

EDITORIAL

It appears that the ‘retirement wave’, which started in continental Europe already a few years back, has reached Ireland. Several of our distinguished colleagues retire in 2009 continuing what began a couple of years ago and will run on in the next years to come. The general expansion of European universities in the 1970’s necessitated a larger body of academic staff who now have completed an accomplished career. Many of them will not leave (Research) Mathematics right away but the question does arise who will succeed them and when this shall happen. The economic situation may not favour rapid replacements and in addition it might be more difficult to find suitable successors who can fill the position of their predecessors and are not simply passing through.

Many of those who now retire considerably shaped the mathematical landscape in Ireland—the interview with Professor Laffey in this volume illustrates this very well. The quality and quantity of mathematical research output ‘produced in Ireland’ has increased tremendously over the past decades and no doubt there are many capable young mathematicians out there. This notwithstanding the Editor wonders whether the possibility of a ‘vacuum’, if even miniscule, looms. Can the small number of research notes written by Irish/Ireland based authors and submitted to the Bulletin over the last few years be taken as an indication that few of us can ‘afford’ to publish in a small periodical which is not widely read? And thus have to look for activities outside of Ireland which can be more profitable for one’s career? On the other hand, the large(r) number of international mathematical conferences organised at Irish universities may point in the opposite direction. But still ...

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