

AGENDA

25

Winning Our Future in Uncertain Times

Biennial Delegate Conference

**Waterfront Hall, Belfast
1-3 July 2025**

STRONGER TOGETHER

CONGRESS

Irish Congress of Trade Unions



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Notice to Delegates

1. This year the overall theme of Conference is 'Winning our Future in Uncertain Times'.

Within the overall theme, Conference will debate:

- 54 motions and 1 amendment, including 9 motions from the Executive Council.
2. This document contains the Congress Code of Conduct for participation at meetings, events and courses, the Timetable of Business, the motions and the one amendment to be debated at Conference and Standing Orders Committee Report Number One.
 3. The Timetable of Business gives you the order in which the motions and the one amendment will be debated and voted on during Conference. Throughout the Conference the Executive Council Report will be referenced and a vote on the report will be taken on the last day of Conference.
 4. The commencement time for each morning session of the Conference will be **09.30 hours** on Tuesday 1 July, Wednesday 2 July, and Thursday 3 July 2025. The afternoon sessions will commence at **14.30 hours**. The Conference is scheduled to finish at **17.30 hours** on Tuesday 1 July and **17.30 hours** on Wednesday 2 July, and **13.30 hours** on Thursday 3 July 2025.

You are asked to be in the conference hall punctually and to remain throughout the sessions.
 5. You must show your Credential/Lanyard Card to gain entrance to the conference hall. You should bring Conference documentation with you to each session, as additional copies will not be available.
 6. Please note that seating will be allocated in the Main Conference Hall.
 7. If you are moving a motion, you will be allowed to speak for **five minutes maximum**, and each subsequent speaker for **three minutes maximum**. You should give your name and the name of your organisation when speaking.
 8. If you wish to contact the Standing Orders Committee you may do so by contacting any member of the Congress Secretariat at the entrance to the conference hall. The members of Standing Orders Committee are: Colm Kelly (Chairperson), Joan Gaffney, Sean Heading and Deborah Yapicioz.

Code of Conduct for Meetings Events and Courses

Adopted by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions Executive Council on 16 October 2024

Introduction

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions has zero tolerance for any violence and any type of harassment including sexual harassment.

Violence and harassment in the world of work deprives people of their dignity and is incompatible with decent work. It is a threat to equality and equal opportunities and to safe, healthy, and productive working environments.

Violence, harassment and sexual harassment are contrary to trade union values and may prevent people, particularly women, from participating and advancing in the labour movement.

As part of our ongoing commitment to create working environments that are free from violence, harassment and sexual harassment, Congress has adopted the following Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct applies to all Congress events, meetings and courses, regardless of venue.

Aim

The ultimate goal of this policy is to prevent incidences of violence, harassment and sexual harassment.

Congress is committed to organising events and other activities at which everyone can participate in an inclusive, respectful and safe environment. All members and participants at Congress conferences, events committee meetings or training courses are expected to uphold this approach.

Applicability

The Congress Code of Conduct applies to all Congress meetings, events and activities, including Biennial Delegates Conferences, other conferences/seminar or events, Executive Council and Committee meetings, assemblies, receptions, expert meetings, courses, workshops, fringe and side event, social events and any other type of event hosted, sponsored or organised in whole or in part by Congress wherever it may take place. The code of conduct applies to everyone participating in Congress events and other Congress activities. The Congress code of conduct also applies in case an event or an activity is co-organised or co-sponsored together with another organisation.

Interaction with Affiliates Code of Conduct

Affiliates will have their own code of conduct and those attending at Congress meetings, events and activities will continue to benefit from their own organisations Code, policy and procedure, for example access to their person of confidence, representation by their union etc. This Code of Conduct does not replace the affiliates Codes rather it provides a bridge between affiliates codes, practices and procedures.

Expected Conduct

Congress expects all those involved in Congress activities and events to uphold our trade union values and to work to achieve an environment that is free from violence, harassment and sexual harassment.

Prohibited Conduct

Harassment constitutes unacceptable behaviour by one or more individuals and can take many different forms, some of which may be more easily identified than others. It can be a range of unacceptable behaviours and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, and includes gender-based violence and harassment.

Harassment because of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, race, national origin, political affiliation, age, religion, class, and any other reason is unacceptable.

Sexual harassment is a particular form of harassment. It denotes any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct may be of a verbal, non-verbal or physical nature, including written and electronic communications, and may occur between persons of the different and the same gender. Some examples include unwanted physical contact, suggestive texts or images, unwelcome sexually-charged comments or propositions.

Complaint Process

It is in the interest of all parties to proceed with the necessary discretion to protect the dignity and privacy of all. Complaints should be made in the first instance as follows:

Irish Congress of Trade Unions Biennial Delegate Conference, Executive Council meetings and associated events to the General Secretary or to a person nominated by the General Secretary (this person will be sufficient standing and experience to deal with the matters).

Complaints relating to the NIC ICTU Delegate Conference or the NIC ICTU meetings should be made to the Assistant General Secretary, or to a person nominated by the AGS (this person will be of sufficient standing and experience to deal with these matters).

Congress Committee meetings or events to the member of the Secretariat with responsibility for the Committee or event; or to a person nominated by the member of the Secretariat (this person will be of sufficient standing and experience to deal with the matters),

Complaints will be dealt with in a timely manner and in agreement with the parties and according to the guiding principles below. If necessary and agreed, external assistance or a 'person of confidence' may help. If it is established that harassment or sexual harassment has occurred, appropriate measures will be taken. This may include measures up to and including excluding persons who do not respect this policy from Congress meetings and events.

Guiding Principles for the Procedure

The procedure is by agreement and is carried out in a manner that respects fair procedures and the principles of natural justice.

Confidentiality will be assured in so far as it is reasonably practicable.

The terms of reference will be agreed and will set out the issues, objectives and scope of the procedure, its interaction with the affiliates own procedures and the languages and the relevant law that applies. The Terms of Reference should be clear and concise and not legalistic. It should be designed to fit the allegation and should include time frame, deadlines and the method of report.

Conciliation between the persons concerned is promoted but not required. Everyone can be represented by their union during the process.

The procedure needs to strike a balance between involving the complainant and at the same time not expecting or making the complainant responsible for deciding the process, recommendations or outcomes.

The person undertaking the procedure will aim for agreement and will produce a report to the parties and the GS/AGS or Secretariat member detailing the recommendations and outcome.

Dispute about facts

If there is a dispute about facts, the Secretariat may also choose to establish an up to five- person Commission of inquiry. The members must be of sufficient authority and unrelated to the organisations to which the person involved belongs and will undertake actions necessary to determine the facts such as:

- interview the parties directly involved separately;
- interview other relevant third parties separately;
- produce a report detailing the inquiry, findings and any recommendations;
- determine on balance of probabilities whether or not the incident(s) of harassment or sexual harassment took place;
- if the inquiry cannot determine, on the balance of probabilities, whether the harassment took place, recommendations can still be made.

Outcomes and Remedies

Appropriate remedies to be recommended can include for example an apology in the context of a consultation, training for the person in breach of this Code of Conduct, recommendation for discipline of the person by their union/ affiliate, prohibition on attending at Congress meetings and events, or other appropriate remedies. Recommendations can also be made to Congress that aim to secure an environment free of violence, harassment and sexual harassment.

There will be follow up by the GS with the affiliates to ensure that the recommendations are implemented.

Appeal

Any appeal is to the Steering Committee who will deal with the matter in a confidential manner, this may include the establishment of an up to five-person committee for consideration of the appeal and their decision is final.

Final points

This policy does not replace legal responsibilities of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, it may be that these responsibilities change according to the relevant jurisdiction. Congress will report serious incidents to the appropriate authorities.

This Code of Conduct does not replace the right of a person to refer the matter to a criminal or other authority.

This Code of Conduct does not replace the responsibilities or obligations on employers to ensure that their workers are protected from violence, harassment and sexual harassment at work and to manage their workers.

This policy will be interpreted and applied in a manner that supports our staff and their policy and procedures relating to the prevent of violence, harassment and sexual harassment at work.

Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Timetable of Business

Tuesday 1 July 2025

Morning Session

09.30 - 11.00 OPENING OF CONFERENCE

Address of Welcome: Lord Mayor of Belfast
 Representative of Belfast Council of Trade Unions
 Election of tellers (six)
 Adoption of Standing Orders Reports No. 1 and No. 2
 Address by Congress President, Mr Justin McCamphill
 Vote of thanks to President
 Introduction of Executive Council Report
 Owen Reidy, Congress General Secretary

11.00 -11.15 Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister NORTHERN IRELAND

11.15-13.00 Motions on Northern Ireland
 Vote on motions 1-4
 Committee Speaker: Margaret Galloway & Jimmy Whelan,
 Retired Workers' Committee ROI & NI

13.00 - 14.30 Lunch Adjournment

Afternoon Session

14.30 - 15.30 THE ECONOMY

Presentation to the Economy in ROI and NI
 (Nevin Economic Research Institute)
 Motions on the Economy
 Vote on motions 5-9
 Committee Speaker: Maeve Richardson, Youth Committee

15.30 - 16.00 Panel Discussion with:
 Esther Lynch - General Secretary, ETUC
 Paul Nowak - General Secretary, TUC
 Liz Schuler - President AFL-CIO

16.00 - 16.15 Break

16.15 - 17.30 FINANCE, ORGANISATION & ORGANISING (PRIVATE SESSION)

(This session is restricted to full delegates only, no media permitted)
 Presentation of Financial Report by Treasurer
 Motions on Finance, Organisation & Organising
 Vote on Motions 10 -13

Wednesday 2 July 2025

Morning Session

09.30 -13.00 EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

Motions on Employment Rights

Committee Speaker: Joanne Pearson

Congress Centres Network Representative

Committee Speaker: Address by Margaret Coughlan and Tina Creaney
Representatives of the Congress Women's Committee.

Vote on Motions 14- 30

13.00 - 14.30 Lunch Adjournment

Afternoon Session

14.30 - 15.00 Dr Jackson Katz

15.00 -17.30 PUBLIC SERVICES/SOCIAL POLICY

Motions on Public Services/Social Policy

Vote on Motions 31 - 46

Thursday 3 July 2025

Morning Session

09.30 - 9.45 Dr Omar Barghouti

9.45 - 11.00 INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS/GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

Motions on International Affairs/Global Solidarity

Committee Speaker: Ann Piggott,
International Affairs / Global Solidarity Committee

11.00 - 11.45 Interview with Mark Little

Vote on Motions 47 - 54

Vote of Executive Council Report.

Vote on all Sections of Executive Council Report

13.00-13.30 CLOSING CEREMONIES

List of Motions & Amendments to BDC 2025

Tuesday 1 July 2025

Morning Session: 11.00 - 13.00 hours

NORTHERN IRELAND		
Motion No.	Name	Mover
1	Taxation	PCS
2	Tax and Not for Profit Organisations	PROSPECT
3	Surveillance of Journalists	NUJ
4	Safe Travel HSC Staff	RCM

Afternoon Session: 14.30 - 15.30 hours

THE ECONOMY		
Motion No.	Name	Mover
5	New Economic Model	Executive Council
6	Post Pandemic State	Executive Council
7	Low Pay	SIPTU
8	Industrial Policy for Jobs and a Future	GMB
9	Western Rail Corridor	Castlebar Trades Council

Afternoon Session: 16.15 - 17.30 hours

FINANCE, ORGANISATION & ORGANISING (PRIVATE SESSION)		
Motion No.	Name	Mover
10	Amendment to the Constitution Section V Finance Paragraph 14	Executive Council
11	Amendment to the Constitution Section V Finance Paragraph 15	Executive Council
12	Amendment to Standing Orders Paragraph 3	Executive Council
13	Trades Councils	Wexford Council of Trade Unions

Wednesday 2 July 2025

Morning Session: 09.00-13.00

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

Motion No.	Name	Mover
14	Health & Safety	Executive Council
15	Recognising and Supporting the Vital Role of Health & Safety Representatives	FÓRSA
16	Statutory Redundancy	CONNECT
	Amendment	USDAW
17	Four Day Week	Dublin Council of Trade Unions
18	Collective Bargaining	Communication Workers Union (CWU)
19	Apprenticeships and Minimum Wage	CONNECT
20	Exploitation of Apprentices	Bray & District Council of Trade Unions
21	Fair Employment and the Industrial Relations Act 1990	Dublin Council of Trade Unions
22	Remote Working	Financial Services Union (FSU)
23	Public Service Pay Agreements and Other ICTU Negotiated Wage Increases	Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO)
24	Protection for Seafarers Working on the Irish Sea	RMT
25	Equitable Technological Progress	Financial Services Union (FSU)
26	Unfair Dismissals Act	Kildare Trades Council
27	Redundancy Act 1967-2023	Meath Council of Trade Unions
28	Supporting Collective Pay Bargaining	UNITE the Union
29	Protecting Retail Workers from Abuse, Threats and Violence	USDAW
30	Access to Additional Working Hours for Existing Staff & Removal of the Minimum Wage	MANDATE

Afternoon Session: 14.30 - 17.30

PUBLIC SERVICES/SOCIAL POLICY		
Motion No.	Name	Mover
31	Equality Motion	Executive Council
32	Domestic Violence	Fermanagh Council of Trade Unions
33	Ending Violence Against Women and Girls	NASUWT
34	Carers Leave	Energy Services Union of Ireland (ESU)
35	Securing 52 Weeks Full-Pay Maternity Leave for all Workers in Ireland	Fire Brigades Union (FBU)
36	Defend Civil Servants and Civil Service Values	FDA
37	Retired Workers Committees Means Testing & Other Eligibility Criteria for Fuel Support Payments	Executive Council
38	Pensions	Guinness Staff Union (GSU)
39	Public Investment in Higher Education and the Protection of Educators' Wellbeing	Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT)
40	Health Services	Irish Medical Organisation (IMO)
41	Educational Supports	Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO)
42	Endorsing the UNICEF Rights of the Child	NAHT
43	Parental Leave	Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland (ASTI)
44	Supporting Educators	Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI)
45	Challenging Racism, All Forms of Hatred and Promoting Rights and Equality for All	UNISON
46	Water Referendum	Waterford Council of Trade Unions

Thursday 3 July 2025

Morning Session: 09.30 -13.00 hours

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Motion No.	Name	Mover
47	Global Solidarity	Executive Council
48	Peace and Neutrality	Belfast & District Trades Union Council
49	Peace and Militarisation	Bray & District Council of Trade Unions
50	Welfare Not Warfare Motion	Derry Trades Union Council
51	Opposition to Militarisation	NIPSA
52	Promote Collaboration to Stand Up to Hate and Counteract the Rise of the Far Right	NAHT
53	Palestine	Derry Trades Union Council
54	Genocide	UNISON

MOTIONS & AMENDMENTS TO BDC 2025

NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Taxation

Following the UK Chancellor's Spring Statement, Congress rejects yet another neoliberal announcement that insists the only way to manage public finances is by extracting more from those with the least.

Congress reaffirms its belief that, in any just society, the resources required to support people in poverty and insecurity should come from those with the greatest means.

Sustainable economic development is impossible when millions are forced to live on the edge, unable to spend beyond the bare essentials – and, for many, even basic needs are out of reach. Each year, the UK loses nearly £35 billion in tax to global tax abuse. This is equivalent to 5.8% of total tax revenue, or around £530 for every person in the country. Around £13 billion is lost through corporate abuse, and £22 billion through the actions of wealthy individuals. The UK ranks as the 18th biggest tax haven and 13th for financial secrecy. The tax abuse it enables causes an estimated £49 billion in losses to other countries. At home, the impact of this lost tax is comparable to nearly a fifth of the NHS budget, or 30% of education spending.

Indeed, the Chancellor seems intent on cutting £5 billion from the welfare budget, when the total lost to tax avoidance and evasion is more than six times that of her proposed cuts.

Congress calls for urgent reform of the tax system to ensure it actively redistributes wealth and power. This should include:

- Aligning the tax rates on unearned income with those on wages and salaries.
- Introducing an annual tax on wealth.
- Applying real political and financial pressure to end the use of tax havens – including legislating where necessary to stop avoidance facilitated by overseas territories and financial secrecy jurisdictions.

Congress also demands that tax authorities are properly resourced to enforce existing laws and recover revenue currently lost to avoidance and evasion by the wealthiest individuals and corporations.

(PCS)

2. Tax and not for Profit Organisations

Conference notes

- the recent increase to employers National Insurance Contributions implemented by the UK government.
- the considerable financial strain this place on not for profit organisations, particularly community & voluntary sector organisations in areas such as health, social care, environment & conservation and the arts & culture sectors.
- the impact on employees in these sectors who are experiencing, or face the potential for, pay freezes and potential job losses, despite already suffering from lower pay and less secure employment.

And therefore, NIC ICTU will

- call on the Stormont Executive to ensure the impact of employer National Insurance Contributions on not for profit organisations are mitigated against in order to protect workers and the services they provide.

(PROSPECT)

3. Surveillance of Journalists

Conference welcomes the judgement of the UK Investigatory Powers Tribunal (IPT) published on 17th December 2024, in favour of Northern Ireland journalists Barry McCaffrey and Trevor Birney.

Barry McCaffrey and Trevor Birney were the subject of unlawful police surveillance as a result of their investigative journalism into alleged collusion between the security forces and the perpetrators of the 1994 Loughlin Island murders.

The High Court in Belfast quashed arrest warrants against both journalists in 2019. In a precedential judgement the IPT quashed the PSNI's direct surveillance authorisation targeting the journalists and their suspected source and ordered the payment of compensation to the journalists for unlawful intrusion.

The Tribunal ruled that the PSNI had unlawfully approved an undercover surveillance operation against a civilian employee at the Police Ombudsman's Office, in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the Human Rights Act 1998.

During the course of the IPT hearing it emerged that covert surveillance of journalists and lawyers had taken place over a decade, the full extent of which may never be revealed.

Conference welcomes the establishment of the review headed by Angus McCullough KC into the surveillance against journalists, lawyers, NGOs and statutory regulators, Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, and the Northern Ireland Police Board. The work of the McCullough Review is ongoing and, by definition, is limited in scope and duration (2011 - 2024).

Confidence in policing has been damaged by the revelation that individuals and groups have been unlawfully targeted by the PSNI in operations sanctioned at the highest levels. Respect for the rule of law is a fundamental principle of democracy.

Conference calls on Congress to support the campaign of the NUJ and civic society organisations, for a wider judge-led full public inquiry into the actions of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and Durham Constabulary arising from the evidence given and material presented at the IPT hearing in October 2024.

(National Union of Journalists NUJ)

4. Safe Travel HSC Staff

The Health and Safety of staff working in the HSC is taken seriously and there are many measures in place to reduce risks to their health and wellbeing. What is not routinely taken into consideration is their ability to travel to and from work safely and travel as part of their working day, carrying out home visits and attending community clinics.

The recent red weather warning, 'Storm Eowym', in January of this year, demonstrates the need for updated and robust policies and procedures put in place, to ensure the safety of both our staff and service users.

Community midwives and their teams, working in community settings across Northern Ireland, can have significant travel as part of their daily working lives. Car travel is the only suitable option to carry out their roles and responsibilities to the mothers and babies under their care.

More than 99% of midwives and 78% of HSC staff are women. 1 in 6 women who are in employment in Northern Ireland have a caring role. This often requires their journey time to and from work to be as short as possible. With car travel being the only option to achieve this.

Other factors which make car travel to work necessary include: -

- The lack of public transport at times travel required
- Safety fears when travelling early morning or late evening
- On call for home births
- Midwives, Maternity Support Workers and student midwives who provide direct mother and baby care, often cannot guarantee to be able to leave at the end of their rostered shift, thereby missing scheduled public transport.

Many employers operate a criteria for the allocation of staff parking permits which does not fully reflect the circumstances of our workforce. This is further compounded by some Trusts having limited car parking facilities to accommodate staff.

Whilst it is recognised not all staff who legitimately require permits can be accommodated other measures should be considered, for example safe transport to park and ride services.

Conference calls on the ICTU to join the RCM in campaigning for safer travel arrangements being addressed for HSC staff.

(The Royal College of Midwives RCM)

THE ECONOMY

5. New Economic Model

Conference endorses the comprehensive long-term model of economic development or **'New Economic Model'** developed by Congress and the Nevin Economic Research Institute for both economies on the Island of Ireland. Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Council to articulate and promote this new economic model at every opportunity within the trade union movement, and whenever dealing with external actors, including the media, business, academics and NGOs, the government, and other political parties.

Conference believes that the two economies on the Island of Ireland need to be transformed if they are to reach their full potential. We need an economy characterised by growth that is inclusive to all, by more and better jobs, by environmental sustainability, and with economic security, agency and collective bargaining guaranteed for everyone. To realise these goals the economy must be underpinned by dynamic public and private sectors, with policies emphasising resilient and sustainable long-term planning focused on the 'high-road' model of skills, innovation, productivity, sustainability and high wages rather than a short-termist 'low-road' strategy focused on competitiveness via driving down costs including wages and working conditions. Initiatives promoting collective bargaining such as the EU's Adequate Minimum Wage Directive provide a pathway for moving to a high-road economic model.

Conference notes that the time has come for a mature debate about the sustainability of our respective tax bases and about our collective policy failings in areas as diverse as housing, childcare, income adequacy, climate emissions, and infrastructure provision. Our enterprise policy must be based on the concept of the 'good company'. This means we should move away from supporting companies and sectors that either cannot or will not provide decent jobs with good pay. This should be reflected in our tax policy and in our public procurement policy.

Conference understands that we are entering a time of uncertainty and change. We are living through the megatrends of spiralling climate change, de-globalisation and tariffs, fast ageing demographics, and profound technological transformation. Given all of these challenges and the potential for other shocks our economies will need to be agile and resilient. Engaging with workers can help in this regard. Workers will also need to be given the proper tools to flourish no matter what shocks hit our economies. This means workers will need access to life-long learning opportunities and the protections that will enable them to avail of these opportunities. We will also need a social insurance system that adequately protects workers and does not force them into the first available job opportunity. Economic security is the bedrock of any sustainable economic model.

There can be no going back to the old flawed model. We need a new economic model that puts people first.

(Executive Council)

6. Post Pandemic State

Congress recognises the fundamental challenges facing workers on the island of Ireland now and in the years ahead. These include: the impact of climate change and the urgent need for workplaces to adapt to meet national and EU climate targets; advancements in technology, particularly the widespread adoption of AI; and the rising cost of living, which continues to burden workers and families across Ireland.

Congress recognises the significant impact that global shocks and risks can have on communities across the island. Brexit, Covid-19, the response to the war on Ukraine, and the decision of the US administration to impose tariffs on EU exports, all gave rise to growing uncertainty around the future of trade and employment.

Additionally, Congress notes that the approach of successive governments has been to address issues reactively rather than proactively, often on an election cycle basis, and without due regard to the well acknowledged challenges facing the country in the medium and long term.

Congress notes that the Republic of Ireland spends far less on public services than similar EU counterparts. In 2022, Ireland's public spending was 21.2% of GDP, compared to an EU average of 49.6%. When we adapt for Modified Gross National Income (GNI*), Ireland still falls short of the EU average at 39.4%. The "social wage" in Ireland is therefore extremely low compared to other European countries.

Congress believes that a radical expansion of the State, which increases the role of the government in providing essential public services, would improve the social wage and provide greater protections for workers, communities, and the wider economy against future geopolitical factors.

Congress acknowledges the publication of the "Irish State Post Pandemic" and the "Future of the Irish State - 2025 and Beyond" reports prepared by the Thinktank for Action on Social Change (TASC) that explore the role of a larger state and the need for stronger investment in public services, recommend interventions to protect workers' living standards, and address emerging challenges of climate change and digital transformation.

Furthermore, Congress rejects any attempts by our governments to narrow tax bases which would leave our economies further exposed to unpredictable market conditions.

Congress calls on the Executive Council and affiliates to urge the Irish Government to reshape economic strategy by moving away from an over-reliance on corporate tax receipts from foreign-owned multinationals, which currently account for over 85% of all corporate tax receipts. And to pursue a model which focusses on strong public investment in public services and infrastructure, the development of indigenous SMEs, and progressive measures to reduce inequality and improve the standard of living for workers and communities. State interventions should include:

- Ensuring that all people on the island of Ireland can be guaranteed a standard of living that allows for individual and community self-actualisation.

- Universal access to free healthcare that provides full and adequate support through all stages of life from childhood to old age.
- The delivery of secure and affordable public housing to meet actual demand
- Fully publicly funded and accessible, high-quality education at all levels, inclusive of early childhood education and care, primary and secondary education, and higher and further education
- An ambitious programme to meaningfully address climate change
- Robust investment in the provision of public services commensurate with our most ambitious European counterparts
- Development of indigenous industries, particularly those that seek to address some of our more significant societal challenges such as climate change.

(Executive Council)

7. Low Pay

Conference notes the extent of low-pay in the Republic's economy:

- One-in-five employees are officially categorised as low-paid, the seventh highest in the EU.
- More than one-in-ten people in employment suffer from enforced deprivation.
- Wage inequality is one of the highest in Europe.
- Low pay impacts particularly on women, young people, and migrant workers.

Conference further notes that such high levels of low pay and inequality undermine productivity, competitiveness and resilience, and that such an economy is not capable of meeting the momentous challenges we face - climate change, the introduction of AI, an increasing ageing demographic and deglobalisation caused by the rise of economic nationalism and the far right.

Conference calls on the incoming Executive to restate the goal of eliminating low pay from the Irish economy, pursuing a range of strategies to achieve this goal; in particular:

- Increasing the statutory wage floors to the low-pay threshold as called for by the Low Pay Commission; namely 66 percent of the median wage
- Vindicating employees' right to bargain collectively with their employers - at both the enterprise and sectoral level.
- Pursuing pay strategies that favour the low-paid as has been done in the public sector.
- Using public procurement as an instrument for reducing low pay through robust social clauses.
- Campaigning against the insidious labelling of wages as a cost: wages are the share of the value-added that employees themselves create in the economy.

- Challenging the business culture that perversely equates low pay with competitiveness.

By pursuing these strategies – statutory interventions, bargaining strategies, public supply-chains, and challenging low-road business culture – we can progress the goal of eliminating low-pay which, in turn, will boost living standards, boost consumer confidence, increase productivity and enhance our competitiveness. Eliminating low-pay is one of the key pathways to a more prosperous and resilient economy.

(SIPTU)

8. Industrial Policy for Jobs and a Future

Conference calls for Stormont to adopt an active industry policy for shipbuilding and aerospace sectors.

As part of Boeing's acquisition of Spirit Aerosystems, Airbus will buy the formerly Shorts operations in Northern Ireland in its own supply chain; however, this provides no security to the approximately 2,500 employed in the remainder of production there. There is a real risk that splitting operations will result in significant job losses. Furthermore, the division of production will impact economies of scale and the integrated nature of operations and raise a longer-term threat to production.

Likewise, the recent financial crisis at Harland and Wolff threatens the livelihoods of 650 employees and 134 apprentices in the shipyard. Despite winning the £1.6 billion Fleet Solid Support Ship contract, the parent company entered administration and Unite the union and GMB are calling for direct government intervention which must secure continuity of employment for the entire workforce in the event that a repudiable buyer with credible shipbuilding credentials has not come forward.

Conference recognises that the absence of an active and interventionist industry policy by Stormont leaves shipbuilding and aerospace workers exposed to the contingencies of the market and the prerogatives of profit. The failure to bring forward investment and to develop the industrial skills base means opportunities for growth through diversifying into socially beneficial production in maritime shipbuilding, aerospace or the renewable energy sectors are being missed.

Conference calls on the Northern Ireland Executive to bring forward an active industrial policy, in particular for the threatened aerospace and shipbuilding sectors. Stormont must back the unions' campaigns for job security, continuity of employment, investment in industrial skills and a future for our heavy industry sectors – and publicly demand the transfer of all Spirit (Shorts) production to a single operator.

(GMB Trade Union)

9. Western Rail Corridor

Conscious of the urgent need for balanced regional development and mindful of the current lagging status of the west and northwest in the EU, congress calls for the reopening of the Western Rail Corridor between Galway and Sligo to be prioritised; thus creating an economic synergy between the two largest cities of Connacht, fostering connectivity in education, tourism, health and travel and allowing for Ireland West Airport to be served by a renewed station at Charlestown.

Congress recognises the strategic importance of the Western Rail Corridor as a social, commercial and economic enabler for the West and North-West regions.

Congress calls upon the incoming National Executive of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to fully support the re-opening and further development of the western rail corridor.

Congress believes the Irish Congress of Trade Unions must use their collective lobbying power to influence government in both jurisdictions to ensure funding is made available for the Western Rail Corridor development along the western sea board from Ennis to Derry and that the Western Rail Corridor is an active priority for redevelopment.

Congress adopts the policy of the re-opening of the Western Rail Corridor and recognises the work of the grassroots West on Track campaign to lobby for the western rail corridor as a vital piece of infrastructure.

(Castlebar Trades Council)

FINANCE, ORGANISATION & ORGANISING PRIVATE SESSION

10. Amendment to the Constitution

Section V Finance
Paragraph 14

Paragraph 14 is amended to read as follows:

Following a motion passed at the BDC 2015, the affiliation fee payable by members is calculated on a hybrid system for determining affiliation fees based on four factors: an amount per member; plus, an amount per delegate to which each union is entitled to have at BDC; plus a flat fee element; plus an amount of .75c per member to fund the activities of the Nevin Economic Research Institute.

From January 1st, 2026, the rates for each element are:

- €2.66 per member; plus
- €835 per BDC delegate; plus
- € 1,671 flat fee per Union; plus
- .80¢ per member to fund the activities of the Nevin Economic Research Institute.

The affiliation fee payable in respect of membership in Northern Ireland shall be the Sterling equivalent based on the rate of exchange on 1 November preceding the year in respect of which the fees are payable. This rate of exchange shall be determined by the Executive Council based on the best advice available at the time. The foregoing is subject to a minimum affiliation fee of €2,060 being payable by any trade union.

The affiliation fee payable by trade unions with associate membership, shall be two thirds of the full membership rate per member, subject to a minimum affiliation fee to €1,373.

The Executive Council shall have sole discretion to waive all or part of the increase, in exceptional circumstances, where an application is made to it by an individual union prior to the due date for affiliation fees.

And

Following a motion passed at the BDC 2015, the affiliation fee payable by members is calculated on a hybrid system for determining affiliation fees based on four factors: an amount per member; plus, an amount per delegate to which each union is entitled to have at BDC; plus a flat fee element; plus an amount of .75c per member to fund the activities of the Nevin Economic Research Institute.

From January 1st, 2027, the rates for each element are:

- €2.74 per member; plus
- €860 per BDC delegate; plus
- € 1,721 flat fee per Union; plus
- .80¢ per member to fund the activities of the Nevin Economic Research Institute.

The affiliation fee payable in respect of membership in Northern Ireland shall be the Sterling equivalent based on the rate of exchange on 1 November preceding the year in respect of which the fees are payable. This rate of exchange shall be determined by the Executive Council based on the best advice available at the time. The foregoing is subject to a minimum affiliation fee of €2,122 being payable by any trade union.

The affiliation fee payable by trade unions with associate membership, shall be two thirds of the full membership rate per member, subject to a minimum affiliation fee to €1,415.

The Executive Council shall have sole discretion to waive all or part of the increase, in exceptional circumstances, where an application is made to it by an individual union prior to the due date for affiliation fees.

(Executive Council)

11. Amendment to the Constitution

Section V Finance
Paragraph 15

Paragraph 15 is amended to read as follows:

The annual affiliation fee payable by Local Council of Trade Unions from January 1st, 2026, shall be €52 if the affiliated membership is 6,500 or less, and €103 if the affiliated membership is in excess of 6,500. The affiliation fee payable in respect of Local Councils of Trade Unions in Northern Ireland shall be the Sterling equivalent of 1 November preceding the year in respect of which the fees are payable. This rate of exchange shall be determined by the Executive Council based on the best advice available at the time.

The annual affiliation fee payable by Local Council of Trade Unions from January 1st, 2027, shall be €54 if the affiliated membership is 6,500 or less, and €106 if the affiliated membership is in excess of 6,500. The affiliation fee payable in respect of Local Councils of Trade Unions in Northern Ireland shall be the Sterling equivalent of 1 November preceding the year in respect of which the fees are payable. This rate of exchange shall be determined by the Executive Council based on the best advice available at the time.

(Executive Council)

12. Amendment to Standing Orders

Paragraph 3(iii) will be amended to read as follows:

The Final Agenda containing motions and amendments and the Report of the Executive Council will be sent to all affiliated organisations and to delegates not later than fourteen days before the opening of the Biennial Delegate Conference and as early as is practicable in the case of a Special Delegate Conference.

(Executive Council)

13. Trades Councils

Recognising the adopted policy of Congress this Conference notes the Renewal and Growth Programme which identified the need for:

- Ensuring that the One initiative in Cork and Galway is utilised as a model for promoting better relations and co-operation between affiliates working at local level across the island.
- That full time resources at a central level in Congress are assigned to work with Local Trades Councils to rejuvenate and grow existing Councils.
- Seek to ensure that every county can have the potential to establish a trades council/Local trade union centre to play a key role in building trade union membership and greater union activity across all parts of the island.
- Establish a Local Trade Union Fund administered by the GPC and Executive Council which will be available to support organisational work projects identified and carried out by local trades councils.

Identifying these key elements are a priority part of organisational policy that a plan be put in place for its implementation.

To this end Congress will establish a formal committee of local trade union representatives from each county in accordance with this plan and in accordance with Congress policy under the direction of the Executive Council.

In acknowledging the historic relevance of the local trade union structures of Trades Councils and of the adopted policies since the Commission of 2011 we commit the firm endeavour of Congress to the establishment of clear unified bodies to be the active voice of the movements presence at local level.

The historic relevance of local trade union structures and the journey since the Commission report Congress commits to the establishment of clear unified bodies to be the preferred policy which will be encouraged.

Such a process should continue to be supported by Congress.

Conference acknowledges the important place of the trade union movement in Civil Society and the relevance of trade union participation in local communities.

In particular we see our place within Civil Society as important to the strengthening of our democracy and to a society which is both egalitarian and environmentally sustainable for all citizens.

To this end we will work with other groups at national and local level building Civil Society solidarity.

Congress will seek to ensure the movement has a continued presence on local democratic bodies and that this will be supported with suitable central resources to facilitate efficient involvement of our members on these bodies.

(Wexford Council of Trade Unions)

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

14. Health & Safety

Conference notes that health and safety and psychosocial risks are key issues for trade unions in collective bargaining as well as for workers seeking representation. Conference further notes the importance of the trade union Safety Representative in making workplaces safer and healthier and in promoting the value of organised workplaces and trade union membership.

Conference recognises the work undertaken by the ICTU Health and Safety Committee in lobbying the HSA to devote resources to supporting Safety Reps and urges the Authority to develop this important work. Conference welcomes the establishment of the Health and Social Care Advisory Committee which the HSA established in 2024. This tripartite grouping has an important role to play in advising the Authority on the issues facing workers in the health and social care sector.

Conference recognises that the world of work continues to change and that the development of Artificial Intelligence will present significant challenges to trade unions. This, together with the pressures caused by precarious work and attacks on public services, pose significant psychosocial risks for workers. Conference welcomes the piloting of the HSA Work Positive tool as a mechanism for assessing psychosocial risk within its workforce and urges other unions to follow suit.

Conference urges the Executive Council to continue to prioritise health and safety as a key trade union issue and to work with the ICTU Health and Safety Committee to:

- Highlight the role of the Safety rep in the organising agenda.
- Consider how Congress and affiliated trade unions can further support and resource safety reps; this to include the development of suitable training materials aimed at trade union officials as well as safety reps.
- Highlight the issue of psychosocial risk and support the lobby for an EU Directive on same.
- Lobby the HSA to establish an advisory group on psychosocial risk
- Continue to urge unions to pilot Work Positive within their own workplaces.

(Executive Council)

15. Recognising and supporting the vital role of health and safety representatives

This Congress recognises that the health, safety, and well-being of our members are fundamental to a safe, fair and productive workplace. We affirm that Health and Safety Representatives play an indispensable role in achieving this by advocating for workers, identifying hazards, and ensuring employers uphold their legal and moral responsibilities.

We note that workplaces with active Health and Safety Representatives consistently demonstrate lower rates of accidents, injuries, and occupational illnesses. These representatives serve as the voice of workers, bridging the gap between management and staff to foster a culture of safety. Their presence empowers members to raise concerns without fear, ensures compliance with regulations, and drives improvements that benefit all.

Therefore, this motion calls for the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to:

1. Develop a program on how trade union health and safety representatives can effectively organise around health & safety in their workplaces and build density.
2. Actively promote and support the appointment and training of Health and Safety Representatives in every workplace where our members are employed through the creation of a workplace health and safety charter, which includes core health and safety priorities such as psychological and psychosocial safety at work.
3. Provide ongoing support, resources and education to ensure these representatives are equipped to carry out their duties effectively through the development of a professionally accredited trade union health and safety course.
4. Campaign for stronger protections and recognition for Health and Safety Representatives by conducting a review of what new legislation is needed to ensure trade union health and safety reps are empowered and enabled to carry out their duties effectively.

(FÒRSA)

16. Statutory Redundancy

In November 2004 the then Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Micheál Martin signed Statutory Instrument S.I. No. 695/2004 setting statutory redundancy weekly calculation at €600.

According to the Central Statistics Office the average industrial wage was €645.62 per week. At the start of 2024 again according to the CSO the average industrial wage was €969.12. Furthermore, the Central Bank of Ireland in their 2024 Q1 report forecast pay on average to rise by 4.7% in 2024. This will bring the average industrial wage to €1014.69 pw by the end of 2024.

It is obvious that the statutory redundancy weekly calculation is completely out of sync with average industrial wage and is severely disadvantaging workers being who are losing their job and being made redundant.

This conference calls for the statutory redundancy weekly calculation to be brought in line with the average industrial wage and to be raised to €1015 and in the future to be adjusted annually in line with the average industrial wage and to seek that this becomes policy for the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

(CONNECT)

Amendment

Insert the following new paragraph after paragraph three - Furthermore, conference recognises that statutory redundancy provisions in Northern Ireland, as originally set out by the Westminster Government in the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, are age discriminatory.

Insert the following at the end of the current fourth paragraph -Conference also calls on the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to include, as part of its lobbying around the Northern Ireland Assembly's 'Good Jobs' Employment Rights Bill, calls to remove age discrimination from redundancy calculations in Northern Ireland. This would mean that all workers, irrespective of age, receive at least 1.5 weeks' pay for each year of service.

(USDAW)

17. Four Day Week

Four Day Week Ireland is a campaign advocating for a gradual, steady, managed transition to a shorter working week for all workers, in the private and public sectors.

The medium-term objective is to move towards the four-day week being the standard work arrangement across the economy, with no loss of pay. As with the five-day week today, it will not be the only work arrangement. For some sectors, employments and workers, different variations of reduced working hours and a shorter working week will need to co-exist alongside the benchmark of the four-day week.

We have seen many changes in the ways we work and live. Technology has improved production and removed barriers to new ways of working. Employers have seen the benefit of allowing for flexibility among their workforce. These changes are leading to more efficient working practices. Trade unions must ensure that technological and procedural advances benefit workers, their families, and communities.

Conference calls on the ICTU to affiliate to the *Four Day Week Ireland* campaign.

Conference also mandates the executive to actively support and campaign, in conjunction with affiliated trade unions and trades councils, to seek the support of

government, political parties, Dáil deputies, Senators, local authorities and wider society to reduce the 39-hour week to a 32-hour week with no loss of pay for all workers.

(Dublin Council of Trade Unions)

18. Collective Bargaining

The ability to organise and to bargain collectively are inextricably linked. One without the other is meaningless. First, we organise, then we bargain. This was the clear message from the *Future of Collective Bargaining* seminar hosted by ICTU in April 2023.

This message was reiterated soon afterwards with a widely supported motion on organising, passed at the 2023 Biennial Delegate Conference, calling for a campaign in support of improved conditions and protections for workplace organising.

The ongoing efforts of the SIPTU, Mandate, the Financial Services Union and the Communications Workers' Union, through the *Respect at Work* campaign, has brought to light the damaging impacts of employer hostility in the form of union busting and the urgent need for statutory reform to protect those who speak up and organise in their workplace.

Non-union workplaces are precarious workplaces and recent decisions by companies that enjoy strong revenues and healthy profits, especially those in the tech sector, have shown a callous disregard as they continue to make large numbers of workers redundant. In some cases, doing so in such a way as to sidestep their statutory obligation of consultation with elected staff representatives.

Efforts to organise workers in the private sector, especially in the technology sector, is met with fierce resistance by employers. The CWU strongly condemns companies that enjoy massive profits and all the benefits of operating in Ireland, but who fail to respect the true purpose of trade union membership: the ability to bargain collectively.

In both the public and private sectors, union activists and workplace representatives continue to face barriers, intimidation and inadequate protections which discourage participation and undermine the strength of the union movement as a whole. Contractual non-disclosure and non-discussion 'agreements' are increasingly being used to silence workers, creating a culture of fear that further erodes fundamental workplace rights. These practices are not isolated incidents but rather are widespread and systemic.

A strong trade union movement requires that all workers are afforded the same entitlement to safe representation and the ability to come together to bargain for decent pay, terms and conditions. A rising tide should lift all boats, but as things stand, some workers are without a lifeboat. What is good for private sector organising is good for the movement as a whole.

The Programme for Government includes a commitment to develop a National Action Plan on Collective Bargaining, a long-overdue step towards ensuring workers in Ireland have meaningful access to collective representation and bargaining rights.

Furthermore, it is noted that a majority of sitting TDs in Dáil Éireann have signed the *Respect at Work* campaign pledge which commits those elected representatives to support legislation to:

- Promote collective bargaining;
- Protects workplace representatives;
- Ensure the right to access a trade union at work.

Conference commends the work conducted by the ICTU to advance the collective bargaining agenda at every opportunity here at home and in Europe. Furthermore, conference calls on the incoming Executive to intensify its campaign to ensure that the commitments supported by a majority of TDs in the Oireachtas are delivered in full.

Conference reaffirms that without legal rights to access, protection and representation, workers across Ireland will continue to face isolation, fear and exclusion from one of the most basic rights in a democracy: the right to organise collectively for fair treatment at work.

(Communications Workers' Union CWU)

19. Apprenticeships and Minimum Wage

Currently section 5(b) of the National Minimum Wage act of 2000 provides that the act does not apply to the remuneration of a person who is an apprentice within the meaning of or under the Industrial Training Act 1967 or the Labour Services Act 1967.

Connect Trade Union following consultation with its Apprentice and Youth forum now call for the removal of this exemption from the act. Connect Trade Union believes that this exemption as outlined in the act is a disincentive for the taking up of apprenticeships, especially for those in more disadvantaged communities where there is little or no ability for families to subsidise members in the initial stages of their apprenticeships.

In addition, with the changing profile of apprentices and where the vast majority are post leaving certificate and where many will begin to incur rental, health and childcare costs, this exemption is an unfair burden which they should not have to carry while training in their chosen profession.

Therefore, we call on the conference to adopt this motion and ensure that it is a primary policy for congress in any future engagement for the ICTU with the government on pay and social policy.

(CONNECT)

20. Exploitation of Apprentices

"That this Conference, recognising the vital role of craft apprenticeships for the future of housebuilding, economic growth and the social wellbeing of our country, condemns the continuing exploitation of apprentices in relation to pay. The failure of Government to fix this and other issues impacting on apprentices, despite ministerial promises, is unacceptable and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency."

(Bray & District Council of Trade Unions)

21. Fair Employment and the Industrial Relations Act 1990

The 2021 ICTU Biennial Conference unanimously passed Motion 21 (text included below) on reforming the 1990 Industrial Relations Act moved by the Dublin Council of Trade Unions.

Motion 21 called for the 1990 Industrial Relations Act to be reformed to restore rights which trade unions had before 1990 and to seek an alternative legislative regime that would allow trade union and industrial action for individual workers, for issues that concern workers across society and across employers, and for effective solidarity to workers in dispute. Now four years later no such legislation is forthcoming.

Conference calls on the executive to set up a committee to identify the sections of existing legislation that need to be reformed or removed to enact this policy as adopted by conference in 2021.

Conference further calls on the executive to engage the experts needed to draft such a Bill and for the ICTU to launch a national campaign, in conjunction with affiliated trade unions and trades councils, to seek the support of government, political parties, Dáil deputies, senators, local authorities and wider society to amend existing legislation through a Fair Employment Bill.

[Motion 21, ICTU BDC 2021 "Conference recognises that the restrictions on trade union action in the 1990 Industrial Relations Act need to be opposed, and that the Act should be reformed to restore rights which trade unions had before 1990. Conference mandates the executive to seek an alternative legislative regime which would allow trade union and industrial action for individual workers, for issues that concern workers across society and across employers, and for effective solidarity to workers in dispute."]

(Dublin Council of Trade Unions)

22. Remote Working

Conference notes with concern recent announcements by some companies to end remote working for their employees, demanding staff return to the office on a full-time basis. Conference recognises the benefits of remote working for workers and employers including better work-life balance, reduced commuting time and costs, and higher productivity and job satisfaction.

Conference acknowledges the work done by trade unions in gaining significant changes to the original position adopted by Government on the code of practice on the right to request remote working in the Republic of Ireland.

Conference further acknowledges the code of practice on the right to request remote working in the Republic of Ireland is in its infancy.

Conference notes, with the evolving employer views on remote working that a review of the code is necessary.

Conference calls on ICTU to establish a grouping of relevant unions to study the effectiveness of the current code and to make any recommendations it deems necessary to ensure the code is fit for purpose, taking account of the evolving views on remote working and to report back to ICTU within three months.

(Financial Services Union FSU)

23. Public Service Pay Agreements and Other ICTU Negotiated Wage Increases

Conference resolves that PSA - 5.5.1 is applied as set out - 'the benefits of the agreement will be confined to those staff and employees represented by unions in membership of the ICTU OR other unions or representative associations which have notified the WRC of their intention to comply with the agreement'.) therefore when agreed, the terms and conditions contained therein apply solely to the members of the signatory trade unions.

Furthermore, all efforts to be made to ensure that all employers (including the Government) party to a collective agreement with trade unions fully understand that it only applies to the members of the trade unions. In addition, all trade unions that reach collective agreements with employers must seek to limit the benefits of the collectively bargained agreement to their relevant trade union members.

(Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation INMO)

24. Protection for seafarers working on the Irish Sea

Congress notes following the P&O Ferries scandal the UK Labour Government's Employment Rights Bill is introducing a welcome provision for a mandatory seafarer's charter covering pay, roster patterns and other conditions on short sea international ferry routes, including freight and passenger ferry routes in the Irish Sea.

The principle of the Charter is that it will seek to mandate minimum employment protections for seafarers and seeks to prevent undercutting and a further race to the bottom by exploitative operators such as Irish Ferries and P&O Ferries.

Congress further notes that in response to the P&O Ferries scandal the French Government has already introduced legislation similar to a mandatory charter on international ferry services between the UK and France and has held discussions with the UK government on the enforcement of stronger employment protections on these routes.

Congress supports a strong set of mandatory employment conditions for seafarers on all ferry services working on vessels in the Irish sea.

Congress therefore asks that ICTU works with maritime affiliates to lobby relevant politicians in Ireland to ensure the strongest cooperation between the Irish and UK governments for the effective implementation of not just the Mandatory Charter but also the strongest possible employment protection for seafarers, working on ferry links between ports in Ireland and the UK.

(RMT)

25. Equitable Technological Progress

Conference recognises the emerging impact of Artificial Intelligence in the workplace and the significant risks this poses to the displacement of jobs.

Conference notes a recent TASC report commissioned by the Financial Services Union into the impact of AI on Financial Services employment reported that approximately 63% of Irish jobs are exposed to AI disruption, with financial services emerging as one of the most affected sectors.

Conference believes that by fostering inclusive policy frameworks, investing in targeted upskilling initiatives, and promoting worker-centred AI adoption, Ireland can establish itself as a global leader in equitable technological progress.

Conference calls on employers to:

Establish AI adoption frameworks that involve workers and trade unions in decision-making.

To invest in targeted training programs that equip workers with AI-related skills with special attention given to marginalised groups, including women and younger workers, to ensure equitable access to upskilling opportunities.

To identify roles most vulnerable to automation and provide clear pathways for affected workers to transition into sustainable positions and to ensure AI systems are designed to avoid reinforcing bias in hiring and career progression.

Conference further call on Government to advocate for worker-centric priorities within the EU AI regulatory framework.

(Financial Services Union FSU)

26. Unfair Dismissals Act

That the ICTU seek the deletion of section 2 (a) of the Unfair Dismissals Act and insert the following

Section 2 (a) an employee (other than a person referred to in section 4 of this act) who is dismissed and whose dismissal does not result wholly or mainly from matters referred to in section 6 (2) (f) of this act. And delete a year or less and insert 3 months in Section 3. -(1) (a). And insert a new sub-section (g) in Section

6. To read as follows: (g) Where an employer has failed to act reasonably to prevent bullying, victimisation, and harassment, reasonably assess complaints, record actions and suitable response, and comply with agreed grievance and fair procedures based on each case’.

(Kildare Trades Council)

27. Redundancy Act 1967-2023

Conference calls on the ICTU Executive to commence a political campaign to amend the Redundancy Payment Act 1967-2023 with particular focus on the maximum statutory ceiling of €600 to be increased to €1,000 as the €600 has not been aligned to cost of living increases or wage movements for some 20 years.

(Meath Council of Trade Union)

28. Supporting collective pay bargaining

Conference notes with concern the increasing focus by employers, especially in the finance sector, on performance-related ‘pay pots’, coupled with the use of forced-distribution matrices, instead of collectively-bargained pay increases.

Performance matrices incorporating a forced distribution of performance assessments are not only inherently discriminatory but, given the pre-determined distribution, ensure that a specific number of workers will always receive a below-average performance-related pay increase.

Conference also notes the use by employers of sectoral pay surveys by external consultants when negotiating pay, and further notes that this promotes pay benchmarking against sectoral competitors rather than against profits.

Conference is of the view that the pay determination methods outlined above are designed to undermine union workplace organisation and free collective bargaining on pay and can be used by unscrupulous employer as an insidious form of union-busting.

Conference therefore instructs Congress to survey affiliates to ascertain the prevalence of

- a. (performance-related ‘pay pots’;
- b. forced-distribution performance matrices; and
- c. (sectoral pay surveys carried out by external consultants
- d. (employers’ use of performance-related assessments to penalise and coerce workers, rather than to positively incentivise performance.

Conference further instructs Congress to develop a strong campaign highlighting the impact of these practices on free collective bargaining and demanding their abolition.

(UNITE the Union)

29. Protecting Retail Workers from Abuse, Threats and Violence

Conference is deeply concerned that abuse, threats and violence against retail workers is at an all-time high. Research by Usdaw shows that over two-thirds of our members working in retail are suffering abuse from customers, with far too many experiencing threats and violence. Despite efforts from retailers to make stores safe and secure, the retail crime epidemic continues, with official figures showing that shoplifting has doubled since the pandemic.

Conference is concerned by the disproportionate impact of this issue with women, young workers and Black workers, most often on the receiving end of the worst types of abuse.

Conference recognises the clear need for legislation that creates a specific offence for abusing, threatening or assaulting a retail worker. This legislation must carry a stiff penalty to make it clear that the abuse of retail workers is unacceptable.

Conference welcomes plans in the North to introduce a new standalone offence through the Sentencing Bill, with similar legislation already in place in Scotland and plans to introduce a new law in England and Wales this year.

Conference believes that all retail workers across the island of Ireland deserve firm legal protection from abuse, threats and violence and calls on the ICTU to:

- Publicly support Usdaw's 'Freedom from Fear' Campaign by highlighting the toll retail crime is taking on retail workers.
- Campaign for all retail workers to be protected by effective legislation against abuse, threats and violence.
- Make the case to employers to protect retail workers and enforce zero-tolerance policies in stores.
- Campaign for extra funding for community policing, so that there is a significant increase in uniformed patrols in neighbourhoods and town centres.

(USDW)

30. Access to Additional Working Hours for Existing Staff & Removal of the Sub-Minimum Wage

This motion is proposed in support of, and in alignment with, the findings of Mandate Trade Union's Smoke and Mirrors report authored by Dr. Conor McCabe of Queen's University Management School, Belfast, and launched in 2023.

Conference notes:

- While the Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018 is currently in force, the mandated report on involuntary underemployment under Section 21 remains outstanding.

- The European Union Council Directive 97/81/EC (15 December 1997), Clause 5.3(b), which upholds the right of part-time workers to request to move to full-time positions or to increase their working hours where opportunities arise, has yet to be transposed into Irish legislation – despite being in effect for over 27 years.

Conference further notes:

- The National Minimum Wage (Equal Pay for Young Workers) Bill 2022 seeks to eliminate the lower minimum wage rates applied to workers aged 16 to 20.
- On 14 June 2023, while this Bill was brought forward, an amendment was proposed by the then Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. This amendment, which was passed by a majority of TDs, deferred further consideration of the Bill by twelve months.

Therefore, Conference calls on the incoming Executive to:

- Actively pursue the completion and publication of the report on involuntary underemployment as required under the Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018.
- Campaign for the full and proper transposition of Council Directive 97/81/EC Clause 5.3(b) into Irish law, thereby ensuring that part-time workers can access opportunities to increase their working hours.
- Engage with all relevant stakeholders – including political representatives, advocacy organisations, and the wider labour movement – to ensure that the National Minimum Wage (Equal Pay for Young Workers) Bill 2022 is passed into law. This will address the unjust and discriminatory wage disparities that currently affect young workers in Ireland.

(MANDATE)

PUBLIC SERVICES/ SOCIAL POLICY

31. Equality Motion

Conference welcomes the work pioneered by the Joint Women's Committee in ending all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), in the workplace and in society.

Conference recognises that the causes of VAWG are rooted in structural inequalities, including in the labour market, and misogyny. Given the rise in the latter this work is now more important than ever.

Conference welcomes the publication of the Ending Violence against Women and Girls strategy in Northern Ireland; at the same time however, other social inclusion strategies including an anti-poverty strategy and a gender equality strategy languish under the Department for Communities. Without a joined-up approach from Government to tackle poverty and enduring gender inequalities, the root causes of VAWG will never be truly addressed.

Conference welcomes the creation of CUAN – the Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (DSGBV) Agency and urges trade unions to seek to work in partnership with them. The imminent National Strategy for Women and Girls will also be an important roadmap for gender equality in the Republic of Ireland.

Conference welcomes the recent White Ribbon workplace Programme to end domestic, sexual and gender-based violence and congratulates those unions who have participated. Bystander training is an important element of this work and should continue to be developed within the movement.

Finally, the active engagement of men and boys in gender-based violence prevention is a key element of our work. Conference calls on all trade union men to become allies in ending gender inequality and gender-based violence. Your actions speak louder than words so strive to show respect, stand up for what's right and support women. This will provide other men with role models that will create a ripple effect in our trade unions and workplaces.

(Executive Council)

32. Domestic Violence

That this conference reiterates its demand for an end to all forms of domestic abuse or gender-based violence. While it can affect people of all genders, the overwhelming majority of abuse cases are directed at females. Conference expresses its sympathy and solidarity with the victims and survivors of that abuse and our deep outrage at the long and sadly growing list of women and girls who have been murdered in their own homes.

Conference welcomes the fact that ending violence against women and girls is one of ten priorities in the Northern Ireland programme for government; however, at the same time, conference notes that core funding for domestic abuse support organisations has been ended and local emergency accommodation and shelters are completely inadequate to meet the number of victims and family members presenting in many areas.

Conference recognises that putting an end to domestic abuse and male chauvinism is not just a women's issue – it is an issue for the entire workers' movement. Domestic abuse is not limited to domestic violence but includes coercive control and micro-managing partners. Chauvinist attitudes provide cover for abuse and it is vital that they be made socially unacceptable. Male trade unionists have a particular responsibility to challenge and call out sexist attitudes and misogynist behaviour wherever and whenever it arises.

Sexist attitudes are ingrained and reflect the interests of a capitalist economy which profits from the exploitation of workers and the super-exploitation of female workers. By comparison, the strength of the trade union movement is based on solidarity and in turn workers' solidarity is rooted on the principle of equality of all.

Conference instructs the incoming executive and affiliates to bring forward an initiative encouraging male workplace reps to step up and join their female colleagues in the fight to put an end to sexist and misogynistic attitudes and domestic abuse and violence.

(Fermanagh Council of Trades Unions)

33. Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

Conference recognises the urgent need to address and eliminate violence against women and girls across both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland, which includes domestic violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence in all its forms;

Conference acknowledges the increasing levels of misogyny and the pervasive culture of sexual harassment in workplaces, which contribute to the silencing of women and girls, and further entrench gender inequality;

Conference commends the efforts made by unions, activists, and women's organisations in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland in raising awareness and advocating for policy changes to address these issues, but notes that much more needs to be done to ensure meaningful change;

Conference calls on Congress to adopt a Shared Island Approach to tackling violence against women and girls, acknowledging the interconnectedness of issues on both sides of the border and the need for cross-jurisdictional collaboration. This approach should prioritise:

- i. **Strong, Coherent Policy Action:** Advocate for the alignment of policies and strategies across the island to address violence against women and girls, ensuring both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland adopt complementary approaches to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.
- ii. **Legislation and Enforcement:** Work toward uniform legislation on sexual harassment, domestic violence, and workplace safety, ensuring that both workers and employers understand their rights and obligations under the law, with robust enforcement mechanisms in place.
- iii. **Support for Survivors:** Push for enhanced and accessible support services for survivors of violence, including but not limited to counselling, legal aid, and safe housing, across the island, and ensure that these services are adequately resourced and accessible to all women and girls.

Conference urges Congress to prioritise the elimination of misogyny and sexual harassment in workplaces, advocating for the following actions:

- i. Training and Education: Mandatory training for employers, trade unions, and employees on gender equality, sexual harassment, and bystander intervention to create safer work environments where harassment and discrimination are not tolerated.
- ii. Zero-Tolerance Policies: Push for the introduction of zero-tolerance policies for sexual harassment, bullying, and any form of gender-based violence in workplaces, with clear reporting mechanisms, investigation processes, and appropriate sanctions for perpetrators.
- iii. Enhanced Protection and Advocacy: Strengthen workers' rights by ensuring that workers who experience violence or harassment at work are supported through fair grievance procedures, access to legal aid, and protection from retaliation. Advocacy should focus on creating safe reporting environments where victims can come forward without fear of retribution.

(NASUWT)

34. Carers Leave

While changes have been made to the supports offered to Carers in the Government's 2024 Budget, the elimination of the means test for those in receipt of Carers Allowance does not go far enough. The majority of those in receipt of Carers Benefit and Carer's Allowance payment are women. Opting to care for loved ones is often not a choice but a necessity and is a gendered issue. Persons in receipt of Carer's Benefit are permitted to avail of paid employment for up to 18.5 hours per week. This enables them to maintain a connection with their employment if they have the capacity to do so. When the 104 weeks expires, a decision must be made either to return to previous working arrangements or sever the link with the employer. In many cases family members need further care for an unspecified time into the future.

Carers provide an essential service to their Community, Society and to the State at a much-reduced cost in comparison to alternative care arrangements for their family members. Restricting the period of time where Carers can receive financial support may result in exposure to poverty for that family.

Under the provisions of the Carer's Leave Act 2001, a person may apply to avail of Carer's Benefit and take a leave of absence from their place of employment for a period of time, up to 104 weeks. Following this they must return to their previous work arrangements or terminate their employment. Restricting the number of weeks that a person may suspend their employment often has negative consequence for Carers and for those they provide care for. This puts immense stress on families and compels people to make life changing decisions sooner than necessary.

ESU therefore calls on Congress to work with other key stakeholders to campaign to change the provisions of the Carer's Leave Act (2001) to remove the time limit of 104 weeks.

(Energy Services Union of Ireland ESU)

35. Securing 52 Weeks Full-Pay Maternity Leave for All Workers in Ireland

Conference is aware that current maternity pay arrangements across our jurisdictions fall short of international best practices and fail to provide sufficient support for new mothers, particularly in high-risk and public service sectors.

Research and campaigns such as the Fire Brigades Unions' "Fight for 52" Campaign which has already seen some fire and rescue services in the UK introduce 52 weeks full-pay maternity leave policies, demonstrating that extended maternity provision significantly improve occupational safety, recruitment, retention, and the overall inclusion of women in the workplace.

Poor maternity provisions are driving experienced staff away in key sectors such as healthcare, education, and emergency services. This issue is not only a matter of women's rights but a critical workforce challenge that affects us all, as paternity and shared parental leave provision are also contributing factors to be addressed. Conference understands that the existing disparities in maternity pay contribute to a "postcode lottery" effect, whereby workers in some regions (and sectors) receive markedly inferior benefits.

Workers in lower-paid sectors and those from a minority background are particularly affected by poor maternity leave provisions creating inequality for many when starting a family. This inequality is not only unjust but also undermines efforts to build an inclusive, family-friendly working environment across both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. International comparisons reveal that Ireland lags behind the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, average in maternity leave provisions, placing an undue burden on working families during a critical period of life.

Unifying the approach to maternity benefits across the island is essential to uphold equality and safeguard the health and wellbeing of workers and their children.

Conference therefore instructs that;

- ICTU endorses a unified campaign for the introduction of 52 weeks of full-pay maternity leave for all workers across Ireland, regardless of sector or region
- ICTU to call upon government bodies and employers in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to review and harmonise current maternity pay policies, ensuring that they are at least in line with international best practices and adequately protect the health, safety, and economic security of new mothers
- that special attention shall be given to addressing occupational hazards and ensuring comprehensive pre-birth and post-birth provisions, recognising that women working in physically demanding and hazardous environments deserve enhanced protection and support
- trade unions are urged to mobilise their memberships to advocate for these improved maternity benefits, emphasising that secure, full-pay maternity leave

is essential to combat gender inequality, promote the retention and recruitment of talented workers, and foster a truly inclusive workforce

- ICTU to initiate a cross-jurisdictional dialogue between employers, unions, and government representatives, aimed at establishing a sustainable framework to finance and implement these enhanced maternity provisions uniformly across the island.

(Fire Brigades Unions FBU)

36. Defend Civil Servants and Civil Service Values

Congress recognises the challenging and complex political landscape facing civil servants in NI working in the context of the power-sharing Executive.

Congress notes that during the period of the Executive collapse between 2022-2024, the UK government placed an additional burden on civil servants through The Executive Formation (Northern Ireland) Act 2023, forcing civil servants to make difficult decisions under extreme budgetary and political pressure. Congress commends the professionalism and dedication of civil servants in NI who have continued to deliver public services despite the challenges of Executive collapse compounded by other challenges including Brexit, COVID19, the cost-of-living crisis and significant under-funding, underlining the importance of a permanent, impartial civil service.

Congress acknowledges that the hard work of civil servants is generally recognised across the public with NISRA figures suggesting trust in the NI civil service, on average, is above 75%, comparing favourably to the Northern Ireland Assembly and the media.

Congress condemns the use of civil servants as scapegoats for political failure. Civil servants are accountable to minister's who are accountable to the public. Civil servants, by convention, have no right of public reply, it is therefore deeply unfair for elected representatives to use their public profile to criticise civil servants.

(FDA)

37. Means testing and other eligibility criteria for fuel support payments

Conference notes the large body of evidence that shows retirement income adequacy is very strongly co-related with older people's quality of life and health outcomes.

Conference recognises that ancillary payments to the core pension payment are a vital financial resource for many pensioners. The Winter Fuel Payment and Fuel Allowance, which help toward the cost of home heating bills during the colder months, are key for ensuring retirement income adequacy, given a higher proportion of older people's expenditure goes on fuel and high energy prices in both jurisdictions. Yet means testing and the household composition eligibility criteria are barriers to fair access and adequate support, forcing retired workers on a modest pension to choose between heating and eating.

Conference resolves:

- to campaign to reverse the introduction of means-testing for the Winter Fuel Payment.
- to campaign to have the Department of Social Protection institute a review of the household composition rules for the Fuel Allowance for over 66s.

(Executive Council)

38. Pensions

The spike in inflation in recent years has seen workers across the country see their take home income significantly reduced with many pay increases agreed with our members and their respective companies being consumed by inflation and the increases in products and services that we all see every day.

This continues despite the reported inflation figures being much reduced from the massive spike post Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

This is no different for those retired members in pension schemes that failed to pay increases to match the level of inflationary costs incurred by retirees who have seen a real and significant reduction in their living standards.

We call on congress to engage with government to introduce legislation mirroring the English "Triple Lock" system that sees guaranteed increases in the state pension.

We believe that increases to the state pension should be made along the following lines. The increase will match the highest of these three percentages:

- how much general living costs have risen by inflation;
- the average wage increases of the previous year, or;
- 2.5%.

For example, if the inflation rate was 1.7% and the average wage increase was 4%. This meant the State Pension would be increased by 4%. This formula also guarantees a minimum increase of 2.5%.

The government should also legislate so that private pension providers are not able to abuse this increase by reducing their pension payments or consuming the state increase into pensioners private payments.

We call on congress to engage with government to introduce legislation that guarantees and protects fair pension increases for current and future pensioners.

(Guinness Staff Union GSU)

39. Public Investment in Higher Education and the Protection of Educators' Wellbeing

This BDC reaffirms the critical role of public higher education in building a democratic, informed, and equitable society. In light of mounting financial strain across the third-level sector, growing student numbers, and the increasing casualisation of academic labour, this Conference stands in solidarity with all educators and researchers who face systemic underfunding, exploitation, and political scapegoating.

We note with alarm the precedent set in other jurisdictions, such as the Trump administration's deliberate undermining of academic freedom, vilification of critical inquiry, and withdrawal of research funding. This serves as a stark warning of the political and social cost of failing to defend higher education and those who work within it.

This Conference recognises the efforts of IFUT and others in seeking to secure sustainable funding and defend the wellbeing of staff across the sector. However, without a coordinated and urgent response across the union movement, the situation will continue to deteriorate.

Accordingly, this BDC instructs the incoming executive of ICTU to:

1. Vigorously support public investment in higher education as a public good and a democratic imperative.
2. Prioritise the elimination of precarious employment in the Higher Education sector, in line with broader anti-casualisation efforts across all sectors.
3. Work with affiliated unions to launch a nationwide campaign demanding sustainable staffing levels, fair workloads, fair and transparent promotion procedures, and proper protections for educators' professional wellbeing.
4. Defend academic freedom, and the autonomy and integrity of academic work, against both market and political pressures—drawing lessons from international contexts where higher education has come under attack.

Let us not wait until Irish higher education reaches the crisis seen abroad. Let us act now, with strength, unity, and vision.

(Irish Federation of University Teachers IFUT)

40. Health Inequalities

ICTU calls on the Government to take meaningful action to reduce health inequalities including a whole of Government approach to addressing the social, environmental and commercial determinants of health.

(Irish Medical Organisation IMO)

41. Educational Supports

- a. Commends the huge efforts made by teachers and other education staff on the island of Ireland to include and support all children in the education system,
- b. acknowledges that this work is being done in the context of an increasing level of diagnosis of need,
- c. denounces the absence of fully staffed and resourced health and education systems and the resultant failure to provide appropriate therapeutic, counselling, psychological and teaching supports for children with additional needs, and
- d. calls on the governments in both jurisdictions to:
 - Increase funding to reduce waiting lists and improve access to children's mental health services;
 - Implement early intervention programmes to identify and support pupils with additional needs from early years through to the end of tertiary education;
 - Provide multidisciplinary assessments in pre-school settings to support early intervention;
 - Establish and implement frameworks for educational transitions, ensuring continuity of care and learning;
 - Ensure all supports and resources allocated in early years settings transition with children into primary education;
 - Develop centralised pupil databases to streamline the updating of pupil information and resource allocation, ensuring clear communication with schools and parents before implementation;
 - Deliver prompt, effective individualised counselling and therapeutic supports in both mainstream and special school settings and increase the availability of nursing care staff and multi-disciplinary professionals in special school settings;
 - Organise ongoing, accessible and fully funded professional development for all teachers to enable them to fully support children with special education needs; and
 - Promote stronger engagement with parents by support services to align expectations with the resource's schools can provide; and
 - Employ sufficient teachers and health professionals to guarantee that all children who require additional teaching and care supports have timely and adequate access to them.

(Irish National Teachers' Organisation INTO)

42. Endorsing the UNICEF Rights of the Child

As a union we are dedicated to supporting school leaders in ensuring that every child has access to high-quality, inclusive learning. Central to this mission is our commitment to enabling school leaders to uphold the right of all children, at home and globally, to realise their full human rights. With this in mind, as a union, we want to call upon ICTU to formally adopt as the rights of the child as contained within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This convention and the values contained within it will provide a guiding framework for all that we do.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), guarantees fundamental rights to education, safety, health, and protection from harm for all children. These rights are crucial in ensuring that every child, regardless of background, has the opportunity to thrive. However, the rise of right-wing political movements has threatened such international human rights laws.

International agreements overseen by organisations like the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation play a key role in protecting trade unionists and the communities they serve. These agreements safeguard against exploitation, ensure fair working conditions, and uphold the right to organise. However, as right-wing populism grows, these institutions face increasing pressure and delegitimisation, making it harder to advocate for workers, children, and young people. Defending these agreements is crucial to preserving the protections that allow communities to flourish.

We believe that:

1. Every child has the right to quality education, free from discrimination, and with the necessary support to meet their individual needs.
2. Children must be protected from all forms of harm, including neglect, exploitation, and violence, ensuring their well-being and safety.
3. Governments, schools, and educators have a responsibility to uphold and advocate for children's rights in all aspects of education and policy.
4. The best interests of the child must be at the heart of all decision-making, ensuring that policies, funding, and practices prioritise children's welfare and development.
5. Children's voices should be heard and respected in matters affecting their lives, particularly in education and school governance.

In the wake of fresh threats to international frameworks of human rights-based protections for our children and young people, we therefore resolve to call on ICTU to:

- Formally adopt the UNICEF Rights of the Child as a statement of principles core to ICTU values.
- Lobby governments to fully implement the UNCRC in education systems, ensuring that children's rights are embedded in law, policy, and practice.
- Challenge, through international trade union efforts, the delegitimisation of international human rights law and institutions.
- Advocate at all times for the education and welfare of children during times of humanitarian crisis.

(NAHT)

43. Parental Leave

Family friendly arrangements are a vital component in the suite of measures that enhance the wellbeing of staff and benefit employers. Research shows that the mutual benefits are considerable.

That the Irish Congress of Trade Unions call on the Department of Education to agree more flexible arrangements for teachers to avail of Parental Leave than currently exist.

(Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland)

44. Supporting Educators

As a union of educators, we are committed to creating safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments for all students, staff, and families. We recognise that third-party violence, particularly that fuelled by online disinformation poses a significant threat to these values and to our school communities and workplaces. Of particular concern in recent years is the widespread availability and influence of misogynistic content, as well as racist and homophobic/transphobic rhetoric fuelled largely by a small but vocal far right movement.

In response to these growing threats of far-right violence, we commit to:

1. Supporting educators/workers in reporting incidents and concerns related to far-right extremism, threats and incidents of violence.
2. Providing resources and training for educators/workers to recognise and respond to disinformation that threatens the safety of workers and the wider community that they serve.
3. Advocating for policies and protocols that prioritise student and staff safety, particularly in the face of external threats.
4. Building partnerships with local community organisations to prevent and respond to incidents of far-right violence.
5. At a national level, developing lines of communication between unions/ICTU and the Gardai to ensure fast and informed responses to threats to worker safety.
6. Promoting inclusive and equitable educational practices that confront harmful ideologies, empower vulnerable community members, and cultivate empathy, critical thinking and social responsibility.

We condemn all forms of violence, intimidation, and harassment, and we will not tolerate any attempts to disrupt the educational process or compromise the well-being of our students and colleagues. We will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that our schools remain safe, welcoming, and inclusive spaces for all.

(Teachers' Union of Ireland TUI)

45. Challenging Racism, all forms of hatred and promoting rights and equality for all

Conference condemns the incidents of violence, racism and hate crime that have been witnessed across both jurisdictions, such as the hundreds of anti-immigration protests, the riots in Dublin in November 2023 and across Northern Ireland in August 2024. Conference condemns this unequivocally and recognises that this has seriously impacted minority ethnic communities, including our members and their families. Health workers have been driven from their homes and children from their schools.

Conference notes the disturbing trend of the far-right to coordinate and collaborate with one another across both jurisdictions, often through using social media to orchestrate demonstrations and spread misinformation and disinformation. Conference supports the work being done to map and challenge this activity and notes the significant report undertaken by Rabble. Coop, commissioned by the Equality Coalition, co-convened by CAJ and UNISON, due to be launched in May 2025.

Conference notes that it has fallen to the trade union movement and wider civic society to challenge the rise of racism and the far right in a manner that has not been matched by effective actions from government and public bodies in both jurisdictions. Conference calls on the Executive Council, working with wider civic society across both jurisdictions, to progress a coordinated campaign for strong hate crimes legislation and effective, rights-based Racial Equality strategies progressed by all parts of government and the public services.

Conference recognises the efforts of ICTU and affiliates in taking action to protect our members from harm and challenge racism. Conference calls on the incoming Executive Council to work with affiliates to ensure that the actions required to challenge racism continue and intensify.

Conference supports the Stronger Together Anti-Racist Workplaces and Trade Unions Project, which has developed a number of initiatives to support our collective membership in the delivery of anti-racism initiatives.

Conference calls on the Executive Council, further to the project that has already been established, to deepen cooperation and joint working with affiliates, their own Black and Migrant Workers' membership structures and allied organisations to ensure effective 'zero-tolerance' policies exist in the workplace and to ensure that the right supports are in place for workers affected by racism and discrimination.

Conference calls on Congress to take the lead in organising, supporting and coordinating anti-racism demonstrations and campaigns alongside other allies and groups. Conference calls on the Executive Council to ensure dialogue with others organising anti-racism activities and initiatives, so that activities can be planned and coordinated with the involvement of trade unions from an early stage, for maximum impact.

(UNISON)

46. Water Referendum

That ICTU will vigorously campaign for a Referendum to amend Article Article 28 Section 4:2:1.... of Bunreach na hÉireann, to add "The Government shall be collectively responsible for the Protection, Management and Maintenance of the Public Water System.

The Government shall ensure in the Public interest that this resource remains in Public Ownership".

(Waterford Council of Trade Unions)

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

47. Global Solidarity

In the light of the rulings of the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court this conference calls on the Irish Government:

- to fulfil its legal and moral obligations by instituting sanctions against Israel,
- to rescind the IHRA definition of antisemitism which is being used to repress solidarity support for the Palestinian people globally and is incompatible with the rights affirmed in the Good Friday Agreement which both the Irish and UK governments are obliged to respect on the Island of Ireland,
- to hold accountable those who have infringed the rights of Palestinian solidarity activists, including Mothers Against Genocide in their protests against the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people.

(Executive Council)

48. Peace and Neutrality

The inevitable economic and social crises resulting from years of neoliberalism have created a dangerously unstable world. Rather than seeking peaceful settlements, conflicts are being fuelled and appear to be escalating towards a global war.

While the Far Right create threats from an internal "other" to achieve power in the interests of big capital, many centrist governments are creating external "enemies" in response to their failure to solve the crisis in their economies inflicted by the demands of globalised capital.

This trend has led to the expansion of NATO and demands from governments for increased military spending at the expense of public services and welfare, development and economic investment in parts of the economy less harmful to humanity and the planet.

In Ireland this has also resulted in the undermining of its historic position of neutrality with government's intention to remove the Triple Lock which stands as a bulwark against deploying Irish troops unless there is a UN mandate to do so.

Neutrality allowed Ireland to be a courageous voice on the international stage proudly championing peace initiatives even when doing so meant challenging the interests of the world's most powerful nations. Building campaigns for peace and defending Ireland's neutrality must be urgent issues for trade unions today.

Therefore, conference calls on the ICTU Executive Council to:

1. Campaign for the continuation of the Triple Lock mechanism on the deployment of Irish military overseas, or for its reinstatement should it be removed.
2. Oppose any attempt to bring Ireland into any military alliance such as NATO, and any move to form a European Union military force.
3. Oppose the Irish Government's moves to increase military budgets as recommended by the European Union and campaign for reallocation of these budgets to address urgent social needs such as housing.
4. Consistently campaign to ensure that the Irish Government and the NI Executive parties, while recognising the restrictions of the Executive's remit, promote and support peaceful diplomatic solutions to all international conflicts.
5. Work with other organisations to promote peace, defend Irish neutrality including the Triple Lock, and oppose further militarisation.

(Belfast & District Trades Union Council)

49. Peace and Militarisation

"That this Conference expresses its concern about the trend in both the Ireland and the UK, towards increased military spending and bellicosity in the diplomatic and political spheres, recognising that increased military spending necessarily involves a diversion of public funds and investment away from public and social provision.

Conference, while conscious of the conflicts across the globe, including in Europe and the dangers of an extended conflagration, calls for a greater emphasis on diplomatic efforts to reduce tensions and bring an end to war. Whilst recognising that Irish neutrality has been diluted over recent years, Conference reiterates its pro neutrality policy and calls upon the Executive Council to:

1. Oppose any attempt to bring this country into any military alliance such as NATO and any embryonic European Union military force.
2. Support the continuation of the so-called Triple Lock governing the deployment of Irish military personnel abroad.
3. Pressure the Irish government into utilising the positivity associated with the neutral status of Ireland to promote diplomatic solutions to international conflicts.

In pursuing these policies conference is mindful that an active militarily nonaligned foreign policy represents the most secure method of defending Irish interests and protecting the Irish people from hostile forces. In pursuit of this policy conference calls upon the Executive Council to work alongside other bodies in defense of Irish neutrality and in particular, the Triple Lock and against increased militarisation in the EU."

(Bray & District Council of Trade Unions)

50. Welfare not warfare motion

Congress notes that governments everywhere seems to be embracing the new arms race. The Dublin government is moving towards ending the triple lock, thereby threatening neutrality, while the UK government plans to cut disability benefits in order to pay for rearmament.

Conference thereby agrees to:

- Oppose rearmament;
- Defend the triple lock and neutrality;
- Defend welfare and defund warfare.

(Derry Trades Union Council)

51. Opposition to Militarisation

The current period of capitalism is marked by increasing tensions between economic superpowers, concentrated accumulation of wealth in the hands of a small percentage of humanity and the tendency for this layer in society to exercise their political power more openly in their own direct financial interests.

These developments are ideologically underpinned by a marked rise in reactionary militarism, jingoism, racism and the patriotism of the bosses. This is most obviously expressed by the more openly reactionary governments but even those governments who seek to give the impression of a liberal attitude are increasingly featuring some or all of these ideas.

Conference notes that it is in the direct interests of capitalism to use this ideology to divide the working class and the trade union movement and that these ideas are a clear and current danger to the future of the trade union movement.

With that in mind Conference calls for unity between the workers of the world and commits to use all possible actions to oppose reactionary militarism, jingoism, racism and the patriotism of the bosses.

(NIPSA)

52. Promote collaboration to stand up to hate and counteract the rise of the far right

Ireland and the UK has seen an alarming rise in support for far-right politics and anti-immigration rhetoric. This is a trend that we are seeing internationally. Recent elections in European countries have shown seismic gains for far-right parties. The rise of right-wing politics is also clear to see in North and South America and their international strategies in the face of the conflict in the Ukraine has fostered fresh fears of security threats to Europe more widely.

We recognise that:

- Governments dominated by far-right political parties have suppressed fundamental freedoms, including the right to strike and the right to bargain collectively for fair terms and conditions.
- That such governments undermine the right of all children to access a properly funded education system. Evidence from across Europe shows that investment in education and essential services for children and young people decreases under far-right administrations.
- Anti-immigration rhetoric and the targeting of minorities creates a culture of fear, which threatens the peaceful and prosperous future of a generation of school pupils.
- The trade union movement is the largest civil society movement and therefore we have prominent role to play in standing up to hate.

We call upon ICTU to:

- Signpost support on how to counteract hate spurred on by far-right political sympathies.
- Work with unions nationally and internationally to develop collective strategies to counteract hate.
- Work with sister unions to tackle the global threat of the far right, defend workers' rights and build stronger unions.

(NAHT)

53. Palestine

Around the world workers, in their unions, have stood in solidarity against apartheid and genocide. In Ireland it was Dunnes Stores workers in the 80's standing against apartheid South Africa. Most recently it is Swedish dockers standing against Israel's genocide. In both instances, decades apart, the courage of the workers has been met with dismissal and criminalisation.

Erik Helgeson is the latest victim. In December SDU union members voted to boycott military cargo for six days in protest at Israel's war crimes in Gaza. The action was upheld as legal in a ruling from Sweden's employment courts, but on the day of the ruling Mr Helgeson was fired by his employer Gothenburg RoRo Terminal. Its major majority owner, DFDS's, operates in Irish and British terminals in Rosslare, Newcastle, Newhaven, Dover. It has Logistics offices in Belfast and Dublin.

Trade Union Friends of Palestine and the European Trade Union Network for Palestinian Workers rights (ETUN) to which Derry Trades Council and this Congress are affiliated, are calling on us all to stand with Erik and workers like him who have the courage to take a stand against injustice.

To give real effect to our policy on BDS we know we must do more.

Consequently, conference demands the reinstatement of Erik Helgeson and vows to act in his support in line with the action called for by his union and our own solidarity organisations. We also call on ICTU to reach out to his union in solidarity.

Conference calls for full protection for the human rights and employment status of our own members who stand up against injustice whether it be at home or globally. Consequently, the incoming Executive Council must pursue this with vigour in both jurisdictions.

Conference further calls on both the Irish and UK Governments to show the way by fulfilling their own legal and moral obligations by introducing sanctions against Israel. Responsibility for enacting this obligation, required as a consequence of Israel's breaches of international law, lies solely with both governments rather than on shoulders of workers who are prepared to act against impunity and the blatant disregard for the Rule of Law by Israel, even if governments are not.

(Derry Trades Union Council)

54. Genocide

Conference recognises that Israel is engaged in genocide, illegal occupation, ethnic cleansing, apartheid, the blocking of humanitarian aid, the use of starvation to advance genocide, the holding of Palestinians as hostages and the use of torture in defiance of international Law and rulings of the UN, the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

Israeli impunity is being conducted in plain sight, largely unreported in the Western media and shamefully ignored by the majority of countries that are signatories to the conventions, treaties and international instruments designed to give effect to the International Rule of Law.

Conference pays tribute to the people of Gaza and the West Bank for their courage in the face of unrelenting terror. We acknowledge the extraordinary contribution of Palestinian workers including health workers, education workers, journalists, front line responders and aid workers, many of whom have been deliberately targeted and assassinated.

Conference stands in solidarity with the courageous human rights NGOs in Gaza - the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, in the West Bank - Al Haq and in Israel - B'Tselem, that have documented, reported and presented evidence to the key International bodies. Yet still the attempted eradication of the Palestinian people continues unabated. Israel broke the ceasefire. The genocide never stopped.

Conference recognises that this is a defining moment for humanity and a very challenging time for our movement.

Conference salutes our courageous colleagues in the Palestinian BDS National Committee who have laid out the actions they wish us to take. In response conference pledges to intensify our efforts through ICTU, to achieve the following:

Our demands that the Irish and British Governments:

- exercise their legal and moral responsibility to impose sanctions and a military embargo on Israel;
- replace the IHRA definition on antisemitism with the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism;
- ensure that all trade unionists and civil society activists campaigning for justice for Palestine be protected by law from intimidation, discrimination and victimisation for their solidarity work and;
- that the Irish Government, through its membership of the EU, challenges other member states to exercise their legal and moral duty to impose sanctions and calls for the expulsion of Israel from the UN.

Within our own movement, Conference declares that the Irish Congress of Trade Unions is an Apartheid Free Zone and calls on the incoming Executive Council to take the actions set out in the BDS guidance to give real effect to it.

Conference further calls on all affiliates, where they have not yet done so, to declare themselves Apartheid Free Zones and to enact the BDS guidance.

Conference calls on the incoming Executive Council to reflect our strong policy on Palestine in motions to the international trade union bodies to which we are affiliated and to call for the exclusion of the Histadrut for its complicity.

Conference calls on affiliates, through their respective collective bargaining mechanisms to push for ethical procurement and to challenge public procurement contracts with companies complicit in genocide, illegal occupation and other breaches of international law, including through the supply chain.

Conference commends TUPF for its continuous and tireless campaigning activity over the past 20 years. In particular, we applaud its new BDS training package which has been delivered to over 600 trade unionists across a range of unions to enable a deeper understanding of the BDS campaign and supports workers taking action.

We also thank those affiliates that provide resources to sustain the work of TUPF and call on the Executive Council to provide a fixed term staffing resource to help coordinate the work of both sections and to explore a potential model similar to that established through the TUC for Justice for Colombia.

(UNISON)



Standing Orders Committee 2025. From left to right, Sean Heading, Deborah Yapicioz, Colm Kelly (Chair) and Joan Gaffney.

Standing Orders Committee

Report No. 1

28 May 2025

Opening Session

1. Time of Sessions

The time of the various conference sessions will be as follows:

- Tuesday 1 July 2025 from 09:30 to 17:30 hours.
- Wednesday 2 July 2025 from 09:30 to 17:30 hours.
- Thursday 3 July 09:30 to 13:30 hours unless the business of Conference is concluded earlier.

Conference will adjourn at 13:00 hours on Tuesday and Wednesday for lunch and will recommence at 14:30 hours.

2. The Election of Officers and Ordinary Members of the Congress Executive Council, the Congress Standing Orders Committee and the Congress Appeals Board.

3. The Standing Orders Committee notes that Congress has received nominations for the Officer positions as follows:

- Congress has received one nomination for the position of President and Phil Ní Sheaghdha is therefore deemed elected.

- Congress has received two nominations for the two Vice-President positions. The persons nominated are Katie Morgan and Jacquie White and both are deemed elected.
 - Congress has received one nomination for the position of Treasurer and Joe Cunningham is therefore deemed elected.
4. The Standing Orders Committee notes that Congress has received thirty nominations for election as ordinary members of the Congress Executive Council. The Congress Constitution provides that there will be thirty ordinary members of the Executive Council and that a minimum number of eight must be women. As thirty nominations have been received and of that thirty, twelve are women the following persons are deemed elected, John Boyle, Ethel Buckley, Kevin Callinan, Kieran Christie, Ashley Connolly, Éamonn Donnelly, Seamus Dooley, Greg Ennis, Susan Fitzgerald, Tom Fitzgerald, Jim Furey, Carmel Gates, Michael Gillespie, Frank Jones, Tanya Killen, John King, Erin Massey, Edward Matthews, Brian McAvinue, Justin McCamphill, Séan McDonagh, Patricia McKeown, Lorraine Monaghan, Fionnuala Ní Bhrógáin, Brian Nolan, John O'Connell, Deirdre O'Connor, Karan O'Loughlin, Ciaran Rohan and Anne Speed.
 5. The Standing Orders Committee notes that Congress has received one nomination for the position on the Congress Executive Council reserved for a person to represent Trades Councils. Michael Wall is therefore deemed elected.
 6. The Standing Orders Committee notes that Congress has received five 5 nominations for the Congress Standing Orders Committee. As there are five seats to be filled the following are deemed elected, Des Derwin, Joan Gaffney, Francis Hourihane, Colm Kelly, and Deborah Yapicioz.
 7. The Standing Orders Committee notes that Congress has received 6 nominations for the Congress Appeals Board. Ashely Connolly has agreed to be designated as a substitute member therefore the following are deemed elected, Miriam Hamilton, Joanne Irwin, Deirdre O'Connor, Ciaran Rohan and Davy Thompson.
- 8. Motions and Amendments**
9. The Standing Orders Committee has examined the motions and the one amendment submitted by affiliated organisations. The Standing Orders Committee have determined that all motions and amendments in the final agenda are in order.
 10. The Standing Orders Committee wishes to draw to the attention of delegates the rules relating to speaking time as set out in the Standing Orders of Congress. *The proposer of a motion or amendment shall be allowed five minutes and each subsequent speaker three minutes.*

11. Suspension of Standing Orders

12. In the interest of orderly and effective conduct of business, the Standing Orders Committee draws the attention of delegates and affiliated organisations to the provisions of paragraph 12 of Standing Orders, as follows,

- “A motion to suspend Standing Orders must be submitted in writing to the Chairperson by the proposer and seconder who are delegates to Conference. It must specify the Standing Orders to be suspended and the period of suspension. It must state reasons of urgency and importance, and if the suspension is sought for the purpose of giving consideration to a matter not on the agenda, the reason for not submitting such matter by way of a motion in accordance with Standing Orders. A Motion to suspend Standing Orders may not be adopted except:

- (a) with the permission of the Chairperson; and
- (b) with the consent of two thirds of the delegates voting on the motion.

13. Conference Sessions

14. Time periods have been allocated in the agenda for BDC for the consideration of specific topics as detailed in the Executive Council Report. Motions related to these topics will be taken during these time periods. If there is any time left over after the completion of the specified business, Conference will proceed to deal with other business as appropriate.

15. Motions have been grouped and votes on motions will be taken as indicated in the Timetable of Business.

16. Delegates are asked to especially note that there is a private session scheduled during BDC. Only accredited delegates can attend this session. The private session is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 4 July from 16:00 until 17:30.

17. Distribution of Materials at BDC

18. Affiliates and delegates to BDC are reminded of the requirement to seek the permission of the Standing Orders Committee in advance of the distribution of any material to delegates during the course of the BDC. Particular attention is drawn to the prohibition in the conference venue on the display of banners, posters and of other material that may cause offence to others.

19. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

20. There will be a photographer present at the Biennial Delegate Conference taking photos of guest speakers, delegates and observers. These photographs will be stored by Congress in the cloud and on our servers and may be uploaded to our website and our social media accounts. We may use these images in publications and to promote the work that Congress is involved in. If you have any objection to having your photograph taken, stored or used in this manner please contact congress@ictu.ie and speak to a member of the Congress staff at the Biennial Delegate Conference.

21. Guest Speakers

22. The following people have been invited to address Conference and have accepted the invitation:

- The Lord Mayor of Belfast
- The Honorary Secretary of Belfast Trades Union Council
- Elizabeth Schuler – ALF CIO
- Esther Lynch, General Secretary, ETUC
- Paul Nowak – TUC
- Dr. Jackson Katz
- Omar Barghouti – BDS movement
- Mark Little – Journalist/Author

23. Exhibition Stands

24. The following organisations/projects/businesses have been granted permission to have exhibition stands in the conference centre.

- Breast Check Ireland
- Construction Workers Health Trust
- Cornmarket Group Financial Services
- Cuan
- Donnelly & Kinder Solicitors
- Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
- FM Downes
- Health and Safety Authority
- HSF Health Plan
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
- Irish Labour History Society
- Justice for Columbia
- The Labour Relations Agency
- Mens Network
- Mi Voice
- Nevin Economic Research Institute
- Peoples College
- Thompsons Northern Ireland
- Three Creative Company Limited
- Together for Public
- Workplace Relations Commission

Nominations to BDC 2025

Congress President

Nominee	Union	Nominated by
Phil Ní Sheaghdha	INMO	INMO, FÓRSA, INTO, SIPTU and UNISON

Congress Vice Presidents

Nominee	Union	Nominated by
Katie Morgan	FÓRSA	INMO, FÓRSA, INTO and UNISON
Jacquie White	UTU	INTO, INMO and UTU

Congress Treasurer

Nominee	Union	Nominated by
Joe Cunningham	SIPTU	INMO, INTO and SIPTU

Congress Executive Council - Ordinary Panel

Nominee	Union	Nominated by
John Boyle	INTO	INTO
Ethel Buckley	SIPTU	SIPTU
Kevin Callinan	FÓRSA	FÓRSA
Keiran Christie	ASTI	ASTI
Ashley Connolly	FÓRSA	FÓRSA
Éamonn Donnelly	FÓRSA	FÓRSA
Seamus Dooley	NUJ	NUJ
Greg Ennis	SIPTU	SIPTU
Susan Fitzgerald	UNITE	UNITE
Tom Fitzgerald	UNITE	UNITE
Jim Furey	MANDATE	MANDATE
Carmel Gates	NIPSA	NIPSA
Michael Gillespie	TUI	TUI
Frank Jones	IFUT	IFUT
Tanya Killen	NIPSA	NIPSA
John King	SIPTU	SIPTU
Erin Massey	CWU UK	CWU UK

Edward Matthews	INMO	INMO
Brian McAvinue	CONNECT	CONNECT
Justin McCamphill	NASUWT	NASUWT
Sean McDonagh	CWU	CWU
Patricia McKeown	UNISON	UNISON
Lorraine Monaghan	INMO	INMO
Fionnuala Ní Bhrógáin	CWU	CWU
Brian Nolan	CONNECT	CONNECT
John O'Connell	FSU	FSU
Deirdre O'Connor	INTO	INTO
Karan O Loughlin	ESU	ESU
Ciaran Rohan	AHCPS	AHCPS
Anne Speed	UNISON	UNISON

Congress Executive Council - Reserve Panel

Nominee	Trades Council	Nominated by
Michael Wall	Wexford Council of Trade Unions	Wexford Council of Trade Unions

Congress Executive Council - Standing Orders Committee

Nominee	Union	Nominated by
Des Derwin	SIPTU	SIPTU
Joan Gaffney	MANDATE	MANDATE
Francis Hourihane	UNITE	UNITE
Colm Kelly	TUI	TUI
Deborah Yapicioz	UNISON	UNISON

Congress Executive Council - Appeals Board

Nominee	Union	Nominated by
Joanne Irwin	TUI	TUI
Miriam Hamilton	IFUT	IFUT
Deirdre O'Connor	INTO	INTO
Ciaran Rohan	AHCPS	AHCPS
Davy Thompson	UNITE	UNITE
Ashley Connolly (First Substitute)	FÓRSA	FÓRSA

fringe Events at BDC 2025

Date	Time	Sponsoring Organisation	Venue	Theme
1 July	1pm	Trade Union Friends of Palestine (TUFPP)	The Waterfront	During this fringe the TUFPP and Dr. Omar Barghouti, Catherine McKenna and Dooley Harte will provide practical information on the BDS campaign.
1 July	1pm	Congress Anti-Racism Project and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung	The Waterfront	This fringe will explore how far-right movements may seek to undermine trade unions in Ireland - and how we can respond proactively and strategically.
1 July	5.30pm	Francis Devine and the Nevin Economic Research Institute	The Waterfront	At this fringe Francis Devine, Irish Labour History Society in conjunction with the Nevin Economic Research Institute will launch a new pamphlet on Donal Nevin the former Congress General Secretary..
1 July	5.30pm	Waterford Council of Trade Unions	The Waterfront	At this fringe the Waterford Trade Council will profile the work of the Community Action Tenants Union (CATU).
2 July	1pm	Nevin Economic Research Institute	The Waterfront	At this fringe the Nevin Economic Research Institute will give a briefing on the work they have been doing to develop a new economic model for the Republic and Northern Ireland.
2 July	1pm	Respect at Work Campaign	The Waterfront	At this fringe the unions involved in the campaign, CWU, FSU, MANDATE and SIPTU will highlight the work of the campaign.

2 July	5.30pm	Irish Congress of Trade Unions	The Waterfront	At this fringe Dr. Jackson Katz will explore how trade union leaders can model behaviour and take action to challenge gender inequality and end cultures which facilitate men's violence against women and girls.
2 July	5.30pm	Unions 21	The Waterfront	At this fringe Unions 21 will highlight the work they are a doing in assisting trade unions and their members.

This is preliminary information and more detailed information on each of the fringe meetings will be provided as part of Standing Orders Committee Report Number Two.



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Biennial Delegate Conference

Winning Our Future in Uncertain Times

AGENDA



Irish Congress of Trade Unions
31/32 Parnell Square
Dublin 1, D01 YR92
Ireland

Tel: + 353 1 8897777
Email: congress@ictu.ie

Web: www.ictu.ie

Northern Ireland Committee
Irish Congress of Trade Unions
45-47 Donegall Street
Belfast BT1 2G, Northern Ireland

Tel: 028 9024 7940
Email: info@ictuni.net

Web: www.ictuni.org

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