



# Dubs are most stressed workers in the country

**WITS' END:** Traffic chaos and tight deadlines combine to increase pressure

By **Cathal McMahon**

RESISTANCE to decentralisation may be lessened slightly with the news that Dublin workers are significantly more stressed than their counterparts in other counties.

Longer commutes and fast-paced city living mean that the capital's swelling workforce find themselves having to take even more stress-relieving breaks.

The survey, carried out by TNS MRBI on behalf of the Cadburys "Snack in the Mouth" campaign, reveals that scheduled breaks have declined in the majority of Irish workplaces.

In our fast-paced economy even the high-status jobs are working more towards deadlines. The result is that high-status workers are working longer hours than they have in the past.

"The push is to get the job done and so breaks are likely to be compromised," said researchers.

UCD Social Psychology Researcher Kenneth McKenzie

said that many international companies are now seeing the benefits of a more rested workforce.

Office romances and even friendships are in decline due to the lack of office interaction. Now experts warn employers who are guilty of cutting down on office friendships and socialising that this may lead to a downturn in productivity.

"Workplace camaraderie is strengthened when people interact with each other," say researchers.

## DISTANCE

"If there are fewer opportunities for people to bump into each other at work, greater distance will result. The solution to this is for people to socialise out of work, but as the working week has lengthened, many people regard this as too much of an intrusion on their time," the research results showed.

"Snack Expert" Dr McKenzie added that a clever solution to this problem was an increase in breaks during the day:

"Workforces that get to know each other are more likely to generate solutions to problems as they can bounce ideas off each other. Breaks are a useful way of bringing this about.

Dubliners have the added stress of commuting to deal with and the capital's workers are now the most stressed in Ireland.

The survey shows that Dubliners are more likely to take breaks throughout the day than country workers, reconfirming that city living makes people more stressed with commuting contributing much to people's stress levels.

The research concluded that there is less autonomy being granted to Irish workers and that those working in highly skilled clerical work and call centres have little independence. Again, Dr McKenzie, who is fast becoming the great hope of office workers, comments that allowing the workers to decide their own breaks gives them that extra bit of autonomy and job satisfaction.



**ENOUGH IS ENOUGH:** City workers are working longer hours than they ever did in the past and have to put up with gridlock on the roads like the M50 (inset)

