

IX INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMPETITION

BARCELONA, 1960.

The ninth International Trade Competition was to have been held in Portugal but this was not found possible and, at short notice, the Spanish authorities decided to organise it in Barcelona. Three nations, who are usually represented at these annual competitions, did not compete in 1960 because of the short notice given to them. The countries were France, Switzerland and Luxembourg. The following nations were represented, Spain, Italy, West Germany, Portugal, Belgium, Great Britain and Ireland.

The following table illustrates the results of the competition for the different countries:-

NATION	Number of competitors entered	1st Places	2nd Places	3rd Places
IRELAND	18	2	2	2
GREAT BRITAIN	31	2	3	14
PORTUGAL	17	1	5	3
BELGIUM	20	3	7	6
W. GERMANY	25	6	8	2
ITALY	25	8	7	3
SPAIN	37	18	7	7

The complete result for Ireland is as follows:-

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th
2	2	2	8	2	2	-

These competitions were started in Spain nine years ago to stimulate the training of apprentices. Six large "Labour Universities" have been built. The most recent one cost £4 million. Post primary students spend 4 or 5 years in these residential universities. They work in the classrooms for 42 hours per week, 26 hours of which are spent at the practical work of the trade chosen by the future apprentice. The time spent at practical work in Irish Vocational Schools would not usually exceed 8 hours per week for two practical subjects. Specialisation starts in Spain as soon as the student enters the labour university, or the school of technology, usually at 15 years of age.

A national competition is held in Spain each year to select the team for the following International Competition. In 1959, they examined over 25,000 apprentices to choose the team for 1960. They have already selected the team for 1961 out of 38,000 apprentices examined. This means that the chosen apprentices have one complete

year to undergo an intensive training programme, on a whole-time basis, for the following competition. They are also building up prestige for technical training and consequently they attract a good type of student to their schools. This was particularly evident in the school in Barcelona where the competition was held. This training will have a marked effect on the Spanish economy in the near future. Those associated with the training for industry in Spain are to be congratulated on the success of their students in these competitions. These successes, however, do not mean the apprentices from industrial countries like Great Britain and Germany are inferior to the Spaniards. If the same intensive training was organised for the other countries as in Spain, the results in these competitions would be very different. The Irish result should be viewed in this light and by comparison with the remaining countries our apprentices have shown that they are up to the standard of the others.

The Irish apprentices faced up well to the difficulties of working machines graded in the metric system and in using metric measurement generally. They, like some of the other teams, were affected by different food and by having to work in the intense humid heat of Barcelona from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. each day. All of them worked hard and they behaved very well in every way.

R. GRIMES.

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Places obtained by Irish Competitors.

Subject	Stage	Competitor	Employer	Place
Carpentry	A	Thomas Byrne	A. Head, Raheny	1st
	B	Aidan Halpin	M. Halpin, Rush	1st
Joinery	A	Seamus Kelly	Langan Bros. Ballina	4th
	B	Edmund Irwin	M. Buttemer, Youghal	4th
Cabinetmaking	A	John Thorpe	Court Cabinet Co. Dublin	3rd
	B	John Stewart	Brendan Dunne, Dublin	3rd
Plumbing	A	Michael McDaid	H. A. O'Neill, Rathmines	5th
	B	Thomas Colley	C.I.E.	2nd
Elect.Inst.Work	A	Jeremiah Carey	E.S.B.	4th
	B	Sean Malone	E.S.B.	6th
Brickwork	A	Noel Smith	J. Keegan & Sons, Dublin	4th
	B	James Farrell	C. G. Cooney, Rathgar	2nd
Painting	A	Denis O Shea	T. A. Hayes, Cork	4th
	B	Richard Tracey	M. Tracey, Rathmines	4th
Fitting	A	Murtagh Logan	Bord na Móna	4th
	B	Michael Curley	Irish Shipping	5th
Turning	A	Dermot Irwin	Bórd na Móna	6th
	B	Michael Brennan	Galway Foundry Works	4th