. Prior to his employment by SFADCO he had worked on the Limerick Rural Survey which Muintir na Tire (a Catholic rural regeneration movement) had carried out with support from Marshall Aid grant counterpart funds. In the course of this work he had gone for a period of initial research training to the University of Wageningen whose Professor Hofstee (the 'doyen of European rural sociologists') was one of the overseas experts to whom Muintir na Tire turned for technical advice (Newman 1964: vii-ix).

The Groningen seminar may have led in the following year to a study of Shannon and its hinterland being carried out with EPA support by the Sociological Institute of Leiden University.³⁷ After a preliminary visit to Ireland by Professor Emile Verduyn Schot in December 1960 McNabb and UCD's Francis D'Arcy, whom O'Doherty described as 'attached to my department of psychology and trained in sociology at Columbia, New York', spent two weeks in Leyden in February 1961 discussing Irish society and observing the functioning of the Dutch sociological institute. In April four members of the Institute staff came to Ireland for a month, divided between the Shannon area where the parishes of Newmarket-on-Fergus, Quin and Tulla were selected to be surveyed and Dublin where meetings were held with two government ministers (Industry and Commerce, Transport and Power), the Director of the Central Statistics Office, the sociological staff at UCD, the National Farmers Association and others.³⁸

Subsequent refinement and revision centred the survey to be carried out on five issues: the nature and prospects for expansion of the Shannon Airport complex's local labour market, the information local people had about this labour market, the educational preferences of different strata of the local community, the kinds of jobs preferred in different social strata and tendency to emigrate existing among the different strata. In May a party of six staff members and thirty students arrived to carry out the fieldwork.

This lasted for three weeks during which 769 people were interviewed. The students, who stayed in family homes, 'were also required to keep a diary of their experiences, and to make written observations on the families with whom they lived'.³⁹

D'Arcy and McNabb visited Leyden again for two weeks in October to take part in the analysis of the data. By then 'the data from the survey had been processed by the Netherlands Statistical Office and a very large bulk of statistics were ready for analysis'. But, D'Arcy reported to the HSC, 'it is clear that a great deal more work must be done before the report stage is reached'.⁴⁰

The extent to which the results of the study were ever published is not at present clear. But one result of the apparent reporting deficit can be identified – a blot on sociology's reputation within one of the government departments visited by the Dutch academics in April 1961. Three and a half years later, on 26 October 1964, a proposal that a pilot local area manpower study be undertaken was discussed at Industry and Commerce's Departmental Conference. Drogheda was the suggested study location and the Department of Sociology at UCD was being proposed to carry out the research. In this discussion Drogheda's being 'on the fringe of the Dublin employment area' was seen as being problematical while 'there were also some doubts on the proposal that the study should be done by the Sociology Department of UCD. It was recalled that a study of a somewhat similar nature in the Limerick/Clare area has been conducted some years ago by the Sociology Department of Leyden University and, so far as was known, no results had been published'.⁴¹

The Irish Productivity Scene After The Winding Up of The EPA

EPA was closed down as part of the process by which the OEEC was transformed in October 1961 into the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) with the USA and Canada as members. All EPA activities were finally wound up by 30 June 1962. The HSC thus co-existed with EPA for three and a half years. The expenditure of the HSC during the last twelve months of this period, and the sources of its funding, are shown in Table 3:

TABLE 3
Expenditure of the Human Sciences Committee in the year ended 30th June 1962
(the date on which the European Productivity Agency was wound up)

| Project | £ | £ |
|---|-----|-----|
| | I&C | EPA |
| September 1961 – Study Seminar in Liege for those responsible for teaching programmes in Schools of Engineering | - | 227 |
| September 1961 – June 1962 Training of junior research workers in the human sciences | 300 | 300 |
| October 1961 – Participation for training purposes in survey of Shannon hinterland conducted by Sociological Institute, Leiden University | 46 | 46 |
| January 1962 - Study Seminar in Paris for research workers on the adaptation and training of rural workers | 16 | 35 |
| May 1962 – Dublin Seminar “The Impact on the Individual of Change in Industry” | 94 | 20 |
| | 456 | 630 |

TOTAL

£1,086

Note: I&C = Department of Industry and Commerce Technical Assistance Grants: EPA = European Productivity Agency: “The general day to day working of the Committee does not involve any expenditure. An Executive Officer of this Department acts part-time as Secretary to the Committee. Typing, stationery etc. is made available by the Department.” (Department of Industry and Commerce to Department of the Taoiseach, 24 September 1962, National Archives, Department of the Taoiseach, S15,453 G62)

With EPA killed off, OECD emerged as an organisation oriented towards analytical studies rather than the provision of support services. Ireland pressed for services related to management development to be retained but this was done only for areas in the process of economic development, a status Ireland was unwilling to embrace. Decision-making delays in Paris were reported by September 1961 to be contributing to a situation where ‘if a programme of operational activities is drawn up eventually there will be no staff to execute it’.⁴² Against this background INPC Chairman D.A. Hegarty embarked on a campaign in late 1961 to establish a national productivity body with a greatly widened range of activities supported by a secure source of domestic funding. The revamped INPC, it was proposed, would operate an advisory service targeted at small and medium enterprises, provide general information services, engage in promotional activities through a network of productivity committees organised on both an industrial and a regional basis, support educational activities and promote research. Drawing on Taoiseach Lemass’s ongoing support to overcome Industry and Commerce’s reservations, Hegarty and his successor as Chairman, trade unionist Ruari Roberts, succeeded in having the INPC established as an independent company limited by guarantee in receipt of an annual grant-in-aid from Industry and Commerce’s budget. The HSC was incorporated into this new structure which was unveiled at the INPC’s annual joint labour-management conference in Skerries in September 1963.⁴³

At present little documentation is to hand regarding the activities of the HSC between a February 1962 meeting - whose minutes conclude: 'the date of the next meeting will be fixed by the Rev. Chairman when O.E.C.D. announce their future programme'⁴⁴ – and its late 1963 integration into the new model INPC. Hegarty's late 1961 memorandum setting out his proposals for INPC restructuring states that 'before E.P.A. went out of existence the [INPC] arranged for it to make a substantial grant to this country to finance research in the Human Sciences field'.⁴⁵ A memorandum dealing with INPC activities and financial needs sent by Roberts to Lemass in January 1963 refers to ongoing discussions between INPC and HSC regarding their relationship and states that 'it is understood that the Human Sciences Committee has indicated that its financial needs in 1963/64 will amount to £5,000'.⁴⁶ With greater access to funds than it had hitherto enjoyed, the HSC in this transitional period helped finance two substantive studies: the Skibbereen survey carried out by English-based sociologist J.A. Jackson (1967) and – jointly with the state transport company, CIE, and the men's unions - a study of the morale of Dublin busmen by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations (Van Beinum 1967).

Operating within the INPC from January 1964 the HSC continued to give grants to support research projects, with the amount devoted to this purpose running at approximately 10% of the INPC's grant-in-aid in the late 1960s (see Table 4). The reconstituted HSC was said to have 'stimulated the universities and the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee into proposing research projects for the consideration of the Committee'⁴⁷. Significant growth was now taking place in human sciences disciplines within the Irish universities and almost all of the awards made were to Irish-based researchers. Ten titles were published in a Human Sciences in Industry Monograph Series between the late 1960s and the mid-1970s and a number of other HSC-supported research studies were published outside this series (see Appendix A). By 1971/72 the INPC's Annual Report was noting the emergence of a pattern of funding applications 'which reflects the success of the [Human Sciences] Committee's early efforts to train research staff and, as a result, an ability and a willingness to undertake major projects'.

The context within the HSC functioned within the INPC was, however, one of conflict and uncertainty. Speaking at the 1963 Skerries conference which launched the revamped INPC, Lemass observed rather prophetically:

There are many organisations concerned with aspects of these problems of national efficiency – perhaps too many. I am very pleased to learn that the National Productivity Committee has completed arrangements for integration with the Human Sciences Committee because the distinction between their activities was too fine to justify their continued separation. Fitting the worker to the job by training and leadership and fitting the job to the worker in the interests of his health are but two sides of the same penny. As we go on with the campaign and see the problem becoming clearer we can consider the possibility of advantage in a greater concentration of effort.⁴⁸

TABLE 4
Irish National Productivity Committee Government Grant-in-aid and Human Sciences Committee Research Project Grant Expenditure 1963/64 - 1979

| Year | Grant-in-Aid (£) | HSC Grants (£) | % of Grant-in-Aid |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1963-64 | 40,000 | 2,000 (a) | 5 |
| 1964-65 | - | - | - |
| 1965-66 | 72,000 | 7,250 | 10 |
| 1966-67 | 80,000 | 6,875 | 9 |
| 1967-68 | 80,000 | 6,077 | 8 |
| 1968-69 | 84,500 | 9,000 | 11 |
| 1969-70 | 110,000 | 9,000 | 8 |
| 1970-71 | 108,400 | 9,491 (b) | 9 |
| 1971-72 | 163,000 | 15,890 (b) | 10 |
| 1972-73 | 183,000 | 13,775 | 8 |
| 1973-74 | 205,000 | 8,439 | 4 |
| 1974 (nine months) | 220,000 | 11,997 | 5 |
| 1975 | 300,000 | 13,000 | 4 |
| 1976 | 300,000 | 16,330 | 5 |
| 1977 | 350,000 | 7,300 | 2 |
| 1978 | 385,000 | 750 (c) | 0.2 |
| 1979 | 439,400 | - | - |

Source : INPC and Irish Productivity Centre *Annual Report and Accounts*, Various Years.
 Notes – (a) In 1963-64 INPC received £251 income from the Human Sciences Committee:
 (b) In 1970-71 and 1971-72 part of the HSC's expenditure was met by a grant of £1,500 received by INPC from the Department of Labour: (c) In 1978 an expenditure of £1,772 on publications is recorded under the Human Sciences Committee heading in the Irish Productivity Centre Accounts. This is the only year in which expenditure on anything other than research project grants is attributed to the HSC.

Further International Input Shapes the Irish Social Research Infrastructure

The 'perhaps too many' organisations referred to in the speech by Lemass spent much time engaging vigorously in bureaucratic turf warfare. Advisory services to firms were a notably bloody battleground with the IMI perceiving its interests threatened by the revamped INPC (Cox 2002: 99-120). Research was initially a less fraught field. The HSC was absorbed into the INPC in an apparently amicable fashion while the ERI and the Medical Research Council had their own separate spheres:

The Human Sciences Committee is concerned with the development of research bearing on the human problems of work in all sectors of the economy. This includes problems which are external to the enterprise and which have a direct influence on attitudes and behaviour at work and on the organisation and conduct of the work. Consequently, the Committee is concerned with the applied human sciences and more particularly industrial sociology, psychology and physiology. Purely economic and medical research are excluded in principle.⁴⁹

In 1963, however, a Social Research Committee was formed under the auspices of the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) with UCD economist Patrick Lynch as its chairman. Lynch was a central figure in two seminal OECD-supported team studies of early 1960s Ireland – *Investment in Education* (Department of Education 1965) and *Science and Irish Economic Development* (Department of Industry and Commerce 1966). The latter report of the Research and Technology Survey Team estimated the funds available for Irish social research in 1963 as about £65,000, with over a third of this funding coming from outside the state:

TABLE 4
Sources of Funds for Social Research in the Republic of Ireland, 1963

| Source | £ |
|--------------------|--------|
| Government | 28,200 |
| Business | 5,380 |
| Private Non-Profit | 8,360 |
| From Abroad | 22,700 |
| Total | 64,640 |

Source: adapted from Table 3.5 of Department of Industry and Commerce (1966). “Over £30,000 was expended by the Economic Research Institute. The rest was spread over higher education departments, the Human Sciences Committee, Government departments and other private bodies. A considerable amount of interdisciplinary social and scientific research was carried on by An Foras Taluntais [the Agricultural Institute] but the cost of this has been included under agricultural research” (Department of Industry and Commerce 1966: 33).

As was the case with Lynch’s career, the Social Research Committee straddled the civil service (it included seven Department Secretaries) and academia (UCD, Trinity College and St. Patrick’s College Maynooth) as well as including a number of state-sponsored research institute directors (ERI, IIRS, IPA, An Foras Taluntais). A Document it drew up envisaged a scheme of university-based postgraduate research fellowships whose holders ‘would investigate specific problems of Irish sociology, preferably of an applied nature’. The cost of such a scheme would, it was estimated, average a minimum of £10,000 a year over an initial three-year period (Friis 1965: Appendix 1).

Like the HSC before it, this Committee did not succeed in sourcing funds for a scheme of fellowships. Unlike the HSC it did pursue to a successful conclusion the acquisition of expert analysis from abroad. This was provided by Henning Friis, Director of the Danish National Institute of Social Research who visited Ireland as a United Nations Consultant

between February and May 1965. His report rejected the idea of basing research in the universities in favour of a multi-purpose research institute and set the stage for the conversion of the existing ERI into the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI).

In surveying the existing situation Friis referred to the HSC of the INPC as having taken 'a strong initiative for supporting research'. In his proposals the suggestion that 'to develop programmes for particular areas of research the Council [of the multi-purpose institute whose establishment he advocated] might set up committees with experts in the particular field' is concretised:

Thus the existing Human Sciences Committee of the Irish National Productivity Committee might be re-organized so as function as the committee on labour market research and human relations in industry (Friis 1965: 24)

Although the INPC's 1965/66 Annual Report refers to 'preliminary discussions' in relation to 'future possible relationships between the expanded Institute and the Committee' having taken place, no such reorganisation took place after the ESRI came into being. However, overlap between the two bodies, the vexed advisory service issue and the overall effectiveness of the INPC as an organisation were all to be raised together by a powerful critic a few years later.

The INPC Falls Foul of the Department of Finance

As a private limited company receiving a government grant-in-aid (a status it shared with the ESRI) the INPC was obliged to submit audited accounts and an annual report to its sponsoring department for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas. When its 1967/68 report and accounts were circulated the Minister for Finance had a number of negative observations to make:

Since the Committee's Advisory Service and the activity of its Human Sciences Committee developed there are indications that the I.N.P.C. may now be overlapping or even duplicating the functions of such bodies as the Irish Management Institute, the Institute for Industrial Research and Standards, the Economic & Social Research Institute and the expanding Small Industries Division of the I.D.A....

On the research front the projects of the Human Sciences Committee, as listed in the annual reports, seem to be on ground that could more appropriately be covered by the E.S.R.I. or commissioned direct by Departments such as the Department of Labour, whose Vote in fact contains provision for enquiries and research of the type dealt with by the Committee.

In general there is a fairly common impression that this organisation is not functioning successfully. For the last two or three years it has been largely stultified by the tug-o-war between employer and employee interests...⁵⁰

These observations concluded by calling for a review of INPC's operations and future 'if possible in the light of the plans which the IMI are understood to be formulating for its own [advisory] service'. Prompted by Industry and Commerce, INPC proceeded to review its activities and objectives – and to provide support for Finance's critique when 'it was not possible to achieve agreement between the constituent members of the Committee'. Assistance from abroad was turned to in the form of Messrs. Dalen and Hubert of the European Association of National Productivity Centres, a network created in the early 1960s to fill a void left by EPA's demise. Their conclusions found their way into the *Irish Times* whose front page on 27 October 1970 carried a story which identified as the core of the foreign experts 27 page report the statement that 'there is little, if any, valid future for the Irish National Productivity Committee as it now stands'.

Fuller details were provided on the newspaper's Business and Finance pages. The INPC should change its name to the Irish Productivity Centre (IPC). Dalen and Hubert were in agreement with Finance insofar as the advisory service was recommended for rapid transfer to either IMI or IDA. But, to take further the worthwhile work done so far by the Human Sciences Committee, 'applied social science' was one of six areas on which the revamped productivity centre should focus. According to the *Irish Times*, the report's discussion strongly linked this area with trade union education, which was viewed as being greatly needed in Ireland, and 'the possibility of the Centre providing an almost massive input of resources in this respect should be most carefully studied'. Structurally the Irish Productivity Centre should replace the existing committee with the combination of a more widely representative Council and a smaller Executive Bureau. The latter should have an independent chairman (a ministerial appointee), three business and three union representatives. Business representation on the Bureau was to be shared between FUE, the Confederation of Irish Industry (successor to the Federation of Irish Manufacturers and the Federation of Irish Industries) and the National Federation of Trade Associations (NFTA - representing the distribution sector, one of the report's six recommended focal areas).⁵¹

The Human Sciences Jettisoned by the Irish Productivity Centre

The activities and structures of the IPC were to take shape rather differently. The name change took place but the proposed transfer of the advisory service was rejected. CII and NFTA withdrew over this issue while, according to the INPC's 1971/72 Annual Report, the other constituent bodies – including IMI, IIRS, the educational institutions and the semi-state companies - 'accepted... the view that they could be more effectively involved in a consultative or advisory role'. This left the new IPC in the hands of the trade unions and – somewhat ironically in view of the manner in which it had opposed the creation of a national productivity organisation and had been at loggerheads with the unions within INPC during its early years – of the FUE. These bodies agreed to alternate the Chairman's position between them. Endorsement was forthcoming from Industry and Commerce for this restructuring (which took effect in 1972/73) thus securing the continuance of the grant-in-aid.

Social science research was not, however, to flourish within a national productivity centre organised along these lines. With fees earned from industrial consultancy emerging as a large element in the finances of the IPC, the value of the HSC's budget allocation dwindled and then disappeared. In 1976 the annual report acquired a new format and shrank to half its previous length. Within these shrunken confines no announcement marked the ending of twenty years involvement in human sciences research activity when it came. In 1979 the heading 'Human Sciences Committee research project grants' simply disappeared from the IPC's accounts. It never subsequently reappeared

Conclusion

In 1965 the Research and Technology Survey Team directed by Patrick Lynch noted that:

Decisions to set up new State research bodies are taken by the Government. Such decisions may be taken either through national considerations (e.g. linked with the obvious needs of economic planning) or as the result of requests from some organisation (or individual) inside or outside the country. There are no restrictions on the setting up of private research bodies if resources are available. It would seem that requests or suggestions for some new research institutes have in the past been influenced by bodies outside the country. Examples of the origins or sources of funds of some recently established research bodies are as follows:

| Research Body | Origin or Source of Funds |
|---|---|
| An Foras Forbartha [National Institute for Physical Planning and Construction Research] | United Nations and Irish Government |
| An Foras Taluntais [Agricultural Institute] | United States (Grant Counterpart Funds) and Irish Government |
| Institute for Industrial Research and Standards | United States Grant Counterpart Funds were used to establish some of the laboratories at this Institute |
| Economic Research Institute | United States (Ford Foundation) and Irish Government |
| Chair of Industrial Microbiology (UCD) | Jointly financed by Bord na Mona and Messrs. A. Guinness, Sons & Co. Ltd. |

A comprehensive list of 'bodies outside the country' exercising influence over the initiatives of the Irish state in the field of scientific research would include the EPA. Although its 'requests and suggestions' regarding the human sciences were not backed up by the substantial amounts of money that accompanied the Irish research institute initiatives supported at the end of the 1950s by the US government and the Ford Foundation, they did succeed in eliciting a response that was positive, if modest in scale, and sustained over a considerable period of time. As a separate body, and as a component

part of the INPC, the HSC deserves to be recognized as a significant part of Irish social science research history and of the history of the meagre and inconsistent support that social science research has received from the Irish state which the HSC's creation began.

Whelan (2000: 314) comments that 'it was somewhat fortuitous that when the [Marshall Plan] grant counterpart funding [that, *inter alia*, founded An Foras Taluntais and extended the facilities of the IIRS] finally came through in the mid- to late-1950s, the political climate was more attuned to such messages [of pursuing economic improvement through promoting, research, education, productivity and rural co-operation] than during the Marshall Plan years'. Certainly the very substantial later-1950s penetration of external influences within the Irish scientific research field presents a dramatic contrast to a perceived situation where 'in respect of the wider issues involved in the ERP and the OEEC, the country had little interest and sought on most occasions to reaffirm its traditional isolationism in all matters' (Girvin 1997: 69) or 'what bedevilled Ireland in the decade after the war was not so much isolation consequent on Allied resentment as self-imposed insulation from the currents of economic and social reconstruction and renewal which swept through western Europe once the Marshall Plan provided the means for rebuilding the continent' (O'Halpin 2002: 303).

There appear to be parallels between the case of Irish scientific research and some of the concrete instances from a variety of countries that have been discussed in the course of recent contributions to the international 'Americanisation' debate (e.g. Gourvish and Tiratsoo 1998: Kipping and Bjarner 1998: Zeitlin and Herrigel 2000). Ireland has not featured to any significant extent in this international debate while Irish studies of the state's post-1945 relationship with the USA or US-sponsored organizations have not to date incorporated a strong comparative dimension. The predominant home-grown image of Ireland as a slow learner grasping key Marshall Plan lessons only years after other countries had fully mastered them may stand in need of modification when the emphasis of recent international scholarship on the continued unfolding of highly variable processes of the transfer of management and technology models through the 1950s and 1960s is fully taken into account. Wider-ranging investigation of Ireland's participation in EPA than has been possible within the confines of this paper provide a means of exploring whether or not this is the case.

The process outlined above by which Ireland acquired a national productivity centre also suggests a need to revise to some extent the predominant view of how the country came to embrace strategic change in the late 1950s. Here the innovating role of state technocrats (particularly Sean Lemass and Department of Finance Secretary T.K. Whitaker) is normally emphasized to the virtual exclusion of any agency on the part of non-state actors. Capital and organized labour tend to be seen as the stagnating, protected Irish economy's insiders, tenaciously holding what they have while the system's outsiders emigrate *en masse* to booming Britain. The case of the national productivity centre's creation has presented at least some non-state elites in a more positive light. Trade union leaders and the IMI championed positive engagement with the EPA at a time when government departments in the main seemed satisfied with keeping up a modicum of appearances through the most minimal involvement. The Irish trade union leadership's

stance on productivity questions particularly merits further study which relates its position to those adopted by organized labour in other OEEC countries.

As regards the specific role in the change process played by key state technocrats, what the productivity centre story highlights is divergence of views rather than a monolithic viewpoint. In the same month as Lemass was telling the IMI delegation that 'he had no enthusiasm for the setting up of any elaborate organisation glorifying itself as a National Productivity Centre', Whitaker was completing *Economic Development* in which he argues that 'if we played a greater part in the [European Productivity] Agency's activities, we could reasonably hope to receive, at comparatively little cost, an increased share of its technical assistance allocations' (Department of Finance 1958: 164).

This paper is a report of work in progress. It is hoped to extend its base of government department archives by adding more of the same, accessing relevant documentation not as yet deposited in an archive and by interviewing surviving participants in the events discussed. It is also hoped that some funding to support this work might be obtained from the state infrastructure to support social science research whose creation was initiated by the formation of the HSC.

Appendix A

Studies published by the Irish National Productivity Committee/Irish Productivity Centre

Human Sciences in Industry Monograph Series

Human Sciences Research in Industry: A Summary (D. Walsh)
 Communication in Industry Between Management and the Shop Floor (M. Peirce and W.G. Scaife)
 New Homes For Old (C. Ward)
 The Motivation and Productivity of Young women Workers (N. Ni Bhroin)
 Barriers to Planned Change: A Study of Two Business Organisations (R.B. Cadwell)
 Management Controls in Action (W. Murray)
 People, Jobs and Organisations (L. Gorman and E. Molloy)
 Labour Relations Policies Within The Firm (G. MacKechnie)
 Trade Union Organisation in Ireland (B. Hillery *et al.*)
 Absenteeism in Irish Industry (C. O'Muircheartaigh)

Other

Human Factors Affecting Productivity in Galway Port (M.D. Higgins)
 Report on the Skibbereen Social Survey (J.A. Jackson)
 The Morale of the Dublin Busmen (H. Van Beinum)
 Managerial Emigration (D.W. Forrest)
 Management of Supervisors (A.F. Donovan – published by Macmillan)

NOTES

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Abbreviations used in Notes:

DETE Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
 DFA Department of Foreign Affairs
 DIC Department of Industry and Commerce
 DL Department of Labour
 DT Department of the Taoiseach
 ICTU Irish Congress of Trade Unions
 NA National Archives

¹ NA DETE R303/7/59

² NA DT S 15,435A

³ NA DETE R303/7/59

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ NA DL W93

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ NA DETE R303/7/59: NA ICTU/2/378 (a) and 378 (b)

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid. : NA DETE R303/8/25:NA DFA 305/57/168/412: NA ICTU/2/378 (a)

¹⁰ NA DIC TIW/1280/1

¹¹ NA DETE 2000/13/17

¹² NA DIC TIW/1280/1: NA DETE R303/7/59: NA ICTU 4/268/Box 30

¹³ NA DETE R303/7/59

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ NA DIC TIW/1280/1: NA DETE R303/7/59: NA ICTU 4/268/Box 30

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ NA DETE 2000/12/913

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid. : NA DIC MIS/1/6 and 7: NA DETE 2000/12/908 and 909

²¹ NA DETE 2000/12/913: NA DIC MIS/1/9

²² NA

²³ NA DIC TIW/1280/2

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

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- ²⁶ NA DIC MIS/1/12
- ²⁷ NA DE TE 2000/13/21
- ²⁸ NA DIC TIW/1280/1
- ²⁹ NA DE TE 2000/12/913
- ³⁰ NA DT S 15,453/G62
- ³¹ NA DIC EPA/5/8
- ³² NA DE TE 2000/12/911
- ³³ NA DE TE 2000/12/911 and 912: NA DIC MIS/1/5 and MIS/1/9
- ³⁴ NA DE TE 2000/12/910
- ³⁵ NA DE TE 2000/12/913: NA DIC MIS/1/9
- ³⁶ NA DE TE 2000/12/907
- ³⁷ HSC documents present the survey as a development based on Dutch-Irish links established at Groningen: Vercrujssse (n.d.: 2-3) presents a different version of the survey's origins.
- ³⁸ NA DE TE 2000/12/907
- ³⁹ NA DE TE 2000/12/913
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ NA DE TE 2000/13/25: Vercrujssse (n.d.), an incomplete twenty-one page typescript which TCD Library appears to have accessioned in the early 1970s, is the only report of this survey I have located to date.
- ⁴² NA DE TE 2000/12/1402
- ⁴³ NA DT S 15,453 F/61: NA DT S 15,453 G/62: NA DT S 15,453 G/63
- ⁴⁴ NA DE TE 2000/12/913
- ⁴⁵ NA DT S 15,453 F/61References
- ⁴⁶ NA DT S 15,453 H/63
- ⁴⁷ NA DE TE 2000/12/1433
- ⁴⁸ NA DT S 15,453 G/63
- ⁴⁹ NA DT S 15,453 H/95
- ⁵⁰ NA DT 2000/6/349
- ⁵¹ *Irish Times* 27 October 1970

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