

STRONGER TOGETHER

CONGRESS

Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Northern Ireland Committee

TRADE UNION ASSEMBLY ELECTION CHARTER
2007

The Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (Congress) asks all the citizens of Northern Ireland to exercise their right to vote on 7 March 2007.

The Congress of Trade Unions stands for:

- The return of a democratic Devolved Government.
- The full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in all its aspects.
- People and Politicians Working Together.
- Recognition of the Trade Union Movement as a full social partner.

We represent over 250,000 members and their families, making us the largest civil society representative organisation. Below, we outline issues that the Trade Union Movement consider vital for the fair and equitable development of Northern Ireland as we chart our journey through the 21st century.

THE ECONOMY

- A sustainable economic development strategy designed for the benefit of all the people of Northern Ireland.
- Sustained and co-ordinated efforts to tackle the scourge of long-term unemployment and economic inactivity, which together comprise almost 40% of our working age population.
- Strategic investment in economically and socially deprived areas, leading to greater skills and jobs.
- The creation of high quality employment and enhanced skills training for those in and out of employment and a renewed emphasis on the importance of Lifelong Learning to both employers and employees.
- The creation of innovative and sustainable manufacturing policies that will strengthen our manufacturing sector.
- The strengthening of public services and an end to privatisation by stealth in the public services.
- An urgent development of policies directed to improving our environment and responding to climate change while simultaneously creating industries and employment to lead in this sector.
- The abolition of an additional tax for water and the implementation of a fair rates system.
- An end to fuel poverty and a reduction in tariffs for electricity, gas and other forms of energy.
- The restoration of a vision for public services delivered to the people in a holistic way as opposed to current Review of Public Administration which is a cynical exercise in cutting services and jobs.
- Incentives to ensure the growth in the underperforming private sector centred on grant aid for export-led increased employment, investment in research and development, increased productivity and innovative products.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

- National Health and Social Services, public and free at the point of need.
- The right to see a General Practitioner within 48 hours.
- The following are issues requiring urgent action:
 - Trolley Waits / Accident & Emergency Cover
 - Health Service Reform
 - Waiting Lists and Times
 - Community and Nursing Home Care
 - Access to Prescription Drugs
 - Privatisation (PPP/PFI)
 - Equality and Access, particularly at local level
 - Ward Closures
 - Ambulance Service
 - Young People and Children
 - Mental Health
 - Free prescriptions for all NHS users



EDUCATION

- The establishment of an effective, single, governing body to meet the educational needs of all our children.
- The right to effective equality of opportunity for all young people by abolishing the 11 plus and the introduction of a fully comprehensive system of secondary education.
- Free and nutritional school meals for all, including breakfasts.
- A fully resourced health and wellbeing strategy for all pupils and staff.
- The withdrawal of any form of fees for university education.
- An end to the capping of student numbers at third level institutions in order to halt the 'brain drain'.
- A new impetus on the primary school curriculum centred on the provision of science and language related subjects.
- Decisive action with clear funding commitments on under performance in schools, including raising outcomes on numeracy and literacy.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

- Full implementation of policies to target social need thus promoting equality and social inclusion.
- The location of jobs and public services in areas of greatest need.
- An end to sectarianism and divisions in our society through the promotion of non-violence and the firm opposition to policies, actions and behaviour that damage, injure or deny the rights, safety and well-being of others.
- The provision of social and affordable housing as a key element in all infrastructural developments.
- A specific social housing programme to enable those with a disability to become fully integrated into our communities and our economy.
- An increase in levels of social security benefits to bring those in need out of poverty.
- A statutory duty to eliminate poverty.

- Priority programmes aimed at addressing the educational disadvantage, employment deficit and the need for greater protection for young people.
- Better resourced programmes to deal with substance abuse.

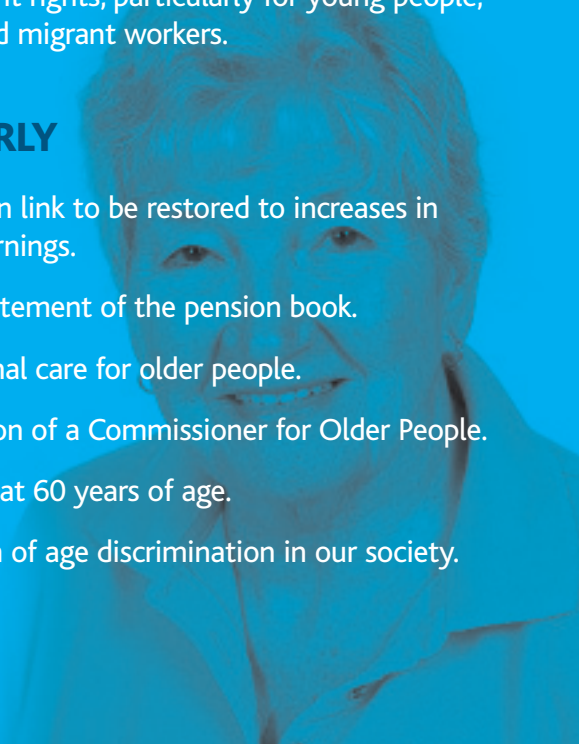


EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- Full Government compliance with all international instruments aimed at eliminating discrimination.
- Full Government compliance with the UN Convention on the elimination of discrimination against women.
- Strong and early implementation of statutory duty and an inclusive and universal Bill of Rights.
- The introduction of effective legislation on equal pay that will eliminate the increasing gap between men and women's pay.
- The utilisation of public procurement and investment strategies for Northern Ireland as a tool through location and delivery to promote the extension of the equality and human rights for all.
- Effective action to tackle and eradicate racism and homophobia.
- The end of exploitation on pay, conditions and employment rights, particularly for young people, women and migrant workers.

THE ELDERLY

- The pension link to be restored to increases in average earnings.
- The reinstatement of the pension book.
- Free personal care for older people.
- The creation of a Commissioner for Older People.
- Free travel at 60 years of age.
- Elimination of age discrimination in our society.





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**These are only some of the objectives of Congress.
We believe that the vast majority of voters and citizens subscribe
to these goals.**

If you are canvassed ask those seeking your vote to subscribe to the declaration below.

***I subscribe to the objectives of this Trade Union Charter.
If elected I shall work towards achieving them.***

Name	Political Party