

Ged Nash TD,  
Minister for Business and Employment,  
c/o,  
David Lockhart,  
Employment Rights Policy Unit,  
Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation,  
Davitt House,  
Adelaide Road,  
Dublin 2.

Padraig Dalton,  
Director General,  
Central Statistics Office,  
Skehard Road,  
Cork,  
T12 X00E.

04/01/2016

Dear Minister,

I refer to your invitation for a submission in response to the recent work undertaken on your behalf by the University of Limerick Business School titled "A Study on the Prevalence of Zero Hours Contracts among Irish Employees and their Impact on Employees".

I have reviewed the recommendations contained in the University of Limerick report and only consider Recommendation 14 to be directly relevant to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) - *"14. We recommend that the Central Statistics Office have a rolling Quarterly National Household Survey Special Module on Non-Standard Employment which would include questions on non-guaranteed hours."*

I note the use of information from the CSO's Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) in the report on the variability and scale of working hours classified by economic sector, occupation and sex. As you are aware, the QNHS is the primary source of information on the labour market in Ireland as well as being the Irish implementation of the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS). The CSO fully appreciates the need for additional information on non-standard employment and will take this into account in a review of the QNHS questionnaire to address upcoming EU legislative changes in labour market statistics. There is a large demand for statistics on labour market issues and in order to allow the CSO prioritise competing demands and assess the feasibility of user requests, it is important that specific user needs are clearly articulated to the CSO. It is imperative that the content, wording of questions and required outputs for any future special module or ongoing data collection on non-standard employment are formulated, communicated to and agreed with the CSO. The CSO would be happy to assist policy makers in this respect and could contribute to any future inter-Departmental working group in this context.

Finally, the CSO participates in an annual European wide Labour Market module. In 2015, the theme of this module was "Work Organisation and Working Time Arrangements" and this module was conducted as part of the QNHS in Q2 2015. While it does not directly measure zero hour contracts there may be data collected as part of the module which is relevant to this topic. The CSO is continuing to work on the finalisation of this data and will follow up with your Department when this is complete.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Padraig Dalton

Director General