STRONGER RIGHTS STRONG UNIONS GOOD JOBS!

AGENDA
OF THE NI COMMITTEE



STRONGER TOGETHER
CONGRESS
Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Northern Ireland Committee

GUILDHALL
DERRY/L'DERRY
25-26 NOVEMBER 2026

BIENNIAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE 2026

ICTU Code of Conduct

Your behaviour at this event, your language, conduct and style of work should reflect the values of the trade union movement. It is expected that you are sensitive to your use of language and that you refrain from swearing and/or using words or phrases which are offensive or discriminatory.

AGENDA
OF THE NI COMMITTEE



TIMETABLE

Wed 25 November

Session 1: 10.30am - 1pm

Fraternal Greetings Derry Trade Union Council
(Damien Doherty)

Conference Opening
Deputy Mayor of Derry & Strabane Council

Conference Arrangements
Committee Report no 1. Report no 2
(to be circulated if appropriate).

Appointment of tellers and scrutineers

Chair of the Northern Ireland Committee, ICTU
Address to conference

Guest Speaker from NI Executive (TBC)

Sections A and B of the report

Assistant General Secretary's Address

Motions 1-2 - Good Jobs

Guest Speakers
Paul Mac Flynn, Lisa Wilson, NERI

Motions 3-8 Future of work/AI

Sections E and G

Lunch: 1pm - 2.15pm

Fringe Meetings
1. Ending Violence against Women and Girls: role of trade unions.
The Main Hall

2. Equity
Green Room

Session 2: 2.15pm - 5.00pm

Equality

Guest Speaker
Tahnee McCorry White Ribbon NI

Equality Motions 9-15
(Includes RWC and Youth speakers)

Section F

Address ICTU President

Motions on Far-Right 16-21

Close of Conference - 5.00pm

5.15 - 7.00pm

Fringe Meeting
Trade Union Friends of Palestine
Main Hall

Thursday 26 November

Session 3: 9.30am - 1.00pm

Motions on Public Services 22-25

Fraternal Greetings
Kate Bell TUC

Motions 26-30

Section C

ICTU General Secretary's Address

Motions on Education 31-33

Section D

Fraternal Greetings
Jenny Douglas President STUC

Lunch: 1.00 - 2.15pm

Session 4: 2.15pm - 5.30pm

Motions on Health 34-38

Motion on TU Organisation 39

Close of Conference

SECTION H
~ APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1: STANDING ORDERS

1. Northern Ireland Conference

1.1 The Northern Ireland Conference shall meet biennially. The place and date shall be decided by the Northern Ireland Committee, subject to the approval of the Executive Council.

1.2 The Chairperson for the Sessions of the Conference shall be the Chairperson of the outgoing Northern Ireland Committee.

1.3 A Conference Arrangements Committee of five persons and two substitutes, elected at the previous Northern Ireland Conference, shall be responsible for the arrangements of the business of Conference, and generally take charge of the meeting place.

2. Representation

Only bona-fide members or full-time officials who are members of an affiliated trade union and resident in Ireland may be appointed as delegates in accordance with the following scales:

a. Trade unions with an affiliated membership in Northern Ireland of less than 1000 members = one delegate

Trade unions having an affiliated membership in Northern Ireland of:-

1000	members	but	less	than	2000	=	2	delegates
2000	"	"	"		3000	=	3	"
3000	"	"	"		4000	=	4	"
4000	"	"	"		5000	=	5	"
5000	"	"	"		6000	=	6	"
6000	"	"	"		7000	=	7	"
7000	"	"	"		8000	=	8	"
8000	"	"	"		9000	=	9	"
9000	"	"	"		10000	=	10	"
10000	"	"	"		11000	=	11	"
11000	"	"	"		12000	=	12	"
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16500	"	"	"	18000	=	16	"	
18000	"	"	"	19500	=	17	"	
19500	"	"	"	21000	=	18	"	
21000	"	"	"	22500	=	19	"	
22500	"	"	"	24000	=	20	"	
24000	"	"	"	25500	=	21	"	
25500	"	"	"	27000	=	22	"	
27000	"	"	"	29000	=	23	"	
29000	"	"	"	31000	=	24	"	
31000	"	"	"	33000	=	25	"	
33000	"	"	"	35000	=	26	"	
35000	"	"	"	37000	=	27	"	
37000	"	"	"	39000	=	28	"	
39000	"	"	"	42000	=	29	"	
42000	"	"	"	45000	=	30	"	

and one delegate for each 3000 members above 45000 and up to 75000 and thereafter in accordance with Paragraph 37 of the Constitution of Congress.

Trade Unions must include women delegates in their delegation in accordance with the following scale:

b. Trade Unions having an affiliated membership in Northern Ireland of more than 500 but less than 1000 women shall appoint at least one woman delegate.

Trade Unions having in Northern Ireland:-

Women Membership	Women Delegates	
1000 but less than 5000	at least	2
5000 but less than 10000	"	3
10000 but less than 15000	"	4
15000 but less than 20000	"	5

and at least one woman delegate for each 5000 women members above 20,000.

c. Local Councils of Trade Unions may appoint delegates (who must be members of affiliated trade unions) to the Conference in accordance with the following scale:-

Up to 6500 affiliated membership	1 delegate
Over 6500 affiliated membership	2 delegates

3. Motions

3.1 Affiliated organisations may submit up to three motions for the Conference Agenda. Motions must be signed by the authorised official of the organisation and forwarded to Congress not later than the date specified in the notice to organisations.

3.2 The Northern Ireland Committee may submit up to three motions for the Conference Agenda.

3.3 Motions must be within the scope of the Objects of Congress as set out in the Constitution. They must relate to the matters provided for in Paragraph 37 of the Constitution, viz "matters relating to the internal, industrial, economic and political conditions of Northern Ireland, and of direct concern to Northern Ireland members only". The Executive Council shall determine whether motions submitted are in order and its decision shall be final.

4. Business of Conference

The business of Conference may include the following items:

a. The Report of the Northern Ireland Committee

b. Special Reports from the Northern Ireland Committee

c. Motions from affiliated organisations and the Northern Ireland Committee

d. Guest speaker/s invited by the Northern Ireland Committee

5. Election of Northern Ireland Committee and Conference Arrangements Committee

The election of the Northern Ireland Committee (NIC) will be conducted using the single transferable vote system. The Congress Constitution provides that the election of the Northern Ireland Committee must result in the election of at least four women.

In the event that only four women are nominated for election to the Northern Ireland Committee, prior to the vote commencing these candidates will be declared elected and an election will be held to elect a further 14 members of the committee using the single transferable vote system.

In the event that there are more than four women nominated for election to the Northern Ireland Committee a single election will be held using the single transferable vote system. If the outcome of the election of the Northern Ireland Committee results in less than four women being elected then the following procedure should apply. The last man to be elected amongst the 18 should be replaced by the last woman to be eliminated. In the event that this does not result in four women being elected then the second last man to be elected shall be replaced by the second last women to be eliminated and so on until the minimum requirement of four women is met.

Nominations of persons for election as members of the Northern Ireland Committee (18 members, including four Reserved Seats for Women and one Reserved Seat for Councils of Trade Unions) and of the Conference Arrangements Committee (5 members plus 2 substitutes) may be made by any affiliated trade union entitled to representation at the Conference. Each nomination must be signed by the authorised official of the nominating union and must be forwarded so as to reach Congress not later than four weeks prior to the date of Conference. Nominations must be confined to persons who are delegates to Conference. A nomination shall not be made without the expressed consent of the person nominated.

Nominations for the Conference Arrangements Committee must be persons who are delegates to Conference, and may not be a member of the incoming Northern Ireland Committee.

A list of persons nominated as members of the Northern Ireland Committee and of the Conference Arrangements Committee will be sent to each affiliated organisation and to delegates not later than two weeks prior to the date of Conference.

6. Methods of Voting on Motions and Reports

Voting at Conference shall be confined to delegates and be by a show of hands, each delegate having one vote. Four delegates shall be appointed as Tellers.

7. Limitation of Speeches

The Conference Arrangements Committee shall make recommendations to Conference on time limits of speeches. No speaker shall speak more than once on the same question except the mover of a motion replying to the discussion.

8. Executive Council

Executive Council members and Congress Officials are entitled to attend Conference. Officials may speak as appropriate on motions or reports.

9. Other Matters

Matters not covered by these Standing Orders in principle shall be dealt with in accordance with the Standing Orders of Congress.

APPENDIX 2: MOTIONS BY SECTOR

Conference motions by Theme

THE ECONOMY & THE FUTURE OF WORK

1. The Good Jobs Employment Rights Bill

Conference commends the dedication and expertise of affiliated trade unions and trades councils whose input into the content of the Good Jobs, NI Employment Rights Bill was essential for this landmark legislation to be formulated. Combined, there is an unanswerable case for justice for all working people across Northern Ireland.

A majority of people understand the need for this legislation and support it. Equally it is clear a majority of MLAs in the NI Assembly would support the bill being completed in this mandate. Yet, the Bill continues to be blocked by one Party at the Executive level.

Affiliates have lobbied and campaigned for rights for all workers, especially those not yet in unions. Affiliates will continue this campaign including taking action necessary to defend the rights of working people.

Consequentially, Conference instructs the NIC to continue:

i. seeking the application of workers' rights in NI that align fully with the highest standards of employment and human rights entitlements on these islands and across the European Union;
ii. campaigning to see the NI Employment Rights Bill ["Good Jobs Bill"] enacted in law as soon as practically possible;
iii. co-ordinating with affiliated trade unions to carry out actions in support of this objective in the face of continuing opposition from conservative political forces and reluctant business interests.

This is too important to let wither in the final days of the present NI Assembly mandate. This legislation will return again and again until workers here have the rights they need for good jobs and a decent life. Affiliates working together will result in working people determining the shape of workers' rights.

NIC

2. Delivering Good Jobs

Conference strongly supports a Good Jobs Bill that would see workers in Northern Ireland benefit from a significant uplift to workers' rights, including secure contracts, better pay, improved work life balance and stronger trade union rights.

However, progress has stalled and as of mid-2026 draft legislation has still not been published. Conference is concerned that further delay could require the legislative process to restart and see the timeline for implementation slip, meaning uncertainty and limbo for workers in Northern Ireland.

In addition, there remains work to do to ensure that provisions in the Bill apply to all workers in Northern Ireland and do not exclude, for

example, agency workers from banded hours contracts.

Conference is clear that workers in Northern Ireland must not be left to fall behind the provisions from Westminster or Leinster House, which are already delivering improvements to workers' terms and conditions and their livelihoods.

Measures in the Bill must be brought forward as soon as possible to tackle exploitative practices such as fire and rehire and zero and short-hours contracts, strengthen flexible working rights and raise collective voice at work through a right for trade unions to access to workplaces.

Conference calls on the Northern Ireland ICTU to:

- Campaign to raise awareness of the importance of delivering Good Jobs for workers in Northern Ireland.
- Call for banded hours contracts to apply to all workers.
- Put pressure on the Northern Ireland Executive to pass the Good Jobs Bill before the end of the Northern Ireland Assembly mandate in 2027.

USDAW

3. A workers-centred manufacturing strategy for Northern Ireland

Conference notes that manufacturing is a key pillar of our economy, employing one in ten workers with many of those being skilled, unionised jobs.

However, the sector suffers from underinvestment, high energy costs and a long-term lack of ambition from Stormont.

The last year saw the UK government publish a ten-year industrial strategy, but no similar plans have been brought forward in Northern Ireland.

Conference mandates the incoming executive to launch a campaign demanding that Stormont work with trade unions to develop an ambitious strategy for the future of the manufacturing sector.

This strategy must have good jobs at its heart and ensure long-term economic resilience so that workers do not pay the price for a Just Transition, AI or external shocks such as shifts in trade and the global economy.

This strategy must focus on:

- Supporting the growth of advanced manufacturing
- Growing our domestic supply chains

A successful manufacturing strategy will require public investment and funding, including

- Investment in expanded, high-quality apprenticeships and adult retraining
- Seed funding for manufacturing start-ups, with strong conditionality
- Investment in R&D and innovation
- Investment in actions to future-proof the manufacturing sector and our vital energy infrastructure
- Positive public procurement with strong conditionality

Northern Ireland's workers must no longer be at the mercy of anonymous market forces.

Acquisitions and takeovers must be subject to new rules designed to

ensure transparency, protect workers, and mitigate the economic impact of corporate takeovers. This must include:

- The right for a recognised trade union to scrutinise a takeover bid
- Extended consultation periods
- Protections for workers' terms and conditions
- Guarantees of continuous employment to prevent asset stripping.

Where there is a threat to jobs, skills and critical infrastructure, or a proven strategic imperative, the Department for the Economy must be mandated and funded to intervene to:

- Take a strategic stake in an enterprise
- Take an enterprise fully into public ownership

UNITE

4. Artificial Intelligence in the Interests of Working People

AI is transforming society and work, yet workers and trade unions lack a meaningful say over its introduction. The benefits risk being captured by large technology companies, while job losses, deskilling, surveillance, exploitation and inequality are borne by working people.

Conference believes AI should raise living standards, strengthen public services and empower working people, rather than undermine employment and concentrate economic and political power. Its use must be guided by the public interest, with workers and trade unions having a meaningful say.

Conference calls on NIC-ICTU to campaign for the Northern Ireland Executive and UK Government to:

1. Establish independent AI regulators with robust enforcement powers, tasked with ensuring AI protects workers' rights, the environment, public safety, privacy and economic wellbeing.
2. Introduce national AI plans setting out a strategy placing household prosperity alongside economic growth and national security, promoting workers' rights, public safety and state assets while resisting undue influence from Big Tech.
3. Increase public ownership and democratic control of strategic AI assets and infrastructure, including national datasets, with trade unions represented on governing boards.
4. Prevent AI-driven offshoring, requiring employers to demonstrate that AI restructuring will not undermine employment and conditions.
5. Give recognised trade unions the right to negotiate and agree the introduction and use of AI in the workplace.
6. Ensure trade unions are embedded in decisions over the development, procurement and deployment of AI across public services.

CWU

5. AI Deployment

This Conference Notes with Concern:

- The increasing deployment of Artificial Intelligence across workplaces in Northern Ireland,
- Research findings for the financial Services Union/Tasc report that reveal 88% of respondents believe

AI will lead to job displacement

- The regulatory uncertainty facing Northern Ireland, which sits in a legal gap between the UK's deregulated framework and the EU's stricter protections.
- The possible risk this uncertainty poses to workers.

This Conference Believes

- AI should be used to augment job quality and safety,
- No worker should have their livelihood, performance, or working conditions decided solely by an automated algorithm without human intervention and accountability.
- As AI adoption accelerates, particularly in financial services worker consultation and collective bargaining are essential to ensuring technological change benefits employees, consumers, and employers alike.

This Conference Instructs the Executive Committee of ICTU to

1. Lobby the Northern Ireland Assembly and relevant departments to ensure local AI policies explicitly adopt the worker protections established in the EU AI Act.
2. Develop and distribute a draft AI agreement to all affiliates which could form the basis of a collective bargaining agreement
3. Secure strict commitments from employers that all critical employment decisions—including hiring, promotions, disciplinaries, and redundancies—remain subject to final human review and veto.
4. Campaign for employer/ Government -funded, upskilling programmes to ensure workers facing automation are retrained for higher-value roles, rather than forced into redundancy.

FSU

6. Artificial Intelligence, Workers' Rights and Democratic Control of Technological Change

Conference rejects the claim that technological change has a single predetermined outcome.

There is no economic law that says productivity gains must result in lower wages, worsening conditions or redundancy. Whether the benefits of artificial intelligence take the form of higher profits for shareholders or improved living standards for workers is ultimately a question of power, ownership and collective organisation.

SIPTU believes that workers must have a meaningful role in shaping how new technologies are introduced, governed and used. Technologies that increasingly influence how people work, communicate and access services should be subject to democratic oversight, transparency and accountability rather than being controlled solely according to the priorities of private corporations, shareholders and financial markets.

Conference therefore reaffirms that technological progress should be governed in the public interest, shaped through collective bargaining and democratic participation, and that the wealth created through technological innovation should be shared fairly by those whose labour creates it.

Conference Notes:

1. The growing deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI), automation

and algorithmic management is increasingly accompanied by claims that job losses, wage restraint and the displacement of workers are inevitable consequences of technological progress.

2. History demonstrates that technological change does not determine social outcomes. The benefits of increased productivity have been secured through collective struggle, trade union organisation and collective bargaining, while the costs have too often been borne by working people.
3. New technologies can be used to eliminate repetitive and dangerous work, improve productivity and create opportunities for more meaningful and fulfilling employment. Equally, they can be used to intensify labour, increase surveillance, weaken collective bargaining and transfer a greater share of wealth from labour to capital.
4. Much of the current AI boom is driven by claims that artificial intelligence will dramatically reduce labour costs and generate unprecedented future profits despite continuing uncertainty regarding its capabilities, reliability and long-term profitability. Conference notes that many of these claims are directed as much towards investors and financial markets as towards workers and consumers.
5. The rapid expansion of AI is also driving investment in energy-intensive data centres, creating significant environmental challenges in relation to energy use, emissions and water consumption.

Conference Believes:

1. There is nothing inevitable about AI being used to lower wages, worsen working conditions or eliminate jobs.
2. The deployment of AI is a social and political choice, not a technological inevitability.
3. The central question is not whether AI exists, but who owns it, who controls it, who benefits from it and who bears its costs.
4. Productivity gains arising from technological innovation should be shared fairly between labour and capital through higher pay, improved conditions, reduced working time and expanded opportunities for training and development.
5. Workers should not bear the cost of any future collapse in speculative AI investment through redundancies, attacks on terms and conditions, cuts to public services or austerity measures.

Conference Resolves:

1. To oppose the use of AI for wage suppression, deskilling, excessive workplace surveillance, union avoidance or compulsory workforce reductions.
2. To campaign for collective bargaining rights over the introduction, deployment and governance of AI and workplace technologies, including a statutory duty on employers to consult recognised trade unions before introducing significant AI or automated systems.
3. To seek agreements ensuring that productivity gains arising from AI are shared fairly with workers

through improved pay, reduced working time, enhanced terms and conditions, retraining and career development opportunities.

4. We call upon NIC-ICTU to establish a cross-union working group of affiliated unions, workplace representatives and relevant experts to develop a model Technology & Artificial Intelligence Agreement for negotiation with employers across both the public and private sectors.
5. To advocate that Technology Agreements include provisions relating to:

   i) Trade union consultation prior to the introduction of significant new technologies;

   ii) Collective bargaining over technological change;

   iii) Job security and protection against compulsory redundancy arising solely from AI deployment;

   iv) Retraining, upskilling and lifelong learning;

   v) Transparency in workplace data collection and algorithmic decision-making;

   vi) Human oversight and review of decisions affecting workers;

   vii) Protection against excessive workplace surveillance and monitoring;

   viii) Environmental standards relating to digital infrastructure; and

   ix) The fair sharing of productivity gains through improved pay, reduced working time and enhanced conditions.

6. To support environmental standards for AI infrastructure, including renewable energy use, energy-efficiency requirements, transparent reporting of energy and water consumption, and the recovery and reuse of waste heat where feasible.
7. To work with sister unions across Ireland and Britain to ensure that technological change serves workers, communities and society as a whole rather than the interests of a small number of investors and technology corporations.

SIPTU

7. AI

Conference notes that the accelerating development of Artificial Intelligence has the potential to emancipate humanity or lead to profound risks, including loss of control, extreme inequality, mass disruption, and existential threats. The outcomes of this technological revolution are not inevitable; they are contingent on social choices.

Responsibility for the development of and control over AI must not be left solely in the hands of unaccountable private tech companies or the super-rich who are purely motivated by the maximisation of profit and power.

Ensuring AI benefits humanity requires political action across infrastructure, regulation, democratic oversight, global equity, ethics and the environment.

As the largest civil society organisation trade unions, should play a leading role as the collective voice of working people and their families in seeking protections and democratic

accountability over such technology and to ensure that AI augments human work rather than replaces it.

Conference therefore calls on NIC-ICTU to campaign for robust regulation and democratic human oversight of AI and automated systems across the economy and wider society.

Conference also calls on NIC-ICTU to encourage and facilitate the sharing of affiliated union's knowledge and resources, and to utilise the experience of the international trade union movement, to allow for collective consideration of the implications of the introduction of AI and automated systems to the workplace. The aim being to increase understanding of AI, identify risks, and to develop strategies that protect working people, enhance the quality of jobs, and formulate demands to ensure that workers share in the technological gains.

B&DTUC

8. AI-generated deepfakes

Congress notes the increasing incidence of AI-generated deepfakes, manipulated imagery, fabricated audio, and other malicious digital content targeting teachers.

Congress further notes that, while recent legal developments have addressed certain forms of intimate image abuse, there is still a lack of clear, comprehensive national guidance for schools and employing authorities on how to respond to the wider range of AI-generated digital manipulation affecting staff.

Congress calls on the ICTU to campaign for:

1. The publication of data on incidents involving AI-generated and social media-based abuse of teachers;
2. The development and issue of clear guidance and protective frameworks to safeguard teachers from AI-generated harassment and malicious digital content; and
3. Updated advice to employment authorities on how best to protect and support teachers who are the innocent targets of such degrading treatment.

Congress further calls on education employing authorities to:

- Establish clear investigative procedures and proportionate consequences for those found responsible, including, where appropriate, removal to another educational establishment.

INTO

HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUALITY

9. Male allyship in ending violence against women and girls

Conference notes that Northern Ireland is the most dangerous place for women in the UK, with over 30 women murdered since 2020 and police responding to domestic abuse incidents every 16 minutes.

Congress commends the campaign work of the ICTU Women's Committee and affiliate unions on ending violence against women and girls, including domestic abuse, sexual harassment and misogyny.

Conference recognises that while women and girls are disproportionately affected, ending violence against women and girls requires the active involvement of people of all genders, including men and boys.

We believe that male allyship is essential to challenging the attitudes, behaviours and social norms that enable violence and gender inequality, and that men have an important role to play in prevention, education, early intervention and creating cultures of respect and equality.

Conference further recognises the importance of engaging men and boys without shifting responsibility away from perpetrators or diminishing the voices and experiences of women and girls.

Congress therefore calls upon the Northern Ireland Committee to:

Work with ICTU Women's Committee to develop a male allyship programme and events which aim to:

- engage and educate men and boys in preventing violence against women and girls and challenging harmful gender stereotypes
- help men to challenge sexism, harassment and inappropriate behaviour in the workplace
- make men in positions of leadership to use their influence to challenge misogyny, harassment and violence and to promote gender equality
- encourage men to become positive role models and allies

PCS

10. End Violence Against Women

Conference recognises that misogyny and violence against women and girls, including digital abuse, are endemic in Northern Ireland. This is a workers' and workplace issue and presents a fundamental challenge to our movement.

Conference notes that, while the Stormont executive states that the issue a priority, the Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) act 2022 has still not been delivered. This also gives rise to concerns that promised legislation to criminalise sexually explicit deepfake images relating to adults may be similarly delayed. The NI executive continues to underfund support services for victims and survivors, and Women's Aid is the only such service in the UK without core government funding.

Conference further notes that, although the LRA has issued guidance on workplace sexual harassment,

there is no NI-wide reporting mechanism on how complaints are raised or how many perpetrators are disciplined or dismissed. This contributes to significant underreporting due to a public lack of confidence in the system as well as fear of victimisation.

Conference therefore:

- Demands the immediate delivery of the Safe Leave Act
- Demands immediate operationalisation of the promised amendment to the Justice Bill criminalising sexually explicit deepfake images relating to adults
- Demands that Stormont provide adequate multi-annual funding for Women's Aid and other specialist support services
- Mandates the incoming executive to campaign for mandatory reporting by employers of sexual harassment complaints and outcomes, with penalties for refusal and the establishment of an ombudsman to investigate employer failures.

UNITE

11. Martin O'Hagan

This conference notes that 2026 marks the 25th anniversary of the murder of journalist and trade unionist Martin O'Hagan.

Conference notes that no one has been brought to justice for that murder.

In 2013 the office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland commenced a review into the handling of the murder.

The Ombudsman has confirmed that the review has been completed but has not published the report despite calls by the NUJ.

Conference calls on the ICTU to support the renewed NUJ campaign for immediate publication of the report and for an independent investigation into the murder.

NUJ

12. Political Instability and Reform of the Institutions of Government

Conference notes with deep concern that over 28 years since the signing of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement that the political institutions are still in a precarious position.

Conference believes that the recurrent collapse of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive has resulted in years of lost progress on workers' rights, and economic development.

Conference believes that congress should support measures which:

i. remove the ever-present threat of collapse and
ii. prevent one party from blocking debate on legislation.

Conference calls on congress to lead the civic discussion on how the institutions can be reformed to deliver stable governance and ensure that all the commitments made in the Good Friday Agreement are delivered.

NASUWT

13. Act now to challenge unstable and ineffective government

Conference notes with concern that the ongoing political instability in Northern Ireland has meant that for 5 out of the past 10 years our devolved government has not been functioning.

As we approach the end of the current Assembly mandate, very little legislative progress has been made since the institutions were restored in February 2024. The democratic deficit resulting from the legacy of the conflict has not been overcome, with an Assembly that lurches from crisis to crisis unable to undertake meaningful strategic policymaking or economic planning.

Conference recognises that these problems are exacerbated by mechanisms embedded in the power-sharing model set out in the Peace Agreements which are in desperate need of reform.

Conference recalls the role of the trade union movement in the peace process and its support for the rights and equality safeguards in the Good Friday Agreement, with strong public services as the key delivery mechanism for a better quality of life. However, the reality we face today is rising poverty, widening health inequalities, equality law falling behind the rest of the UK and the Republic of Ireland, failure to keep pace on workers' and trade union rights and no Bill of Rights for NI.

Conference notes that the current Executive's inability to set a budget or to even get the Good Jobs Bill to the floor of the Assembly demonstrates not just an ineffective government but one which is actively running down our public services.

Conference believes that it is time for the trade union movement to mobilise for the progress we have waited too long for. It is not enough to keep hoping that a new mandate will bring something different from the Executive when long-standing commitments, such as those in the New Decade New Approach agreement, remain unfulfilled.

Conference calls on the Northern Ireland Committee to rally the trade union movement to consistent action providing a platform for workers, our families and communities to demand the rights and services we are entitled to.

Conference further calls on the Northern Ireland Committee to support reform of the political institutions with the aim of ending the cycle of unstable government that has blighted the last decade. This includes calling for the removal of the St Andrews veto and the Executive Agenda veto which have been deployed to thwart and block progress on the progression of rights-based policies and issues, including workers and trade union rights.

Conference further calls on the Northern Ireland Committee to lobby the UK and Irish Governments as co-guarantors of the Peace Agreement to fulfil their obligations to ensure the effective functioning of government in NI. This includes engaging with the UK government to progress meaningful reform of the political institutions, provide a more suitable financial settlement to support public services and ensuring the delivery of the long overdue Bill of Rights.

UNISON

14. Age Discrimination

This BDC is familiar with the call for legislation to outlaw discrimination on the grounds of age in the provision of goods, facilities and services. This is despite promises that it would be

brought forward in 2016, 2021 and again in 2022. Several motions to ICTU conferences endorse this policy.

A positive development in the current NI Assembly mandate is the introduction of a Private Member's Bill from Claire Sugden MLA, who also chairs the APPG for Older People. Her PMB aims to "make provision for the prohibition of unjustified discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the ground of age in connection with the provision of goods, facilities, and services."

Similar legislation is available in Scotland, England, Wales and the Republic of Ireland, and is making a real difference for older people. There are examples of this in both private and public sectors, such as availability of car insurance for people over an age barrier which is at the discretion of financial service providers (or more often an algorithm) or medical consultants pre-testing people's 'mental capacity' before commencing life-saving treatment.

After a decade of promises, older people across Northern Ireland are being denied the same rights and protections as fellow NI citizens with 'protected characteristics', and other older people across these islands due to the development of an 'older people's sea border'.

This conference believes that age discrimination legislation in relation to goods, facilities and services must:

- Be framed with a strong purpose clause containing a series of clearly articulated goals.
- Include public, private and voluntary sector in it's scope.
- Include strong protections for older people across all areas of goods, facilities and services, in particular health and social care and financial services.
- Include people of all ages in the scope of the legislation.
- Learn from the experience of the pandemic not to marginalise our older citizens but to value their continued contribution to our society.

This conference calls on the incoming NIC to work with other older peoples' organisations and campaign vigorously to bring Ms Sugden's legislation to belated fruition so that older citizens may get justice. Also, if the PMB is not passed in this mandate, to lobby for its return as an NI Executive Bill in the next NI Assembly.

RWC (proposed by NIC)

15. Strengthening Workplace Protections and Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled and Neurodivergent Workers and Workers with Mental Health Conditions in Northern Ireland

Conference Notes:

1. Disabled workers in Northern Ireland continue to face serious barriers to getting, keeping, and progressing in work.
2. Mental ill health among workers in Northern Ireland is increasing. Stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout are now some of the main causes of workplace absence. Long waits for mental health services and uneven access to Occupational Health support mean that many workers do not receive help quickly enough. This increases the risk of crisis and people leaving the workforce early.

3. The main law protecting disabled workers in Northern Ireland is still the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. As a result, workers in Northern Ireland have weaker and less consistent protection against discrimination, harassment, and victimization than workers in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.
4. The NIC-ICTU Disabled Workers Equality Committee does valuable work. The Disability Champions training programme has also improved knowledge and support across trade unions.

Conference Believes:

1. Everyone has the right to receive timely and effective reasonable adjustments. Access to these adjustments should not depend on an employer's goodwill.
2. Disabled and neurodivergent workers are more likely to face capability procedures, disciplinary action, and unfair dismissal. These outcomes are often caused by delays in providing reasonable adjustments or by refusing to provide them.
3. Mental health must be treated as seriously as physical health. Workers experiencing mental ill health are often penalised through absence triggers, performance management, or capability procedures. In many cases, early support and appropriate adjustments could prevent these problems.
4. Trade unions must lead the campaign for equal legal protection and workplace systems that provide adjustments as a normal part of working life. Workers should not have to repeatedly explain or prove their health conditions or support needs.

Conference Calls Upon the Northern Ireland Committee (NIC) to:

1. Work with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) to campaign for urgent and wide-ranging reform of disability equality law. This should include one equality law that provides stronger protection and closes current gaps.
2. Lobby the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly to oppose cuts, freezes, or changes led by Westminster that reduce disability and welfare benefits. Such changes can penalise vulnerable workers and push households into poverty.
3. Coordinate a united strategy among all affiliated unions in Northern Ireland to secure the mandatory use of the Workplace Reasonable Adjustment Disability Passport in both the public and private sectors. Agreed adjustments should remain in place when management changes.
4. Promote the widespread use of the ICTU Neurodiversity Guide in workplace bargaining. This should support clear policies on neuroinclusive recruitment, sensory adjustments, and flexible working.
5. Press the Northern Ireland Executive, the Public Health Agency, and employers to provide timely access to mental health support. This should include counselling, trauma-informed Occupational Health assessments, and workplace adjustments that reduce stress and prevent burnout. Workers experiencing mental ill health must also be protected from unfair treatment in the application absence management or capability procedures.

UTU

CHALLENGING THE FAR RIGHT

16. Challenging the Far Right

Conference will recall that a motion was carried at the 2024 BDC condemning 'the outrageous display of racial and ethnic hatred on display' that summer. Since then, we have endured two further summer outbreaks of lawless racism visited upon our members, our neighbours and our friends. There is evidence that this violence is organised both 'on the ground' as well as online.

This movement has a long history of anti-fascism, and this conference commends those who exercise that tradition.

Counter-protests on the streets are instrumental in challenging the far right and this movement has developed additional tools in the continued struggle against ignorance and prejudice.

This includes the work of ICTU's dedicated anti-racism project, as well as the work of affiliates who provide training to their members along with support and assistance to workers in vulnerable communities and at workplaces exposed to attacks online and in person.

Therefore, Conference instructs the NIC to:

i. build on the work of the trade union movement in challenging the rise of far-right politics;
ii. develop strategies to equip trade union members to counter and dispel far right propaganda and protect refugee and migrant workers in their places of employment;
iii. work alongside partners in wider society in countering racist violence and protecting refugee and migrant communities;
iv. campaign to ensure that the NI Executive produce a credible and resourced racial equality strategy which has the support of black and minority representative groups in particular;
v. be prepared and co-ordinate action in opposition to the forces of fascism and to challenge government failings regarding their responsibilities to refugees and immigrant workers.

NIC

17. Resisting the far right through anti-racist solidarity

Conference condemns the racist violence and pogroms against Black and migrant members of our communities that have occurred over the last three summers. Conference is concerned that racist, Islamophobic and anti-migrant organising has been taking place in local communities and on social media by far rights actors intent on instilling fear through disinformation and dehumanising rhetoric.

Conference notes the important work undertaken by the Equality Coalition's subgroup on Monitoring Far Right and Racist Activity, including four published reports mapping and analysing the online activity of far right individuals and organisations and the responses of political parties and elected representatives. This work by the Rabble Cooperative has provided a vital insight into how racist violence

is mobilised and what civil society and statutory authorities can do to prevent and address it.

Conference believes it is important to focus on the powerful demonstrations of practical solidarity that many trade unionists were involved in during the pogroms in June 2026. Trade unions organised with their Black and migrant members to ensure their safety, engage with their employers and meet the immediate needs their families faced. In the midst of horrific attacks, community-based women's organisation Anaka mobilised hundreds of people, including many trade unionists, to form a network of support providing meals, shopping, transport, emergency accommodation and a physical presence alongside families being intimidated. The images of these courageous women helping people escape burning homes made more of an impact than anything the racists set out to achieve.

Conference calls on the Northern Ireland Committee to reaffirm its commitment to existing work progressing anti-racism campaigns and training across the trade union movement, lobbying for more effective law and policy to tackle racism and all forms of religious bigotry, and taking a lead in visible public demonstrations of anti-racist solidarity.

Conference further calls on the Northern Ireland Committee to support affiliates to build a programme of resistance to the far right that starts with doing the hard work of practical solidarity. This includes providing opportunities for capacity building, networking and sharing of best practice across affiliates and a visible anti-racism campaign that focuses on the positive community-building activities that the trade union movement is encouraging workers to get involved in.

Conference further calls on the Northern Ireland Committee to play an active role in challenging statutory bodies, such as the PSNI, Housing Executive and local councils, whose response to the racist pogroms has been inadequate. The Committee should also renew their efforts to promote the widespread adoption and implementation by employers of the Joint Declaration of Protection for Dignity at Work and Inclusive Working Environments.

Conference further calls on the Northern Ireland Committee to examine the recommendations in the four Rabble Cooperative reports and consider what work Congress can undertake to support the implementation of these recommendations alongside our partners in civil society.

UNISON

18. FIGHT RACISM

Racism is a tried and tested weapon of the capitalist class. It is deliberately stirred up by the rich when they seek to divide potential opposition to their economic and social regime.

Over the last few years, the rich have been even more blatant in their use of racism as a divide and rule tactic to divert people from the role of the capitalist class in creating the social and economic misery that plagues society. It is now common currency to see news reports of billionaires openly bankrolling racist, populist far-right political parties, disseminating racist

ideas through media platforms and even supporting violent neo-Nazi gangs.

These rich reactionaries have been partially successful in seeding sections of the population with racist ideas. In some extreme cases, a small minority of the most backward elements of society have been mobilised to racist violence. Although these numbers are currently tiny, they have a significant impact on communities and should be taken very seriously.

The most recent outbreak of racist violence was a case in point. The numbers involved in violence were small but they had a massive impact in society and, without opposition, they will attract wider layers to their cause.

Opposition to the growth of racism must be based on a number of key objectives:

- Countering the racist narrative of the billionaires and their political representatives through information and education.
- Trade union-based struggle against the social and economic poverty that provides the underpinning for racism. Such a struggle can remove the opportunity for the far-right to present themselves as the defenders of working-class communities.
- Recognition that racism exists across the sectarian divide. Failure to adequately recognise this fact has given space for racist ideas to grow in some areas.

Our movement should remain confident that the vast majority of society stands steadfast in opposition to violent racism and against the forces of reaction who seek to mobilise around is. The most recent example of organic solidarity was during the recent racist riots where the work of trade unions in workplaces and community organisations against racist attacks took on heroic proportions. The public display of mass opposition that saw many thousands take to the streets in demonstrations against the racists not only sent a message of solidarity to those under attack but also a warning to the racists about the potential power of the trade union and anti-racist movement.

The trade union movement can be rightly proud of the role it has played. We must be ready to mobilise if there is a repeat of the attacks.

Conference pledges that, in the event of further upsurges in far-right violence, trade union centred demonstrations should take place, and, if necessary, trade unions should repeat our tactics during the period of the 'troubles' when we called members out on half and full day actions to send a warning to the perpetrators of violence. These actions had a direct effect of pushing back against the forces of reaction and of showing massive solidarity across society.

NIPSA

19. Counter the scourge of the Far-Right

Conference recognizes the work done by affiliate unions to counter the scourge of the Far-Right.

Conference was appalled by the scenes of a brutal knife attack on 08 June but that this terrible event was no excuse for the appalling race riots and pogroms that followed.

Conference welcomes foreign nationals into our unions and our communities and recognizes the valuable work they do to invest in and support all our communities, especially their work in the health service.

Conference also recognizes the work of activists in our communities, such as Lurgan Against Racism in our own Trades Council area whose work builds better communities, not tears them down.

Conference calls on the Northern Ireland Committee and its affiliate unions to redouble our efforts to both support our members who have come to this part of the world to work. Conference also calls for further engagement in a programme of education for all our members to promote the work of immigrant workers and the benefits that they bring. Conference also calls on affiliate unions to better engage with community anti-racism groups such as Lurgan Against Racism, to better support and promote their work.

CTUC

20. Defending education from attacks by the far right

Conference recognises the growing threat posed by the far right. Far-right politics feeds on insecurity and division, scapegoating migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, while offering no serious answer to underfunded public services, insecure work, poverty or inequality.

Education is central to this struggle. Schools, colleges and early years settings are civic institutions and bastions of community life, where children encounter equality and inclusion, families turn for support, and communities remain connected in periods of challenge and division. They provide safe, inclusive spaces for children and families exposed to hostility, exclusion or fear.

Conference is concerned these spaces are increasingly under pressure. Far-right narratives seek to undermine confidence in education and educators, attack an inclusive curriculum, intimidate education workers, target migrant and refugee children and families, and present equality and human rights education as political threats rather than democratic responsibilities.

The trade union movement must be clear: defending education from the far right is central to defending workers, children, communities, democracy and the future of public services.

Conference calls on the government to reject far-right narratives which attempt to portray educators as a threat to patriotism and commit to defending education as a space for learning, inclusion, and community.

Conference calls on ICTU to build on its campaigning and challenge the attacks on public education, to defend education and educators from xenophobic and hate-fuelled narratives, support education workers facing intimidation, stand with refugees and migrants, and defend the trade union rights needed to resist attacks on public services.

NAHT

21. Tackling Racism and Promoting Anti-Racism in Education

Conference condemns the organised, planned racist violence that erupted in Belfast and other parts of Northern Ireland in June 2026, which saw homes set alight, families forced to flee, and communities terrorised.

Conference believes that the trade union movement has a duty to condemn all forms of hate crime and to campaign in support of those who are under attack, as well as promoting education to reinforce why such behaviour is unacceptable in a civilised society.

Conference further believes that schools and colleges should be places of safety, welcome, and support for all children and young people, and the education system must play a central role in challenging racism and building a genuinely inclusive society.

Conference commends Congress for its work on tackling racism but calls on all political leaders to show the same solidarity with communities who are under attack.

Conference call of congress to demand that:

i. all politicians are unequivocal in their condemnation when racist attacks occur;
ii. the Department of Education and employers develop a contingency framework to protect educational continuity and pupil safety during periods of civil unrest;
iii. workers who can't get to work during civil unrest are not financially penalised;
iv. education employing authorities provide mental health and trauma support for pupils who have witnessed attacks on their homes or communities and
v. anti-racist education is part of the new curriculum.

NASUWT

PUBLIC SERVICES

22. Wildfires, Climate Change and Fire & Rescue Service Resilience

Conference recognises that climate change is increasing the risk and severity of extreme weather events, including wildfires, creating growing risks for workers, communities and the environment in Northern Ireland.

Conference notes that firefighters responding to large and prolonged wildfires can face difficult terrain, extreme temperatures, heat stress, fatigue, smoke and potentially harmful contaminants, while these incidents place significant demands upon Fire and Rescue Service personnel and resources.

Conference welcomes the Wildfires in Northern Ireland Strategic Framework 2025–2030 and accompanying Action Plan, including their focus on prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and enforcement.

Conference notes, however, that successful wildfire resilience depends ultimately upon the workers required to deliver it.

Conference supports the Fire Brigades Union's Wildfire Resilience campaign and believes that Northern Ireland's approach must place firefighter safety and operational resilience at its heart.

Conference is particularly concerned that structural firefighting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is not designed for prolonged strenuous activity at wildfire incidents in high temperatures. Firefighters require appropriate specialist lightweight wildfire PPE, equipment, training and welfare arrangements.

Conference further believes that increasingly prolonged and resource-intensive wildfire incidents must not compromise the ability of the Fire and Rescue Service to maintain an effective emergency response to other incidents across Northern Ireland.

Conference therefore calls upon the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to:

- Support the full implementation and proper resourcing of the Northern Ireland Wildfire Strategic Framework and Action Plan, with meaningful involvement of the trade unions representing frontline workers.
- Campaign for sufficient firefighter and emergency control staffing and safe crewing levels to maintain operational resilience during prolonged or simultaneous wildfire incidents.
- Campaign for specialist lightweight wildfire PPE, appropriate vehicles and equipment, recognised wildfire training and competency standards, and suitable welfare, hydration, rest and relief arrangements.
- Call for the occupational health risks to firefighters and other workers from wildfire smoke, contaminants, extreme heat and fatigue to be properly addressed, including appropriate health surveillance.
- Support continued investment in wildfire prevention, sustainable land management, public awareness and community resilience; and
- Support effective multi-agency and cross-border cooperation and mutual assistance during major wildfire incidents.

Conference believes that climate policy cannot simply be about reducing emissions in 2030 or 2050; it must also be about protecting the workers dealing with the consequences of climate change today.

Climate resilience requires investment in workers, properly resourced public services and a strong trade union voice for those on the frontline.

FBU

23. Assaults on Public Service Workers and Calling for Enhanced Protections

This Congress notes:

- The continuing rise in assaults, threats, intimidation, and abuse directed at public service workers across the Northern Ireland, including but not limited to local government staff, health and social care workers, education professionals, transport workers, civil servants, and frontline emergency personnel.
- That these attacks have severe physical, psychological, and economic consequences for workers, their families, and the communities they serve.
- That current legislative protections, including the specific offence of assaulting police officers, fire and rescue personnel, and ambulance workers, do not extend to the full range of public service workers who face similar risks in the course of their duties.

This Congress believes:

- That every public service worker—regardless of role, department, or employer—deserves to carry out their duties free from violence, harassment, and abuse.
- That assaults on public service workers are not only attacks on individuals but attacks on the essential services that sustain society.
- That the current patchwork of protections is inadequate and fails to reflect the realities faced by workers across public services.

This Congress condemns:

- All assaults, threats, and abusive behaviour directed at public service workers.
- The failure of successive governments to provide comprehensive legislative protection for all workers delivering public services.

This Congress resolves:

1. **To call for a unified, crosssector public campaign**, led jointly by trade unions, public bodies, local authorities, health trusts, education institutions, and government departments, clearly condemning all assaults on public service workers and promoting a zerotolerance approach to violence and abuse.
2. **To lobby Stormont** to extend existing legislative provisions—currently covering police, fire and rescue personnel, and ambulance workers—to all workers employed in public service roles, including but not limited to:
    - Local government and council staff
    - NHS and social care workers
    - Teachers, lecturers, and education support staff
    - Public transport workers
    - Civil servants and agency workers delivering public functions
    - Public facing staff in libraries, job centres, courts, and community services
3. **To campaign for the introduction of a specific offence covering assaults**, threats, or harassment

against any public service worker, with appropriate sentencing guidelines and mandatory reporting requirements.

4. **To support affiliated unions** in developing workplace policies, training, and reporting mechanisms that strengthen protection for members and ensure incidents are recorded, investigated, and acted upon.
5. **To work with employers and public bodies** to ensure that no worker is pressured to continue working in unsafe conditions and that all affected workers receive appropriate support, including medical care, counselling, and legal assistance.

Congress confirms that it will not rest until such times that our members are afforded the protection from being assaulted whilst serving the public.

GMB

24. Budget

Conference notes the deepening crisis across our public services, with unsafe staffing levels, rising workloads, growing waiting lists, crumbling infrastructure and repeated failures to deliver fully funded, timely public sector pay awards.

This crisis is the result of years of inadequate Westminster funding, short-term budgets and a fiscal framework that does not reflect our real level of need.

Conference believes that Northern Ireland requires a budget from Treasury that is funded above current need, as is the case in Scotland, and sufficient to fund decent public services, fair pay awards, appropriate staffing levels and long-term investment in service modernisation.

Conference rejects any attempt to make workers and our community pay for underfunding through cuts, privatisation, job losses or regressive household charges.

Conference therefore resolves to campaign for a budget settlement that will secure recurrent Treasury funding based on need, not austerity limits or one-off packages.

Conference further resolves to continue to campaign to protect public services from cuts, privatisation and regressive charges.

Conference instructs the incoming NIC to lobby all Assembly party leaders, the First and Deputy First Ministers and the Secretary of State to agree and deliver these demands.

Our campaign should include coordination across the trade union movement supporting joint industrial action where appropriate to defend pay, jobs and services.

NIPSA

25. Basic Income for the Arts

Over the last few years, the issues of low pay, precarious work and poverty have become ever more prevalent across the arts and entertainment industry. Flaws in the universal credit and wider social security system are a major barrier for access for many creative professionals. Equity's Northern Ireland Committee notes that the Basic Income for the Arts scheme has recently been made permanent in the Republic of Ireland. The devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales are actively investigating

the possibility of similar schemes. It seems that the time for Basic Income for the Arts is here – but not in Northern Ireland. In contrast to these prevailing trends, NI Communities Minister Gordon Lyons has recently stated that no such initiative will be considered in Northern Ireland.

Equity urges the NIC- ICTU Conference to support their campaign which calls on the Northern Ireland Executive to:

- reconsider a pilot basic income for performers and creative workers in Northern Ireland akin to the scheme in the Republic of Ireland.
- work closely with the trade union movement to ensure any pilot scheme aligns with the existing collective bargaining framework to support those in work to earn well.
- work closely with the trade union movement to ensure the scheme does not impact upon funding provided directly to Arts Council Northern Ireland or other arts Arms Length Bodies.
- work closely with Irish Government, Westminster and the other devolved nations to share learnings and investigate potential joint action.

EQUITY

26. Seafarer Jobs and Pay in the Ferries Sector

Congress welcomes growth in ferry passenger numbers and freight volumes into ports in Northern Ireland, including the 55% increase in passengers carried between Birkenhead and Belfast since 2019.

Congress applauds the progress the RMT has made with measures to increase recruitment and retention on all Stena Line's ferry services in the Irish Sea. This includes recent agreements to increase seafarer jobs and apprenticeships.

Congress notes with concern that P&O Ferries continues to undercut pay, investment and jobs at ferry operators in the Irish Sea that recognise the RMT for collective bargaining purposes. P&O operate two ferries registered in the Bahamas on the Cairnryan-Larne route with agency seafarers contracted to work at sea for two months on the National Minimum Wage. Passenger numbers on these services have fallen 14% since 2019 and by 4% in the last year.

Congress notes with concern that the UK Labour Government's Mandatory Seafarers Charter which comes into force in December will not cover seafarers working on commercial ferry routes between the UK and Northern Ireland.

Congress therefore commits to campaign with the RMT and lobby politicians in Northern Ireland to support the RMT campaign for the Charter to apply to seafarers working on commercial ferry routes between the UK and Northern Ireland and for improved measures on pay, safe roster patterns, holiday pay sick pay and pension rights for seafarers which reflect collective bargaining arrangements.

RMT

27. Outsourcing

Congress notes the policy shift announced by the UK Government in June 2026, which formally acknowledged that decades of "outsourcing by default" have damaged public sector resilience, eroded terms and conditions, and enriched private contractors at the expense of workers and public services.

Congress welcomes the introduction of mandatory Public Interest Tests and five-year insourcing strategies at Whitehall level, alongside the commitment to bring 2,000 facilities management workers across 83 civil service buildings back into direct public employment by 2028.

However, Congress recognises that the Whitehall model cannot simply be transposed unchanged to Northern Ireland. With Northern Ireland public procurement accounting for roughly £3 billion annually compared to well over £300 billion UK-wide, the Westminster threshold requiring five-year insourcing roadmaps only for bodies spending over £100 million would let the vast majority of NI public sector employers off the hook.

Congress stands with all affiliate unions opposing the scourge of outsourcing. Congress congratulates the PCS members working for Sodexo at Erskine House in Belfast on their principled stand against a shameless employer that has made hundreds of millions of pounds from the public purse while running down services, cutting hours, offering poverty pay rates, and engaging blatantly in union-busting tactics. These workers have demonstrated extraordinary resilience in fighting for dignity, fair pay, and equal treatment on the civil service estate.

Congress therefore calls upon the Northern Ireland Committee to:

1. Campaign alongside PCS to demand that the Westminster government immediately extend its civil service insourcing commitments to all UK Government property in Northern Ireland, ensuring that outsourced facilities and support staff in buildings like Erskine House are brought directly into civil service employment with matching pay and pensions.
2. Demand that the UK Cabinet Office apply a regionalised public interest test to all reserved government service contracts in Northern Ireland, ensuring that lower-value contracts are not permitted to bypass public sector delivery.
3. Coordinate movement-wide industrial and political anti-privatisation campaign.
4. Organise training for affiliate unions on developing "in-house bids" for NI public procurement.

PCS

28. Delivering excellence in public transport

Conference recognises the service and dedication of public transport workers and the critical importance of modern and sustainable public transport to society. Bus and rail services play a critical role in reducing poverty and advancing social inclusion. They are vital in delivering equality for those with disabilities and reducing social isolation. They help connect rural communities and counter regional imbalances. Our public transport services also help ensure the safety of late-night workers and promote the growth of the nighttime economy.

At a time of accelerating climate change, a modal shift to public transport is essential for a Just Transition to a sustainable future.

Public transport workers and their unions have repeatedly demonstrated their commitment to a modern public transport system – a system which delivers good jobs and serves communities.

Yet consecutive Stormont ministers have failed to properly support or invest in the service. Funding for public transport in Northern Ireland is lower per head and per journey than anywhere else on these islands.

Conference calls on the incoming Executive to support the campaign by affiliated public transport unions for public transport excellence and to:

- Campaign for increased funding of our bus and rail services, including
- Increased investment in our currently inadequate public transport infrastructure and network
- Ring-fenced funding for Translink apprenticeships
- Campaign against cuts to services and discount schemes: measures such as fare freezes must not be funded by cutting service
- Campaign against any attempts to undermine or privatise Translink or to outsource vital functions such as engineering, thus hollowing out the public transport skill base

UNITE

29. Public Transport

Conference notes that:

Translink is facing cuts across both bus and rail networks reducing an already inadequate public transport system for Northern Ireland;

Students, workers and everyday passengers face an increase in the cost of using public transport;

Government spending on public transport per capita in Northern Ireland is among the lowest in the UK; despite the rural nature of NI, just £486 per capita is spent here on public transport, compared to £841 in Scotland, £1,200 in London and £650 on average across the UK;

Cuts proposed will force fare increases for passengers who rely on the fare promotions for affordable public transport access;

Cuts proposed will have an impact on the volume of traffic on the roads with more people opting to use private transport for their commute, increasing carbon emissions;

Cuts proposed are a massive backward step in developing a public transport model to match the needs of the people of the region;

Cuts proposed open the door for private operators to move in on the more lucrative services such as the 212 service between Derry and Belfast, although private operators will have no desire to provide the essential everyday rural and metro services;

That the huge investment in Belfast Grand central station was promoted as a catalyst to the growth of public

transport in the North, built with public funds to enhance the lives of public transport users.

Conference demands that Stormont:

- Reverses the cuts on public transport provision for the region;
- Increases the investment in public transport across all rail and bus provision to at least the UK average;
- Expands the rail network in the west of the region to correct regional imbalance;
- Introduce the fare structures in other regions which include free bus travel for under 21s;
- Return the fuel duty rebate to public transport as is done in other regions;
- Increase the EV fleet numbers across the network.

Conference calls on NICICTU to campaign to ensure the investment in public transport provision in NI is realistic in relation to the needs of workers in the region, and to the environmental challenges we face;

Conference also calls on NICICTU to campaign to ensure the provision of public transport is kept out of the hands of the private transport companies currently circling like vultures to pick off the lucrative services in our public transport network and destroy the services so vital to so many of our society

DTUC

30. Rebuilding Royal Mail for Workers and the Public

Conference believes Royal Mail is a vital public service facing existential challenges, requiring a new vision that secures its future in the interests of customers, communities and workers, including across Northern Ireland, while utilising its national infrastructure and trusted workforce to create social and economic value.

Conference notes the Business and Trade Select Committee's May 2026 report, *The regulation of postal services*, which found that Royal Mail's service is unacceptable, Ofcom is failing as postal regulator, and reform of the Universal Service Obligation is essential.

Conference calls on the NIC-ICTU to campaign for the Northern Ireland Executive and UK Government to:

1. Fully implement the recommendations of the Business and Trade Select Committee's May 2026 report.
2. Create a level playing field in line with the Good Jobs Employment Rights Bill by introducing a single status of worker and sectoral collective bargaining, ending the race to the bottom based on bogus self-employment, insecure work and low pay.
3. Establish a new regulatory framework that puts universal service, investment, quality of service and sector-wide employment standards ahead of competition, and reviews downstream access arrangements.

4. Build on the UK Government's golden share by developing a new ownership and governance model for Royal Mail, with democratic public control and oversight, and worker and customer representation, supporting investment, diversification, growth and public value.

5. Bring Royal Mail and the Post Office back together, creating a stronger national network delivering postal, banking, government and community services.

CWU

EDUCATION

31. The Cause of Education is the Cause of us All

Conference notes:

- Ulster University's announcement of 450 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) job cuts across all 4 campuses
- The united opposition of the campus Joint Trade Unions (JTUs), UCU, UNITE and UNISON to such devastating job cuts
- The legal obligation on the employer to meaningfully consult the JTUs to avoid and reduce redundancies as well as mitigate impact
- The sustained engagement efforts of the JTUs in opposition to these redundancies and to save jobs in each campus and location
- The stated commitment to the expansion of Magee Campus and its documented importance, as outlined in the New Decade New Approach political agreement and the recent Programme for Government
- The opening of a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme on 14th September 2026, with absolutely no change to the scale of redundancies
- The university's continued refusal to take compulsory redundancies and course closures off the table

Conference agrees that:-

- Ulster University's multi campus model is a key component of widening access, given its role in providing opportunities for higher education to young people far beyond greater Belfast
- The scale of job cuts and consequent risk to courses will inevitably contribute to a brain drain of young people who may be forced to seek education and a future elsewhere
- The level of cuts proposed present a direct threat to the expansion of Magee campus in Derry
- The societal impact of such job losses will have a lasting negative impact on the local economy
- Such a level of job cuts announced in any other sector would have engendered greater adverse political reaction and outrage, including strong demands to reverse such a devastating announcement
- The level of cuts imposed present a direct threat to the expansion of Magee campus in Derry
- Unsafe and dangerous workloads will be a real risk to already overworked staff left behind
- Ulster University faces a tangible reputational risk, further

threatening stability and future expansion

- The lack of transparency and accountability of the University's governing Council raises serious questions about the governance arrangements of third level institutions in receipt of public money
- Any rise in tuition fees, a key demand of university management, is likely to result in greater numbers of young people from working class backgrounds and more marginalised communities being excluded from accessing higher education

Conference demands that Ulster University:-

- Step back from the crippling level of job cuts imposed
- Immediately remove the threat of compulsory redundancies and course closures
- Work constructively with the unions to ensure safe workloads are maintained for all staff
- Commit to work constructively with the JTUs to create governance and oversight structures at the university which are fully transparent and accountable

Conference calls on NICICTU to include the higher cost of multi campus Universities and the need for greater investment in Magee and a specific allocation of additional students for Magee under the MaSN (maximum student numbers) scheme as one of its priorities in the coming Assembly elections.

Conference also calls on the NICICTU to fully support the joint request from the three recognised trade unions, in collaboration with university management, to encourage The Executive Office and Assembly Executive to work with all concerned to provide adequate funding to maintain the current multi campus model for higher education, which benefits students and young people across the whole community.

UCU/ DTUC Composite Motion

32. Social media abuse targeting teachers

Congress notes with grave concern the increasing incidence of social media abuse targeting teachers, including the creation of fake accounts, AI-generated videos, and other forms of online misrepresentation.

Congress recognises that such content is often humiliating, offensive, violent and sometimes sexual in nature, and is having a significant negative impact on the mental health and wellbeing of those targeted. These incidents are becoming more frequent and increasingly sophisticated due to advances in generative AI.

Congress calls on ICTU to campaign for:

1. Acknowledgment of the vulnerability of teaching staff to online misrepresentation, abuse, and bullying; and
2. Protection and support for teachers who are victims of such activity.

Congress further calls on education employing authorities to:

1. Introduce policies that enable schools to take robust and timely action against individuals who create or distribute such material; and
2. Ensure proactive education for pupils on the responsible and ethical use of AI and social media.

INTO

33. Our Forgotten Children

Conference recognises that some of the most vulnerable children and young people in our society are those whose lives are affected by multiple and complex challenges, including experience of the care system, poor mental health, developmental trauma, addiction, poverty, homelessness, educational disengagement and criminal or sexual exploitation.

Conference further recognises that these challenges rarely exist in isolation and that the needs of vulnerable children and young people cannot be adequately addressed by any single Department, agency, profession or service.

Conference notes the commitments contained within the Children's Services Co-operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 and the Executive's Children and Young People's Strategy 2020–2030 to improve the wellbeing of children and young people through effective cooperation across government and public services.

Conference believes that no child or young person should become a victim of gaps between services, departmental boundaries, eligibility criteria or failures in communication and accountability.

Conference further believes that early intervention and sustained, trauma-informed support represent not only a moral and social responsibility, but an investment in the future wellbeing of our communities and society.

Conference therefore calls upon the ICTU Northern Ireland Committee, working collectively with affiliated trade unions, to campaign for:

i. A fully coordinated, cross-departmental approach by the Northern Ireland Executive to identify and support children and young people experiencing multiple vulnerabilities, with clear ministerial responsibility and accountability for outcomes.
ii. Effective cooperation, information sharing and, where appropriate, pooling of resources across Education, Health, Justice, Communities and other relevant Departments and statutory agencies so that support is organised around the needs of the child rather than departmental boundaries.
iii. Properly funded, accessible and trauma-informed early intervention services, including mental health, addiction, social care, education, youth, housing and family support.
iv. Meaningful participation of children and young people with lived experience in the design, delivery and evaluation of the services intended to support them.
v. Recognition and appropriate resourcing of the workers across education, health and social care, justice, youth and community services who support vulnerable children and young people.
vi. The development by the trade union movement of a coordinated campaign to advocate for these children and young people, challenge failures in provision and hold government collectively accountable for ensuring that no child is forgotten and no young person is left behind.

UTU

HEALTH

34. Build A Modern NHS

The foundation of the NHS remains one of the most significant achievements of the working class.

In the period running up to its establishment, it was opposed by powerful capitalist interests, private health profiteers and political representatives of capitalism.

Their opposition was based on the idea that everything, including health, should have a price and should be rationed to make profit for the super-rich. They did not end their opposition at the foundation of the NHS which continues unabated to the present day.

History has taught us that the only true defenders of the NHS are its original champions - the working class, the labour and trade union movement and committed health service campaigners. Defence of our health service and securing its future for the next generations will depend on the same interested parties who created it.

With this in mind, conference commits to playing its role in fighting for a national health service.

Conference pledges to fight for:

- A modern nationalised health service free at the point of use and funded by universal taxation.
- A comprehensive service that covers all health requirements.
- The return of those elements of the health service that vested interests have outsourced.
- Nationalisation of the pharmaceutical industry as part of fundamental health service provision
- Recognition of the rights of communities to have comprehensive services provided in appropriate locations.
- Centring the health service on our heroic health workers who have provided outstanding service in the most difficult conditions.
- Democratic control and management of the health service to be in the hands of patients, communities, health service workers, trade union representatives and political representatives.

NIPSA

35. Flexible Working and Staff Retention in Healthcare

Conference notes that healthcare professions with predominantly female workforces continue to experience significant barriers to accessing flexible working arrangements, despite ongoing workforce shortages and increasing pressures on staff.

Conference believes that the refusal of reasonable flexible working requests contributes directly to the loss of experienced healthcare professionals, negatively impacting staff wellbeing, workforce retention, service delivery, and patient care.

Conference further notes the commitment within the Northern Ireland Good Jobs Bill to promote fair, flexible, and family-friendly employment practices and the opportunity

this presents to strengthen workers' rights.

Conference asks that committee

1. Campaign for a statutory right to flexible working from day one of employment for all healthcare staff in Northern Ireland.
2. Call on healthcare employers to demonstrate clear and objective justification when flexible working requests are refused.
3. Challenge the Department of health NI to accurately publish how many flexible working requests they receive, numbers refused and approved and reasons for refusal
4. Lobby the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure the Good Jobs Bill incorporates robust protections and enforcement mechanisms for flexible working rights.
5. Promote flexible working as a key workforce retention measure to support experienced staff, particularly women, to remain in the healthcare workforce.

SOR

36. Safe Staffing = Safe Care

Congress notes that maternity services across Northern Ireland are being pushed by years of understaffing, underinvestment and increasing demand. Midwives, maternity support workers and student midwives are working in conditions that are neither safe nor sustainable.

Congress is alarmed that 45% of midwives reported experiencing burnout often or always. A recent RCM survey showed that 93% of maternity staff said staffing levels directly affect the quality of care they can provide.

During the survey week, 77% said their unit was unsafely staffed. At the same time, maternal deaths are now 20% higher than a decade ago.

Congress recognises that safe staffing is not simply a workforce issue; it is a patient safety issue, a women's health issue and a workers' rights issue. Staff cannot continue to carry the burden of systemic failure while employers and the Executive fail to provide the investment needed to deliver safe care.

Congress therefore calls on the ICTU to campaign alongside affiliated unions for the Executive to deliver sustained investment in safe maternity staffing and invest in safe and modern maternity estates, and ensure staff have the time and resources to deliver equitable, high-quality care.

Congress further calls on the ICTU to reaffirm that no healthcare worker should be expected to routinely work beyond safe limits or without breaks, and that protecting the wellbeing of maternity staff is essential to protecting the safety of every woman, baby and family who depends on our maternity services.

RCM

37. Safe Staffing Legislation – Training for Implementation

Conference recognises and thanks the health trade unions, for the sustained work that ensured we had progress towards safe and effective staffing legislation.

Conference further recognises that this legislation has the potential to strengthen accountability, improve workforce planning, support safer services and give staff a clearer

framework for raising concerns about unsafe staffing levels.

However, Conference believes that legislation alone will not deliver safe staffing unless union officials are properly trained to understand what the legislation means, how it should operate in practice, and how it can be used collectively to protect staff and service users.

Conference therefore calls on the NIC ICTU health committee to develop and deliver multi professional accessible training and guidance on the legislation, including how to identify breaches, raise concerns, gather evidence, use reporting mechanisms and hold employers and decision-makers to account.

Conference further calls on the NIC ICTU health committee to monitor implementation across health and social care employers, identify recurring or systematic failures and then co-ordinate an effective trade union response

CSP

38. Defend and renew our public health system

Conference notes with concern the extreme pressures facing our health and social care (HSC) system and the impact of underfunding, outsourcing and structural inefficiency on healthcare workers and the public. The approach taken by healthcare leaders and policymakers has given rise to a continuous series of crises, characterised by kneejerk reactions, passing blame and a lack of transparency with no clear lines of decision making.

Conference notes that previous reviews of the system, particularly the Bengoa Report, have focused on a 'burning platform' analogy which promotes service reduction as the only way to achieve a more sustainable system in the long term. However, no clear plan for transformation or reorganisation has been progressed that would meet the needs of the population across the region as a whole, with piecemeal service closures drawing huge public backlash and resulting in pressures elsewhere in the system.

Conference further notes with concern that the NI Executive's lack of progress on agreeing a multi-year budget has left HSC services unstable, vulnerable to cuts and unable to invest in the long-term transformation necessary to better meet the needs of the public.

Conference believes there is a need for a genuine public debate on the future of our HSC system. This should include views from those who use it, work in it, interact with it, advocate for its founding principles, and have ideas for its future based on those principles. Conference believes that people have the right to understand how decisions are made, who is making them, and how we can influence them in advance. We need a public conversation because people are well aware of what's happening in the HSC system but the silence around it has created a sense that we have no choice but to accept the managed decline of our services.

Conference believes that while government pays lip service to tackling health inequalities, the doors have been flung wide open for those who see healthcare as an opportunity for profiteering. Allowing privatisation to take hold of our HSC

system is widening health inequalities and costing lives. Research shows that privatisation is associated with increased rates of treatable mortality, lower quality services and lower efficiency.

Conference calls on the Northern Ireland Committee to:

- Support, through affiliate unions, the development of grassroots, democratic, public debate about the future of the HSC system, not another top-down review.
- Lobby the UK government to provide a financial settlement for NI that is sufficient to support public services at the appropriate level of need. This requires addressing its chronic underfunding of health and social care in NI that has become entrenched due to decades of shrinking capacity in the public system to pave the way for privatisation.
- Lobby the NI Executive to invest in a transformation programme that provides an integrated, holistic vision for HSC services across the region, grounded in rejecting outsourcing and privatisation; valuing the workforce; and upholding equality, rights and quality of life for the whole population.
- Lobby the Minister for Health to work in genuine partnership with health unions to develop systems and delivery models that can deliver quality health and social care and justice for the workers.
- Mobilise through affiliates and trades councils for a public-facing campaign to restore a universal public health service free at the point of need.

UNISON

TRADE UNION ORGANISATION

39. Defending, Valuing and Organising the Community and Voluntary Sector in Northern Ireland

Conference notes that:

1. The community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland employs approximately 57,000 workers across hundreds of employers and over a thousand sites, with trade union density below 5%.
2. The sector delivers frontline services to some of the most vulnerable people in society, including youth services, women's aid refuges and women's centres, disability organisations, addiction services, food banks, housing, health and community organisations, ethnic minority support groups, environmental projects, and training and education programmes.
3. These are the services that are the first to identify families in poverty, women fleeing domestic abuse, young people at risk and mental health issues.
4. Since the end of European Social Fund support, each successive replacement funding stream has been reduced by millions of pounds, leaving the sector in serious crisis.

5. Over the same period, local councils have attracted funding to deliver services that were previously delivered by community and voluntary organisations, and new council-led training, education and environmental projects have been established alongside them.
6. The workers delivering these services are among the lowest paid in our economy, often on short-term contracts tied to funding cycles, with little job security.

Conference believes that:

1. Workers in this sector are undervalued relative to the vital work they do, and this is a direct result of chronic underfunding and short-term funding models.
2. The movement of funding and delivery from community organisations to councils reflects a pattern that threatens the survival of independent, community-rooted organisations, and with them the trust, expertise and reach they have built over decades.
3. Cuts to the sector will fall hardest on the communities that depend on it, and on the workers who keep these services running.
4. Short-term funding, late decisions and disproportionate scrutiny cause low pay, insecurity and staff loss, and put frontline services at risk.
5. The sector's low union density, fragmented employers and dispersed workplaces make it one of the most difficult to organise, and it will not be organised without a dedicated, well-resourced and coordinated effort.

The community and voluntary sector acknowledge the support of the trade union movement and the engagement, particularly around May Day that provides a platform to meaningfully engage with our sector.

Conference resolves to:

1. Demand a transparent public audit of funding streams previously available to the sector that have been redirected to or retained by councils and other public bodies.
2. Call on councils and departments to commission services in partnership with the community and voluntary sector rather than duplicating or displacing its work.
3. Campaign for funding conditions that require fair work standards, including at minimum the real Living Wage, secure contracts, full cost recovery, TUPE protection where services transfer, and access for trade unions.
4. Provide support and resources for sector-wide social partnership forum of unions, employers and government, with the aim of establishing sectoral collective bargaining.
5. Commit resources to a dedicated organising strategy for the sector, including an organising team, workplace representative training, and a coordinated approach with other unions through NIC-ICTU to avoid duplication across such a fragmented workforce.

B&DTUC

APPENDICES

CHARTERED
SOCIETY
OF
PHYSIOTHERAPY

At the 2024 BDC, Delegates passed a motion from CSP which included the following recommendation:

We also urge all unions to consider how in their communication with members they can continue to spread messages around health improvement – encouraging and supporting members to take part in health screening and vaccination and looking at the opportunities they have as a unions to provide nutritional advice and to encourage activity. We would like to see the ICTU conference brochure include helpful advice such as stretches or local walking routes to combat the amount of time delegates spend sitting.

We encourage delegate to take advantage of the fine advice below from comrades at CSP.

We advise seeking professional advice before starting a new exercise regime. Have a happy and healthy conference!

Everyday movement and stretches

Desk-based exercises:

www.csp.org.uk/publi...rcises

How to fit exercise into your day:

www.csp.org.uk/publi...ur-day

Easy Exercise Guide:

www.csp.org.uk/publications/easy-exercise-guide

Staying healthy at work:

www.csp.org.uk/public-patient/keeping-active-healthy/staying-healthy-work

Video exercises for specific pain

Foot pain:

www.csp.org.uk/conditions/foot-pain/video-exercises-foot-pain

Shoulder pain:

www.csp.org.uk/conditions/shoulder-pain/video-exercises-shoulder-pain

Back pain:

www.csp.org.uk/conditions/back-pain/video-exercises-back-pain

Neck pain:

www.csp.org.uk/conditions/neck-pain/video-exercises-neck-pain

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy provides membership, trade union services and related physiotherapy professional activity throughout the United Kingdom: www.csp.org.uk

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