Changes to Legislation: as of 13 October 2026, this Act is up to date with all changes known to be in force.

Number 15 *of* 1976

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT 1976

REVISED

Updated to 1 February 2020

This Revised Act is an administrative consolidation of the *Industrial Relations Act 1976*. It is prepared by the Law Reform Commission in accordance with its function under the *Law Reform Commission Act 1975* (3/1975) to keep the law under review and to undertake revision and consolidation of statute law.

All Acts up to and including the *Consumer Insurance Contracts Act 2019* (53/2019), enacted 26 December 2019, and all statutory instruments up to and including the *Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2019 (Commencement) Order 2020* (S.I. No. 24 of 2020), made 29 January 2020, were considered in the preparation of this Revised Act.

Disclaimer: While every care has been taken in the preparation of this Revised Act, the Law Reform Commission can assume no responsibility for and give no guarantees, undertakings or warranties concerning the accuracy, completeness or up to date nature of the information provided and does not accept any liability whatsoever arising from any errors or omissions. Please notify any errors, omissions and comments by email to revisedacts@lawreform.ie.

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ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

Section

1. Definitions.
2. Amendment of section 4 of Principal Act.
3. Consequential repeal.
4. Establishment of joint labour committee for agricultural workers.
5. Modification of Second Schedule to Principal Act.
6. Repeal of Agricultural Wages Acts, 1936 to 1969.
7. Modification of section 49 of Principal Act.
8. Additional divisions of the Court.
9. Consequential amendment of section 2 of Act of 1969.
10. Amendment of section 5 of Act of 1969.
11. Repeal of Agricultural Workers (Holidays) Acts, 1950 to 1975.
12. Short title, construction and collective citation.

ACTS REFERRED TO

Agricultural Wages Act, 1936	1936, No. 53
Industrial Relations Act, 1946	1946, No. 26
Industrial Relations Act, 1969	1969, No. 14

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AN ACT TO AMEND AND EXTEND THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACTS, 1946 AND 1969, TO REPEAL THE AGRICULTURAL WAGES ACTS, 1936 TO 1969, AND THE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS (HOLIDAYS) ACTS, 1950 TO 1975, AND TO PROVIDE FOR OTHER MATTERS CONNECTED WITH THE AFORESAID MATTERS. [18*th May*, 1976]

BE IT ENACTED BY THE OIREACHTAS AS FOLLOWS:

Definitions.

1.—In this Act—

"the Act of 1969" means the Industrial Relations Act, 1969;

"agricultural employer" means a person who employs other persons as agricultural workers;

"agricultural worker" means a person employed under a contract of service or apprenticeship whose work under the contract is or includes work in agriculture, but does not include a person whose work under any such contract is mainly domestic service;

F1**[** 'agriculture' means—

(a) (i) the production of animals, including the production of meat and other animal produce intended for human consumption,

(ii) the sorting and packing of meat and other animal produce, and

(iii) the production, sorting, and packing of crops, including fruit and vegetables, intended for human or animal consumption,

on farm land (within the meaning of section 664 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997), and

(b) horticulture, including market gardening, garden nurseries and nursery grounds;**]**

"the Court" means the Labour Court;

"the Minister" means the Minister for Labour;

"the Principal Act" means the Industrial Relations Act, 1946.

Amendment of section 4 of Principal Act.

2.—F2**[**...**]**

Consequential repeal.

3.—Section 66 of the Principal Act, which defines "worker" for the purposes of Part VI of that Act, is hereby repealed.

Establishment of joint labour committee for agricultural workers.

4.—(1) As soon as practicable after the passing of this Act the Court shall by order establish a joint labour committee to perform, in relation to agricultural workers and their employers, the functions assigned to it by Part IV of the Principal Act.

(2) Sections 35 to 40 of the Principal Act shall not apply to the joint labour committee established under this section but that committee shall, subject to section 5 of this Act, be deemed to be a joint labour committee within the meaning of section 34 of the Principal Act.

Modification of Second Schedule to Principal Act.

5.—F3**[**...**]**

Repeal of Agricultural Wages Acts, 1936 to 1969.

6.—(1) The Agricultural Wages Acts, 1936 to 1969, are hereby repealed.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, any order made under section 17 of the Agricultural Wages Act, 1936, and in force at the commencement of this section shall continue in force and be deemed to be an employment regulation order.

(3) This section shall come into operation on the date of the making by the Court of the first employment regulation order under section 43 of the Principal Act following proposals to the Court under section 42 of that Act submitted by the joint labour committee established under section 4 of this Act.

Modification of section 49 of Principal Act.

7.—Section 49 (2) of the Principal Act, which relates to the posting by employers of certain notices, shall not apply to agricultural employers.

Additional divisions of the Court.

8.—(1) Whenever the Minister is of opinion that for the speedy dispatch of the business of the Court it is expedient that there should be added to the Court another division or other divisions he may, notwithstanding anything in the Act of 1969, by order, made with the consent of the Minister for the Public Service, provide for such an additional division or divisions.

(2) A division of the Court provided for under this section shall consist of a deputy chairman of the Court (who shall be chairman of the division), a workers' member and an employers' member, and sections 3 (*b*) and 3 (*c*) of the Act of 1969 shall apply in relation to such a division as if it were a division under that Act.

(3) Whenever the Minister makes an order under this section he shall appoint a deputy chairman of the Court, and sections 4 (4) to 4 (7) of the Act of 1969 (as amended by this Act) shall apply in relation to a deputy chairman appointed under this Act as if the references in those sections to a deputy chairman were references to a deputy chairman appointed under this Act.

(4) A deputy chairman (whether appointed under this section or under section 4 (4) of the Act of 1969) shall be paid such remuneration (by way of either fees or salary) and allowances as the Minister, with the consent of the Minister for the Public Service, determines.

(5) Section 4 (5) of the Act of 1969 is hereby repealed.

Consequential amendment of section 2 of Act of 1969.

9.—The Act of 1969 is hereby amended by the substitution of the following section for section 2:

"2.—(1) The Court shall consist of a chairman (in this Act referred to as the chairman), a deputy chairman or deputy chairmen and ordinary members.

(2) The number of deputy chairmen shall be equal to the number of divisions of the Court less one.

(3) The number of ordinary members shall be equal to twice the number of divisions of the Court and shall be divided equally among workers' members and employers' members.".

Amendment of section 5 of Act of 1969.

10.—Section 5 of the Act of 1969 is hereby amended by the substitution of the following subsection for subsection (8):

"(8) The Minister shall grant and pay to Joseph Stapleton Quigley, upon his retirement without re-appointment from membership of the Court, a gratuity of an amount equal to one year's salary at the date of his retirement.".

Repeal of Agricultural Workers (Holidays) Acts, 1950 to 1975.

11.—(1) The Agricultural Workers (Holidays) Acts, 1950 to 1975, are hereby repealed.

(2) This section shall come into operation on the commencement of regulations under the Holidays (Employees) Act, 1973, providing for the application of that Act to agricultural workers.

Short title, construction and collective citation.

12.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Industrial Relations Act, 1976, and shall be construed as one with the Principal Act.

(2) The Industrial Relations Acts, 1946 and 1969, and this Act may be cited together as the Industrial Relations Acts, 1946 to 1976.

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About this Revised Act

This Revised Act presents the text of the Act as it has been amended since enactment, and preserves the format in which it was passed.

Related legislation

Industrial Relations Acts 1946 to 2019: this Act is one of a group of Acts included in this collective citation to be construed together as one (*Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2019*, s. 5(2)). The Acts in the group are:

- *Industrial Relations Act 1946* (26/1946)
- *Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 1955* (19/1955) (repealed)
- *Industrial Relations Act 1969* (14/1969)
- *Industrial Relations Act 1976* (15/1976)
- *Industrial Relations Act 1990* (19/1990), other than Part II (ss. 8-22)
- *Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2001* (11/2001)
- *Industrial Relations (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004* (4/2004), in so far as it relates to the *Industrial Relations Acts 1946 to 2001*
- *Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2012* (32/2012), other than ss. 16, 17 and 18
- *Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015* (27/2015), other than ss. 24 and 36 (collectively cited *Industrial Relations Acts 1946 to 2015* and Part 3, other than s. 36, to be construed as one)
- *Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2019* (21/2019)

Annotations

This Revised Act is not annotated and only shows textual amendments. An annotated version of this revision is also available which shows textual and non-textual amendments and their sources. It also shows editorial notes including statutory instruments made pursuant to the Act and previous affecting provisions.

Material not updated in this revision

Where other legislation is amended by this Act, those amendments may have been superseded by other amendments in other legislation, or the amended legislation may have been repealed or revoked. This information is not represented in this revision but will be reflected in a revision of the amended legislation if one is available. A list of legislative changes to any Act, and to statutory instruments from 1972, may be found linked from the page of the Act or statutory instrument at www.irishstatutebook.ie.