

Report of the Executive Council

Biennial Delegate Conference
Killarney 4-6 July, 2011

**A better,
fairer
way**

STRONGER TOGETHER
CONGRESS
Irish Congress of Trade Unions



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Executive Council: 2009-2011

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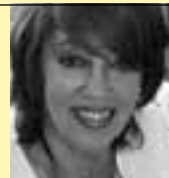
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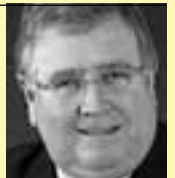
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Introduction & Overview

Looking over the Executive Council Report to BDC 2009 one is struck by the extent to which the economic crisis has deepened. At that stage we were still hopeful of being able to reach an agreement with Government and employers on a Social Solidarity Pact to mitigate the worst elements of the recession, and to spread the burden of adjustment fairly across society to ensure that those with the largest shoulders would carry the heaviest burden.

It was not to be. In many respects, quite the reverse. It is hard to view the reduction in the National Minimum Wage of €40 per week in tandem with the attempts to dismantle wage setting machinery for the low paid, as anything other than an attack by one class in society on another.

What was particularly reprehensible about these measures - amongst all the other hardship imposed in three brutal budgets - was that they served no fiscal or economic end. Not a single cent was saved for the taxpayer. They happened because the business supporters of Fianna Fail wanted to take advantage of the crisis to enhance their profits at the expense of the most vulnerable in the workforce. That they were accommodated in this by neoliberal zealots in the EU - although they deny it - is also to be condemned.

The new Government did promise to restore the minimum wage and hopefully that promise will be honoured. However, the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Innovation - Richard Bruton - has publicly identified a linkage between 'reform' of the REA and JLC system and restoring the Minimum Wage.

That is clearly at odds with promises made on the campaign trail.

But there is evidence that even the most vulnerable workers are fighting back. The publicity campaign run by Congress in opposition to the cut in the Minimum Wage did help generate some notable results.

The most significant was that of the five SIPTU members in Dublin's Davenport Hotel who - after three weeks on strike - won a signal victory against their employer and forced a reversal of their wage cut.

Nonetheless, occasional victories of this type cannot disguise the extent of the assault on employment conditions that is taking place. These rights were hard won and built up over generations. They are threatened by those seeking to exploit the recession.

An Alternative Strategy

The pain of unemployment and emigration is affecting families in all parts of the island. The deconstruction of the public sector in Northern Ireland, upon which so much economic activity depends, is a core part of British Government policy. Budget cuts of £4 billion in Northern Ireland constitute a massive blow to the quality of life.

In the Republic €20.6 billion has been taken out of the economy in three budgets, imparting a huge deflationary shock. The drop in VAT receipts is a manifestation of the collapse in domestic demand. Even though the exporting sectors, both foreign and indigenous, are growing at the rate of 5 percent annually, unemployment in mid March stood at 14.7 percent and it is estimated that 100,000 people will have emigrated between April 2010 and April 2012.

Since the crisis began over three years ago Congress has maintained a consistent policy line, as represented in our 10 Point Plan for *A Better Fairer Way*. At the heart of this alternative strategy is the belief that simply loading austerity upon austerity would lead to destruction of the economy and society.

We advocated for a policy that would give time and space for growth to take a hold and do some of the heavy lifting of fiscal consolidation. Initially, our views got no support. But over time, first the ESRI and then the Labour Party, moved close to our position. The Labour Party made extending the timeframe for adjustment a central plank of its policy in the General Election campaign.

During that campaign Congress and affiliated unions made clear our preference for an outcome which favoured the type of Social Democrat - Christian Democrat coalition that characterises the successful small core European countries. These countries have long realised that small open economies exposed to liberal international trade regimes must place limits on domestic political quarrels in order to survive and to protect their populations from the worst excesses of free markets. Most have adopted regimes of democratic corporatism in which political compromises are reflected in similar accommodations between both sides of industry. This has never been fully capable of emulation in Ireland up to now for two reasons:

- i. The political inheritance of the civil war resulted in every issue being conceptualised in terms of independence rather than in terms of class interest. This resulted in two centre right parties sharing 80



all the consequences that Congress warned against at the outset of this crisis have come to pass

percent of the popular vote and Labour left as a sort of rump party. The forensic deconstruction of Fianna Fail by the electorate has probably changed that profile forever, leaving open the possibility of a more normal European political alignment;

- ii. Social Partnership was an effort to construct democratic corporatism without the political bargain that normally underpins it – a politics that never seemed possible until now.

Another possible side effect of the European crisis is that it will bring closure to the Boston v Berlin debate. The reason is that the resolution of the crisis, whatever its form, will require deeper European integration. The alternative would be the unravelling of the single currency and that would not seem likely for political reasons.

Congress has always supported the analysis first voiced by the National Economic & Social Council (NESC) in 2009, which said that Ireland was facing a five part crisis: economic, social, banking, fiscal and reputational. The NESC argued that these sub sets of the overall crisis should not be tackled partially or sequentially. They need to be addressed in a holistic manner. The last Government never got beyond the banking and fiscal elements. The neglect of the other components goes a long way to explaining why Ireland - apart from Spain - suffered more than any other country from unemployment during the crisis. In the end they singularly failed to deal effectively even with those banking and fiscal elements they did focus on.

Unfortunately, all the consequences that Congress warned against at the outset of this crisis have come to pass. But the situation will be even worse unless a European solution to banking debt is arrived at. A terrible mistake was made in conflating banking and sovereign debt. European solutions which provide more loans but which exact more austerity will ultimately lead to default. In the economic section of this report we explain what Congress has sought to achieve at European level to head off this outcome.

Leaving aside the big picture, the challenges thrown down to the trade union movement in the last two years have been awesome. They include:

- » The re-emergence of long term unemployment and emigration;
- » The virtual collapse of the construction industry and severe retrenchment in retail, banking and to some extent in manufacturing;
- » Massive cutbacks in public service budgets resulting from a large contraction in the tax base;
- » A collapse in GDP from €80 billion in 2008 to an estimated €28 billion in 2011;

corporate governance standards in Ireland are appalling and we are all paying a price for that failing

- » A reduction of €40/week in the minimum wage and a determined attack on the wage setting machinery for low wage sectors of the economy;
- » A serious reduction in incomes due to increased taxation and imposition of a Universal Social Charge;
- » Increased interest rates on mortgages as banks try to improve capital ratios;
- » A sustained ideological attack on the public sector and on the trade union movement and its representatives;
- » The collapse of Social Partnership;
- » Severe curtailment of income to unions and to Congress.

Nevertheless, we have managed this onslaught and if we have not fully repelled it, then we have perhaps contained it. Some of the initiatives taken include: the establishment of a Trade Union Commission, the organisation of a coalition of unions to fund an Economic Research Unit and an orderly realignment of costs to income.

In addition, we concluded an agreement to safeguard security of tenure, wages and pensions in the public sector. We preserved the REA (albeit at the cost of pay reductions) in the construction industry and we will, hopefully, preserve the JLC and REA infrastructure more generally.

At a political level we secured commitments in the Programme for Government to introduce a legal right to collective bargaining and to reverse the cut in the Minimum Wage. We negotiated a protocol with IBEC to allow for continued observance of collective agreements and to use established machinery for dispute resolution.

Unquestionably this is a very bad time, way beyond the life experience to date of anyone still active in the movement. Nor is there any prospect of measurable improvement for the foreseeable future. Still, amidst all this depression, there is an opportunity in rebuilding the country to make it more sustainable than it was. Three times in the last 60 years Ireland has stared into the abyss. This must tell us something about the public policy failures which make it imperative to find a new way of doing things. We don't have to reinvent the wheel either – just try to emulate what the small core countries of Europe have done.

In conclusion, reflecting on the period under review, we have seen the dark side of business and politics exposed in Ireland. It started with the Anglo debacle, to be followed by Quinn and, in March, by the report of the Moriarty Tribunal. NESC was right when it said we also had to deal with a reputational crisis: corporate governance standards in Ireland are appalling and we are all paying a price for that failing.

David Begg, General Secretary

The Economy



Chapter One - The Role of the EU

Introduction

The austerity programmes implemented by Governments across Europe have had a devastating effect on economic growth and employment. Unfortunately, Ireland has been hit exceptionally hard with unemployment growing from 4.5% to 14.6% over the period of the crisis. Ireland is so much worse than other countries because too little was done to mitigate the effect of the recession.

As mentioned earlier the focus of public policy has been on the banking crisis and fiscal policy. A tragic mistake was made by the last Government in tying the banking and sovereign debt together.

The deflationary effect of austerity has been such that the main forecasting agencies have had to continuously revise their predictions downwards. In its winter bulletin the ESRI forecast GDP to grow by 1.5% and GNP to grow by 0.25%, in 2011.

Given that consumption is expected to fall by 0.75% in 2011 and a further 0.5 % in 2012, GDP growth is based purely on exports. While export performance has been robust at 6% per annum it is doubtful that this will be sufficient to counter the collapse in domestic demand. While policy makers regularly speak of an 'export led recovery' they perhaps forget that domestic demand normally accounts for in excess of 60% of all economic activity. Even in the Celtic Tiger era from 1994 to 2001 manufacturing accounted for only 14% of the jobs created. Domestic consumption and public services accounted for the remainder.

In the UK the Government is pursuing a strategy of austerity through cuts in public services and staff numbers. This is particularly acute in Northern Ireland where jobs in the state sector account for 30% of the total. The region depends on public spending for 70% of its economic activity, and the power-sharing Executive's budget has been slashed by £1.6 billion over four years. Growth is forecast at 1.9% for 2011, by the Northern Bank while Ulster Bank is predicting just one percent.

At the time of writing the UK budget is expected to contain something about a corporate tax rate adjustment, a cause championed by the Secretary of State, but regarded with considerable caution within the trade union movement. There are also allegedly plans to market the region as an enterprise zone, although this may be a long term project. In the private sector of Northern Ireland

there are 67,000 people employed in 355 medium sized enterprises employing between 100 and 500 staff. This compares to 84,000 in 430 similar enterprises in Wales and 195,000 in 980 medium sized firms in Scotland.

Because of the Republic's membership of the Eurozone the nature of the economic crisis diverges between both parts of Ireland. Both at ETUC level and with individual countries bilaterally, Congress has put considerable effort into explaining to trade union colleagues that the debt burden involved in the EU/ECB/IMF plan is unsustainable. This work is intended to alter the balance of opinion in civil society towards a greater understanding of the implications of the current arrangements.

The Role of EU Governance in the Crisis

The key topic at EU level now is economic governance. The original Werner Report published in the 1960s suggested the need for an institutional framework for Economic & Monetary Union (EMU).

Following passage of the Single European Act in 1987 a fresh impetus was given to the EMU project and Jacques Delors published a further report which became the platform for EMU in 1989. Delors' conclusions were broadly in line with Werner except in one major respect: he did not see the need for an institution to shadow the European Central Bank (ECB) under the economic heading.

Thus a situation developed whereby monetary policy was directed centrally by the ECB, fiscal policy remained a national competence and economic policy was but loosely coordinated through the Open Method of Coordination and the Lisbon Strategy. In that sense there has never been Economic & Monetary Union and when the current crisis erupted it exposed the inherent flaws in the EMU, as it has been constructed.

The French have been the strongest advocates of economic government with the Germans unconvinced. More recently Angela Merkel decided to go with economic governance (a slightly different concept) but was determined that she was going to define it.

The manifestation of this is the Competitiveness Pact, which embodies a very orthodox neoclassical kind of economics, with a heavy emphasis on unit labour costs as the main component of competitiveness.

This example of 'intensive intergovernmentalism' has not gone down well with other countries. Both Von Rompuy and Barroso attempted to take back the initiative by publishing their own proposal, but it has the same ideological orientation as the German-French plan.

Meanwhile former EU Presidents Delors and Prodi have spoken out in favour of *A Community Act*, and for the involvement of trade unions in its construction. The reality is that domestic politics and national interests are influencing the debate in a way that may prevent an optimum outcome.

If one makes a working assumption that, for political reasons, the single currency will not be allowed to fail, then increased economic activity and fiscal coordination seems like an inevitable outcome.

The Irish Government has entered these discussions with a strong position on defending the 12.5% corporation tax. This may not turn out to be a viable stance because it is the antithesis of economic and monetary union, in a pure sense.

On the whole, from a philosophical standpoint, we have not favoured tax competition. Allowing for some degree of disingenuousness in the ways countries compute the effective rate of corporation tax, it is an approach that lacks solidarity and allows multinationals to play one country off against another.

But neither have we argued for tax harmony because that would not allow any adjustment for peripherality. Tax coordination - in which the circumstances of individual countries could allow for a graded tax structure - seems to us to be a more practical approach in the long run. Moreover, constructing an industrial policy on the one legged stool of tax competition does not seem to be a very sustainable policy.

The All Island Economy

The enhanced cooperation between the Republic and Northern Ireland is progressing although it has been put under strain by the economic collapse of the Republic. This collapse was due largely to its Government's pursuit of neo-liberal economic policies of deregulation, tax cutting, tax shifting and pro-cyclical economic policies. The obscene behaviour of the banks brought them to collapse. This failure of all the private banks and the subsequent blanket bailout by the Irish taxpayer undermined the public finances, turning a private debt crisis into fiscal crisis of the State.

Nonetheless cooperation is progressing on tourism, industrial policy and environmental projects. The Republic is substantially assisting in funding the improvement in the Aughnacloy-Derry road.

There could be much greater cooperation on energy policy especially where Congress' New Green Deal is concerned. On an island as small as Ireland, a large degree of electrical spinning reserve has to be maintained and greater economies of scale could be generated by more cooperation especially in emissions reduction and around green energy.



Joe O'Flynn, Congress Treasurer

Chapter Two - Big Bankers Bring Down the State

The IMF/EU/ECB Bailout for the Irish Banks

On December 1 2010, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was agreed between the Irish Government and the IMF/EU/ECB.

The then Minister for Finance and the Governor of the Irish Central bank signed a “declaration of intent” on behalf of Ireland, setting out an austerity programme of:

- a) massive cuts in public spending and some tax rises;
- b) reform of the banking sector that caused the crisis, and
- c) reform of the labour market – despite it being already recognised as among the most flexible in the developed world.

The above bodies will visit Ireland every quarter for several years i.e. to end of 2013, to ensure that the programme of cuts and reforms is being implemented in full.

In return for this savage austerity programme, the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) will lend Ireland €45 billion at a high interest rate and the IMF will lend €22.5 billion at a lower rate.

A further €17.5 billion will come from Ireland’s own resources - mainly from the National Pension Reserve Fund – and bilateral loans from the UK, Sweden and Denmark. The bailout total is €85bn.

Ireland was unable to borrow to fund day-to-day spending because of the collapse of the private Irish banks which led to interest rates of around 10% plus on Irish Government borrowing.

The decision to socialise the bank debts by guaranteeing both the deposits AND the bondholders (lenders) was taken by the previous Government on September 28, 2008. It has been called “the promise that sunk Ireland.” It led directly to the Irish sovereign debt crisis, to our inability to borrow money on bond markets.

In other words, a private business debt problem was turned into a sovereign debt crisis by the previous Government. This is the crucial distinction between Ireland and Greece. As the Brussels-based Schumann Foundation noted recently:

Ireland’s problem is very different from that of Greece. In Athens the bankruptcy of the state and the public finances brought down the banks; In Ireland it was the banks and the private sector that brought down public finances.

Before issuing the guarantee the Government failed to ascertain the extent of the debts run up by the boards of the Irish banks.

The trade union movement has consistently advocated an alternative economic strategy entitled ‘A Better, Fairer Way’, which we first outlined in January 2009. We warned that austerity and deflation would serve only to make the situation worse.

Unfortunately, many of the consequences we warned about have come to pass.

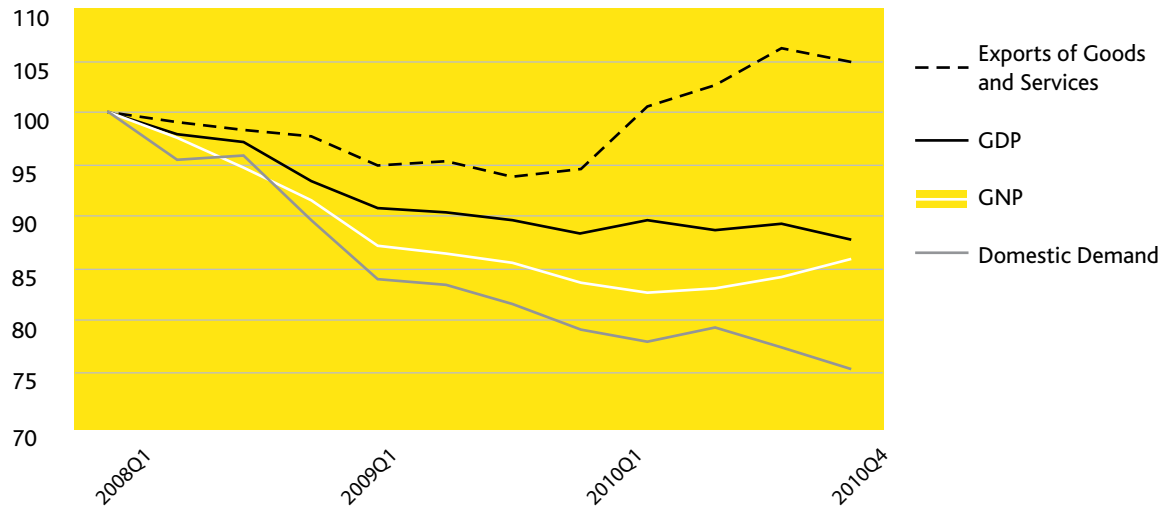
Despite the bailout, Ireland’s cost borrowing remains punitively high, at above 10%. Although we are not borrowing at the moment as a result of the EU/IMF ‘rescue package’, the fact that rates on the bond markets remain punitively high is a clear indication that the bailout has not worked.

Meanwhile, unemployment stands at a shocking 14.6% and is kept from rising further only by high emigration. Tax revenue is down and domestic demand has collapsed.

Congress has argued that Ireland is suffering from a five part crisis – economic, social, fiscal, banking and reputational. The FF/Green Government focused only on the banking and fiscal elements – and did precisely nothing about unemployment. In attempting to resolve the fiscal crisis, it passed four extremely harsh budgets which took €20.6bn out of the economy.

The resulting collapse in domestic demand has seen thousands of jobs lost and businesses going into liquidation, as the graph below shows.

Selected measures of economic growth (Q1 2008=100)



Source: Irish Times from CSO data.



Moira Wynn, INMO member from Congress Youth Committee addressing the Jobs Not Cuts Protest

As can be seen domestic demand (the lower line) plummeted by a massive 25% between early 2008 and end 2010. And national income, whether measured by GNP or GDP, also fell very substantially in the period.

In truth, the policies governing the bailout package are unsustainable. It simply will not be possible for a workforce of some 1.8 million to repay the enormous gambling debts run up by senior bankers. Equally, the imposition of a crushing austerity programme means the economy cannot grow. In that case, how are we expected to repay any debts?

Neither the bailout package nor the austerity programme is working. In truth, they are driving us towards a disorderly default.

The one positive in the economy is exports (top line in graph above), but that sector is not big enough nor labour-intensive enough to drag the entire economy out of recession. Instead, we are seeing the emergence of two distinct and increasingly divergent economies.

Without growth there will be no new jobs. Without new jobs the burden of austerity will overwhelm us.

To create more jobs we need growth and because the economy is so depressed we need the State to step in and substitute for the investment that would be happening if things were normal.

To this end, Congress argued for the use of the monies in the National Pension Reserve Fund to invest imaginatively in training, upskilling and in 'big ticket' infrastructural projects in order to get people back to work (see section on the Jobs Crisis).

We also argued that we needed to harness the skills and expertise of our commercial State companies, to the task of job creation and recovery. These companies were key to overcoming critical challenges in the past.

They should be allowed to innovate and develop new businesses and projects, utilised to deliver 'big ticket' infrastructure projects that would contribute enormously to our competitiveness: National Waste & Water System, National Broadband Scheme.

The state companies must not be sold off to be asset stripped by corporate vultures as we demonstrated in our Spring 2011 publication *Privatisation, Learning from the Eircom Debacle*. <http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fullist/learning-from-the-eircom-debacle/>

Ireland is in a deep crisis and has to make even more difficult decisions, but it can and must put solidarity at the heart of its reforms. Congress has long argued that Ireland cannot achieve the 3% deficit target set under the

MOU, but there is scope within the broad parameters of the programme for much more equitable policies. Such policies also work more effectively than deflationary cuts and regressive taxes.

Budgets 2010 & 2011

The two Budgets of 2010 and 2011 were introduced in the most difficult economic circumstances. Both budgets were unnecessarily deflationary. Both were also pro-cuts. We differed very strongly with Government on the severity and the destructiveness of such huge cuts.

The economic crash of 2008 was caused by de-regulation, especially of banking, of tax shifting from the late 1990s (by cutting direct taxes on income and profits and relying on taxes from consumption, much of which was construction-boom related), tax-cutting during a massive boom (increased taxes then would have helped deflate the bubble) and massive tax subsidies to business, especially property. Congress had consistently opposed all of these. The lack of banking regulation, endorsed by Government, facilitated indiscriminate lending at low rates, leading to the private banking collapse.

"We are now on the road to economic recovery" said Brian Lenihan, then Minister for Finance, in his Budget speech, December 9, 2009. While a number of measures were taken to gather taxes from the highest earners, the income levies imposed on all citizens, were not imposed on corporate incomes.

Cuts of 4.1% were imposed on social welfare and €16 a month on Child Benefit. Public sector pay was cut unilaterally, ranging from 5% to 15% of the salaries. This was in addition to the pension levy. Congress' idea of a National Solidarity Bond was adopted but it was not hypothecated to fund certain investments.

The thrust of the budgets was not to increase taxes but to cut spending in line with liberal economic theory, which was behind the policies which caused this crisis. Cuts in public spending of €4bn or 3.1% of GNP were made, of which €1bn were in cuts in capital investment. Mr Lenihan concluded by asserting that "our plan is working... we have turned the corner."

Nothing could have been further from the truth. For Budget 2011, initial leaks to the press were that cuts of as much as €3bn would have to be made in 2011. However, this soon grew to 4bn and beyond.

When Budget 2011 was finally revealed, it included a massive €6bn 'adjustment', or 4.7% of GNP.

On this occasion, the Finance Minister conceded that it was “a traumatic time” but claimed, less bombastically than a year earlier, that “there are clear signs of hope.”

Yet he was introducing a highly deflationary Budget which would lay waste to domestic demand. Conservatives pinned their hopes for recovery on the export sector, which consists largely of foreign multinationals with very high value added but relatively low employment and indigenous food exports which were booming (courtesy of a global commodity boom) ably assisted by Irish zinc exports.

Cuts of 4% were made in social welfare and €10 was cut from the rate of Child Benefit, but there was no cut in the state pension. Public service pensions were cut by an average of 4%. Taxes were increased but not progressively.

A highly regressive and punitive Universal Social Charge was introduced. There were some cuts in tax breaks for investors, but new tax breaks were simultaneously introduced as a “revamped BES” with zero Corporation Tax for three years for new companies and a substantial reduction of Stamp Duties for residences to 1 and 2% from up to 9%.

Combined, the budgets extracted €10bn out of the economy. But by the end of 2010, the total ‘adjustment’ in terms of tax increases and cuts in public spending, had reached €20.6bn (the equivalent to over 16% of GNP in 2010 and 2011).

Congress pre-Budget Submissions: 2010 and 2011

In Budget 2010 Congress set out an alternative vision: a more equitable society, a more balanced and productive economy. Learning from the crisis we have within our grasp the capacity for economic recovery and transformation, making this small island into one of the best places in which to live and work.

Alongside the 2010 pre-Budget Submission, Congress also published a document that set out in great detail where taxes should and could be raised, without further deflating the economy. We reiterated this for Budget 2011.

We argued that the social welfare system should be radically altered and integrated with skills enhancement, education and training. We suggested that this could be augmented with additional funding from the Public Capital Programme (PCP).

In our 2011 submission we sought a €2 billion jobs plan over three years. We called for greater ambition and a major drive for job creation and protection.

In the 2011 submission we reiterated the view of the National Economic & Social Council (NESC) that Ireland was suffering from five interlinked crises: economic, social, banking, reputational and fiscal and all had to be dealt with coherently.

These submissions are available at:

<http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/congress-prebudget-submission-2010/>

<http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/areas-where-tax-can-should-be-raised-in-budget-2010/>

<http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/prebudget-submission-2011/>

we have within
our grasp the capacity
for economic recovery
and transformation



The President of Congress, Jack O'Connor with David Begg, General Secretary and Patricia King, Vice President

Chapter Three - Economic Policy Stifles Growth

The Failure of Austerity

With the onset of the crisis in 2008, national income fell massively by 21%. Unemployment soared to 14.7% in early 2011 and is only at that level because of mass emigration and falling participation in the labour force (i.e. people staying in education).

The extraction of over €20.6 bn from the economy represents one of the severest programmes of austerity in recorded economic history. It has meant that by Spring 2011, the Irish economy was characterised by:

- » Sustained high unemployment,
- » Sustained high emigration,
- » Falling participation at work,
- » Reduced tax revenue,
- » Falling economic growth,
- » Collapsed consumer and business confidence,
- » Business closures,
- » Sustained high bond rates,
- » A staggering banking crisis that threatens to overwhelm the State itself.

Austerity has decimated domestic demand, sucking money out of the economy, especially from welfare recipients and lower and middle income earners, killing business confidence and closing businesses. On top of that, the massive cuts in public investment compounded the deflationary impact of spending cuts and increased taxes on lower incomes.

It is also certain that cuts will have a profound impact on the quality and delivery of public services. The public service trade unions have signed up to a major reform and transformation programme, through the Croke Park Agreement, and believe this represents the best opportunity to ensure that services are protected in these difficult times.

Congress recognises how deep the crisis is and also that there is a need to align spending with income. But it is our belief that it be done over a longer timeframe in order to minimise the impact of cuts and to allow growth a chance to take hold.

The promised Strategic Investment Bank in the new Programme for Government is a move in the right direction, but it is bureaucratically cumbersome, especially compared to Congress' proposal to simply invest €2bn a year for three years in companies, in loans, in infrastructure, schools, transport and in training.

The correct solutions should be:

- » Lengthen the period of recovery and roll back the front-loading of the cuts and taxes on low incomes
- » Implement judicious cuts and taxes but target the better off
- » Boost public investment substantially, by €2bn a year for 3 years to lift demand and address our many needs
- » Boost the *Solidarity Bond*, have auto-enrolment in pensions, invest PRSAs in State pension fund etc. - all these ideas will also generate billions in cash for the State
- » Facilitate investment by Irish pension funds in major infrastructural projects, as opposed to the unfair levy
- » Reform corporate governance i.e. Irish company law and reform the private sector where the rot began
- » Negotiate or insist on burden-share with bank bondholders and European partner states.

Following the 2011 General Election, Congress called on the new Government to abandon its plan to implement with last Government's €6bn adjustment. We said that it would likely to plunge Ireland into another three or four quarters of a downward, deflationary spiral, in addition to the 11 quarters of falls in GNP, up to Spring 2011. Our request was ignored.

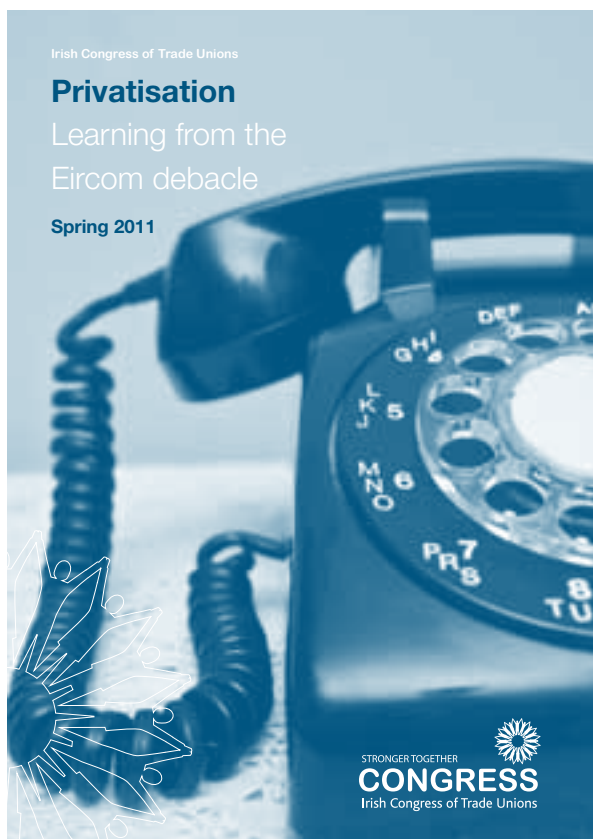
The Privatisation Programme

The greatest irony of the economic collapse of 2008 is that the best Irish enterprises we have may be sold off to pay for debts run up by private banks!

Ireland has a large enterprise deficit. A great many of our so-called 'entrepreneurs' were useless cowboys and only made money when property prices were on the rise. Our three biggest private companies not alone failed, but quite literally brought down the State itself.

In response the FF/Green Government hired prominent economists and others to write the script for the privatisation agenda. In fairness, at least in the McCarthy Report it proposed that State enterprises are held until a fair price can be achieved (see report on semi-states below).

However, if this agenda succeeds, it will mean that in the long run there will be few indigenous firms left. Ireland will then be even more dependent of the whims of foreign multinationals. There was no consideration at all by policy makers of the need for a suite of progressive and dynamic indigenous companies based in Ireland.



Released to coincide with the McCarthy Report

Congress produced a report *Privatisation: Learning from the Eircom Debacle* which we released simultaneously with the issue of the McCarthy Report. It helped expose the reality of the privatisation agenda, showing how a good company providing a useful service was asset stripped by vulture capitalists. A small number of very wealthy people were made even wealthier and the Irish economy became less competitive. Crony capitalism, Irish style.

Unhappily the new government is constrained by the Memorandum of Understanding with the EU/IMF/ECB Troika and its promise to sell off a staggering €2 billion in productive and profitable state assets. It is to be hoped this can be reversed or at the very least minimised as it could do untold damage in the long-term.

The Assault on Incomes

After the Crash of 2008, the official response was to pursue a policy of internal deflation primarily by cutting wages and welfare.

The supposed aim was to boost 'competitiveness' – even though wages are but a small factor in this complex area and wage levels had never been cited as a problem by the National Competitiveness Council.

The FF/Green Government set about attacking wages in a systematic way. It was an ideologically driven assault that began with the unilateral imposition of a levy on public sector pensions and, later, a cut in public sector wages and social welfare rates. For public sector workers the cut in earnings averaging 13%: comprised of a pension 'levy' and a straight pay cut.

Social welfare supports for the unemployed have suffered savage cuts reduced by almost 10% including the Christmas Bonus. The main rate in 2011 is now €188 per week - from €204.30 in 2009. The rate is close to what it was in 2007.

However in real terms those on social welfare are now much worse off as prices have increased significantly since 2007. For example, bus fares are up by 22%, local authority rents by 21.5%, while bread has risen by 12.5% and milk by 19%.

Having cut welfare and public sector pay, the FF/Green Government then turned its attention to the Minimum Wage.

Almost immediately upon signing the IMF/EU/ECB bailout – which was designed to save the private banks – they introduced a cut of 12% to the Minimum Wage, the equivalent of one euro per hour or €40 per week. It was an extraordinary cut for the lowest paid workers in the State and clearly showed the true priorities of the former coalition Government. The cut was voted through the Dail on December 10, 2010, which Congress branded as "our day of shame."

The cut came into force on February 1, 2011. In response, Congress published the Roll of Shame - a list of all TDs who had voted in favour of the measure. Thankfully, the new Government committed to reverse the cut in its May 2010 Jobs Initiative.

In Spring 2010, Congress had warned that business groups and lobbyists had the Minimum Wage in their sights and exposed the flawed arguments they used to justify a cut.

"Business lobbyists have demanded a cut of at least €1 per hour, in the Minimum Wage. They claim our rate is the second highest in the EU and therefore damages 'competitiveness'. This is untrue as it only includes countries where the minimum wage is set by law. In Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland it is set by agreement between unions and employers in each sector of the economy – Retail, Catering, Construction etc.

"When these are taken into account Ireland's Minimum Wage falls to sixth (Norway is not an EU member, but is a member of the European Economic Area). Equally, the true value of wages can only be determined by what they can purchase and must correspond to the cost of living in

each state. Despite deflation, our cost of living is typically higher than our neighbours. When rates are adjusted to take account of purchasing power, Ireland's Minimum Wage falls to ninth position."

(Shifting the Burden, Congress, Spring 2010)

<http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/shifting-the-burden/>

The coalition Government then turned its attention to those earning just a few cents above the Minimum Wage. It undertook a review of the wage setting mechanisms of the Joint Labour Committees (JLCs) and Registered Employment Agreements (REAs) that cover over 300,000 workers, the majority in lower paid sectors.

The final report was published on May 24, as this report went to print.

Trends in Earnings: 2 years to end 2010

	Q4, 2008			Q4, 2010		
	Hourly	Weekly	Yearly	Hourly	Weekly	Yearly
Managers, & Professionals	33.12	1115	57,720	32.78		
Clerical, sales etc	16.99	510	26,520	16.50		
Production workers	16.55	574	29,848	15.87		
All workers	22.44	721	37,492	21.96	699	36,371

Source: CSO

Estimates for the sectoral groups' weekly and yearly 2010 were not available and estimating them would not be possible.

The greatest irony is that the best Irish enterprises may be sold off to pay for debts run up by private banks

Some private firms, including those owned by some of the wealthiest families in Ireland, also took legal action to try to smash the same agreements and so maintain their profits at the expense of low paid.

Business lobbyists repeatedly argued that costs had been driven down and so wages had to follow. Yet, in June 2010, price levels in Ireland were 26% higher than the average in the European Union.

By the end of 2010, average hourly earnings were down to €21.96 that is, €699.46 per week, or €36,372 a year for all workers, including managers.

The following table shows the trend from early 2009 to end 2010.

It can be seen from the above that hourly earnings fell in the two years by 2.1% for *all* workers. As inflation in the period fell by 3.8%, workers' hourly earnings therefore rose by 1.7%. For professionals, the fall was 1% or a real rise of 2.8% per hour, compared to say, production workers, with a fall of 4.1% or a real fall of 0.3%.

All workers saw a fall in annual gross wages and salaries of €1,121 or 3%. Against inflation, this was a small rise of 1.1% in the period.

Thus the official plan to make working people pay through a 'competitive deflation' was not very effective. However, if one takes slightly different periods and different groups of workers, the outcomes vary slightly. Production workers have seen their hours reduced by most compared to other categories, but most sectoral groups have seen their hours decline with the deep and prolonged recession.

It pays to work for a bigger firm or organisation because they pay much better than small ones, according to the data. In Q4 2010 firms with over 250 employees paid an average of €25.18 per hour as against only €18.39 for those with under 50 employees – a difference of 27%.

This, of course, is one key reason why public sector workers often have higher earnings than private sector workers, the majority of whom work for small firms. The other key reasons for that disparity is education attainment, professional qualifications, job grades and, of course, trade union membership. Union density is far higher in the public sector.

The data shows that in spite of a massive recession, massive cuts in public spending and job losses, for most workers there were reductions in earnings but with falling prices for the period October 2008 to January 2010 (of 7.7% in this period), many private sector workers did not suffer a fall in earnings in the period.

In the two years to Q4, 2010, private sector hourly earnings held steady (-0.25%) while public sector fell by almost 5% (4.9%). This does not include the pension levy cut of about 7%.

Ultimately, the ideological policy of 'internal deflation' did not work. In fact, this has served only to depress the economy and has led to many thousands of job losses.

Outcome of the 2011 General Election

The outcome of the General Election was probably as good as we might reasonably have hoped for. Labour secured 37 seats, the highest in its history, and sufficient to deny Fine Gael the opportunity to govern alone, or as a minority Government supported by Independents.

The Programme for Government includes some progressive social policy measures including a commitment to reverse the minimum wage reduction. It also embraces the Croke Park Agreement and public sector reforms will be negotiated in that context. The most radical social policy measures are undoubtedly the proposals to introduce a new insurance based health system and to legislate for collective bargaining. There are some issues which are of concern, namely: the disposal of €2 billion worth of state assets and the transfer of the transmission assets of ESB to Eirgrid. But there are also solid commitments to the future of An Post and the VHI in public ownership. It is important to remember that this is not a Labour programme but a coalition one.

The other remarkable outcome from the election was the forensic dismemberment of Fianna Fail and the numbers and diversity of Independents elected, from the far left to the far right. This was the first election in Europe under conditions of austerity and the message from it – if it is recognised as such – is that there are political limits to the degree of austerity that will be accepted. In the context of a problem which has a large European dimension this is a significant result for Europe. A point which we ourselves need to assimilate is that - whether we agree with it or not - the outcome represents a very definite choice by 70.1 percent of the electorate and the Programme for Government reflects that reality.

Congress took a very clear position on the issues facing the electorate in the General Election. On the day the election was called the President and General Secretary jointly issued the following statement:

General Election 2011: Statement To Union Members

The General Election has been called for February 25, 2011. The key issue is who we are going to put in to Government, not who is going to be in opposition. It is the make up of the Government that determines the issues which crucially affect all our lives.

For over two years now the trade union movement has consistently advocated for a response to the crisis embodied in our alternative economic strategy entitled A Better Fairer Way. Unfortunately, many of the consequences we warned about are coming to pass. We must use this opportunity to elect a Government that cares more about the citizens of the country than

about bond markets and big business. We must elect a Government that will assert the interest of citizens when dealing with the IMF, EU and ECB. In our view the crucial issues remain the following:

- » It is imperative to approach the problem in the right way. Ireland is suffering from a five part crisis – economic, social, fiscal, banking and reputational. The next Government must respond to all of these elements together, not sequentially or partially. The outgoing Government focused only on the banking and fiscal elements – for instance it did nothing about unemployment;
- » In attempting to resolve the fiscal crisis it passed three extremely harsh budgets which took €20.6 bn out of the economy. This imparted such a deflationary shock that domestic demand has collapsed, businesses are going into liquidation and thousands of jobs have been lost;
- » The bailout package reached with the IMF/EU/ECB is unmanageable. It must be renegotiated. The deflationary effects of the measures in it are such that growth has no chance of reviving. Without growth there will be no new jobs. Without new jobs the burden of austerity will overwhelm us. As well as that the interest rate on borrowing at 5.8 percent is beyond what is sustainable;
- » To get jobs we need growth and because the economy is so depressed we need to substitute for the investment that would be happening if things were normal. We must use the National Pension Reserve Fund to invest imaginatively in training and upskilling and in infrastructure as well as other commercial projects, to save existing jobs and create new ones;
- » The outgoing Government has made no effort to spread the burden of adjustment fairly. To the contrary they concentrated their fire on workers and unemployed people. The attack on the low wage pay determination systems of the Labour Court is an example of this approach. Any political party concerned with fairness will commit to maintaining these mechanisms to protect the vulnerable;
- » We need to optimise the potential of our commercial state companies, which were key to overcoming critical challenges in the past. They must be allowed to innovate and develop new businesses and projects. They must not be sold off at bargain basement prices to be asset stripped by corporate vultures;

- » In the same way any new Government concerned about workers' rights generally will commit to legislating for the right of working people to engage in collective bargaining. This is the only effective way to redress the imbalance in power between workers and employers caused by the recession;
- » The crisis originated in the private sector. The requirement to bail out the banks turned it into a fiscal crisis. The outgoing Government compounded it by equating banking debt with sovereign debt. This crisis has most certainly not been caused by the public service, yet every effort has been made to make it look otherwise. At the end of the day public service cuts hit the most vulnerable people hardest. Public services provide a threshold of decency below which no one should be expected to live. There is little point in switching from the outgoing Government to any party which shares that flawed analysis;
- » A high quality accessible health service is the key characteristic of a civilised society. Tragically we never managed to develop a public system of the quality of Britain's NHS or France's health service. It is critically important to scrutinise the health plans of each party to ensure that we do not end up with a recipe for wholesale privatisation and outsourcing cloaked as something else.

The foregoing are key components of our alternative economic strategy. We have no choice but to deal with each element of the five part crisis. However, we can only deal with it if allowed the time and space to do so. That is why we have proposed extending the time to make the adjustment out to 2017 and renegotiating the penal interest rates built into the IMF/EU/ECB package. Since we first articulated this viewpoint a growing number of reputable commentators and agencies have come to agree with it.

If something further untoward were to happen, like an increase in Eurozone inflation causing an increase in the ECB interest rate, then the crisis might require a more radical solution like debt restructuring, debt buyback or Europeanisation of some portion of the debt. All of this is still to be played out.

The bottom line is that we need people, not just in Dáil Éireann but **actually in Government**, who care about workers and who will strive to protect our interests in the difficult times which most certainly lie ahead.

*Trade Unions working to protect
the health of construction workers.*



CWHT

Construction Workers Health Trust

Helping Ireland's construction workers
to access appropriate medical care

We provide on site health screening
for building workers using fixed and
mobile medical units. We test blood
pressure, cholesterol, lung function,
body mass index and conduct regular
screening campaigns into serious
conditions such as, diabetes, prostate
cancer and colon cancer.

In addition we fund research into
conditions which affects the health of
Irish construction workers.

Construction Workers Health Trust,
Cunningham House, 130 Francis St Dublin 8

Tel: 01-7093070 Fax: 01-4544937
Email: info@cwht.ie Web: cwht.ie

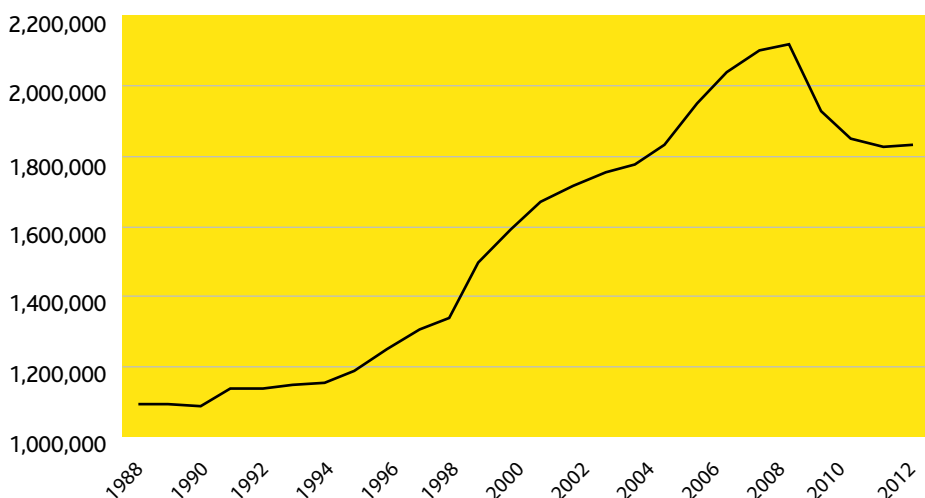
Chapter Four - Creating Jobs & Growth

The Jobs Crisis

For over the decade to 2007, the rate of unemployment was an historic low of 4.5% - virtually full employment. But by 2011 it had more than tripled to 14.6%. This 'employment collapse' is illustrated in the graph below. But the graph does not include the mass exodus of

people out of Ireland, since the crisis began. Net inward migration began in 1996 and totalled almost half a million people to 2008 (457,000). We saw an outward flow of 8000 in 2009, but that turned into 35,000 people leaving in 2010 and we are expected to lose some 60,000 people in 2011 and 40,000 in 2012 (ESRI figures).

Irish Jobs Machine '87-12 (Almost doubled and then collapsed)



The Irish economy has collapsed, with a fall in national income (GNP) of 21% since 2007 when it stood at €161bn. GNP in 2011 is at €127bn, which is slightly below that of 2003. In other words, we have suffered *eight lost years* of national income.

In 2010, industry, which included construction, employed 360,000, with 1,405,000 employed in services and 287,000 jobless. A remarkable statistic on work in Ireland is how few farmers there are today. In 2010, there were just 86,000, or 4.6% of those at work. Indeed, 35% of that number are not full-time farmers.

The rapid rise in the live register over the years 2009, 2010 and 2011 was ignored by Government, while they focused instead on the private sector's banking crisis.

Live Register & Unemployed Rate

	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010
Total Nos	296,300	430,300	444,000
Under 25 years	64,600	87,100	84,000
Unemployed rate	8.6%	13.1%	13.4%

The live register has soared over the two years in review and while those 'under 25 years old' appears to have stabilised, this is largely because it is that group that are remaining in education or emigrating.

Congress Job Proposals

In the run up to the election in early 2011, Congress said that the crisis demanded that we radically alter our social welfare system and ensure it was fully integrated with skills enhancement, education and training. We also sought an initiative on short-time working not unlike the very successful job preservation schemes that were

implemented across the EU, with the most successful models operating in Holland and Germany. The proposal was contained in an overall Congress initiative on Job Creation, an abridged version of which is reproduced below. A modified version was submitted to the new Government ahead of its May 2011 Jobs Initiative. A full version is available at: <http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/congress-jobs-proposals/>

1. Capital Expenditure & Job Creation

An Increased Investment Programme

Ireland has a serious infrastructural deficit, mass unemployment in construction and related professions, while the wider economy needs a greater boost than the current package will deliver.

Congress rejects the view that because all of the money invested is borrowed, the Plan had to be reduced significantly. The billions of euros poured into the black hole that is the Irish banking sector have also been borrowed. This vast taxpayer subsidy to the banks creates no new jobs, builds no new schools or hospitals or establishes no new public transport systems. We hold that more borrowing for such investment makes strong sense, particularly as lower tender prices mean we can deliver far more for that investment.

There is also a strong argument for sourcing funding from other areas:

Increased taxation on high income groups (reduction of regressive tax expenditures, extension of PRSI and related levies to capital income, etc.) could provide considerable funding while at the same time having little deflationary impact on consumption.

Redirect and frontload some of the future contributions to the National Pension Reserve Fund. The Government intends to pay nearly €4 billion into the Pension fund between 2012-2014. Some of this could be redirected toward immediate capital investment without any medium-term impact on the Exchequer balance.

Literature on the impact of Government investment in Ireland shows a highly positive relationship between growth and employment generation. The most comprehensive study indicates that €1 billion in capital investment will generate over €4 billion in extra GDP over time.

The benefit to the economy arising from a once-off investment persists for six years.

The employment impact would also be considerable. The Government's capital expenditure review provides a ratio of direct employment of 8-10 jobs per €1 million investment in a number of sectors, a statistic reiterated in anticipated employment impacts of the Infrastructure Investment Priorities launched recently by Government. On this basis the number of jobs directly created by an investment of €1 billion would be between 8,000 and 10,000.

The scope for increased capital spending is considerable. The World Economic Forum and National Competitiveness Council have ranked Ireland's infrastructural capacity – energy, telecommunications, transport – as being still poor.

Delivering Jobs – Maintaining Standards

If the investment programme is to create and deliver quality jobs, it is imperative that the Registered Employment Agreements in the construction and electrical contracting industry are maintained.

Due to the recession employers are undercutting each other and asking their remaining employees to work on conditions less than the legal minimum proscribed by the REAs. The Construction Industry Federation is on record as saying that non-compliant firms from north of the border are able to undercut good employers, even on major projects in the Dublin area.

If the REAs fall - either to legal challenge, through the failure of the parties to support them or through pressure being applied to remove them - an appalling vista is opened for big construction projects. With no universal minimum standard conditions applying, companies from outside the state - under the terms of the Laval judgment - can bid for these projects and bring labour in on the minimum wage or worse.

Thus the investment programme would not put Irish companies or workers back to work. Instead, the big, lucrative projects will be picked off by companies not based here. Inevitably, they would be picketed by unemployed Irish workers, while posted workers from abroad were bussed past them.

Full compliance with the REAs on pay and terms of employment and rigorous enforcement of the Code of Practice on the definition of the employer is the best means of ensuring that domestic contractors can compete for and obtain work that becomes available.

Labour & Social Clauses

Labour and social clauses in public contracts would mean that public authorities, in contracting for the execution of construction works, or for the supply of goods and services, would be required to concern themselves with maximising employment and the working conditions under which the operations in question are carried out. This type of approach is actually advocated by the International Labour Organisation, (ILO). Convention 94 (*Labour Clauses in Public Contracts Convention*) stipulates that all tenders apply the best conditions of employment in force at the local level.

Labour clauses are emerging across the EU as a way of linking spending on capital projects and services with public policy objectives: such as reducing unemployment and combating social exclusion. They work by specifying certain labour requirements in the tender/contract, such as respect for collective agreements and labour law and targeted recruitment and training. They have a clear legal basis and ensure equality for those submitting tenders. They also have the benefit of maximising 'value for money' from public spending, along with acting as an automatic stabiliser and ensuring against a race to the bottom in wages and conditions.

Labour and Social Clauses Permitted under EU Rules

The EU Procurement Directives apply to all public sector contracts above a certain level and allow for the inclusion of labour provisions. *While EU case law requires their benefits to be verifiable from a public policy perspective, it does not prohibit their use.* Public policy objectives of combating growing unemployment, promoting decent work and protecting against a race to the bottom in wages and conditions are permitted.

Training Apprentices to Guarantee Future Skills

The severe downturn in construction is impacting on the recruitment and training of apprentices and will threaten the future availability of skilled workers. The system of allowing employers to determine the commencement numbers of first year apprentices has to change if skills shortages are to be avoided when the economy improves. If the current system is allowed to continue it is likely that no new apprentices will enter the system for several years to come. Ireland and the construction industry has benefited from a first-class training infrastructure, built up over many years and at great expense to taxpayers. The failure of employers to hold on to their apprentices or to recruit new ones must not be used as an excuse to destroy the apprenticeship system.

Congress believes that initiatives should be introduced to ensure a future supply of construction skills. Specifically, FAS should introduce a competitive scheme for school leavers and unskilled/low skilled workers who have become unemployed, for a defined intake across each of the construction trades.

2. Exceptional Short-Time Working Scheme

Measures initiated in other European countries have demonstrated that targeted supports can help companies through difficult operational periods, whilst at the same time maintaining full-time employment and improving skills. In particular the German and Dutch Exceptional Short-Time Working Schemes are models that have demonstrated their efficacy.

The schemes provide support to private sector employers experiencing a sharp downturn in revenues to help maintain full employment. The scheme allows employers, in consultation with unions, to place workers on temporary, short-time working without having to lay them off.

This approach is intended to help employers to temporarily reduce their labour overheads whilst maintaining workers on the payroll and protecting salaries. The employers implementing the scheme receive a subsidy from the National Unemployment Fund, which is conditional on employees participating in skills development or education during the 'down' period and employers top-up the fund to the normal salary level. Specific criteria exist for schemes, including a developmental requirement (training) for the affected workers and a strict qualifying measurement based on reduced turnover, by the company or business involved.



3. The Role of State Companies

Congress made the case for the establishment of a State Holding Company (SHC), as a new governance structure for commercial state companies, as far back as 2005.

Given current budgetary constraints, the SHC could and should be used to leverage the companies' considerable aggregate assets for borrowing, outside the strictures of the EU's Growth and Stability Pact. This investment could also be used for a major Investment Stimulus Programme for jobs, within and outside these companies themselves and also in partnership with private firms.

The Commercial semi-state companies employs about 40,000 directly and many more indirectly. They have a turnover of around €10bn and generate profits of in the region of €500m annually. They generate substantial dividends in normal times (The CIE group is unique - being the only company in the group to receive net subsidies and these are under EU rules).

The net worth is very positive and level of net debt is well under control, being about €3bn for ESB and BGE and much less for the other companies. The companies did employ as many as 87,000 back in 1980, falling to 67,000 by 1987 and 46,000 by 2002, through restructuring but mainly by moving employment out of the sector through privatisation. It is roughly estimated that the privatised commercial state companies still employ around 35,000.

The substantial net worth of the companies within a structure like a State Holding Company allows increased borrowing and expands such capacity substantially in aggregate. As these are commercial enterprises (excluding CIE) with substantial leverage, their aggregate borrowings should be accepted by Eurostat as outside the Growth and Stability Pact.

Then the challenge becomes the repayment of interest on increased borrowing and also stress testing for increased rates. If the money is invested in expanded enterprises, then that does not pose a problem. There are also multiplier effects in jobs and tax revenue.

4. Social Innovation & Social Infrastructure

From the trade unions' point of view, cutting support for unemployed people is unacceptable, given the individual misery and social harm it causes. Likewise 'workfare' and 'work for your benefits' programmes can actually do more harm than good. Working for benefits creates a plentiful supply of cheap labour, whilst running down public spending and creating a lower benchmark for wages. Forcing people to work for their dole – allied with

employers making 'an offer you cannot refuse' – has little or no role in job creation. In fact it may be detrimental to that goal. Keeping people in employment should be the number one priority

Social Enterprise & Job Creation

There is a value in developing a job guarantee/social enterprise programme that will provide job opportunities for long term unemployed, while at the same time providing community goods and services, for which there is a genuine demand, but for which there are insufficient resources to pay at a market rate.

Social enterprises can be thought of as Public-Citizen-Partnerships (PCP) as opposed to Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP). The concepts of Social Enterprise and Social Entrepreneurship are gaining increasing popularity amongst researchers and policy makers throughout the world. It is argued that the development of this field has provided innovative ways of obtaining economic growth, social development and environmental sustainability. While the social enterprise sector in Ireland is growing, it remains relatively underdeveloped in comparison to the EU and US.

Overall, the sector has also become a major provider of jobs in Europe, where employment in social enterprises is estimated at 3.5 million.

The sector has the potential to become a provider of jobs, particularly as many social enterprises provide personal services with a high labour intensity.

Improved Rules to Ensure Internships and Work Experience Programmes are not used to Exploit Unemployed People or as a Substitute for Real Jobs

High quality work experience can be of great benefit to people starting out on their career and as a way for unemployed people to maintain their skills and keep their resumé up to date.

However, Congress is concerned that some employers are abusing their power and taking advantage of internships or the work experience programme to get work done for free, whether it is young unemployed graduates on 'internships' or older unemployed workers on work experience.

From our perspective the most important question is what the real arrangement is, not whether someone is labeled an 'intern' or not. If someone is engaged on a regular basis, for an extended period of time, and they carry out work of benefit to the enterprise, particularly full time

and core work, then that person must be considered an employee and should be entitled to be paid at least the national minimum wage and to be protected by all other employment rights, such as working time, health and safety and employment equality.

Congress is calling for a better set of rules to ensure that internships and work experience programmes are actually giving people an insight and relevant experience in the sector they are interested in working in. In the United States - the home of the intern - the US Department of Labor has outlined a list of criteria and all must be met in order for an internship to be unpaid:

1. The training, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to that which would be given in a vocational school;
2. The training is for the benefit of the trainee;
3. The trainees do not displace regular employees, but work under close observation;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the trainees and on occasion the employer's operations may actually be impeded;
5. The trainees are not necessarily entitled to a job at the completion of the training period; and
6. The employer and the trainee understand that the trainees are not entitled to wages for the time spent in training

a) where interns and those on work experience programmes are engaged on a regular basis and they carry out core work of benefit to the enterprise, particularly for- profit enterprises then that person must be considered an employee and should be entitled to at least the minimum rate (hourly, weekly or monthly) including JLC and REA for the job;

- b) that interns and those on work experience programmes do not displace regular employees, but work under close observation and support;
- c) unpaid internships and unpaid work experience are only acceptable when it provides training and experience that yields economic benefits in the long term, the International Labour Organisation have held that unpaid work is only acceptable where the future benefit (from the unpaid work) outweighs the short term absence of pay;
- d) that employment rights, including health and safety, maternity and employment equality rights apply equally to interns and those on work experience programmes, including at the recruitment stage;
- e) that interns and those on work experience programmes have an entitlement to time off for job seeking and in circumstances where the worker finds paid employment, employers cannot require a notice period from unpaid interns or those on work experience programmes.

To ensure that the graduate and non graduate work experience programme does not displace paid employment or distort the normal functioning of the labour market, Congress is calling for better monitoring of the programme. We are specifically asking that that the existing national monitoring for Community Employment be used to confirm that work experience placements conform to the criteria set out above.

Some employers are taking advantage of internships or the work experience programme to get work done for free



New Skills for a New Economy

Faced with the challenges of high and rising unemployment, (from 4.5% to over 14% since the onset of the crisis) and the proposed restructuring of FAS, Congress produced a policy document on skills which was approved by the April 2011 meeting of the Executive Council. The document has since been published and sets out the Congress view on how Ireland's Vocational Education and Training (VET) system should develop in the years ahead.

It looks at the opportunities and the potential pitfalls. It argues that any reshaping of the Irish training system needs to prioritise the maintenance of a coordinated system of VET. The executive summary of the document is set out below.

In the current financial situation the strategic requirement to upskill the existing workforce seems to have slipped from the public agenda. Money from the European Globalisation Fund aimed at redundant workers sits in Brussels and redundant workers cannot get their entitlements. The collapse of social partnership seems to have induced total inertia in the departments and agencies dealing with the labour market. We are in danger of moving from a coordinated to an uncoordinated model of education and training. Peter Soskice, one of the foremost theorists of industrial society has observed that:

“Deregulated economies have difficulty in equipping the least able or privileged children with basic employability skills. Part of the reason is that employers are unprepared to engage in serious initial training as the wage setting system exposes them to poaching. Instead at the bottom end of the labour market they offer only limited unskilled employment activities...By contrast employers are more engaged in coordinated economies both in apprenticeship systems and in maintaining contact with public vocational training.”

In Ireland we have a coordinated Vocational Education and Training system. This approach is one reason why Ireland has historically avoided the phenomenon of NEETS – young people ‘not in employment education or training’. However as youth unemployment rises, the number of young people in this category has risen from 11% to 18% in the last two years. It is vital that we work toward reversing this trend.

One of the key drivers of the earlier (pre construction boom) phase of the Celtic Tiger was the skills and education levels of the workforce. Skills acquisition is a driver of both competitiveness and equity and must remain a key item on the public agenda. While Ireland currently has high levels of unemployment and, in particular, of youth unemployment, compared to many OECD countries we have a higher proportion of young people in our labour force. We do not therefore face the challenges other countries do as the baby boomers begin to retire in the next two decades.

The skills of the workforce are a central part of political economy. Debate on the issue leads to other areas such as the roles of education, citizens' obligations, equity, efficiency, and the correct role of the market. Getting it right in this area can deliver wins for many areas of society, such as promoting social equity, increasing productivity, minimising unemployment and ensuring the capacity of the workforce to handle increasingly complex technologies.

Getting it wrong can propel the economy on a self sustaining low skills equilibrium which will damage both social equity and competitiveness and may drive marginalised groups out of the Labour Market. There is a need for intervention to ensure that training and education are fairly spread throughout the workforce. Left to its own devices, training is inversely related to need and is more likely to exacerbate rather than to mitigate existing labour market inequalities.

Upskilling measures, fairly spread across the workforce will bring returns to individuals, to employers and to society as a whole. Increased skills bring benefits to workers, employers and to the economy. The European Centre for Research in Vocational training, CEDEFOP, has estimated that increased participation in education either through increased enrolment rates or additional years spent, can increase economic growth by one percent per year. This figure is endorsed by recent Irish research which estimates that increases in labour quality (improved education of the workforce) contributed one percent per annum to average GNP growth between 1994 and 2003.

The labour market outlook for those with low skills is poor, and people with low skills face the prospect of long term unemployment. While demand for basic level skills will decrease over the next two decades, demand for higher level skills will increase.

This might lead to a paradoxical situation where companies cannot fill vacancies while there are substantial numbers of people unemployed. Upskilling through education and training is the key to resolving this paradox. Investment in skills and education is therefore vital to long term recovery.

The correlation between educational achievement and labour market status is strikingly revealed in the September 2010 Quarterly National Household Survey.

Education level	Unemployment rate	Employment rate
Primary or below	18.4%	40.4%
Lower secondary	19.2%	55.0%
Higher secondary	13.5 %	72.4%
Post leaving cert	16.5%	81.2%
Ordinary degree	8.6 %	85.4%
Honours Degree (or above)	7.6%	89.2%

Ireland has a wide disparity in educational achievement between 25-34 year olds and 55-64 year olds having upper secondary education with the gap of 40% being among the highest in the OECD. The European Union in its Euro 2020 policy sets out the challenge at a European level: "A quarter of pupils have poor reading competences, one in seven young people leave education and training too early....Less than one in three aged 25-34 has a university degree compared to 40% in the US and over 50% in Japan."

Ireland does not share all of these problems, but the places where we do well are at the upper end of the education system - 39% of our labour force is third level graduates. We do, however, underachieve at the lower levels. This is a proxy for inequality in society. While we take justifiable pride in the quality of our education system we must recognise that the established Leaving Certificate best suits those who are academically gifted.

Passport to a Job

The National Skills Strategy was published before the height of the boom, but it sets out challenging targets for upskilling the workforce. It is estimated that 500,000 people will require being upskilled by the year 2020 if we are to meet the challenges of the emerging economy. The largest groups are 250,000 from level 3 (Junior cert equivalent) to level 5 140,000 from level 5 to level 6/7 (advanced certificate ordinary degree) 70,000 from level 1 or 2 (old primary cert or school dropout) to level 3 30,000 from level 4/5 to level 8 (honors degree) or above.

The report comments that: "The upskilling of 500,000 persons already in the labour force is a significant challenge."

These targets will stretch the capacity of the Irish education and training infrastructure. Most OECD countries have separate vocational and general streams of upper second level schooling; pupils are segregated after junior cycle into an academic and a vocational stream. Ireland is unique in that most students take a general academic stream culminating in the Leaving Certificate examination. Admission to third level education and preparing students to compete in the point's race has become the primary focus of the Leaving Certificate, displacing emphasis on the broader function of education and compromising attempts to support a strong vocational emphasis. While there have been sustained attempts over more than two decades to promote alternatives to the Leaving Certificate, brand loyalty remains strong among pupils and parents alike and only a negligible proportion of students undertake a programme of study with a primarily vocational emphasis. Many vocational courses in the VEC sector fall under the Post Leaving certificate sector and can provide opportunities for early school leavers and for adult returnees. Most young people stay in education – which is good. Some may however stay in the wrong kind of education – with diminishing returns. That this is the case is shown by the statistics on practical literacy and numeracy, which show that 20% of those in the 16- 25% age cohort scored at the lowest or level one.

These trends highlight the need for augmented efforts to develop and expand vocational strands within the education sector. The fact that Ireland has a weak vocational element in upper second level education (when compared to other countries) makes the training system all the more important. VET systems should deal with the needs of the labour market and participation in VET should be seen as a sure passport to a job. VET stands at the frontier between education and work. While employers expect young people to have a good standard of general education, imparted through the school system, they also expect that work specific skills will be imparted by a strong VET system. For employed people the training system is a means of maintaining and upgrading skills. For unemployed people the training system is a means to re-enter the labour force either in their former job family or in a new one. This means that there should be a strong linkage between training provision and emerging jobs or job families.

Upskilling the workforce brings positive returns to the economy and to society. It leads to higher skilled and more confident workers, able to deal with increasingly complex technology. It increases the productivity of enterprises and with it their profitability and sustainability. The increased level of education and training feed into economic growth. Increasing the skills of the workforce will be a driver for renewed and increased economic growth.

The paper is structured on a thematic basis and deals with the strengths and weaknesses of the Irish education and training system, and the role of VET systems in successful economies. It goes on to deal with the skill needs of the economy, how to meet these in the most effective manner and how different groups benefit differently. The importance of governance systems is examined and the paper advocates that a new re-branded skills agency with a remit near to that of the former ANCO should be established, financed by a broadened National Training Fund.

The underlying theme of the paper is that as VET is a 'public good' the state should play a leading, but not an exclusive role, in the provision of education and training. The paper strongly argues that it matters that people are trained and educated to a high standard in a broad range of skills which will guarantee their labour market mobility. It also matters that a reserve army of labour on workfare does not undermine conditions through swathes of the economy.

Unions must shape the VET system to deal with both short term and long term challenges. Short term challenges include youth unemployment and high levels of long term unemployment. Longer term challenges will include the underperformance of boys in the education system and the uncertain labour market performance of the children of migrants.

It matters to trade unions that one of the key aspects of Ireland's manufacturing competitiveness – a highly skilled workforce – is maintained. The 'hidden hand' of the market will not bring these things about.

The full text of this paper can be downloaded at <http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/new-skills-for-a-new-economy/>

Labour Market Activation

This phrase has a number of meanings, depending on the context. As used in the labour market activation fund, it means a voluntary engagement by unemployed people with the third level education sector.

The €20 million Labour Market Activation Fund (LAMF) was established as part of Budget 2010 to support training and education programmes for the unemployed who have been getting an unemployment payment for at least three months before joining the programme.

The programmes are giving priority to those who are less skilled, those who previously worked in the construction, retail and manufacturing sectors, those who are under 35 and the long-term unemployed. The Department of Education & Skills is managing the fund.

In an entirely different context, the phrase arises in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Irish Government and the EU/ECB/IMF troika which commits the Government to:

*Take steps to tackle unemployment and poverty traps including through reducing replacement rates for individuals receiving more than one type of benefit (including housing allowance);
Introduce Legislative and other measures with a view to: improving the efficiency of the administration of unemployment benefits, social assistance and active labour market policies, by exploiting synergies and reducing the overlapping of competencies across different departments;*

Enhancing conditionality on work and training availability;

Strengthening activation measures via:

- i. the introduction of instruments to better identify job seekers' needs ('profiling') and increased engagement;*
- ii. a more effective monitoring of jobseekers' activities with regular evidence-based reports;*
- iii. the application of sanction mechanisms for beneficiaries not complying with job search conditionality and recommendations for participation in labour market programmes set in such a way as to imply an effective loss of income without being perceived as excessively penalising so that it could credibly be used whenever lack of compliance is ascertained.*

At each subsequent review of the programme, the Government will submit reports containing an assessment (including by means of quantitative indicators) of the management of activation policies and on the outcome of job seekers' search activities and participation in labour market programmes.

The operation of this system is being monitored at the time of writing.

Congress report on skills policy





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Rights in the Workplace

Chapter One - The Aftermath of Partnership

Bilateral Arrangements Replace Multilateral Approach

The collapse of Social Partnership after 22 years marked a sea change in the way relations with Government and IBEC now must be conducted. There is no longer a structured dialogue framework such as the quarterly plenary meetings or the monthly reviews. Nor is there a host of working parties or sub-committees to be serviced.

This is not all necessarily bad. There is no great attraction in maintaining a bureaucratic machine simply for the sake of it. On the other hand there are hundreds of mundane issues that need to be progressed, but which now have no channel in which to do so.

The collapse of Social Partnership did not result in any meaningful reduction in access. By and large we could still meet the Taoiseach and senior ministers when required.

It must also be remembered that the Croke Park Agreement has its own quite sophisticated machinery. We also have a protocol for handling disputes with IBEC, covering the private sector (see below). The demise of the National Implementation Body (NIB) probably leaves a gap in the arrangements for handling industrial disputes which will have to be filled in an ad hoc way. It is too early to say how relations with the new Government will pan out.

Industrial Relations Protocol for the Private Sector

Congress engaged with IBEC over a period of some months towards the end of 2009 to see if ground rules could be agreed for the conduct of industrial relations, in the aftermath of Social Partnership.

The outcome was a protocol, the terms of which are reproduced below. It was initially to cover one year, but following a review in February of this year that period was extended to the end of 2011.

ICTU & IBEC National Protocol for the Orderly Conduct of Industrial Relations and Local Bargaining in the Private Sector

1. Both IBEC and ICTU have reviewed the above protocol and reiterate their agreement that the maximisation of sustainable employment is the most important objective to be secured during the economic downturn.
2. The parties will work together to facilitate economic recovery through agreed strategies within their sphere of influence.
3. The parties are committed to preserving stability by ensuring that industrial relations are conducted in an orderly manner and to serve the primary purpose of protecting jobs. Specifically the parties will:
 - a. Promote meaningful and timely engagement at local level in relation to issues in dispute; and which is undertaken in a spirit of making every effort to reach agreement at the earliest stage;
 - b. Encourage their members to abide by established collective agreements and ensure that local negotiations, where applicable, take place on the expiry of existing agreements on pay under any procedures agreed at enterprise level for the resolution of disputes;
 - c. Utilise the machinery of the State – the Labour Court and Labour Relations Commission (or other agreed machinery) – to resolve disputes.
4. The parties recognise that they are operating in a context without a formal agreement on pay determination. However, bearing in mind the shared commitment to maximising the sustainability of employment, it is accepted that the economic, commercial, employment and competitiveness circumstances of the firm are legitimate considerations in any discussion of claims for adjustments to pay or terms and conditions of employment. It is not the intention of the parties to alter their historical approach to dealing with normal ongoing change.

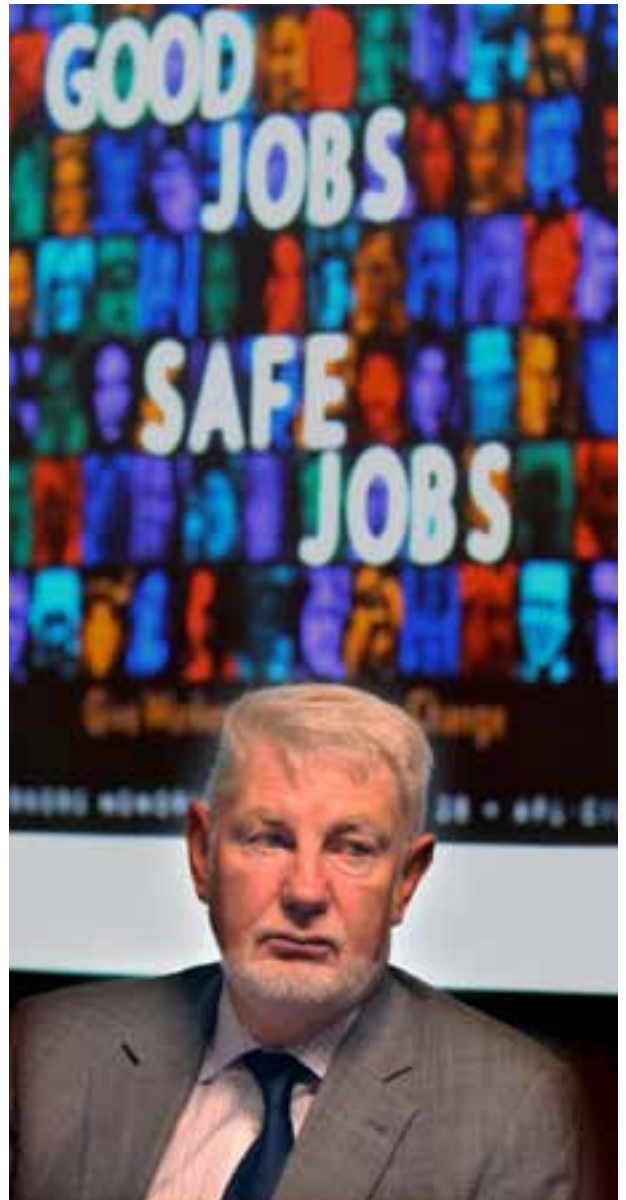
5. The parties will try to achieve common ground for the purposes of persuading Government to take action on priority issues including:
 - Job retention and creation;
 - Pensions;
 - Home reposessions.
6. The parties are committed to ensuring that their respective members do not engage in strikes, lockouts or other forms of industrial action in respect of any matters covered by this protocol where the employer or trade union concerned is acting in accordance with its terms.
7. This protocol remains effective for 2011 and the parties will meet during the autumn to discuss arrangements to apply thereafter. Otherwise, the parties will meet as required to review the operation of this protocol, to oversee the delivery of industrial peace, stability, good industrial relations and to consider any procedural matters where difficulties arise.
8. The parties will establish agreed tripartite structures under a rotating chairmanship to include Government to discharge the functions set out in paragraph 7 above.

Pensions

Congress identified the provision of sustainable adequate pensions as a strategic priority during the *Towards 2016* negotiations. The response of Government was to commit to the publication of the Green Paper on Pensions which eventually saw the light of day in October 2007.

Following a further prolonged period of consultation and foot dragging the Government finally produced a Pensions Framework in March 2010. During this period Congress continually pressed the Pension Board and the Government to accept that Defined Benefit (DB) Schemes were in serious crisis and that unless decisive action was taken Irish workers were facing what we described as a 'pension catastrophe'.

There was limited progress. More flexible rules regarding Section 50 applications allowed trustees to reduce benefits in a more equitable fashion. The Pensions Insolvency Payments Scheme allowed for a more orderly wind-up of a scheme, provided both the scheme and the sponsoring employer had become insolvent. At time of writing a proposal supported by Congress to allow scheme liabilities to be assessed with reference to Irish



Sovereign Bonds has been agreed and should make it easier for schemes to either meet the Minimum Funding Standard, or to wind up in a fashion that might save some of the benefits for active members.

Whatever the final outcome - in terms of whether many or any DB schemes survive - the Government, the Department of Social Protection and the Pensions Regulator have failed spectacularly to protect the pensions of members of DB schemes. Many thousands of workers will not get the pension they and their employer paid for dearly. May thousands more may lose their entire pension. The reputational damage done to funded pensions is immense. The current generation and the next generation of workers are unlikely to entrust their hard earned money to a system where the consequences of the risks taken by the investment 'experts' fall entirely on the worker.

It appears that, notwithstanding EU directives requiring effective pension protection, the Government and public officials - including the regulator - intend to stand back and do nothing while members of occupational pension schemes lose their working life savings.

Congress will continue to lobby the new administration for action to save occupational pensions schemes.

The Pension Levy

The Minister for Finance recently announced that a levy of pension savings is to fund the Government's jobs initiative and will entail:

A levy of between 0.5% and 0.6% of the pension scheme assets of all pension savers including savings in occupational defined benefit and defined contribution schemes, approved retirement funds, retirement annuity contracts and PRSAs. This levy will be applied for a period of four years from 2011 to 2014 and is intended to raise €450 million per annum over this period.

Congress is deeply concerned about the impact of the imposition of a levy on pension funds as many funds are already in considerable difficulty.

Congress represents the great majority of members of pension schemes in Ireland. Most occupational pension schemes were first established in the collective bargaining system when trade unions and employers agreed the terms, rules, and benefits of the schemes.

Congress has been leading attempts to rescue the Defined Benefit (DB) system from the crisis it now faces. We have done this in two ways, firstly by negotiating the restructuring of individual schemes and secondly by engaging with Government to seek the creation of the best regulatory environment possible for DB schemes.

Congress has been advocating that the €78 billion of Irish workers' money that is currently tied up in pension funds should be harnessed for job creation, but this levy is not the way to do it. The levy will simply add to the difficulties and lead to the closure of many DB schemes. It will also lead to a further erosion of confidence in Defined Contribution (DC) provision.

Congress has been meeting Government officials, public sector procurement organisations and pension fund managers advocating that pension funds should invest some of the assets in infrastructural developments which would stimulate employment in our beleaguered construction industry.

All those we have met agreed that this idea has merit and the potential to help us out of the crisis. This levy is an unimaginative approach which can only do damage to pensions. The Congress alternative will work if the Government and the pension stakeholders work together to harness the real job creation potential of Irish pension funds

Review of EROs and REAs

In a last act of treachery on the part of the outgoing Fianna Fail /Green coalition, Minister Mary Hanafin announced shortly before departure from office that the Government had established an 'independent review' of the framework of statutory wage setting mechanisms known as Employment Regulation Orders (EROs) and Registered Employment Agreements (REAs). This announcement followed hard on the heels of the IMF/EU/ECB 'bailout' and after months of a concerted media and political campaign run by the 'competitiveness through exploitation' lobby.

Their aim was to use the crisis to roll back regulations protecting workers conditions and to drive down wages. They focused their fire primarily on the lower paid. Their campaign accorded neatly with Government policy and, as now seems clear, a move at EU Commission level to attack wages and living standards.

The Chairman of the Labour Court Mr Kevin Duffy and Dr. Frank Walsh, UCD, were given just six weeks to complete this review.

Congress made a comprehensive submission to the review body, making the following points:

- » The review is the precursor to an attack on the pay and conditions of some of the most hardworking and vulnerable workers in Irish society;
- » JLCs and REAs are valuable elements of our industrial relations system. They offer protection against exploitation and abuse of workers;
- » The European Commission is interfering in the Irish labour market in order to tip the scales against lower paid and vulnerable workers in favour of 'social dumpers' and would-be employers of sweated labour;
- » There is a real and present danger that construction workers, hairdressers, cleaners, catering workers, and agricultural workers will have no minimum standards or protection other than the deflated National Minimum Wage;
- » If employers wish to change or dilute the terms of either EROs or REAs because of difficult economic circumstances, the procedures exist for them to do so. If, however it is intended to strip vulnerable workers of very basic protections at a time of crisis and when their collective bargaining strength is at an all time low, then fine words from the EU Commission and our Government during the Lisbon debate about respecting workers rights will be seen to have been nothing but an exercise in deceit.

A delegation from Congress met with the review body to amplify our concerns. The final report was published on 24 May 2011.

Labour Standards: Enforcement & Compliance Trends

The quarterly reports of the National Employment Rights Authority (NERA) allow compliance to be mapped across various sectors of the economy. They show the extent of non compliance with EROs and REAs. A summary of compliance levels for June 2009 and June 2010 is shown in the accompanying chart. These show alarmingly low levels of compliance, with levels falling in all sectors except catering between 2009 and 2010. This partially results from the fact that as operational knowledge increases across different sectors, NERA will concentrate on higher risk employers.

The amount of wages recovered declined by almost 50% between 2009 and 2010 from roughly the same amount of visits. These figures do not support the view that wage setting mechanisms in the services sector need to be weakened: if anything they clearly illustrate the need to strengthen these mechanisms and increase the penalties for non compliance.



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Extraordinary Possibilities

Chapter Two - Better Leave Schemes

Equality Tribunal

Congress continued to try and deal with the issue of long delays - up to 3 years - at the Equality Tribunal. Members of the Equality Committee met with the newly appointed Director and his team in July 2010 to make our case and also raised the issue politically with the relevant Minister, making the point that the Tribunal should be equipped to deal with cases in a timely and professional manner. We said that there should also be a right to an oral hearing. Congress has produced a guide for trade unions on taking a case to the Tribunal and will be organising training in this area. We have also produced guidance in relation to Lesbian, Gay and Transgender issues in the workplace.

Leave Schemes

Congress continued to seek improvements in the various leave schemes for workers and we sought a review of the leaves (Maternity, Parental, and Paternity) as they operate in Ireland to include consideration of:

- i) the introduction of a statutory entitlement to flexible working arrangements for workers; and a statutory entitlement to paternity leave;
- ii) extended paid maternity leave and paid parental leave and transposition of the Council Directive 2010/18/Eu of March 8, 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BusinessEurope, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC;
- iii) learning leave for low-skilled workers.

The new Parental Leave Directive has facilitated contact with the relevant Government department who are awaiting political direction before proceeding with transposition. They have also indicated that they will use the opportunity to address some technical matters in relation to other leave schemes and to examine the feasibility of introducing Paternity Leave.

The National Framework Committee on Work Life Balance, in the context of the economic situation and subsequent budgetary pressures in the department resulting in the near elimination of funds available for the promotion of work life balance has ended its work. Arrangements are being made to ensure that the information resource represented by the stand-alone work life balance website can continue, but the funding of the Panel of Consultants scheme has finished.

Our work in this area has been informed by Congress Research on leave practices and options available to union members. Very limited up-to-date research has been carried out in Ireland regarding the uptake and availability of leave options (including parental leave), flexible work arrangements and life long learning options from the perspective of union members. In order to counter this lack of data and to inform our participation in the promised review of the various leave schemes in the Republic of Ireland, we commissioned a questionnaire survey of union members to find out more about workers' experiences and aspirations regarding flexible working arrangements and leave options.

This was carried out by Nexus Research with the support of the Congress Equality Committee and member unions. A significant challenge currently facing workplaces relates to how to keep people in their current employment. In this context, the focus of the research is on how the availability and use of flexible work arrangements and leave options has allowed employees to maintain their employability and career progression in a way that would otherwise not be possible.

Many developments in this area originate in Europe and Congress has continued its active involvement at the ETUC in this regard.

Congress wrote to all Irish MEPs regarding the Revision of Directive 92/85/EEC (Pregnant Workers Directive) on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the health of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding. We expressed concern about the continued stalling of the process of revision of this Directive in the European Parliament. Congress is of the opinion that the Pregnant Workers Directive must be seen as an important part of a much broader package of necessary measures regarding reconciliation of work and family life, which should include childcare and eldercare, paid parental leave, a stronger role for fathers in childrearing and flexible working arrangements for men and women.

Trade Unions across Europe described the outcome of the vote on the Maternity Protection Directive in the European Parliament on October 20, 2010 as mixed. MEPs voted positively on the Estrela report on 'Improvements in the Safety and Health at Work of Pregnant Workers and Workers who have Recently given Birth or are Breastfeeding'.

The maternity protection dossier then passed on into the hands of the Council, where EU Governments, including Ireland, have their say. At the European Council on December 6, a majority of ministers considered that the amendments adopted by the Parliament, primarily the requested extension of the minimum maternity leave to 20 weeks on full pay, did not constitute an appropriate basis for negotiations. The Belgian Presidency concluded that the Commission's original proposal aiming to extend the minimum length of maternity leave from 14 to 18 weeks could be a more acceptable basis for a compromise than the European Parliament's amendments. There has been no progress on the matter since then.

The main changes are an increase from three to four months, the extra month being non-transferable

The Parental Leave Revised Framework Agreement on parental leave – in which Congress played a very active role as part of the ETUC negotiating group - has now been transposed into a Directive and published in the Official Journal. The reference number of the Directive is 2010/18/EU. Deadline for implementation is March 8, 2012.

Congress will be actively pursuing transposition of this Directive into Irish law and will be working closely with the ETUC who are coordinating efforts across the EU in this regard. The main changes are an increase from three to four months, the extra month being non-transferable between parents, and the right to request flexible working arrangements upon return from leave. All matters regarding income in relation to this agreement are for consideration and determination by member states and/or social partners according to national law, collective agreements and/or practice.

Congress organised a briefing for trade unions on these issues in May 2010, which included input from the ETUC and the Department of Justice. We also participated in an ETUC seminar on issues in relation to the transposition of the Directive in February 2011.



Patricia King, Vice President Congress

Chapter Three - A Safer Workplace

Safety, Health & Welfare at Work

The Health and Safety Committee of Congress meets every two months with the dual aim of keeping unions informed of developments in the area of safety, health and welfare at work and to also to campaign for improvements in workplace safety. The quest for improved awareness and increased enforcement is proving increasingly difficult across the world, in Europe and at home here in Ireland. The Government funding allocation to the HSA has been reduced in the last two years by over €4 million. In addition the stated intention in the Programme for Government *“to merge the activities of the Health & Safety Authority with the National Consumer Agency to create a Business Inspection and Licensing Authority”* needs to be monitored very closely to ensure there is no diminution of the rights of workers or no adverse impact on health and safety.

In this report we highlight some of the key challenges and milestones of the period under review.

The ‘Smart Regulation’ Threat to Health & Safety

In September 2009, EU Commission President Barroso introduced the concept of ‘smart regulation’ as a new approach to European policymaking. The Commission put forward a number of proposals to reduce administrative ‘burdens’ in the area of labour law and health and safety, amongst others. One proposal was to remove the requirement for employers to compile a Safety Statement. This was portrayed as unnecessary red tape.

For the Congress Health and Safety Committee the Better Regulation Agenda is a threat to health and safety for at least three reasons. First, by aiming to reduce companies’ information on health and safety obligations, the Commission is attacking workers’ rights to information and consultation. Secondly, this is being done under the pretext of reducing administrative burdens or simplification, thus trying to avoid the normal (legally required) health and safety decision-making process. Thirdly, the proposals were made on the basis of unreliable data and unreliable methods of calculating administrative costs.

We are happy to report that on foot of the actions by the Committee the proposals were not accepted. However the Committee remains concerned that similar proposals will again emerge under the guise of supposed ‘better regulation’. We are also concerned that cuts in funding to the Health & Safety Authority (HSA), will mean fewer work place inspections, which has negative implications for the maintenance of standards.

Work related Deaths, Injuries & Ill Health

Official statistics underestimate the number of people killed because of their work. For example, they exclude the number of workers killed and injured while driving for work and the hundreds who die from work-related cancers.

In 2009, there were 43 workplace fatalities in the Republic of Ireland, the lowest on record since the Health and Safety Authority was set up in 1989. There were 48 workplace fatalities in 2010 and ten people had died up to March 25, 2011.



Workers' Memorial Day 2010

Of the ten fatalities, three have been in the agriculture sector and two have been in the fishing sector. The number of workers who suffered a non-fatal injury in 2010 will not be available from the Central Statistics Office until 2012. The number of non-fatal injuries that involved more than three days absence in 2009, was approximately 20,000.

The Congress Health and Safety Committee continues to press for legislation to ensure that Corporate Manslaughter is recognised as a crime and we made representations to the recent review of white collar crime.

In December 2010 the then Minister for Justice Dermot Ahern announced that preparations were underway to introduce legislation to prosecute companies, senior managers and executives over a death that was linked to a business. Disappointingly the Criminal Justice Bill 2011, published in May 2011 did not contain any corporate manslaughter provisions and Congress is campaigning to secure amendments to that Bill to ensure that will hold Directors and senior managers liable for manslaughter in the workplace, and also if they sold a product or provided a service, such as transport, blamed on a killing. We are also seeking enactment of protection for workers who blow the whistle on corporate misconduct or wrongdoing so that they are protected from employers reprisals.

Work-Related Traffic Accidents

The Committee focused particularly on the problems associated with driving for work. Up to one third of all road collisions involve drivers who are using their vehicle for work. This means that around 75 people die in work related road accidents per annum. The Committee met with the Road Safety Authority and contributed to the development of new Driving for Work Guidelines. The Driving for Work guidelines provide an overview of legislation and detail how to carry out risk assessments.

Work-Related Cancers

Each year in Ireland, there are over 20,000 new cases of cancer and over 7,500 cancer deaths, accounting for almost one quarter of the annual death toll.

The European Agency for Safety & Health estimates that an average 9.6% of all cancer deaths are attributable to work. The smoking ban in workplaces in Ireland will undoubtedly reduce the number of work related cancers. But even an exceptionally conservative 3% of 20,000 would mean that 600 cases of cancer every year are the result of preventable, predicable workplace exposures.

At work, we face a barrage of rapidly evolving substances and of new work methods, processes and environments, with very little thought given to the health consequences

that will face society – workers, families, entire communities - a working generation down the road. This is an issue we need to deal with proactively and on an ongoing basis.

In this context, the Committee has taken a particular interest in the emergence of nano-technology and is involved at an EU level trying to ensure that this does not become the asbestos of our generation.

Work-Related Suicides

There is no record kept of work-related suicide but international research suggests that about 10% of deaths by suicide can be considered to be work-related. Last year, there were 527 deaths by suicide recorded in Ireland and the majority were males. This would suggest that at least 50 of those suicides were work related.

International Workers' Memorial Day

International Workers' Memorial Day falls each year on April 28. On this day, working people throughout the world remember those who were hurt or killed at work and renew the struggle for safe workplaces.

On this day, unions rededicate to ending injustice in the workplace and to fighting for stronger safety laws and protections for all workers.

Congress marked Workers' Memorial Day 2010 with an event in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, while the 2011 day was marked with a ceremony at the Labour History Museum. All unions were invited to send representatives in memory of members who had lost their lives because of work related injuries or illness. In 2010 we placed a special focus to the families and colleagues of those who were killed at work, while in 2011 the emphasis for the day was on work-related suicide. We highlighted the necessity for employers to have safe systems of work and conduct risk assessments, including assessments for work-related stress.

The Committee is campaigning to have Workers Memorial Day officially recognised, as is the case in the UK and most recently (2011) the USA. President Obama officially designated April 28 as Workers' Memorial Day and called on everyone to participate in ceremonies and activities in memory of those killed or injured due to unsafe working conditions.

Other matters under active consideration by the Committee included drug and alcohol testing and the use of 'fit notes'. The Committee also issued guidance on dealing with swine flu.

Chapter Four - Union Rights are Human Rights

Securing Union Rights

Although trade union rights are recognised as fundamental human rights, they are not properly respected in Ireland. In particular a problematic interpretation of 'freedom of association' by the Irish Supreme Court in *Ryanair*, has meant that anti trade union activity, once the preserve of a few companies, has become widespread, thereby jeopardising the basic human right of workers to organise in trade unions for the protection of their interests.

In response, Congress developed and implemented a legal strategy designed to counter this. We invited leading labour law expert Professor Keith Ewing of King's College London, to advise the Executive Council on lodging a formal complaint to the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association. This happened in 2010 and the complaint is expected to be heard this year.

We followed this up with a Shadow Report to the United Nations', under its Human Rights' Supervisory Framework in which we outlined the failure of successive Irish governments to properly respect trade union rights.

In addition we carried out a high level lobbying campaign to secure the enactment of legislation to protect the trade union/human rights of workers in a manner consistent with:

- (i) the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- (ii) recent rulings of the European Court of Human Rights in *Wilson, Demir*¹ and *Enerjii*;
- (iii) the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights;
- (iv) obligations under International Labour Organisation Conventions to which Ireland is a party, in particular ILO Conventions 98 and 8;
- (v) the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- (vi) the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- (vii) the Council of Europe's Social Charter and
- (viii) the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

1 *Demir and Baykara v Turkey*, Application No 34503/97, 12 November 2008,

Commitment in Programme for Government

At BDC 2009 the leader of the Labour Party, Eamon Gilmore, committed to legislate for trade union rights, including the right to collective bargaining. The Labour Party remained true to their word and Congress welcomed the inclusion of just such a commitment in the new Programme for Government. It reads: "*We will reform the current law on employees' right to engage in collective bargaining (the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2001), so as to ensure compliance by the State with recent judgments of the European Court of Human Rights.*"

In that context Congress is calling for meaningful legislation that:

- a. Ensures that the right of all workers to Freedom of Association, the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining is guaranteed and properly respected;
- b. Prohibits any adverse treatment, prejudicial act and any less favourable treatment arising from the exercise of these human/trade union rights;
- c. Provides for enhanced protection, that is available rapidly and in a manner that guarantees to prevent any adverse treatment from occurring, by providing for injunctions along with dissuasive sanctions and improved redress;
- d. Safeguards against anti-union activity and prohibits 'interference' which includes the use of 'inducements' or other measures, policies or acts calculated to induce workers not to join or to give up their trade union membership or to not exercise their trade union rights, including the right to collective bargaining;
- e. Provides a definition for 'collective bargaining', 'collective agreement' and 'collective action' in line with ECHR and ILO standards;
- f. Sets out the legal obligations on parties to participate in collective bargaining and the facilities and arrangements to be put in place to ensure 'good faith' in the collective bargaining process;
- g. Establishes the parties to collective bargaining, in line with ILO definitions to ensure the rights of freelancers and safeguard against the use of non-union representatives to undermine the position of trade unions;

- h. Sets out the institutional machinery to facilitate negotiations and the settlement of disputes;
- i. Clarifies the legal effect of collective bargaining agreements and the extension of collective agreements;
- j. Re-establishes fair employment rules.

We are working with the Labour Lawyers Group and have sought guidance from a number of legal experts in the fields of human rights, equality, constitutional, European and labour law.

In addition Congress is working with the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors (AGSI) who are experiencing 'unnecessary' 'disproportionate' and 'unjustified' restrictions on their fundamental trade union rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. The AGSI is prohibited from associating with the ICTU, contrary to the (Revised) European Social Charter (ESC). Article 5 ESC only allows a restriction of trade union freedom for members of the armed forces, (i.e. the army not the police). Further the ECHR has found that any restrictions must be 'necessary' and 'proportionate' to the aim pursued by their imposition.

union rights are not properly respected in Ireland

The Social Deficit



Chapter One - Equality is not a Luxury

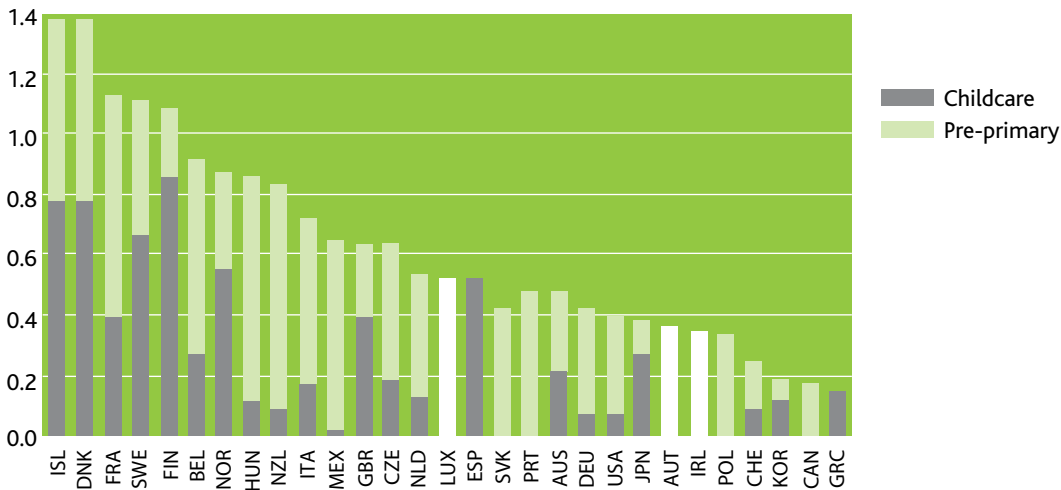
The Childcare Deficit

Congress has consistently made the case that the economy exists to serve society and not the other way round. The crisis has confirmed the importance of that view and of the necessity to ensure it becomes widely accepted.

Childcare is an area where progress has generally been poor and where services and infrastructure developed during the boom is now under threat from spending cuts. Among the most worrying of recent suggestions is the proposal to tax Child Benefit. Child Benefit is used for a range of costs in relation to children - food, clothing, school books, uniforms and childcare.

Given the abolition of the Early Years Childcare Supplement, Child Benefit is now the only payment to assist parents with childcare costs which, depending on where you are in the country, can range from €800 to €1000 per month. In the absence of a properly resourced, State child support system in Ireland, and the fact that the payment is made directly to women, confirms our view that it would be unfair to tax Child Benefit. Congress is concerned that further proposals to remove tax allowances to providers for childcare facilities, along with the treatment of employer care as Benefit in Kind, will also add to childcare costs. Thus Congress cannot support the taxation of Child Benefit until there is a strong, State supported system of child care in place. Although a number of years old, the OECD graph below shows the low level of state support that obtains here generally.

Public spending on childcare including pre-primary education, percentage of NNI, 2005:





Young and old took to the streets

Congress prepared a submission on the Development of the Workforce in the Early Childhood Care and Education Sector. Congress believes that the delivery of quality childcare is dependent upon a highly skilled childcare workforce that is retained within the sector. The facilitation of training and education must be a core element of developing the workforce. We are equally of the view that the development of a sustainable highly qualified workforce will not occur in the absence of appropriate pay, working conditions and career progression for childcare workers. High quality, affordable, accessible childcare with decent jobs continues to be the principal trade union demand in respect of the early childhood care and education (ECCE) sector.

Trade unions have also been to the fore in supporting the efforts of those campaigning against the proposed cuts in community childcare services. The Community Sector in Ireland is on the frontline supporting the most marginalised and vulnerable communities. They provide essential services and support in areas such as childcare and elder care.

Battling Inequality

The *Better, Fairer Way* campaign demanded that national recovery should not be achieved at the expense of dismantling hard won protections for the vulnerable and weakest in our society, or at the expense of institutions to combat discrimination and promote equality and human rights.

Any plan for national recovery must include a strong, effective, independent and adequately resourced equality and rights infrastructure so we can emerge from this crisis with an outcome that respects and protects the dignity of all.

Congress renominated two representatives to the board of the Equality Authority to ensure we played our part in fighting to protect hard won rights and the important work of the Authority, as it struggled to cope with the devastating cuts to its budget and the continued absence of a legal advisor.

It is essential that we have an Authority that can continue to raise awareness of discrimination and build public support for equality, but which can also investigate and challenge discriminatory practices beyond simply relying on individual complaints. This should include a more proactive approach to implementing equality, in particular the need for a 'positive duty' requiring private sector organisations to be planned and systematic in their approach to equality. All public sector organisations

should have due regard to equality in carrying out their functions, along with the need to further develop and support infrastructure to assist organisations in implementing this proactive approach to equality.

We have continued our active engagement with the **Equality and Rights Alliance** who produced *Roadmap to a Strengthened Equality & Human Rights Infrastructure in Ireland* in February 2011. It was launched by the Reverend Jesse Jackson and contains the following recommendation in relation to workplace participation:

“Introduce legislation to underpin the right of all workers to collective bargaining through their trade unions in line with the state’s international commitments under International Labour Organisation Convention 98, article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights, articles 12 and 28 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and recent judgments of the European Court of Human Rights.”

Congress continued our active participation in the National Women’s Strategy. This included submitting our views to a review of the strategy. The stated purpose of the review was: “To ensure that the strategy reflects changes in the operating environment including a progress in its implementation.”

Congress has warned that it should not be used as an opportunity to further row back on the rather modest aims and objectives contained therein. Congress has repeatedly made the case for gender equality to be a core component of any national recovery plan. Our submission to then Minister for Equality, Disability and Mental Health, John Moloney TD, expressed concern for the apparent abandonment of commitments to gender equality in the face of the economic crisis. This included:

- » Reallocation of most of the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform (DJELR) money earmarked for gender equality initiatives to “essential services” provided by that department, resulting in a vastly reduced 2009 allocation of only €1.2m for the Equality for Women Measure and the ineligibility of associated childcare costs.
- » The reallocation of €10m EU funding for the gender equality measure to DETE for much needed labour market programmes – but with no gender focus attached to this spend.

Congress continues our participation in the NWS monitoring group and the sub-committee on women in decision making. Congress also continued its work for equality in the following areas:

- » Religious exemption: Continued advocacy for the repeal of Section 37(1) of the Employment Equality Act – including a meeting with former Minister Mary White;

- » While welcoming Civil Partnership, we have also sought political commitment to equal marriage rights for same sex couples
- » Following the passing of a motion proposed by the TEEU at the Congress Women’s Conference in March 2010, Congress has played a supporting role on the issue of trafficking for sexual exploitation. David Begg and Eamon Devoy participated in the launch of the *Turn off the Red Light* campaign with both speaking at the launch in January 2011. The campaign argues that the best way to combat sex trafficking and prostitution is to tackle the demand for paid sex by criminalising the purchase of sex. (See <http://www.turnofftheredlight.ie/>). This issue will also feature at the Congress BDC in July 2011.
- » A continuing commitment to create an environment in Ireland that enables the participation of people with disabilities. Ireland has national strategies in place that reflect this goal. What we need now is a Government determined to carry the strategies through and advance towards our shared goal, despite the economic challenges. Congress has supported the NDA advice to prioritise the implementation of the **National Disability Strategy**, through the development of a framework of integrated actions including:

- Completion and implementation of the review of the efficiency and effectiveness of Disability Services currently underway as part of the Government’s Value for Money & Policy Review (VMPPR) Initiative;
- Disability Proofing is an important initiative to ensure that the impact on people with disabilities is embedded into public policy development and needs to be embedded in departmental plans and actions;
- Employment is a critical issue for people with disabilities. The finalisation and implementation of the proposed Comprehensive Employment Strategy for people with disabilities in order to:
 - increase the participation of people with disabilities in the workplace (by addressing the diversity of circumstances, needs and abilities of people with disabilities); and
 - enhance the operation and effectiveness of the range of FÁS supports and services for facilitating increased participation of disabled workers in the open labour market.

The Strategy will also form the basis for the provision of mainstream activation services for people in receipt of illness/disability welfare payments.

Chapter Two - The Dutch Model

New Study of Dutch Health Care System

Following on the commitment by the new Government to move towards a universal health insurance system based on the Dutch model, Congress produced a study of the health system in the Netherlands based on an analysis of the international academic literature and on interviews with Dutch trade unionists.

Since 2006, the Dutch state has stepped back from running the health system. Health care is now financed through a system of compulsory private health insurance from approximately ten insurance companies. These insurance companies now purchase care on behalf of their customers from hospitals and care providers.

However, health care does not lend itself to the application of unfettered market forces and a system of 'managed competition' and the promotion of equity through 'risk equalisation' have been introduced. Insurers must offer the same premiums to young and old, sick and healthy, in an attempt to stop those in relatively good health from congregating in specific companies.

To ensure compliance with both the spirit and the letter of the law the system is tightly regulated by NZa, the powerful Dutch state health regulator. The Government audits each company's enrolment plans and activities every year and a central fund pays subsidies to insurance companies who end up insuring higher risk groups. This fund is financed through a mix of member and government contributions.

The Dutch system is still in its early days and it is not without problems. Congress insists that public values in health care are ultimately set down and maintained in a public, not a commercial space – a space in which accountability and regulation ensure a democratic input into our health services. The classic definition of public values in healthcare is of "the trinity of quality, accessibility and affordability".

These values mean that the health system should deliver high quality and safe caring and curing to all citizens based on their medical need. Like many OECD countries Ireland is faced with the problem of increasing health costs. People are living longer and in so doing using more health care resources. Many diseases which were regarded as a death sentence two decades ago are now treatable – often with expensive new drugs after diagnosis on expensive new pieces of high tech equipment.

From January 1, 2006 each adult Dutch citizen was obliged to buy health insurance from any one of a number of insurance companies. These companies operate under what is known as 'managed competition' which is defined as a system in which consumers have free choice of health insurers, health insurers contract or integrate with care providers, and competition is regulated by government to ensure the public goals of universal access to affordable care of good quality. Managed competition recognises that healthcare provision does not lend itself to the application of unfettered market forces, and requires strong regulators to keep insurance companies focussed on patient need and to keep medical professionals focused on cost effective treatment.

All Dutch insurance companies are obliged to insure all customers. They are precluded by law from declining cover to higher risk customer or from skewing their products towards healthier customers. Children's premiums are paid by the Government and for the chronically ill there is a healthcare allowance or income related subsidy. There are two premiums: a basic and an income related premium. The latter is paid by employers and this is the "instrument of equalisation".

The income related premium and the Government's contribution towards children is pooled in a central risk equalisation fund, which pays compensation to insurers in respect of their higher risk (for which read older or sicker) customers. This equalisation is necessary in health insurance, because if market forces were allowed free rein only healthy young people could afford health insurance. The Dutch unions consider the results to be positive overall and didn't oppose the plan unlike most proposals from that conservative/liberal Government. The new system was unpopular for the first number of years but that unpopularity seems to have lessened.

As insurance companies are at the heart of the new Dutch system, they are tightly regulated by the Dutch Health authority - NZa, a government established body. The NZa ensures that both the letter and the spirit of the law are upheld and that insurance companies comply with the legal requirement to offer insurance at the same premium to all citizens. All insurers must offer everyone the same standardised benefits package, with insurers competing on premium costs, customer service and quality of care.

The four big companies who together share 88% of the market now dominate the Dutch health insurance market. Any merger between two of the big four and one of the smaller undertakings would bring the merged entity close to the 60% of market share which constitutes market dominance and which is illegal under EU competition law.

There are currently very few public hospitals left in The Netherlands – Dutch hospitals are in the main not for profit trusts, who sell care procedures to insurance companies. The Dutch Government is considering a proposal which would allow private capital to be introduced into hospitals in return for a profit in certain circumstances. As Dutch hospitals changed into more commercialised enterprises they assumed responsibility for maintenance and investment budgets relying almost exclusively on private sector capital financing with approximately 80–90% of funds for a typical project coming in the form of money loaned directly to the hospital. The remaining 10–20% is made up from the hospitals' accumulated savings or from other private sources. In three recent cases Dutch hospitals have had close shaves with bankruptcy, but were bailed out by the Government due to their perceived importance to the system.

In Ireland we need to have a discussion about how the Dutch system would be adapted to our circumstances. One key question is who would act as the banker of last resort for hospitals and insurers? The phrase 'systemic importance' – used in connection with a financially challenged Dutch hospital will send a shiver down Irish spines. The Irish people are currently undergoing a very bitter experience arising from the failure in regulation. We therefore cannot afford to bail out insurers who have under priced their products or hospital trusts who fail financial stress tests. Presumably the financial implications of healthcare reform will require the package to be approved by the EU/ECB/IMF troika.

The Dutch reforms are still described as a work in progress and the full implications of this are still a matter of debate among politicians and among health care economists. If the adoption of the Dutch system brings about affordable health care it will be regarded as a good thing. However, the political system will take a step back from the day to day management of the health system and askers of parliamentary questions on many aspects of the health system will be referred to the insurance companies or one of the regulatory bodies. Because insurance companies don't need to be elected every four years they will drive hard bargains with providers, and hospitals which fail to close a deal with an insurance company may well close. It is already apparent in The Netherlands that insurance companies are shaping the health sector to their own liking. Whether this is socially desirable is open to debate but it will require a robust and effective regulatory body.

Dutch healthcare costs have not decreased as a result of the 2006 law. The health-care-to-GDP ratio rose from 13.3% in 2008 to 14.7% in 2009. In 2009, per capita health care expenditure was €5,069 versus €4,818 in 2008, an increase of 5.2%. The latest research indicates that there is no hard evidence of total health care expenditure growth after 2006².

While the Dutch have allocated a certain role to markets in steering the health system, it is by consensus underpinned with values which are set by the political system. One prized Dutch core value is solidarity. The relation between citizens and their health is not reduced to the heartless cash nexus, because the political system has set in place regulators with teeth. Two American commentators posed a number of questions on the Dutch experiment which should be a starting point in the debate on the implications for Ireland.

- » Will the benefits of the basic package be eroded?
- » Will mergers and acquisitions in the insurance sector erode consumer choice?
- » Will competition undermine choice?
- » Will risk selection be practiced subtly if illegally?
- » Will private sector interests lobby government to undermine the measures which support the Dutch tradition of solidarity?³

In The Netherlands the market has been allocated the task of financing healthcare, and of exercising a restraining influence on health costs. However, as stated, that is done within the context of solidarity, a highly prized value within Dutch society. The key public health care values are quality, affordability and accessibility are set down and maintained in a public and not in a commercial space, and we need to bear this in mind as we go forward.⁴

At the time of going to print, the health study report was in the process of being published and will be available on the Congress website. (www.ictu.ie)

2 Schut and van der Ven 'effects' p.121.

3 Rosenau and .Lako 'Experiment' p. 1042

4 Van der Grinten et al 'Markets and public values in Health Care' NZ a discussion paper 2010 p.4

Chapter Three - Protecting People's Homes

The Housing Crash & Repossessions

Throughout the boom Congress was faced with a dilemma. Economic orthodoxy suggested that the main solution to spiralling house prices was to increase supply. However, for a decade unprecedented increases in house completions - from 20,000 per annum in the 1990s to 90,000 at peak - served only to drive prices ever upward and out of the reach of workers and their families. Congress' response was to demand social and affordable housing schemes so that working families could be housed, without having to take on unsustainable mortgage commitments.

Several national partnership agreements contained innovative schemes to achieve this end. The commitment to using public land stocks and the creation of the Affordable Home Partnership both proved to be well intentioned but ultimately futile attempts to moderate and counteract the worst excesses of an out of control private housing market.

No significant progress was made with these initiatives before the housing market crashed. Irresponsible lending by financial institutions fuelled a speculative frenzy that served to produce 300,000 unoccupied houses, while the legacy of the crash is evident in ghost estates and half finished, empty apartments the length and breadth of the land.

At time of writing we are witness to an escalating mortgage default crisis as incomes are cut and interest rates ratcheted up. This is another huge blow for working families who have borne the entire financial and social brunt of this crisis.

Office of Debt Resolution

Indeed repossession is now a very real threat for many families. There is every reason to believe (on foot of the recent distressed assets sale) that banks will sell on the debts or be tempted to repossess houses as they have nothing to lose, as despite the repossession, the person still owes the full outstanding mortgage (and the banks can charge the families unrestricted fees for the cost of repossession, sale and court costs!)

Voluntary surrender, where homeowners hand the keys of their property back to the bank, is on the increase. Where the property is in negative equity there are real issues facing families as inevitably the lender will pursue the

borrower for the shortfall and there is no guarantee about how the property will be valued, nor does there seem to be any obligation on the banks to obtain the best price for the property.

Congress has proposed the establishment of an Office For Debt Resolution (ODR) to protect families in financial distress from losing their homes and to address over indebtedness. This would work by:

1. Providing an easily accessible, non-legal alternative to courts for people who are over indebted;
2. The ODR would be empowered to require lenders to conclude, an 'affordable mortgage and debt payment arrangement' which protects a 'minimally adequate' standard of living; (repayments can be adjusted upwards if/when the persons situation improves);
3. In repossession and surrender situations, the ODR could vary the overall mortgage and/or the repayments and suspend interest, penalties and other charges as these only exacerbate financial distress;
4. Set out what steps should be taken by a lender to ensure that the best price is obtained for a family home when it is repossessed;
5. Restrict the amount that can be charged in a repossession/voluntary surrender situation, restrict fees, cap resale costs;
6. Include an option of a 'write down' of negative equity;
7. Debtors must be guaranteed access and representation when they are negotiating an 'affordable mortgage and debt payment arrangement;'
8. Provide for certainty - no more vague and ambiguous language in Voluntary Code's which make enforcement or even the investigation of alleged breaches by Lenders, very difficult;
9. Provide for debt forgiveness/shared ownership;
10. Increase protection and regulate debt collection practices.

Protection Against Debt Collection Practices

Workers who are experiencing problems with debt can be concerned not only because of their debt but also because they fear negative consequences from receiving calls at work. Typical tactics include the debt collection agency phoning the worker at work (or on their mobile) and leaving a first name and number (but no message) and asking for an urgent call back.

Briefly, there are two sources of legal protection for workers, although it is unclear how effective these are: the Consumer Credit Act 1995 and the Non Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997. (The Code of Practice on Mortgage Arrears states that no more than three calls should be made but this is a voluntary code).

The Consumer Credit Act prohibits calls at work unless the worker has agreed: Section 46 of the Act states:

A creditor, owner or a person acting on his behalf shall not visit or telephone—

- (a) *a consumer without his consent—*
 - (i) *at his place of employment or business unless the consumer resides at that place and all reasonable efforts to make contact with him have failed,*
 - (ii) *at any place,*
 - a. *between the hours of 9 o'clock in the evening on any week day and 9 o'clock in the morning on the following day, or*
 - b. *at any time on a Sunday or a public holiday (within the meaning of the Holidays (Employees) Act, 1973),*
- (b) *a consumer's employer or any member of the consumer's family unless that employer or family member is a party to the agreement, without the consent of the consumer, given in writing and separate from any other term of agreement, for any purposes connected with an agreement other than the service of a document in connection with legal proceedings.*

(This applies to all arrangements before June 2010, however it appears that this section does not apply to credit arrangements after that date).

It's clear that these protections are vulnerable to waiver by consent. Some years ago when taking out the loan, credit/store card or other arrangement, people were more likely to think that a call at work would be a positive call rather than negative. They were unlikely to have foreseen dramatic changes in their circumstances when signing and agreeing to be contacted at work.

Despite the worker having given permission to be contacted at work the creditor cannot repeatedly call nor can they make threatening calls. This is prohibited under Section 11 of the Non Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997. This prohibits "Demands for payment of debt causing alarm".

Section 11 of the Act provides (1) A person who makes any demand for payment of a debt shall be guilty of an offence if:

- (a) the demands by reason of their frequency are calculated to subject the debtor or a member of the family of the debtor to alarm, distress or humiliation, or
- (b) the person falsely represents that criminal proceedings lie for non-payment of the debt, or
- (c) the person falsely represents that he or she is authorised in some official capacity to enforce payment, or
- (d) the person utters a document falsely represented to have an official character.

repossession is now
a very real threat
for many families

Northern Ireland Report



Chapter One - Resisting Austerity

Resisting Austerity

This report to the 2011 Biennial Delegate Conference outlines the main activities of the Northern Ireland Committee since 2009. These have been dominated by a campaign of resistance to the austerity cuts imposed by the UK's coalition Government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats.

The NIC has been well served by the committed and efficient leadership of the Chair, John Corey, who retired as Regional Secretary of NIPSA in 2010, but continues his involvement with the movement as chair of the Coalition Against Water Charges. John was succeeded as NIC Chair by Avril Hall-Callaghan of the UTU, and she is well served by the dedicated commitment of her Vice-Chair Pamela Dooley and all the Committee members who have their own constituents to serve in their daily duties.

The challenges facing the trade union movement under a Conservative-led coalition in Westminster are both serious and broad. The policies adopted by the Liberal Democrats and the Tories are deeply inimical to the interests of working people and are driven by neoliberal ideology and cynical electoral considerations.

What the Tories and their LibDem enablers have in their sights is what their strategists call 'Labour's Client State', public sector workers with decent terms and conditions and an attachment to the idea of public service, known as 'the progressive middle classes'. By stripping the state of resources and demoralising its workforce, they plan to 'hollow out' the welfare state just as the Thatcher government attacked the skilled working classes through de-industrialisation in the 1980s.

This is where the reality of cuts meets the rhetoric of the 'Big Society' – the outsourcing of public services to private sector companies and underfunded voluntary organisations, the fracturing of state education through 'free schools' and the socialisation of private gambling debts, a state of play deftly summarised by one commentator as: "The price of everything was laid out, but not the value of anything about to be destroyed."

How can we grasp the opportunity arising from the discrediting of neoliberal economic theory to the benefit of the people we represent, workers in the unorganised sectors, and those workers deemed unemployed or 'economically inactive'? How can we seize the opportunity to ensure that workers, their families and the marginalised take their rightful place in the democratic life of Northern Ireland and beyond?

We, as the largest civil society organisation in Northern Ireland represent more humanity and greater interests than the loud voices speaking for business and minority interest groups seeking to maintain a flawed economic system.

The trade unions of Northern Ireland have taken on this responsibility at all levels. We have engaged with elected representatives at all levels, from local councils to the NI Assembly and Executive and Westminster, in many forums set up to address the economic crisis, the most substantial of which is the Cross Sector Advisory Forum.

We are engaging in a process of education for our members and 'opinion formers' on the causes of the recession and the likely consequences to the greater number of people of the flawed designs of the consistent Conservatives and the (neo) Liberal Democrats. Major publications on the mythologies of the pro-cuts propaganda and on the case against cutting the rate of Corporation Tax have been widely distributed and discussed.



Vice President, Eugene McGlone with John Corey, outgoing General Secretary NIPSA



**Assistant General Secretary
Peter Bunting**

Richard Murphy of Tax Research UK and author of *Pot of Gold or Fool's Gold* has been interviewed many times and has provided necessary balance to a 'debate' which was tilted from the start by media organisations and accountancy firms with substantial vested interests in cutting Corporation Tax.

We have engaged with the public across the airways and the internet and on the streets as well. Tens of thousands of leaflets, pamphlets, newsletters, posters and articles have been produced and distributed. Websites and social media have been utilised and dozens of public meetings and seminars have been organised, the largest of which was the Peoples' Congress, held in Belfast in February 2011. Pickets, protests, marches and rallies have featured in every major town and city. Trades Councils have been revitalised and reinvigorated and the Congress Youth Committee have been models of diligence and commitment. Cooperation between unions is at an all-time high, as the scale of the threat we face can only be faced down by collective action.

The political realities we confront have led to stronger alliances with our colleagues across these islands, with constant cooperation with the TUCs of England, Scotland and Wales, utilising the structure of the Trade Union Council of the Isles to pressurise the devolved governments and the Westminster regime.

The fruits of this reinvigorated relationship included the huge rally in London on March 26, 2011 and last October's unprecedented joint statement on the UK economy by the First Ministers and Finance Ministers of

Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, which sent a blunt message to Downing Street: "These cuts are too fast and too deep" and will do "lasting damage to the economy and the fabric of our public services."

Further afield, international solidarity was deepened with joint actions involving trade union centres across the EU, facilitated through the ETUC, whose General Secretary John Monks met activists, politicians and stakeholders in Belfast on two separate visits.

On this island, many trade union activists have regularly crossed the border to express solidarity with their comrades in Northern Ireland, taking part in demonstrations and pickets as well as sharing the pleasures of the annual May Festival and parade, by far the largest on this island. Indeed, Congress President Jack O'Connor has been a frequent attendee at NIC meetings and at several public events across NI. He also hosted the joint meeting between the Retired Workers Committee in Liberty Hall, making the human as well as political links between workers in struggle North and South.

Jack O'Connor also addressed the successful NIC BDC, in the City Hotel, Derry on 27th and 28th April 2010. The conference was also addressed by the General Secretary, David Begg, the Deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness, and Richard Murphy. The BDC considered motions on the political situation and the economy as well as employment rights and industrial relations. Motions on education, training and lifelong learning, alongside equality and human rights motions were central to the debates at the conference. Various fringe meetings took

place around the BDC dealing with topics ranging from international issues of concern to trade unionists, to a question and answer session with elected representatives from the majority of main political parties in NI.

On October 23, 2010, on a freezing and wet Saturday, at least 15,000 people thronged the centre of Belfast in its largest political demonstration since before the Iraq war. Nine towns and cities held simultaneous rallies, one month after Derry and Belfast rallied alongside their ETUC brothers and sisters across Europe on September 29. Another large rally was held on March 26 to support the TUC's rally in London.

What was notable was the level of support from workers in the public and private sectors, but also workers who are not in unions. Every political party had representatives at the rally and these cross-political expressions of support have become the norm at subsequent trade union events. While such political support may have impacted on the rhetoric used by all parties in the election campaigns of 2011, it remains to be seen how this will translate into policy in the NI Executive's Programme for Government 2011-2015.

The Draft Budget 2011-2015 was inauspicious. Indeed, the Minister of Finance, Sammy Wilson, seemed to relish confronting the unions as much as implementing £4 billion in reductions in the bloc grant from Westminster over the next four years. With no election in sight for at least three years, the temptation may be there to 'think the unthinkable', which invariably translates into 'impose the unspeakable'.

If so, the closet neoliberals will have the full backing of the NI Secretary of State, Owen Paterson. Previous Secretaries of State used to express their "passion for peace." In a time of relative calm, this scion of the Tory establishment never misses the opportunity to tell us that "cutting Corporation Tax is crucial to shaping the economy." Literally any opportunity. Only good manners prevented us from loudly castigating him for linking, less than a day after the murder of Police Officer Ronan Kerr, the case for cutting Corporation Tax to the safety of citizens. The Belfast Telegraph reported his remarks thus:

The radicalisation of teenagers could not be countered just by policing and had also to be tackled economically, added Mr Paterson. Citing moves to cut corporation tax in the province, he said it was a crucial part of the Government's strategy to boost the province's economy to the extent that even its most deprived areas benefited.

"With this political stability, we have a wonderful opportunity to really crack on and galvanise the economy.

"My hope then is the rising tide of prosperity is completely colour-blind, it will wash into every one of those estates where there are sadly disaffected unemployed young people and they will all be lifted by it."

Congress continues to play a major role facilitating a more peaceful future. Thousands gathered at the trade union rally for peace on April 6, held at the precise time of the funeral of Ronan Kerr. It was attended by thousands whose quiet dignity said more than all the loud condemnations or obscene 'justifications' about the intense human tragedy suffered by the family of a brave 25-year old public servant.

Later the same day, the same stage hosted a rally jointly organised by education workers and students' unions to denounce the Government's vandalism of our colleges and universities, and the opportunities of every able child to attend them. That is the politics which matters to the vast majority of people.

The campaign against cuts will succeed if the public believe that there is a more compelling alternative to the drumbeat of austerity from the Tories, their Liberal enablers and their sponsors in the corporate press. Part of that alternative narrative must include a healthier society as well as safe workplaces with secure jobs.

That is why Congress and its affiliates campaigned assiduously for an inclusive and meaningful Bill of Rights and why we oppose the fascist BNP on our streets, in our workplaces or on the airwaves. Working for a better society means supporting those individuals and communities challenging sectarianism as well as lobbying for a comprehensive Government strategy for a shared future. That is why we were so disappointed with the NI Executive's timid proposals on Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI), but remain engaged with those who take the many small steps required to eradicate sectarianism, not least the Trades Councils, who have publicly faced down violent groups and the consequences of their crimes.

Safer streets and secure workplaces complement each other. Congress vice-President Eugene McGlone led Congress representations to the Department of Employment & Learning to ensure that changes to the system of resolving workplace disputes were more fair and efficient for all parties. Further representation was made to ensure that employees were adequately represented at the Industrial Tribunal and on Fair Employment Tribunal Panels.

That is the
politics which matters
to most people

Chapter Two - The Work of the NIC

New Deal

The NIC has responded to a range of consultations issued by the Department for Employment and Learning. Regular meetings have been held with the Minister and his officials, including the Permanent Secretary. Legislation discussed and consulted upon by the Congress have included topics covering holiday entitlements, blacklisting of trade unionists, an LRA Code of Practice on time off for trade union duties and activities, agency workers, trade union political funds, membership criteria, the dispute resolution system and appointments to the LRA Board.

The NIC supported and assisted affiliates in a range of industrial disputes. Sectors involved a wide range of public and private services. These include:

- » Royal Mail
- » Stream International
- » Fujitsu
- » Traffic Wardens
- » Coca Cola
- » Civil & Public Services
- » Education
- » Further Education
- » Health Services

The NIC and the Trades Councils also organised a bus of trade unionists from Northern Ireland to attend a rally at Dublin docks in support of workers in dispute there. The delegation included dock workers from ports across Northern Ireland.

Further solidarity action with workers in the Republic of Ireland included highlighting the dispute involving Green Isle, recommending that trade unionists be aware of the issues involved and of the products of the parent company, Northern Foods.

Firm negotiation with the NI Transport Holding Co ensured that plans to outsource Translink public bus services were reversed.

Other economic initiatives in which Congress was involved included *The Green New Deal for Northern Ireland*. This is a cross-sectoral initiative led by these civil society organisations:

- » Confederation of British Industry
- » Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
- » Ulster Farmers Union
- » Friends of the Earth
- » Irish Congress of Trade Unions

The work of the group is supported by a number of individual members and professional advisors from academia and the private and public sectors.

At a meeting of the Group held in June 2009 a number of issues were identified in order to assist in taking the work forward. It was agreed that Green New Deal for Northern Ireland should provide a joined up approach to the 'triple crunch' of recession, rising energy prices and climate change.

PCS Striker 2010



A key element of the proposal was to 'invest in an ambitious programme to cut consumption of fossil fuels to create thousands of new jobs, help secure our energy supply; and build a competitive lower carbon economy'.

The agreed New Deal Vision is to:

- » Refurbish tens of thousands of existing homes with eco-friendly energy mechanisms.
- » Transform the energy performance of public and commercial buildings.
- » Employ a 'carbon army' of skilled workers to implement a systematic reconstruction programme creating around 24000 new jobs.
- » Create thousands of 'green collar' jobs in the £3000 billion world market for low carbon goods and services.

A pilot programme of home retrofitting is being completed in Newry, and a substantial proposal was made to the NI Executive for rolling out the programme NI-wide was delivered. So far, the response from Stormont has been timid, but campaigning continues on this idea.

In the middle of 2009 the DETI Minister announced an Independent Review of Economic Strategy (IREP) and invited comments on the review report when it was published in September 2009.

The NIC met with the review team during its deliberations and responded formally in November 2009. The NIC has concluded that any new economic strategy should encompass a policy framework to address the issues listed below:

- » low productivity in agriculture, environment, construction, transport and distribution;
- » the high rate of economic inactivity;
- » the Green New Deal;
- » relating subsidies for training to new skills benefiting the wider community;
- » the cost and supply of energy;
- » the contribution of tourism to economic goals.

In short if we are to bring about a step change in economic performance we need a new economic vision, which learns the lessons of the past and which strikes out boldly in a fresh direction.

Congress has lobbied and demonstrated for a more decent society with a fairer economy. We entered submissions on the Draft Budget, the Programme for Government and the Investment Strategy, and followed up these published proposals with meetings with ministers from every devolved department.

Trade Councils Consultative Committee

The Trades Council have assisted the Northern Ireland Committee by campaigning on a range of issues. These issues have covered:

- » Water Charges
- » Anti-Cuts campaigns
- » The Minimum Wage

The Trades Councils were particularly active in organising local protests in response to the threats of public service cuts from November 2009, working with local trade union branches and community organisations, as well as public representatives. Since then, Trades Councils have played an essential role in mobilising mass public opposition to the cuts.

The Trades Councils played a particularly important role in leading and organising public responses to violent attacks on the peace process, not only in the aftermath of the murder of three members of the security forces in March 2009, but also in response to murders and bombings in Newry, Coleraine and Derry. In 2010 and 2011, Trades Councils in Belfast, Omagh, Newry, Antrim, Ballymena and Derry, took similar initiatives.

The momentum behind the anti-cuts campaigns and the enhanced profile of local trade unions leading campaigns ahead of many public representatives has revitalised the movement at a grassroots level. As a consequence, Lisburn Trades Council has been re-established, and a new Trades Council has been founded in Downpatrick.

In Newry and Derry, cutbacks to local health services have been touchstone issues, while all Trades Councils provide a vital resource by conducting research in their local area, which feeds into the broader campaign for people, jobs and services.

The Trades Councils have also been active with the support and recruitment of Migrant Workers, and have highlighted individual cases of injustice faced by vulnerable Migrant Workers. Another recent innovation has been the development of distinctive websites run by and for the nine Trades Councils across Northern Ireland, to assist with campaigns and recruitment. The TC websites can be accessed through the 'Affiliates' button on the www.ictuni.org homepage.

Trademark

Trademark was established in late 2001 by a committed group of activists from the community/voluntary and trade union sectors. It carries on the work of Counteract in the changing circumstances of Northern Ireland.

Trademark has an express responsibility in dealing with sectarianism and the new challenges of racism and fascism; this unit whilst delivering political education and conducting research and policy development maintains its roots in intervention and political action.

Trademark's expertise in conflict resolution and community relations was of crucial assistance to Congress during our response to the NI Executive's paper on Cohesion, Sharing and Integration. Trademark have also utilised their network of academics and researchers to establish the Centre for Progressive Economics, a new space for thinkers who oppose the neoliberal consensus to conduct and share research, publish papers and organise seminars. The CPE is emerging as a valuable counterweight to the overwhelming publicity machine of bank-employed economists, corporate spokespeople and right-wing business gurus who have tended to dominate the media discourse on the relations between the economy and society.

For more information:

<http://www.trademarkbelfast.com>

<http://www.centreforprogressiveeconomics.com>

Trade Union Education

The programme for trade union representatives continues to develop and this period has seen a large number of new courses reflecting demand from affiliates and changes in society.

The delivery of the NIPSA reps programme continues with the first run of a NIPSA Reps stage 2 course, as well as successful stage 1 courses. Demand for both of the Diploma courses (run over 36 weeks) is high and both courses are taught by the two full time trade union tutors at Belfast Metropolitan College.

For the first time a 10 week employment law course has been piloted, bridging the gap between a union reps stage 1 and the Diploma in Employment Law. This has been very well attended and initial feedback is positive.

Delivery to Community Sector

This period has seen a significant development in our training. In September 2009, Congress piloted a Saturday morning course dealing with employment law. The course was tutored over six Saturday mornings and was attended by trade union members and non trade union members alike.

Partnerships

Congress continues to enjoy an ongoing partnership with Belfast Metropolitan College trade union studies department.

We have also been working with the North West Regional College to re-establish a trade union education programme in the North West area. It is hoped that this will facilitate reps that cannot, or find it difficult to, travel to Belfast for courses.

Responses to Consultations

During this period, Congress responded to the Department for Employment & Learning (DEL) consultation on proposals to grant employees the right to request time off to train. Copies of the full response are available from the NIC office or by contacting clare.moore@ictuni.org

It is proposed that a new 'right to request time off' for training should be extended to employees along the lines of flexible working requests. This new right would not carry the right for paid release, something that the NIC has called for. At time of writing this report, the new right has still to be introduced and at the last enquiry, the Department has indicated that the Minister is keeping a watching brief on economic recovery, feeling that an introduction of the right may impact negatively on SMEs. Congress is actively lobbying for the full introduction of the right.

Congress also responded to a consultation on the Governance arrangements in FE colleges in Northern Ireland.

Right to Time Off

In the BDC 2009 report, it was reported that representatives were experiencing difficulties getting time off to attend accredited courses. Regrettably, this continues to be the norm with many reps being denied time off because of 'business needs'.

Well trained representatives are essential to effective unions and elected representatives have the right, protected by legislation, to have time off to get trained in order to carry out their trade union role. These rights have been secured by trade unions and we should continue to ensure that they are protected.

Union Learning

Following an external scoping study of other Union Learn Programmes in the UK in 2008, fuller responsibility for administrative and financial management of the programme was delegated to NIC-ICTU by the Department for Employment and Learning. An

Independent Assessment Panel was set up by NIC-ICTU to ensure an appropriate monitoring and assessment system was in place. Applications were sought and successful projects (until March 2011) were:

CWU
UNITE
BFAWU
UCATT
USDAW
UNISON
FBU
TSSA
PCS/NIPSA
BECTU

The Union Learning programme in Northern Ireland continues to flourish. In the period 2008 – 2011, 97.3% of targets were met and the budget was fully utilised. At the time of writing the Department has confirmed that a further 3 year period of funding from 2011 – 2014 would be available under the Northern Ireland Union Learning Fund.

A total of 2,367 learners completed essential skills courses including literacy numeracy and ICT in the period April 2008 – March 2011.

A total of 3,317 learners completed other accredited courses in other areas including foreign languages, sign language, OU and NVQ.

European Literacy Project

The Education & Training Officer was asked by QUB to participate in an EU funded project focusing on literacy and numeracy across Europe. The project has a number of project partners and is led by the Belgian organisation, Lire Ecrire (Read and Write). One of the unique elements is the participation of literacy learners in the project with the aim of promoting best practice in literacy teaching and also ensuring the voices of learners lead in lobbying.

Workers Education Association (WEA)

The Education Officer was asked to join the Management Board of the WEA and this has facilitated closer working with the WEA which has always had strong links to the trade union movement.

Education Guidance Service for Adults

The Education Officer continues to represent Congress on the Board of Directors of EGSA.

Open University

The partnership with the Open University continues and a working group has been established between the OU and Congress.

Health & Safety

Committee and Officers

Barbara Martin was re-elected as Chairperson of the NIC ICTU Health and Safety Committee at the reconstitution in February 2010.

Workers' Memorial Day

In 2009 members of the committee met with Belfast Lord Mayor Tom Hartley to discuss how Workers' Memorial Day could be mainstreamed following official recognition of the day by the UK Government. In 2010 the Minister for Enterprise Trade & Investment joined families of colleagues killed at work at an event in the Long Gallery of Assembly Buildings, Stormont. In 2011, Workers Memorial Day was commemorated with a moving testimony from the Layland family. David Layland died in a BIFFA landfill site in 2008. He was a GMB member and an active advocate for proper implementation of safe working.

European Safety Week

In 2009 and 2010, the committee held seminars in the UNISON offices in Belfast. The events focused on issues including:

- A. Asbestos in schools and
- B. Using the stress management standards effectively.

Safety Rep Award

The Award is given to the Safety Rep who, in the view of the panel, has made a significant and lasting contribution to workplace health and safety. In 2009 **Ray Rafferty** from UNISON was awarded Safety Rep of the Year. In 2010 the award was jointly presented to Seamus Larkin (PCS) and Gary Mercer (UNITE).

Trade Union Health & Safety Executive Forum

To facilitate regular communication and joint working, the Health & Safety Committee and the HSENI established a joint forum. The forum is attended by the Chair of the Health and Safety Committee, the Chief Executive of HSENI as well as HSENI senior staff and the NIC Education Officer. The forum is chaired by Brendan Mackin, in his capacity as Board member of HSENI.

The Health and Safety Committee were disappointed that at the last round of recruitment to the HSENI Board, that the Minister did not appoint the trade union candidate, despite being recommended as suitable for appointment. The Health and Safety Committee was further disappointed that none of the new appointees were women, resulting in the gender representation of the Board being extremely imbalanced.

Youth Committee

The Youth Committee continues to be a vibrant part of the ICTU and has been integral to the anti cuts campaign as well as being active in addressing issues facing young people in Northern Ireland.

The Youth Committee has been involved in a range of events over the past two years including:

Campaigning

The Youth Committee attended numerous events, rallies and demonstrations to protest at job losses, attacks on services and in solidarity with striking workers. The committee was well represented at the Pride Marches in both Derry and Belfast and at May Day Parades in Belfast.

In particular the Committee played an important role in the ICTU's continuing campaign against the budget cuts. During this campaign the Committee provided speakers to rallies and assisted our local Trades Councils in running stalls and organised a 'Gig against the Cuts' in the John Hewitt.

In addition the Committee organised a Roundtable Discussion with Youth Organisations to discuss the impact of the cuts on the young people and seek their support for the campaign.

We also produced an information pamphlet outlining how the cuts would impact young people and our alternatives. This was widely distributed within the trade union movement and in leaflet drops to young workers.

Education & Training

The Committee has continued to work closely with and was supported by Trademark. During 2010 several Youth Committee delegates received the Advanced Trade Union Leadership Award. We also organised a successful Anti-Racist Training Seminar for young trade unionists.

Communications

During 2010 we made significant progress in developing our communications and raising our profile within the movement and beyond. Using online media we launched a website (www.ictuyouth.com) which had over 150 hits in the first month and a Facebook page which currently has over 100 fans.

The Committee also launched its own magazine *The Spark*. All delegates to the Committee took part in writing content and designing this magazine which will allow us to raise awareness on issues affecting young workers and encourage more young people to become active in the trade union movement. We have already distributed over 1,000 copies.

In January 2011 the Committee hosted a seminar with Trademark to review our Youth Strategy and to build on the work we have already done. Hopefully it will be another successful year that will see more young workers becoming active trade unionists.

Education Trade Union Group

The ETUG is made up of teaching and non teaching unions organising in the education sectors. It meets monthly and during this period made representation to senior civil servants of both DEL and DE as well as meeting with committee representatives.

Culture & Arts Committee

The Culture and Arts committee has a dual remit: To lobby on industrial matters within the cultural arts industries and to oversee the May Day Festival.

Members of the committee met with the ministers and officials from the Department for Culture Arts & Leisure during this period. Members of the committee alongside Congress Officer Clare Moore also met with the DCAL committee to make representation on the huge reduction to the DCAL budget.

In addition, the Culture and Arts committee worked to oversee successful May Festivals which saw the expansion of the May Day programme to include many events of interest to the trade union movement and their families.

Over The Bridge

This classic Sam Thompson play about unions and sectarianism in Belfast's shipyards was revived in 2010 by Martin Lynch's Green Shoot Productions, with substantial input from the trade union movement. Trademark assembled the education pack which accompanied the play, and the programme featured contributions from the unions. A very successful run of the play was held in Belfast's Waterfront Hall, and a public debate was held alongside one of the performances on the role of trade unions in the fight against sectarianism.

Retired Workers' Committee

The Retired Workers' Committee (RWC) continues to forge ahead with an ambitious agenda under the Chair of Margaret Galloway. The Committee is actively represented on the National Pensioners Parliament at a regional and UK-wide level, and its members are also active in many different arenas, including the Age Sector Platform.

Work is ongoing with the RWC from the Republic on a number of joint strategic initiatives and issues, and a North-South meeting of the two Retired Workers' committees was hosted in Liberty Hall by Congress President Jack O'Connor. The RWC were highly active in campaigns on Water Charges, the state pension and the 'Can't Heat and Eat' campaign.

In the summer of 2009, the RWC decided to get involved with the UK-wide campaign for a decent state pension, initiated by the National Pensioners' Convention. This is particularly important for this region as far more pensioners here are solely dependent upon the state pension – almost twice the UK average.

This followed a rally on April 6, 2009 in which several hundred pensioners stood up for a decent pension at Belfast City Hall. The rally was one of 50 held across the UK as part of a national day of action organised by the National Pensioners' Convention (NPC).

Members of the ICTU Retired Workers' Committee were involved in the organisation of the protest, which was addressed by NIC-ICTU chair John Corey, Nigel Dodds MP, Dorothy Hanna of the NPC and Bill Carson, Chair of the Age Sector Platform.

The Officers and members of the Joint Women's Committees meeting with President Mary McAleese



The RWC Age Seminar was held in the Unison offices in Belfast on September 24 and 25, 2009 and was addressed by several experts and campaigners from Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and London. Over 50 attended, mostly members of the retired members sections of trade unions.

The trade union movement was represented by Peter Bunting, Congress Assistant General Secretary, who told those present that one of his inspirations was the trade unionist who founded the NPC: "Jack Jones was a great leader of the trade union movement, a brave fighter against fascism and a far-sighted champion of pensioner power."

The RWC was also involved with the Age Sector Platform in campaigning during the UK general election, producing a Pensioners' Manifesto which demanded:

- » A basic state pension set above the official poverty level (estimated at £165 per week in (2009), which is linked to the higher rate of earnings or prices, and paid alongside other existing concessions, to provide some financial security for all;
- » Increase the winter fuel grant in line with energy prices;
- » Provide improved access to social and long-term care to maintain dignity in advanced years;
- » End discrimination where it adversely affects the opportunities, goods and services available to older people;

This campaign has met some success and support from all NI MPs, and the RWC continue to campaign for the rights and welfare of older people in Northern Ireland.

Since BDC 2009, Retired Workers have gained the right to speak to a motion on older people's affairs at both the all-island and the NI BDC, ensuring that retirement from the place of work does not mean an end to involvement in the trade union movement.

The RWC is also working closely with the Youth Committee on shared projects, such as the World of Work exhibition which ran in Belfast's Golden Thread Gallery as part of the 2011 May Day Festival.

Chapter Three - Equality & Solidarity

Over the last two years the equality programme has expanded and has dealt with issues using different mediums, for example drama and DVD. We are also delighted to have introduced the new PETAL (Progressive Equality Training & Learning) programme. This offers training on issues that have been identified by our reps as priority in the workplace. For example, stress, harassment and bullying, pregnancy and maternity rights, disability, absence management and taking a case to an industrial tribunal are just a sample of the topics that are covered.

The training comes in four strands. The first is the Equality Law Seminars which are designed to keep reps up to date with the latest developments in case law. The second is *Key Employment and Equality Issues for the Union Representative* which is designed to encourage reps to bring issues to the negotiating table and to develop and implement good strong equality proofed policies.

The third is the Disability Champions series which deals with spotlight topics on disability and also gives Disability Champions the opportunity to meet and support each other in their work.

The fourth is the Mental Health First Aid and Suicide Awareness Training. These sessions were held as summer schools in the Unison office, Belfast and were attended by over 40 participants from all over the island. We hope to repeat this training over the summer 2011. In creating and delivering the PETAL programme we have worked with a number of partners including The Equality Commission NI, Labour Relations Agency, Health and Safety Agency and Public Health Agency. We would like to record our thanks for their help and assistance.

Women's Committee

The committee prioritised a number of issues and these have included:

- Budget Cuts Effect on Women
- Violence against Women
- Caring
- Flexible Working Patterns
- Equal Pay

The Committee has been involved in producing a number of documents on these issues which can be found on the Congress website. The Committee has also lobbied through unions and directly at Stormont on these and other barriers to women's full participation in society.

International Women's Day

International Women's Day 2010 saw the Committee welcomed to Belfast City Hall by Lord Mayor Naomi Long. Speeches centered on women's participation in public life, and the remarkable history of women in Ireland.

Earlier in the day, there was a live link up with Lana Shaheen a Palestinian journalist living and working in Gaza. The link up helped us hear a powerful story of the difficulties endured in Palestine, due to Israeli actions and policy.

International Women's Day 2011 saw Dawn Purvis MLA welcome the Committee to Stormont to celebrate 100 years of this day and speeches centred on the impact of budget cuts, intellectual disability and privatisation.

The Women's Conference which was held in Belfast 2010 and the Women's Seminar which was held in Cork 2011 also saw increased attendance and participation. The events also dealt with problems that remain barriers for women and with new and diverse issues.

The Chairs and vice Chairs of the committee also traveled to Brussels with the Congress Equality Officers, as guests of Bairbre de Brun MEP to discuss issues around women and leadership and women and political and public life.

Disability Committee

The Committee is pleased to welcome the ever increasing numbers of Disability Champions that have been trained and who also attend the Disability Champions Forum. The Chair represents the Committee at various forums, including at meetings with The Equality Commission and The Human Rights Commission.

The Committee has taken part in the Disability Seminars in both Derry and Dublin. The seminars and the committee meetings have been addressed by a number of high profile speakers, who have dealt with topics that included: living with sensory disability, suicide awareness and trauma, legal developments at home and in Europe, the UN Convention on Persons with Disabilities, dealing with the development of 'fit' notes. The Committee has raised serious concerns over the issue of the 'Universal Benefit Scheme', and new regulations around Incapacity Benefit and the removal of those who have previously been awarded the benefit.

LGBT Committee

Members of the Committee have taken part in the annual Pride events which included debates and seminars on sexuality and also drama and musicals. The Committee members also attended the annual Pride dinner. A number of meetings were held to discuss LGBT issues and policy and other organisations and individuals working in the field also attended. These included Rainbow and Glen, who contributed to the discussion and outlined work that is ongoing.

The Committee continues to help develop relationships within and between affiliates and organisations within the LGBT community and has worked hard to raise awareness and to effect change for all LGBT members.

Race Awareness

As part of Race Awareness Month 2010 an education pack and DVD were produced by Congress. The Talkin' Heads project - which involved 16 migrant workers - produced a finished product which is an excellent training tool for affiliates. Entitled '*I Came Here For.....*' the training pack includes a separate pack for tutors and the DVD can be downloaded from the Congress website. Alternatively packs can be requested from the Congress office in Belfast.

Events around racism were also held in 2009 and 2010 these included a seminar in Newry on *The Rise of the Right across Europe*. This focused on combating racism and promoting unions. The second event was a roundtable discussion on racism attended by John Monks, ETUC General Secretary, David Begg, Congress General Secretary and Jack O'Connor, Congress President, along with members of the NIC.

Bill of Rights

The Congress Equality Committees held special consultation meetings on the Bill of Rights. Congress also held a major seminar on the issue, which was attended by over one hundred participants. Congress affiliates also encouraged their own affiliates and members to become involved in the Human Rights Consortium campaign. Despite the campaign being a success and clear messages being sent to Government, we still have no Bill of Rights. Discussions are ongoing with the Human Rights Consortium on a continuing campaign.

Congress organised a series of consultative events in February 2010 in response to the Government recommendations on the Bill of Rights. A report of those consultations is available on www.ictuni.org. Congress responded to the Secretary of State's consultation paper *A Bill Of Rights For Northern Ireland: Next Steps*, as follows:

The current consultation document as published by the NIO fails to deliver human rights protections of any meaningful depth or scope for the people of Northern Ireland. Congress rejects this document as a basis on which to develop a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. We also wish to express our disgust at the complete disregard in the proposals for a strong and inclusive Bill of Rights.

Congress has consulted widely with our affiliates and has assembled its response through a series of seminars and meetings. Our members have expressed wide-ranging opinions on the need for an inclusive Bill of Rights which specifically underpin peace and reconciliation and promote social and economic rights.

We therefore make our comments on a very informed and robust basis.

We have included some of the comments below which have been collected during our consultation exercises and which reflect the depth of feeling for a strong and inclusive Bill of Rights:

- » Our role must lie in vigorously pursuing social and economic rights;
- » A Bill of Rights is a 'bread and butter' issue;
- » We are working for Peace and Reconciliation using Human Rights;
- » The current proposals are pointless;
- » We need a strong Bill of Rights;
- » A Bill of Rights must put rights at the centre of our values;
- » A Bill of Rights must give new sense of hope. It must empower ownership and responsibility;
- » The Bill of Rights would be crucial in halting the exploitation of workers;

Thanks must be recorded for all affiliates who supported the pursuit of equality through Congress by attending events, seminars and training, and who have contributed funds to make these happen. Thanks also to the Chairs

and members of the committees who have given up their time and who pursue the equality agenda relentlessly. They are the mainstay who leads our fight for human rights and justice.

Thanks also to the workers who have been involved in our various forums for equality particularly the *Talkin' Heads* group and the Disability Champions who have helped to bring a diverse, new and fresh thinking to workplace issues on equality.

Thanks to all who have assisted in the delivery of the equality agenda and in particular to Jacqui McGonagle, Congress PETAL Programme Manager, without whose help and assistance it would just not be possible to deliver such a diverse agenda.

Migrant Workers

The considerable increase in migration to Northern Ireland in recent years has presented a significant challenge to the society, its Government and trade unions alike. By exposing new generations to significantly greater diversity it has also introduced new social challenges and tensions.

Whilst the Government, trade unions and voluntary organisations have in recent years made some positive steps towards providing better support to migrant workers, much still needs to be done to ensure that they enjoy equal access to services, employment rights, development opportunities and respect for their cultural background.

Additionally, in the present economic climate, the unions must ensure that foreign nationals are not disproportionately affected and incorporate these groups into any strategy of dealing with economic downturn.

The first comprehensive research into the economic impact of migration in Northern Ireland conducted for DEL by Oxford Economics has found that in recent years migrant workers have made a significant positive contribution to Northern Ireland economy, with an estimated overall net impact of post-2004 migrants in 2008 at almost 40,000 jobs and £1.2 billion GVA.

According to a 2009 report by the Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration (CReAM) in the latest fiscal year, 2008/09, migrants paid 37% more in direct or indirect taxes than was spent on the public goods and services they received.

Although migrant workers have become an indispensable part of the Northern Ireland economy, the effects of the economic downturn on these low-wage workers has been largely unacknowledged.

The experience of Congress suggests that migrants are disproportionately affected during recession in terms of redundancies, or alternatively, reductions in pay, hours of work and generally poorer working conditions. Once unemployed migrants are more likely to face destitution and homelessness. A proactive and systematic joined-up strategy involving all stakeholders is required to ensure that migrant workers are adequately supported in these difficult times, in terms of housing and welfare benefits.

The economic downturn has also intensified racist attitudes and concerns about displacing local workers. Unison's research *Migrant Workers, Racism and Recession* has revealed that 77% of respondents felt that migrant workers would be primarily affected by the recession and job losses. Additionally, a resounding 66% felt that there has been an increase in racist attitudes and comments since the start of recession.

Our Migrant Workers Support Unit (MWSU) was established in 2007. Its fundamental aim is to pursue the implementation of Congress policies by working towards the elimination of racism, discrimination, exploitation and barriers to accessing services for migrant workers. In October 2009 the MWSU was joined by an expert employment rights advisor specialising in employment relations and representation.

The new addition to MWSU, *A Shared Workplace, A Shared Future* project is a comprehensive approach for developing and disseminating new ways of delivering integrated and representative mechanisms for migrant workers and their families, rooted in the principles of equality and social justice.

Through the development of strategic partnerships, accredited training, outreach programmes and research it aims to combat discrimination and inequality experienced by migrant workers by building the capacity of the trade union movement to make informed and equality-proofed policy decisions that ensure the inclusion and participation of migrant workers.

The new project complements the ongoing work of the Unit in providing representation for migrant workers, a crucial service in ensuring access to employment rights and equality. It is recognised that other support agencies have limited expertise on employment rights and more importantly, no provision in terms of representation. It is our view that to advise on rights, to engage and then to leave migrant workers without representation at their most vulnerable moment is to undermine the entire undertaking.

Because of great demand for advice and representation, the Belfast office is now operating as a permanent Migrant Workers Employment Rights Centre. In the last year, the Unit has dealt with over 300 clients through a combination of advice centre, clinics and information sessions. The centre also runs a dedicated telephone line, which in the last year received over 200 queries.

From this initial contact, migrant workers can join the union organisation thus benefiting from its services and increased protection in their employment and building positive relations with other workers. The Unit has also been successful in supporting individual migrant workers in organising their entire workplaces.

The Unit successfully pursued a case to the Industrial Tribunal on behalf of a Polish female who was sexually harassed and racially discriminated against by her employer. The worker received an award of over £50,000 in a case which received wide publicity.

The Unit is also active in campaigning for migrant workers rights. We have been working with the Equality Commission NI during Race Equality Month, a partnership initiative consisting of employers, trade unions and Black and Minority Ethnic groups. This initiative focuses on raising awareness of racism in the workplace and encouraging employers to develop practical workplace strategies to achieve equality of opportunity in a culturally diverse workforce.

Our programme of employment rights information sessions, clinics and seminars is ongoing and reaches across the region. We have established important partnerships with BME support organisations and other social partners. The Unit is represented on a number of bodies concerned with migrant workers rights, such as the Office of First Minister/Deputy First Minister Racial Equality Panel; the DEL Thematic Subgroup and Belfast Migrant Forum. We were also represented on steering panels overseeing two important pieces of research: the Institute of Conflict Research investigation of forced labour in NI and the Equality Commission's investigation into recruitment agencies.

The Unit has become one of the key partners of the newly established Belfast Migrant Centre, a one-stop shop for foreign nationals, and within that project we support the centre with our expertise on employment issues.

Recognising the crucial role of active engagement of migrant workers, we organised a residential BME Trade Union Leadership Training event aimed at building their capacity to participate in the trade union movement and to promote trade unions. The training was also structured

to encourage contributions from the participants that will assist the trade union movement to make informed and equality-proofed policy decisions ensuring greater participation of migrant workers.

Another important initiative of the Unit is the development of a 'myth-busting' handbook and leaflet aimed primarily at workplace representatives and shopstewards. This will assist them in challenging racism and building more inclusive workplaces.

Other publications produced by the Unit include: *Your Rights at Work*, a pocket-size guide to employment rights, available in English, Polish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Slovak, Russian, Chinese, Romanian and Bulgarian. In partnership with Unite we also produced a leaflet *Say No to Racism* highlighting the mistreatment of agency workers. All the above publications are available from NIC-ICTU office.

Once unemployed migrants are more likely to face destitution

The Employment Rights Rule Book

Your
Employment
Rights
EXPLAINED



Available now **FREE** from:

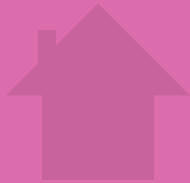
The Equality Authority
LoCall 1890 245 545
www.equality.ie

NERA
LoCall 1890 80 80 90
www.employmentrights.ie



This project is funded by the European Commission DG Employment Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities PROGRESS Programme (2007-2013).

Congress Organisation



Chapter One - Membership, Finance & Structures

Affiliated Membership & Union Density

The number of union members affiliated to Congress at the beginning of 2011 stood at 797,399 in 49 unions, compared to 816,848 members in 2010. This is a reduction of 19,449 members, a difference of -2.4%, in the year.

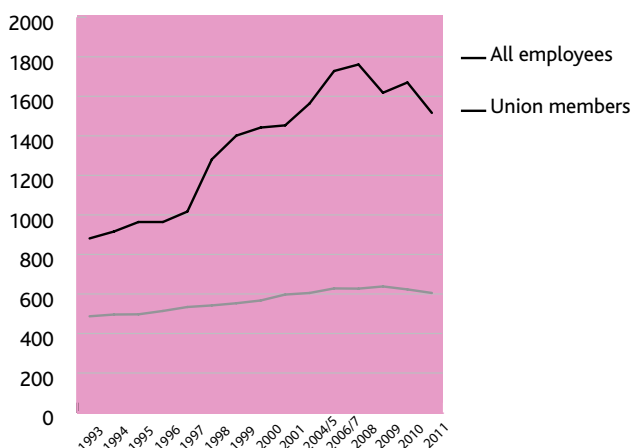
The decline in membership occurred predominately in the private sector with unions in the construction sector, manufacturing and retail experiencing significant reductions, mirroring the continuing deteriorating of employment in these economic sectors.

The QHNS Q4 2010 shows that average employment fell by 4.2 % in 2010 and unemployment reached 14.7%, before falling back slightly. During 2010 employment continued to fall in construction (-60% from peak) with significant drops also recorded in financial services and manufacturing. There has also been a sizeable shift in part-time employment to 423,000, 23% of all employment, due mainly to an increase in involuntary part-time employment implying the use of reduced hours as an alternative to layoff. The employment rate in the Republic of Ireland now stands at 59.4%, down ten percentage points since 2007.

Summary Membership Figures

	2010	2011	Difference 2011/2010
NI	220,105	217,711	-2,394 /-1.1%
RoI	596,743	579,578	-17,165/ -2.9%
Total	816,848	797,399	-19,499/ -2.4%

Employees and union membership



Women's Membership

The total number of women members in 2011 is 410,097 compared to 414,751 in 2010; a difference of -4,654, or a decline of just over one percent. The main changes in relation to membership losses occurred in financial services, manufacturing and retail whilst gains were experienced in the education and health sectors. There has been a gradual drift towards a majority female membership over the last decade with women now comprising 51% of membership (just over 50% in RoI and 56% in NI). The proportion of female members for 2011 remained level with 2010.

Women's Membership

	2010	2011	Difference 2011/2010
NI	126,543	122,818	-3,725 (56%)
RoI	288,208	287,279	-929 (50%)
Total	414,751	410,097	-4,654 (51%)

Density

The total number of employees in ROI at the end of 2010 was 1,516,000 (QNHS Q4 2010), compared to 1,679,000 at the end of 2008. Unions affiliated to Congress recorded membership of 580,000 in ROI at the beginning of 2011. Based on these figures the density rate for Congress affiliated membership is 38.3%, demonstrating that the decline in union membership is occurring at a slower pace than the fall in employment.

Congress Challenges CSO Data on Union Membership (CSO Quarterly National Household Survey Q2 2009)

Congress has long argued that the measurement of union density shown in the Central Statistics Office (CSO) module on union membership understates union density. It has been our position that the CSO does not take into account number of factors that impact on the statistics, including the number of respondents who complete the survey without declaring whether or not they are union members. Distributing the 'non-declared' respondents proportionately across union and non-union totals has the affect of aligning the CSO total for union membership

more closely to the actual membership figures of Congress and to those submitted officially by unions to the Registrar of Friendly Societies at the Company's Registry Office.

The CSO QHNS module on union membership published in 2010, nonetheless did indicate a step rise in density to 34% (Congress figures 38%) from its stated level of 31% in 2007.

Congress Finances

The last two years have been turbulent in relation to Congress finances. Having achieved relative stability following the 2007 Conference decision to restructure affiliation fees, the organisation was hit during the last two years by a series of events which had a deteriorating effect on its funding base.

Factors Impacting on Income

The continuing labour market insecurity has impacted on union membership and ultimately on the number of members unions affiliated to Congress. There has been a decrease in Congress member numbers for two consecutive years.

The core funding received from Government to support the Education, Training and Advisory Services (ETAS) provided by Congress was reduced in 2011 for the third year running. The ETAS grant has been in place since 1975 for the purpose of developing and operating training and capacity building, technical support and centralised policy formulation for the trade union movement in order to sustain a stable institutional framework for industrial relations. The contribution received for ETAS is used substantially towards the cost of salaries.

The reallocation of the Competency Development Programme (CDP) funding from training for people at work to training for the unemployed reduced and ultimately removed the provision for trade union training and capacity building. The decision, communicated in February 2010, was retrospective to 2009.

In line with the general experience of cutbacks in exchequer-funded activities, there has been a continued withdrawal of or reduction in funding for designated activities or projects. This has affected all projects including Disability Champions, Global Solidarity and the Congress Centres Network (CCN). The Union Skills Network (USN) was wound-up at the end of September 2010 when it became clear that further funding would not be available.

The shift away from Social Partnership has led to a reduction in the number of boards on which members of the secretariat participate. As board fees are returned to Congress by serving staff members, this has resulted in a lowering of general income. The economic climate has also made it difficult to raise funding from commercial activities.

As reported at the last BDC, the economic crisis had also contributed to a significant worsening in the net deficit position of the staff superannuation schemes.

The general financial trend has been an overall reduction of income from a base of €6.3 million in 2008 to €4.6 million in 2010.

Addressing the Financial Deficit

Resolving the financial insecurity has become a priority since the last BDC. The Treasurer has worked closely with the General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary to address the organisational finances in order to ensure the sustainability of Congress. This has required an extensive review of all activities undertaken and the implementation of a programme of cost saving measures including reductions in affiliations to international organisations, a significant reduction in grants to third parties and general savings across a range of overheads.

However, the main area of expenditure within Congress is payroll costs and the contribution to savings made from non-payroll measures was insufficient to address the scale of the problem faced. In consultation with the unions representing Congress staff, a voluntary redundancy programme was introduced in 2011 to reduce payroll expenditure. In addition to the voluntary redundancy programme, a number of other measures are under consideration to reduce overall payroll costs. A more detailed report will be presented at conference.

The Economic Research Unit

The trade union movement has largely been a lone voice in recent years in its attempts to challenge Government policy on economic and fiscal matters. Our capacity has been no match for the numbers of pro-Government advocates and commentators attempting to bolster the failed neo-liberal model. It had become virtually impossible to get any traction around an alternative narrative of what was happening in the Irish economy; the most serious crisis faced in modern history.

In order to mount an adequate response to the dominant orthodoxy, the trade union movement needed to be in a position to go beyond the macro-economic theoretical debate and demonstrate the micro effects of policy decisions in the real economy. To achieve this meant that we had to develop our capacity in econometric modelling and in the development of world-class economic research. To support this ambition, the Executive Council endorsed a decision to establish an Economic Research Unit (ERU) to provide specialist economic analysis. It was agreed that the Unit would be the property of a number of affiliated unions who have contracted to subscribe substantial funding to resource the Unit for five years. It was further agreed that the ERU would have a corporate governance structure of its own but was to be accommodated by Congress with the General Secretary chairing the Management Board.

The Unit has been formally established and a recruitment process has taken place to appoint a Director and specialist research analysts in both the Dublin and Belfast offices. It is intended that the ERU will be fully operational by September 1, 2011.

The trade union movement has largely been a lone voice in challenging Government policy

Commission on the Trade Union Movement

At the BDC 2009 the following motion was adopted:

“Conference, recognising the challenges presented by the unfolding collapse of the Anglo-American model of capitalism globally, compounded by the failure of domestic policies which have been over-reliant on credit-led property speculation, paralleled by inequitable and inadequate tax systems and moved by the enormously negative affect of unemployment on working people and their families and concerned with the implications for enterprise, employment retention and job creation, as well as the disastrous consequences for the social fabric of society including the quality of public health and education services, re-asserts our fundamental commitment to the promotion of equality and fairness for all and to this end, approves the establishment of a Commission to review trade union organisation in Ireland, including structures and procedures, with the objective of optimising effectiveness through co-ordination of resources in the best interests of working people and their families over the period which lies ahead.”

Arising from the adoption of the motion the Executive Council agreed the composition of the Commission and the Terms of Reference to guide its work. The members of the Commission are: Jack O Connor, Peter McLoone, Patricia McKeown, Eugene McGlone, Avril Hall Callaghan and David Begg. The Executive Council considered it essential to include as members of the Commission persons with an extensive knowledge of how the union movement operates across the globe. It was agreed that Philip Jennings, General Secretary of UNI Global Union, and Philip Bowyer, the former Deputy General Secretary of UNI Global Union, would act as Joint Chairs of the Commission. Liam Berney from the Congress Secretariat is the Secretary to the Commission.

The early part of the Commission’s work focused on meeting with affiliates. It also invited written submissions from interested parties. In addition, the Commission held meetings with politicians, representatives of community groups, various Congress Committees and some employer organisations.

On the March 1, 2011 the Commission organised a one day seminar to update affiliates on its work. At that seminar the two joint Chairs presented a paper which set out their reflections on what they had heard in the course of their dialogue with affiliates and others. The paper posed a number of questions for discussion as follows,

- » Given that trade union organisation is relatively high in Ireland how can we build on this strength to construct a vision for Ireland that can command public support?

- » How can the movement be more effective in changing public opinion away from the free market growth model, which has clearly imploded, and towards a more social democratic model?
- » How can the trade union movement challenge the dominant economic orthodoxy in Ireland in a serious way?
- » How does such an outlook address the challenges of wage degradation, privatisation etc.?
- » Does 'Social Solidarity' retain a currency any longer? What are we doing to cultivate it? How can we grow a culture of solidarity?
- » Congress produced an alternative Better, Fairer Way in response to the economic collapse. What do we need to do to effectively challenge the other side, particularly in circumstances where they control the overwhelming means of communication?
- » The media is dominated by free market orthodoxy and can we mount a serious challenge to this by developing our own communications medium?
- » How can we hope to conduct the kind of multidimensional campaigns (including ethical consumer initiatives) which are critical to maintaining some degree of leverage?
- » Can we tackle distracting inter-union competition and encourage disciplined sectoral co-ordination?
- » Can we optimise synergies otherwise and develop coherent structures for co-ordinating industrial/organisational activity along sectoral lines?

Arising from the discussion at the seminar it was agreed that the work of the Commission should be accelerated, that it would engage further with unions along sectoral lines and that a final report would be prepared for consideration at BDC 2011.

a Commission to review trade union organisation, including structures and procedures, with the objective of optimising effectiveness

Chapter Two - Public Sector, Semi States & Construction Committee

Public Services Committee

The past two years have been the most challenging in the history of the Public Services Committee (PSC). The deep recession combined with Government policy on banking led to the emergence of a deep deficit in the public finances. This in turn led to Government seeking savings across all expenditure headings, particularly in expenditure on pay and pensions. This brought the Congress Public Services Committee into conflict with the Government on a number of fronts. The following details the events and the major changes in the period covered by this report.

Pay and Conditions of Employment

In the Executive Council Report to the 2009 BDC, details were given of the implementation by Government of a pension levy on public servants. This report also referenced efforts to lessen the impact on the pension levy on the lower paid in the public service. However, nobody at that time could have predicted what was to unfold.

In April 2009 the Government introduced a supplementary budget. The Minister for Finance had indicated that the €4 billion in savings that the Government proposed to secure in 2010 would be achieved through a mix of tax changes and expenditure cuts. However, by the last few months of the year Government indicated that their focus would be on cuts and that the cuts would be in the social welfare bill and in public service pay costs, in particular.

As part of this shift in policy the Government indicated that of the €4 billion in adjustments, €1.3 billion was to come from the public sector pay bill. The change in Government policy prompted the PSC to mount a campaign aimed at securing a meaningful engagement with Government on how this was to be achieved. Contacts with Government at that time led us to conclude that there was no likelihood of an agreed approach.

As a result, the Public Services Committee decided to launch a campaign of industrial action including strikes across the public service. The first strike took place on November 24, 2009. This was the first time since 1985 that an all out public sector strike had taken place. In organisational terms, the strike was an enormous success with every single branch of Government closed down, except for emergency services. The strike, despite clear media hostility, appeared to have the necessary effect.

Within 24 hours, the Government issued an invitation to the PSC for a re-commencement of discussions. That same day the Committee also announced a further one-day strike for December 3, 2009.

Following the Government invitation, intensive discussions commenced. Much has been written about what transpired in these negotiations. For the PSC the negotiations had two main objectives.

The first was to find an agreed basis for a temporary payroll savings for 2010 as part of a short time working arrangement. The second was agreeing a reform agenda that would deliver the required level of savings on a permanent basis. As discussions proceeded Government was kept briefed as to the progress made. At a critical point in the negotiations, it emerged that minor differences stood in the way of an overall agreement, including how the short time working would be applied in some sectors. At this point it was the view of the PSC that an overall agreement could be reached and this was relayed to Government.

Following a short break the PSC was informed that Government shared this analysis and had instructed its representatives to conclude an agreement. In light of this development, the PSC called off the second one day strike that was scheduled for December 3, 2009.

Although negotiations on the putative deal restarted, they did so in a climate that was both hostile and belligerent, with key media alleging the Government had 'caved in' to union demands. It has also emerged that backbench Government TDs were simultaneously subjected to a campaign by members of the business community, who demanded the rejection of any deal on public sector pay.

Despite the fact that at this stage there were no significant differences remaining between the parties, the Government representatives informed the PSC, less than twenty four hours later, that they would not be in a position to conclude an agreement.

Such a shift on the part of this employer was unprecedented and it was the unanimous view of the PSC that it was an act of very bad faith at best. Later that day the Government indicated that they would make an adjustment to public sector pay as part of the upcoming budget. In his budget speech on December 9, 2009 the Minister announced pay cuts as follows:

- » 5% cut on the first €30,000

- » 7.5% cut on pay between €30,000 and €70,000
- » 10% cut on pay from €70,000 to €120,000

Following the Budget, the PCS decided on a campaign of industrial action. The strategy was to seek to disrupt the functioning of the public service without impacting on front line service delivery. By March 2010 the Government signalled that it was interested in further discussions in order to avoid the inevitable escalation in the campaign of industrial action.

Given the experience of December 2009, it was recognised that outside facilitation would be required. Kieran Mulvey and Kevin Foley of the LRC were appointed to this role. After several initial meetings, intensive negotiations took place over four days at the end of March 2010. The negotiations resulted in a draft agreement.

The Croke Park Agreement is essentially a trade off. It involves a commitment to no further pay cuts and no compulsory redundancies until 2014 and a commitment to reform that will result in measured savings in the cost of delivering public services, along with a facility to restore lost remuneration, over time.

At the time of writing all but one of the PSC affiliated unions had signed up to the agreement. Most unions confirmed support for the agreement following a vote at the PSC on the June 15, 2010. Since then the unions in the individual sectors - health, education, civil service, local government and non commercial semi state companies - have been working on the implementation of the agreement through the action plans agreed at sectoral level.

These action plans are supported by implementation bodies in each of the sectors and an implementation body also oversees the agreement at national level. The work of these bodies will be vital in the first annual review of the agreement which is anticipated to take place in May 2011. Further information on the Croke Park Agreement and its implementation can be found at www.implementationbody.gov.ie.

While the Croke Park Agreement protects the pay and conditions of current public servants, in his budget speech of December 2010 the Minister for Finance made changes that reduced the level of pension payments and changed the rates of pay for new entrants. The PSC has raised concerns with the Department of Finance about how these measures have been applied and, at the time of writing, is awaiting a response.

Public Sector Pensions

In the period under review, there have been some significant changes to public sector pension provision. As mentioned earlier, in his December 2010 budget speech, the Minister of Finance cut pension payments. In 2009 he announced his intention to introduce a single pension scheme for the public service that would apply to new entrants, and that the new scheme would be structured to provide pensions based on “career average” earnings.

While the PSC did not support the decision of the Minister, it was decided to engage with the Department of Finance on the proposal. Discussions were held under the auspices of the Labour Relations Commission. Following a protracted period of negotiations, an LRC document, which detailed the principles underlying the new scheme which will apply to new public servants, was approved by the Minister for Finance. For its part, the Public Services Committee noted the outcome will require legislation to be introduced.

The other proposed reform that was announced by the outgoing Government was that both existing pensioners and serving public servants could, after 2010, be subject to new arrangements in respect of post retirement pension increases based on the movement in prices, rather than on the pay of the related grade. However a LRC clarification of the Croke Park Agreement confirmed that no changes would be made during the period of the agreement.

Public Service Numbers

In the past two years we have seen a number of initiatives that aim to reduce the numbers of people employed in the public service. The incentivised scheme for early retirement and the voluntary redundancy scheme for the health service introduced at the end of 2010 have had a significant impact on numbers. While both of these schemes are no longer available the continuation of the recruitment embargo and the imposition of Employment Control Frameworks will result in the numbers employed continuing to fall. The new Government has announced its intention to further reduce the number of people employed in the public sector by up to 25,000 by 2015, without any compulsory redundancies. It remains to be seen if any new voluntary redundancy schemes will be required to assist to achieve this objective.

Officers of the Public Services Committee

Shay Cody	Chair (Impact)
Shelia Nunan	Vice Chair (INTO)
Gene Mealy	Vice Chair (SIPTU)
Tom Geraghty	Secretary (PSEU)

Public Services Committee Negotiating Group

The Public Services Committee negotiating group is comprised of the Officers of the Committee plus a representative of each union as follows:

Blair Horan	CPSU
Dave Thomas	AHCPS
Patricia King	SIPTU
Noel Ward	INTO
Peter MacMenamin	TUI
Liam Doran	INMO
John Clinton	POA
Eric Young	IMO
Mike Jennings	IFUT
Pat King	ASTI
Terry Casey	MLSA
Kevin Callinan	IMPACT
Billy Hannigan	PSEU
Liam Berney	Congress

Public Services Committee Representatives on the Croke Park Agreement Implementation Body

Shay Cody
Shelia Nunan
Tom Geraghty
Patrica King

The Semi-State Sector

Since BDC 2009 there have been some interesting developments in the sector.

The two state companies in the energy sector - **Bord Gais and ESB** - continue to play an extremely important role in the economy despite very challenging conditions. The ESB has faced increased competition in power generation and electricity supply. The requirement by the regulator for the ESB to reduce its electricity generating capacity, while allowing other energy supply companies to undercut the company has led to the loss of a significant market share. Conversely Bord Gais, which has entered the electricity supply market, has benefited from this policy.

As a result of EU energy policy there are issues about the future ownership of the distribution networks of both companies. In the case of the ESB while it had been the policy of the previous Government to transfer the ownership of the transmission assets to EIRGRID, a consultant's report commissioned by the Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources suggested that this might not be the correct course of action.

In the case of Bord Gais negotiations with the company envisaged the ownership remaining with Bord Gais, but within a subsidiary company. However the new Programme for Government proposes over time to create a national grid company with the ownership of both transmission networks transferring to this new company.

At the time of writing this report Congress has written to Minister Pat Rabbitte expressing concern about this proposal.



CWU member at the Rally

Since BDC 2009, the EU directive on the regulation of **Public Transport Provision** has been transposed into Irish law. The new regulatory regime changes the method used to select public transport providers and provides for a form of tendering in the provision of public transport services. The regulations also establish the National Transport Authority as the regulator of the sector. The Programme for Government proposes that a cabinet sub-committee will investigate if public transport users would benefit from a more diverse range of public transport providers.

An EU Directive requires the opening of the market for **postal services**. The last Government was in the process of enacting legislation to bring this about in way that would have caused very serious damage to An Post. However the legislation fell when the Dail was dissolved. The new Government has committed to supporting An Post by enacting legislation that will open the market while assigning the universal service obligation to the company for a minimum of 20 years.

The state **owned health insurance company** VHI has come under severe pressure resulting from the failure of the Government to legislate for a properly functioning system of community rating, supported by an effective method of risk equalisation.

In response to the difficulties faced by the Company the last Government opted for privatisation - a decision that has been reversed by the new Government. They will now examine the role the VHI might play as part of the proposal to create a system of universal health insurance.

There have been some industrial relations difficulties at the **DAA**. The fall in passenger numbers across the three airports and decline in other revenues led to the negotiation of a cost containment programme. On the positive side the opening of the new terminal at Dublin Airport has significantly increased capacity.

While the new Programme for Government appears to have adopted the long standing Congress policy of creating a State Holding Company for the semi-state sector, in April 2011 the Department of Finance published a report commissioned by the previous Government concerning the possible disposal of State assets. The report's principle author was Colm McCarty.

It essentially recommends that over time practically all assets in the ownership of the State be disposed off. The report claims that the sale of these assets could yield in excess of €5 billion for the Exchequer. The Programme for Government proposes that the State would dispose of up to €2 billion in 'non strategic assets'.

In response to the McCarthy Report, Congress issued a statement condemning this approach as short sighted and the analysis underlying the recommendations as "flawed." Congress has commissioned the think tank TASC to prepare a critique of the McCarthy Report. It is anticipated that this will be published in the second half of 2011.

Construction Industry Committee (CIC)

At the Biennial General Meeting of the CIC, in December 2009, Mr Jim Moore (UCATT) was elected Chairperson, while Mr Charlie Prizeman was elected Vice Chair and Mr James Coughlin was elected Secretary.

Construction Industry Committee

Tom Fitzgerald	UNITE
Brian Gormley	UNITE
Richard Hurley	NUSMWI
Billy Wall	OPATSI
Eric Fleming	SIPTU
Martin Meere	SIPTU
Christy MCQuillan	SIPTU
Paddy O'Shaughnessy	BATU
Brendan O'Sullivan	BATU
Owen Wills	TEEU
Pat Guilfoyle	TEEU

Fergus Whelan from the Congress secretariat advises the CIC. The CIC nominates representatives onto the following bodies:

- The Construction Operatives Pension Scheme
- The Construction Industry Monitoring Agency
- Construction Training Committee (FAS)
- The Construction Workers Health Trust
- The Construction Workers Benevolent Fund
- The Joint Safety Council for the Construction Industry

The primary focus of the CIC involves negotiating on behalf of building workers at the National Joint Industrial Council (NJIC). The issues can include pay and conditions, pensions, health and safety and apprenticeship and training. The main issue dealt with in the period under review was the demand by the Construction Industry Federation (CIF) for a reduction in pay.

In January 2010, the CIF lodged a claim with the NJIC on behalf of the construction industry, seeking a 20% pay cut along with reductions in travelling time and overtime payments.

In October 2010 following protracted negotiation at the NJIC agreement was reached on a number of issues concerning compliance with the REA, amendments to the disputes procedure and the procedure for dismissal in the case of redundancy. As no agreement could be reached on pay reductions the CIF referred this matter to the Labour Court.

The Labour Court issued its recommendation on June 29, 2010.

The Court recommended that the basic rate for Craft Workers should be reduced by 7.5% with effect from a date four weeks after the date of acceptance of this recommendation. The Court further recommended that current differentials in the case of the various grades of General Operative should be maintained with the reduced craft rate. Likewise, allowances, which are related to the basis rate, should be reduced in line with the reduction in the basic rate. Following a consultation process the CIC agreed by a majority decision to accept the proposed reduction in pay rates.

The new rates applied from February 2011. The decision to accept the pay reduction was made in order to protect the REA, so that some protection will be given to construction workers in the face of the deepest recession in the history of the industry. However the attacks on the REAs have continued. The outgoing Government resiled from its support for the REA system in the face of pressure from non-compliant employers and the European Commission.

The Safety Representative Facilitation Project (SRFP) has been working to improve safety in the construction industry for 10 years. Its mission is to promote cooperation between employers and workers and to create awareness of the fact that consultation with worker Safety Representatives (SRs) is not just a legal requirement but can be used to positive advantage by site managers trying to encourage employee engagement with safe working practices. The project has sought to achieve these aims by the deployment of a Director and a Facilitator to visit as many sites as possible throughout the country. The project staff engages with site management and workers explain the law relating to safety representative and help the parties in the election/selection process. They help the chosen SR to access suitable certified training, sometimes provided by the project directly.

The main activity of this project has been the visits by the project Director and Facilitator to construction sites. This enables companies to comply with their obligation to have a worker Safety Representative in place, where the site has more than 20 workers.

Experience shows that the visit of the Facilitator helps many site managements to fulfill their obligation regarding the selection of an SR.

Between Jan 2008 and Dec 2010, project staff visited 1,000 sites countrywide. Our staff visited sites in every county in the Republic of Ireland.

The project organised twelve Construction Safety Representative Training courses between 2008-2010. The lack of clarity around FAS support for training has militated against take up of courses in 2009 -2010.

Safety Representative of the Year award

The project administers the annual Construction Safety Representative of the Year Award. In 2008 Mr. Gerard Smyth, K& C Scaffolding Drogheda, was the winner.

Joe Adams of John Sisk & Son was the winner for 2009, while Kieran Foley also of John Sisk & Son was runner up. Gary Bass BAM Contractors was the winner in 2010 and Patrick Murphy of Townlink Construction was runner up.

The outgoing
Government resiled
from its support for the
REA system

Chapter Three - Women's Committee, Disability & Equality Committee

Women's Committee

The Women's Committee is one of the longest standing formal committees of Congress and continues to provide an opportunity for women in the movement to meet and discuss union agenda through a gender lens. It was reconstituted in 2010 and the following were elected Officers of the Committee

Carol O'Brien (UNITE), Joint Chairperson;
Taryn Trainor (UNITE), Joint Chairperson;
Maire Mulcahy (ASTI), Joint Vice Chair;
Theresa Devenney (ATL) Joint Vice Chair;
Margaret Browne, Joint Secretary.
Teresa Graham (NASUWT), Joint Secretary;



Delegates to the Women's Seminar Cork 2011

The major initiatives during the period were the organisation of a national conference in 2010 and a seminar in 2011. The conference was held in Belfast and themed *Building Equality into Recovery*. Nearly 200 trade union delegates and guests attended. Congress President Jack O'Connor addressed the conference and noted the position of women members within our trade unions shows that we have work to do ourselves in the area of gender equality. The results of the first equality audit, contained in the report of the Executive Council to the conference showed that:

- » In terms of paid staff, a significant gender divide at the higher levels, with a higher percentage of men occupying the higher roles, and a higher percentage of women occupying administration positions. In general there is a 60-30 split between men and women – with this pattern being replicated at the level of officials. The administrative positions have a majority of 85% women; however at the levels above official, this is reversed.
- » This pattern is replicated in the statistical information on trade union membership and elected officials, with a higher percentage of men in highest position of president, however at the level of shop steward, there gender divide is more equally split between men and women.
- » In relation to shop stewards, there are slightly more women active than men, however, at the more senior level of National Executive, this is reversed. At the level of Vice President there is a more even split between men and women, however, at the level of president the divide is 78-22.

The President welcomed the fact that we now have these findings, recognised the challenges they pose for us a movement, and committed Congress and the movement to continue to progress commitment to achieving gender equality in our programmes and structures. This means giving an equal voice and representation to thousands of working women, by further developing strategies and actions to overcome these challenges so that when we repeat the audit the results will show significant improvements.

The conference also had a major focus on trafficking for sexual exploitation.

The committee also engaged with the 2010 ETUC project *"From membership to leadership: advancing women in trade unions"* which makes a strong case for a renewed and strategic approach to achieving gender balance in decision-making and leadership structures,

as a basis for union democracy and for realising gender equality at societal, economic and political levels. A resource guide has also been published to spread good practice cases (including from Ireland North and South) collected via this project and to support affiliates' efforts to achieve gender balance.

The seminar in 2011 in Cork focused on the effects of the crisis on Women and the development of a trade union response. The conference had presentations from the United States and Colombia and also focused on Ireland's first examination of its human rights performance under the Universal Periodic Review. As part of the celebrations for International Women's Day 2011 Congress Women's Committee in Dublin and the Trade Union Friends of Palestine, linked up live, through satellite with Lana Naem Ragheb Shaheen-Dghish, a woman journalist in Gaza. In Belfast the Committee held an event in the Long Gallery, Stormont, with speakers opposing the cuts to Government budgets. Speakers spoke passionately about the unfair impact on women. A performance on the issue of Trafficking was also given by Vinie Burrows, actress and Human Rights advocate.

The 2010 celebrations for International Women's Day saw the Committee welcomed to the Belfast City Hall by Lord Mayor Naomi Long. Several issues were discussed including The Bill of Rights, women's participation in public life and the remarkable history of women in Ireland.

The Committee also met with President McAleese on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary in November 2009. The meeting took place at Aras an Uachtaran, at the invite of President McAleese. Current and former members of the Congress Joint Women's Committee were in attendance. Speaking in advance, Patricia McKeown, a former President of Congress said: "We are delighted that President McAleese has invited us to celebrate with her 50 years of struggle and achievement, on the part of the members of the Women's Committee, past and present."

The Committee also hosted the Council of the Isles Women's Committees in Derry in November 2010 where more than 60 Women Trade Union Leaders vowed to continue to resist senseless and unjust austerity measures throughout the UK and Ireland. Delegates heard how austerity budgets being implemented in England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland were affecting women disproportionately and how this was also bad for the economy and our society. Margaret Browne also participated in a TUC International Conference in March 2011 to mark 50 years of International Women's Day.

The Committee published a revised set of guidelines for trade unions in order to assist women at work who are experiencing domestic violence. The workplace can play a key role on raising awareness about domestic abuse. We know for many women work is a place of safety where they may confide in others about their experiences and where they can access help.

The officers of the Committee travelled to Brussels to meet MEP's on the issue of Women and Leadership. The trip was hosted by Bairbre De Brun MEP. The Committee also met with members of the team at OFMDFM Brussels who also hosted meetings on the topic. The Committee are grateful to Ms De Brun for the opportunity and will build on the knowledge gained.

The Committee are pleased that a Women and Leadership accredited course has now been established with 15 women completing the training late 2010. The Committee are looking forward to expanding this initiative.

Finally, about 30 people, including 10 members of the Executive Council of Congress, attended a roundtable discussion hosted by the Women's Committee in May 2010 at Liberty Hall. The purpose of the event was for members of the Executive Council, and key representatives of other Congress Committees to meet with members of the Women's Committee to explore common issues of concern and to assess how we can work better together into the future. Chaired by Sally Anne Kinahan, speakers included:

Susan McKay, Director of the National Women's Council;
Patricia King, Congress Vice President.
Clare Treacy and Taryn Trainor (Joint Chairs of the Committee) also gave short overviews of the activities of the Committees. This was followed by a discussion on the best way forward. More info at: <http://www.ictu.ie/equality/gender.html>

Women's Reproductive Rights – a Congress Response

At the 2009 BDC, a motion on the "Right to Choose" approach to the issue of abortion was remitted. Since then, a decision by the European Court of Human Rights has ruled that abortion, in certain circumstances, should be legalised in the Republic of Ireland. This decision by European Court of Human Rights reaffirms the Supreme Court X Case judgment of 1992 and two preceding referenda. Critically, the unanimous view of the Court that women's rights in Ireland have been violated sends a very strong message that the State can no longer ignore.

The Northern Ireland Committee of Congress adopted a position that the 1967 Abortion Act should be implemented fully in Northern Ireland. In the Republic, Congress has taken a position to support the logic of the December 2010 European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) decision and has called for the Government to legislate on that basis. Noting the absence of a comprehensive trade union policy on reproductive rights and the responsibility upon us to reach agreement on such a policy, the Executive Council agreed to facilitate discussion and resolution on the key issues. The General Purposes Committee of Congress recommended, and the Executive Council agreed, that a special informative seminar with expert input and advice on reproductive rights would be convened for trade union delegates, from which a policy would be developed in consultation with the joint Congress Women's Committee and presented to the Executive Council for formal and final approval in Autumn 2011.

Disability Committee

The Congress Disability Committee, chaired by Deirdre O'Connor and vice Chair Dermot Gallagher, continues to meet regularly. The major events and initiatives during the period included:



Deirdre O'Connor, Chairperson, Disability Committee

Disability Champions

The Committee continued to oversee the implementation of the Disability Champions project. More than 140 people have now been trained with some unions (CWU) having mainstreamed the modules into their trade union training. Congress appreciates the continued support of FAS for our work on Disability Champions.

Policy work

Submitting views on the 2009 Review of Sectoral Plan of the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment under the Disability Act 2005.

The Committee welcomed the ongoing input to the implementation of the sectoral plan through the Consultative group set up to monitor progress towards its important objectives; reminded DETE of the shared vision for people with disabilities outlined in *Towards 2016* as the overall aim in this area: "Every person with a disability would be supported to enable them, as far as possible, to lead full and independent lives, to participate in work and society and to maximise their full potential..... The elaboration of a comprehensive employment strategy for People with Disabilities including a range of measures to promote education, vocational training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities."

The Committee also participated in formulating Congress demands in advance of General Election 2011 and in meeting with then Minister Mary White on a range of workplace related equality issues, including the employment of people with disabilities.

Congress Disability Seminars

The Congress annual Disability Seminar was held on April 1-2, 2011 in Dublin Airport. Some 40 delegates gathered to discuss the impact of the crisis on people with disabilities and how the trade union movement should respond. Among the speakers were: Deirdre O'Connor who opened the seminar with some remarks about a recent European civil society conference on disability issues. Congress General Secretary David Begg spoke about the seriousness of the economic crisis facing us and on the importance of ensuring that we do not lose focus on the fact that the economy should exist for society and not the obverse; Delegates also heard from: Eithne Fitzgerald of the NDA; Christy Lynch, CEO of KARE; Paul Oakes of the Equality Commission ; Deirdre McNamee from the Public Health Agency (N.Irl) and John Saunders from See Change. INTO delegate and Disability Committee member, Maire Masterson, finished the seminar with a session on stress management techniques.

Participants also worked in breakout sessions and brought back some recommendations for the consideration of the Disability Committees North and South.

Peter McKeivitt, Chairperson of the NDA also attended and presented certificates to Disability Champions graduates. There are now over 140 Champions trained on the island.

The 2010 Congress Disability Seminar was held on April 23-24. The theme for the seminar was: *'Mental Health in the Workplace'*. The seminar was attended by members of the Disability Committees from ICTU and NIC ICTU, Disability Champions, and lay activists. The event was jointly chaired by Deirdre O'Connor and Berni McCrea. The seminar was opened by Colm O Gorman, CEO of Amnesty International, and also heard from Congress General Secretary David Begg. There were also presentations from Mary Van Leishout of the NDA on attitudes to mental health, Peter Purton from the TUC and Seamus Mac Alastair from Spes. Jane Clare, Disability Champions Officer and Paul Oakes, Equality Commission, Northern Ireland also addressed delegates. Congress has since developed a code of practice in relation to mental health issues in the workplace.

Celebrating Champions

Over 60 trade unionists from across the island of Ireland gathered in Belfast on October 1-2, 2009 to celebrate the work of the then 100 Disability Champions on the island. The graduation ceremony was presided over by Patricia McKeown (Past President of ICTU) and 14 of the latest Champions graduated. The seminar, funded by the Equality Commission, Concensus and FAS was opened by John Corey, followed by a drama piece by members of the Disability Committee. There followed presentations by: Michelle Morris, the Equality Commission; Renee Dempsey, CEO of the Equality Authority; Brian McKee, Barrister, - on recent developments in disability legislation; Creative Exchange Arts Project; Jane Clare, Congress Disability Champions Officer ; FAS presentation on supports available; and Donal Lyons from the Human Rights Consortium.

The Equality Committee

The Strategic Implementation Committee for Congress Equality Initiatives, chaired by Annette Dolan, continues to meet regularly and seeks to coordinate the work of other equality related Committees.

During the period, the Committee oversaw a number of Congress strategic initiatives including the 2010 equality mainstreaming project and the workplace diversity project. These included challenge funds for unions to

develop equality initiatives and the development of a strategic approach to the integration of migrants into trade union structures. Much of this work was showcased at a major equality conference in November 2010. The keynote address to this conference was delivered by Richard Wilkinson, co-author of the Spirit Level, why more equal societies almost always do better. Kat Banyard, UK author of the Equality Illusion, also made an address to the conference. The Committee also oversaw the equality audit carried out among unions in 2009 and developed the agenda for Congress lobbying on equality issues in advance of election 2011. Previously the Committee led a Congress delegation to meet with then Minister for Equality, Mary White TD. The main issue for that discussion was repeal of Section 37(1) of the Employment Equality Act, an issue that Congress is also taking up with the new Government. Publications produced during the period included:

- » A Resource on taking cases to the Equality Tribunal with Ellis Barry
- » Trade union guidelines on Lesbian Gay and Bisexual issues at work in partnership with GLEN and Trans Workers with the Transsexual Equality Network Ireland

The Committee was also part of the Congress delegation to meet with the Equality Tribunal in July 2010. The Committee also coordinated a submission on Equality issues to the Commission to Review Trade Union Membership in Ireland. It continues to advise on the structure and content of the equality section of the Congress website: <http://www.ictu.ie/equality/> .

Guest speakers at the Committee included: Ms Dil Wickremasinghe, Social Entrepreneur, and Broadcaster; Dr Oran Doyle, Law School, Trinity College, Dublin who was carrying out a European Commission (DG Employment) comparative study on access to justice in gender equality and anti-discrimination law-; a special discussion on Equality Audits with Peter Purton, from the TUC.

The Committee also met with President McAleese on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary

Youth Committee

Since the BDC 2009, the Youth Committee has followed an active programme of engagement with a number of Congress lead campaigns and with youth groups in the voluntary sector, along with supporting the Executive Council on youth employment issues.

We have also had an active engagement with the ETUC, with Lorraine Mulligan (SIPTU) representing the Committee on the ETUC Youth Committee. This represents a vital link between the Youth sections of Congress and the ETUC.

The Youth Committee is also represented on a number of bodies including: the Children's Rights Alliance, the Children's Mental Health Coalition and the National Youth Council of Ireland. The Youth Committee hopes to extend membership of these bodies over the coming year to broaden our input into the community and voluntary sector.

The Youth Officer has also acted in an advisory capacity to individual unions in setting up their own youth committees, and supporting them in recruitment (TEEU, IBOA). These youth committees have representatives on the Congress Youth Committee, and we hope that this approach to youth representation will be adopted by all unions in the future.

We also held a SkillNet training event for young trade union members on communications and negotiation skills. The coming year will see us hold more of these training events, as they are very much in demand from young people in trade unions who wish to get more involved.

We have also contributed to the YouthConnect campaign and have continued with the Talks to Schools programme. The Youth Committee is looking forward to continued involvement with YouthConnect, as the project is rolled out and developed. To this end, we have continued with the publication and updating of the Your Rights at Work information card, which continues to be a popular and vital resource for young people at work or entering the workforce.

Retired Workers Committee

In the period under review the Committee undertook a survey of the status of retired workers in the union movement. It had been some years since the previous survey was carried out and the new survey would allow us to see what improvements there had been in the intervening years.

The Committee believes it is regrettable that a large number of unions are not affiliated to the Retired Workers Committee and do not have retired members sections. The Committee feel that there is a need for urgent action on this issue as retired are as much in need of trade unions, as when they were working.

Budget Submissions

The Committee prepared budget submissions for 2010 and 2011 and were disappointed that there were no increases in the state contributory and non-contributory pensions, in either budget.

We also noted that there was a commitment to the IMF/ EU/ECB troika that there would be no increases in the state pension for the next four to five years. This will create hardship, particularly for pensioners who are solely dependent on the state contributory or non-contributory pension. In Budget 2011 there was a reduction in the tax free credits available to older people and this, along with the introduction of the Universal Social Charge and reduction in the age allowance, has increased the tax liability for many pensioners. As a result whatever benefits older people had gained from the decision to retain the medical card has now been clawed back by the state.

The Committee participated in the Congress's National Demonstration for 'A Better Fairer Way' on November 27, 2010 and a member of the Committee, Marie Doyle, addressed the gathering at the GPO. She spoke eloquently about older people's needs in society and their commitment to intergenerational solidarity.

Other Issues dealt with by the Committee

- » Fuel poverty
- » Prescription charges
- » Fair Deal for Nursing Home Support
- » Difficulties facing the provision of pensions in Ireland
- » General election outcome and older people
- » Proposal for a new pension scheme for Ireland
- » EU Green Paper on Pensions
- » The Lisbon Treaty Referendum
- » Universal Social Charge
- » Reduction of Public Service Pensions



Marie Doyle, Pensioner and Member of the Congress Retired Workers' Committee speaking at the November 2010 Rally

Submissions

- » Budget Submission 2010, 2011
- » Garda Strategy on Older People

FERPA

The Committee is affiliated to FERPA, the organisation of retired workers in the ETUC. Michael OíHalloran, Secretary of the Committee, is the delegate and Jim Keegan is the deputy delegate to FERPA. Among the issues dealt with by FERPA included:

- » EU Green Paper on Pension Policy
- » The economic crisis in Europe and its impact on poorer people in the European Community

The Committee is also affiliated to the Irish Senior Citizens Parliament. The Committee participated in consultation meetings with the Department of Social Protection on issues affecting older people.

The Committee attended an event organised by the Older and Bolder organisation.

The Committee held two meetings with the Retired Workers Committee of Northern Ireland. One of the meetings, in Dublin, heard an address from by Jack OíConnor, President, on the trade union view of economic crisis. The Belfast meeting dealt with the motion on retired workers issues for BDC 2011.

The Retired Workers Committee is made up of delegates

from the: AHCPS; ASTI; CPSU; CWU; GSU; IFUT; IMPACT; INMO; INTO; MANDATE; NUJ; SIPTU; TSSA; TUI; UNITE/ATGWU; UNITE/AMICUS.

Obituary - Ross Connolly

The Committee regrets the death of Ross Connolly (grandson of James Connolly, Labour Leader) who for many years was Secretary of the National Retired Workers Committee of SIPTU and played a major role in improving the standards of retired workers in the union and in the wider trade union movement. May he rest in peace.

Chapter Four - Trades Councils, Congress Centres & Labour Relations Systems

Trades Councils (Republic of Ireland)

There are 23 Trades Councils in the Republic. During 2010 Congress Head Office commissioned a survey to assess both their level of activity and their training and resource needs. The field work for the survey was carried out by Mary Guihen.

While the response rate was disappointing- 11 of the 23 responded, or 48% - the results suggest that there is a healthy and functioning Trades Council movement throughout the Republic. Among the positives to emerge from the survey were:

- » 100% of responding Trades Councils elect an executive either annually or biennially;
- » 90% of respondents have standing orders in place;
- » More than half the respondents reported new delegates nominated within last five years;
- » 100% hold either monthly or bimonthly meetings;

The survey showed a strong level of participation in Integrated/City Development Boards, Partnership Boards, Congress Centres, Enterprise Boards, Childcare Committees, and Strategic Policy Committees. There appears to be a strong culture of reporting back to Trades Councils from these bodies:

- » 91% reported that they were currently involved in a campaign on behalf of their local community;
- » 50% of the respondents have been involved in union recruitment campaigns;
- » 100% of respondents reported issue press statements on regular basis, both in support of local campaigns and the various national campaigns directed from Congress head office.

Amongst the possible causes for concern emerging from the survey were:

- » almost no culture of reporting back directly to Congress;
- » Trades Councils are generally perceived as peripheral by local union branches;

- » time constraints are an issue for Trades Council activists highly involved in local branches;
- » currently little 'added value' for TU movement from participation on many outside boards and often such participation is seen as a chore;
- » It was the perception of most respondents that Congress has not provided much help or support to Trades' Councils in the past number of years.

Trades Council Research Conclusion

Trades Councils are the de facto local presence for Congress. They act as an umbrella group for union branches and are therefore an invaluable resource in terms of establishing and spreading the trade union ethos at local, grassroots level.

A coordinated effort by Congress to support and guide the Trades' Councils on the ground will increase their momentum, enthusiasm and the scale of their work. It would also provide much needed opportunities in terms of facilitating improvement and change.

Congress Centres' Network

The Congress Centres Network currently has 24 constituent Centres: Athlone, Athy, Ballina, Belfast, Bray, Caherciveen, Castlebar, Cork, Drogheda, Dublin 12, Dundalk, Ennis, Fingal, Galway, Killarney, Kilkenny, Leixlip, Letterkenny, Limerick, Longford, Manorhamilton, Mullingar, Newbridge, and Tralee. Until January 2011 the Network was served by two full-time and one part-time staff member, based in the Congress offices in Dublin: a Programme Manager, a Training & Development Coordinator and Administrator.

Meetings of the Centre Coordinators and Network staff were held frequently over the last two years. The downturn in the economy has seen a huge rise in demand and resulted in the Centres managing a footfall of 500,000 service users throughout the country.

Centre Coordinators also now meet on a quarterly basis to discuss operational and service conditions issues that are of importance to their group. The current Chair of the Coordinator's Group is Brendan Mackin of the Belfast Centre. Vice Chairs are John Mathews of the Dundalk Centre and Mary Maguire of the Athy Centre.

The Network's first Strategic Plan (2005-2008) focused on building a formal, structured and sustainable Network, and among its key outcomes was:

- » the establishment of a formal, functioning Network with a common mission, vision, priorities, services, standards, and a shared 'brand';
- » the identification of new sources of funding;
- » the achievement of FETAC Quality Assurance;
- » the development and delivery of a range of services to migrants;
- » The development of a cohesive policy voice and high levels of active participation within Social Partnership.

The Network's second Strategic Plan (2009-2011) was drafted within the context of a contracting domestic labour market, and a national and global economic crisis of unprecedented proportions. Factors such as rapidly rising unemployment, high levels of personal indebtedness, the global nature of the downturn, and persistent social exclusion and risk of poverty were central to the development of the Plan. Congress Centres are now needed more than ever and are in an ideal position within their communities to support vulnerable groups and help those already distant from the labour market from becoming even further excluded. Copies of the Strategic Plan are available from the Network Office or from Congress Centres.

Centres' Education & Training

Activity around education and training continues to be geared towards building capacity in Congress Centres, to assist participation in the knowledge society and lifelong learning through provision of a range of courses. These are aimed at people vulnerable to redundancy and the unemployed along with migrants, lone parents and adult returners.

By early 2009 nineteen Congress Centres were operating as FETAC training centres running a variety of courses at FETAC Levels 3, 4 and 5. The Dublin 12 Congress Centre successfully achieved FETAC status in January 2011.

Two further Centres are in the process of submitting their Quality Assurance applications to FETAC. In addition, Centres with FETAC QA status were registered with the FAS National Register of Training Providers and had their Centres approved to deliver training on behalf of FAS. In January 2010 the Network Office, also a FETAC training centre, began delivering a series of Level 6 Train the Trainer courses aimed at tutors already operating with Congress Centres. To date over 75 tutors have achieved this qualification and continue to work within the network.

The Congress Centres Network has worked in collaboration with the National Adult Learning Association, Career Decisions, 'I Can Do IT' and the VEC to help recruit unemployed participants for education opportunities funded through the Labour Activation Fund and certified by FETAC.

Unemployed service users have also accessed training through the Congress Centres' links to 'Positive 2 Work Skillnet' and 'Women at Work Skillnet.' This training covers a broad range of subjects and offers the opportunity of free certified training courses.

Equality for Women Measure, 2007-2013

In July 2008 an application was submitted to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform response to the Equality for Women Measure.

The aim of was to activate women who are currently distant from the labour market and who experience a number of barriers in accessing paid work and/or education. It focused particularly on lone parents and migrant women, as well as groups experiencing multiple disadvantages. Over 50 women completed three modules of learning at level three on the National Framework of Qualifications. The modules included Personal Development, Computer Literacy and Preparation for Work.

Centres' Response to Unemployment Crisis

The Centres around the country continued to provide a comprehensive information and advocacy service, particularly around social welfare matters, to a range of client groups in their communities. These included unemployed people, low paid and vulnerable workers, redundant workers, migrants, lone parents, carers and members of the travelling community. One of the goals of the Network Strategic Plan 2009-2011 is to identify and access funding for the appointment of a Network Information Manager to coordinate and develop these services. This has become particularly important in light of the marked increase in those seeking advice and assistance, particularly around areas of employment/unemployment, social welfare and personal indebtedness.

Redundancy seminars are available throughout the network offering information packs and presentations on social welfare entitlements and eligibility. Over 800 people have availed of this service including union officials, union members and workers facing redundancy. Congress Centre Information officers have been invited to attend Social Welfare training provided by Congress.

In 2010 the Congress Centres participated in the Jobwise Conference in Croke Park, in collaboration with Positive 2 Work Skillnet. Over 500 people registered for this event and social welfare information along with training and education options was made available to the audience by members of the Congress Centres Network.

Policy & External Relations

In early 2011 the Network lost a three year grant from the Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs to support its involvement in Social Partnership. The resource provided by the Policy Officer allowed the Network to take a more active role within the Community and Voluntary Pillar and other Social Partnership bodies. The Policy Officer also facilitated the development of a united Congress Centres Network policy voice. The Congress Centres Network will continue to engage with the Community Voluntary Pillar but due to the cuts this will be at a level the organisation can manage.

Between 2009 and 2011, the Congress Centres Network was represented on the Community Pillar, the National Steering Group for *Towards 2016*, the Labour Market Group, the National Economic and Social Forum, the National Action Plan Against Racism Monitoring Group, the RAPID Monitoring Committee, the FAS Basic Workplace Education Monitoring Group, the Open University Cross Border Openings Project, the Board of Management of the National Organisation of the Unemployed, the FAS Community Employment National Monitoring Group and the European Anti Poverty Network.



Congress Centres Network achieves recognition for its work with adult learners (L-R) John Matthews, Vice Chair; Sylvia Ryan, CCN Manager; Michael D. Higgins TD; Fiona Elward CCN Administrator; Susan Bray, Coordinator Mullingar Centre, Frank Vaughan, Director Education & Training Congress

The Network continued to build strong relationships with a variety of organisations in the sector, including the INOU, the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, Age Action, One Family, OPEN, the European Anti Poverty Network, the Community Platform, the National Women's Council, Combat Poverty and the New Communities Partnership.

The Congress Centres Network also made a number of key submissions to Government departments, covering areas such as medical cards, the National Carers' Strategy, activation, lone parents, the National Reform Programme and the National Report for Ireland on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2009-2011.

Funding & Restructuring

As funding from existing sources is under pressure the Network is exploring funding opportunities from other streams. Currently some Centres work with local social welfare offices to accommodate training courses for those in receipt of jobseekers benefit and job seekers allowance.

We are working closely to support the Union Learning Representatives and facilitate training and services necessary for this initiative using existing funded Projects. Congress Centres Network has successfully won contracts with FAS to deliver training. Twelve of the Centres have registered on the FAS National Training Providers list and this allows them to apply for Government tenders for training.

Leonardo Mobility Project 2010-2011

In February 2010 an application was made to Leargas under the Vocational Education and Training Professionals (VETPRO) category to travel to Iceland and visit similar Centres. In September 2010 the funding was secured to take eight Coordinators or Tutors to Iceland and Miðstöð símenntunar á Suðurnesjum (MSS – Centre for Lifelong Learning) of Krossmói 4, 260, Reykjanesbær, kindly offered to facilitate our visit. One objective of the trip is to exchange ideas and experiences in relation to vocational education and training provision. The aim of the project is to identify possible innovations in the area of service provision and delivery in the community services relevant to unemployed people in Ireland. This trip is planned for June 2011 and all participants will complete the FETAC Level 5 Working in Groups and Work Experience modules and also receive a Europass document issued by the Irish National Europass Centre, within the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland. The Congress Centres Network strives to encourage the continuous professional development of all the members of the network while building relationships with similar organisations internationally.

Leonardo Transfer of Innovation Project 2008-2011

Congress is the Irish partners in the new Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation project 'ReVOW' – Recognising the Value of Work.

'ReVow' is a continuation of the 'VOW' (Value of Work) project that was completed in 2007. The aim of the 'ReVOW' project is to develop and implement certified training for people employed in the financial sector.

Industrial Disputes & Labour Relations

The table below tracks the trends in industrial disputes over the last 10 years. As can be seen, 2009 saw the highest number of days lost due to industrial action in many years. The spike is primarily attributable to the one day strike that occurred across the public sector in November 2009. The one day strike resulted in all Government departments and services - with the exception of essential services – being shut down for a 24 hour period.

In 2010 the number of disputes and days lost due to industrial action fell back significantly from 2009 levels, with the number of days lost being the second lowest recorded in the period 2001 – 2010.

Industrial Disputes 2001 - 2010

Year	Disputes	Days Lost	Disputes	Days Lost
2001	26	58	32168	114613
2002	27	43	3553	21257
2003	24	32	3567	37482
2004	11	11	10227	20784
2005	15	14	3291	26665
2006	10	10	1186	7352
2007	6	6	1436	6038
2008	12	10	356	4147
2009	23	168	278228	329593
2010	14	14	511	6602

Source: CSO

The Labour Relations Commission

The Labour Relations Commission (LRC) was established in 1990 with the aim of developing and improving industrial relations procedures and practices in Ireland. The LRC provides a wide range of services including a conciliation service, a Rights Commissioner Service and an advisory service.

The principle industrial dispute resolution mechanism provided by the LRC is its conciliation service. The table below shows the number of cases referred to the LRC over the period 2001 to 2010 and the settlement rate at conciliation. It is interesting to observe that the number of cases referred to the LRC for conciliation in 2010 has dropped by 31%, on 2009 levels. There could be a number of reasons for this decline. There is no doubt that the decline in the number of referrals arises from the abrupt slow down in economic activity. It has been suggested that some of the decline can be attributed to initiatives taken by some unions to resolve disputes at local level.

LRC - Conciliation Conferences 2001 - 2010

Year	Number of Referrals	Settlement Rate at Conciliation
2001	1815	80%
2002	1693	81%
2003	1597	82%
2004	1484	80%
2005	1692	81%
2006	1519	82%
2007	1289	80%
2008	1317	82%
2009	1571	82%
2010	1193	82%

Source LRC

The other main area of activity for the LRC is its Rights Commissioner Service. Unlike the trends in conciliation which showed a decline, the number of referrals to the Rights Commissioner Service has increased dramatically. The table below shows that the number of referrals increased by nearly 5000 in 2009 with a further increase to over 15,000 referrals in 2010.

Rights Commissioner Service 2001- 2010

Year	Number of Cases
2001	4184
2002	5700
2003	4737
2004	4700
2005	5500
2006	7179
2007	9077
2008	10978
2009	14569
2010	15671

Source LRC

Again it is difficult to be precise about the reasons for the increase. However the LRC has noticed a significant number of disputes relating to payment of wages and a significant increase in claims relating to the end of employment disputes.

All-Out Picket Applications

In the period under review Congress granted five all out pickets.

In July 2009 we granted an all out picket to SIPTU in a dispute relating to conditions of employment for contract cleaning workers employed by ECO Facility Management at the Custom House in Dublin. In September 2009 we granted an all out picket to the TEEU in a dispute relating to the dismissal of a number of workers by Green Isle Foods in Naas. In January 2010 we granted an all out picket to Mandate in a dispute concerning conditions of employment of workers in Blarney Woollen Mills in Limerick. In May 2010 we granted an all out picket to Mandate in a dispute concerning redundancy terms for workers in Connolly Shoes, in Dun Laoghaire. In November 2010 we granted an all out picket to Mandate in a dispute concerning redundancy terms for workers in Laura Ashley.

Chapter Five - NESC & The HEAP Report

Hierarchy of Attributes, Earnings and Privilege – The HEAP Report

The HEAP Report, an analysis of income inequality in Ireland, was produced as part of a collaborative arrangement among Congress, TASC and the NUI Galway Social Sciences Research Centre (SSRC) at the end of 2009. The report, which was authored by NUI Galway academics, Professor Terrence McDonough and Jason Loughrey, comprises a poster illustrating the numbers of households at different income levels, broken down by occupational category and household type, together with an explanatory booklet.

The Report sets out to provide basic facts relating to income distribution in Ireland, together with an analysis of Ireland's socio-economic structure: income distribution, occupation and household type. It is presented in an easy to understand and accessible format, produced as a standalone resource for unions and all those concerned about inequality in Irish society. The research was also used as a major component of the Youth Connect schools' resource pack.

The Report highlights the extent of inequality in Ireland. It highlights some of the unseen aspects of the 'tiger' years including the increased gap between those at the top of the earnings' ladder and those at the bottom and how 84% of families live on less than €40,000 per annum. When analysed in terms of occupation, only the managerial/professional occupation category makes its way to the very top of the earnings' league.

The importance of education is affirmed in HEAP where it is shown that a definite advantage exists in terms of earning power with the average gross income of those with no formal education, or primary education only, at €13,489, while those with a university degree had a median income of €45,700.

The impact of social welfare as a poverty reduction measure becomes clear when it is shown that although relative poverty levels increased during the boom years, social welfare played a critical role in reducing poverty from 21.9 per cent in 2001 to 16.5 per cent by 2007.

Women's income is shown to be around two-thirds of men's income; adjusting for differences in hours worked, women's hourly earnings are about 86 per cent of men's. Women are also more likely to be at risk of poverty.

The report provides a graphic illustration of our clearly divided society, and strong evidential support for the view that Government cannot continue to impose the burden of this recession on low and middle income earners. Massive amounts of wealth were generated during the boom years. This report very clearly shows where that money did not go - to the majority of the population. It also shows that wealth has not evaporated; it is still there, concentrated in the hands of a few.

Drawing on experience from other countries, a number of practical policy positions are proposed in the HEAP Report to counter inequality:

- » Maintaining the investment in social protection to provide a safety net for individuals and households who are at risk of poverty;
- » Reducing the income gap between high and low incomes through progressive taxation of income and wealth, or through policies that ensure smaller differences in incomes;
- » Investment in education and early childhood development and education as an important economic and equality equaliser.

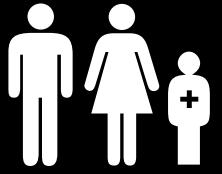
The HEAP analysis is being redeveloped as a web-based resource for unions and schools from Autumn 2011.

The report provides a graphic illustration of our clearly divided society

Continuing at this scale, to include the income of €118 million, the average of the top three wealthiest households in Ireland in 2007, the chart would be 750m high or 12.5 times taller than Liberty Hall.

H.E.A.P. CHART

Hierarchy of Earnings, Attributes and Privilege Analysis



WHAT THE CHART REPRESENTS:

The H.E.A.P. (Hierarchy of Earnings, Attributes and Privilege) chart represents the income distribution of Irish households drawn from the 2006 Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) in Ireland. Due to the extent of Irish income inequality, and the limitations of a B1 poster, we were not able to include the highest incomes in the main chart.

The figures include all income before tax, including government benefits. We have not adjusted for household size.

The main chart shows incomes below €134,000, representing 95 per cent of the Irish population. The scaled-down version of the chart shows incomes up to €330,000. Due to space constraints we were not able to show the icon at the very top, a managerial/professional couple household earning €600,000. To put these figures in perspective, the average industrial wage in 2006 was around €30,000.

ON BOTH CHARTS, EACH ICON REPRESENTS 2,800 IRISH HOUSEHOLDS.

Four household types are represented: single males, single females, single females with dependents (children) and couples households. There were not enough single men with children for us to represent them on the chart. As well as indicating household type, each icon also shows the occupation of the adult family member(s), differentiated by colour. The key below provides a guide to household type and occupation.

USING THE CHART

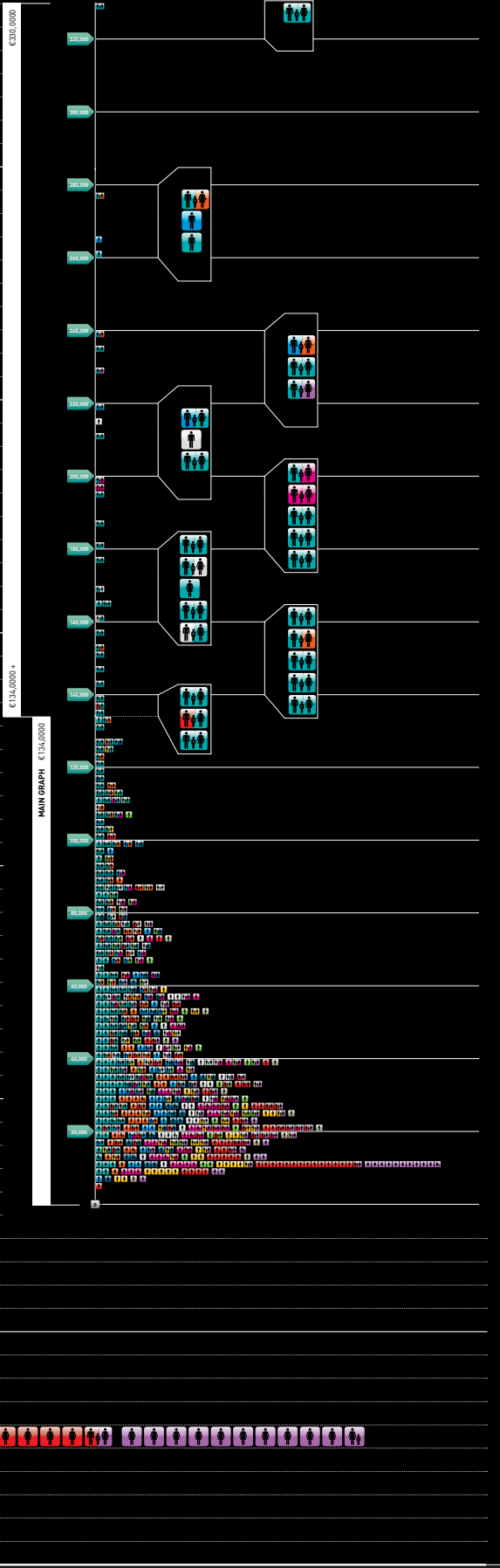
To discover where you and your family are positioned in the Irish social H.E.A.P., you need to calculate your annual household income:

1. Add together the incomes of all adults in your household.
2. Then add any government benefits received.
3. Identify the icon which most closely corresponds to your household type and occupation.
4. Locate your income level on the vertical axis of the chart.
5. Check this row for your icon or one which most closely corresponds.

Chart authors: Professor Terrence McDonough and Jason Loughrey, Social Sciences Research Centre (SSRC), National University of Ireland (NUI), Galway.

Design: whitenoisestudios.com

Project supported by ICTU (Irish Congress of Trade Unions), TASC (Thinktank for Action on Social Change) and the SSRC (NUI Galway).



HOUSEHOLD TYPE



The couples icon includes couples with children and couples without children as the latter were not numerous enough to be represented on this chart. Same sex couples are not represented on the chart as the survey data does not include that information.

Each icon represents 2,800 households.

OCCUPATION

- Managerial and professional:** Managers, directors and other executives, scientists and engineers, health professionals, teachers, business professionals, lawyers, writers and technicians.
- Clerical and secretarial:** Secretaries, clerks, cashiers, bank tellers, travel agents, receptionists, telephone operators and call centre operators.
- Craft and related:** Builders, plumbers, electricians, painters, welders, motor mechanics, handicraft workers, food processing workers, textile workers, garbage collectors, and construction and maintenance labourers.
- Sales:** Models, shop salespersons, shop demonstrators, market salespersons, and street vendors.
- Other:** This includes occupations that do not fit into one of the other categories, but were not numerous enough to require a separate category.
- Personal and protective services:** Travel guides, waiters and bartenders, child-care workers, personal care workers, hairdressers, beauticians, undertakers, fire-fighters, police officers, armed forces, domestic helpers and cleaners, caretakers, messengers and porters.
- Plant and machine operators:** Power-generation operators, water-treatment operators, assembly-line operators, industrial-robot operators, chemical-products machine operators, printing-machine operators, sewing-machine operators, food-processing machine operators, and vehicle drivers.
- Unemployed/disabled, students:** This category includes people who are unable to participate in the active workforce due to disability. Those who are currently unemployed, but available to take up employment, and full-time students.
- Retired:** This category comprises those who have retired on age grounds.
- Farmers:** Crop growers, vegetable growers, horticulturalists, dairy and livestock producers, poultry producers, farm labourers, forestry workers, and fishery workers.
- Home duties:** This category includes people who look after children, older people and/or people with disabilities on an unpaid basis, and people who are voluntarily not in the labour force.

The National Economic & Social Council (NESC)

Congress is represented on NESC by David Begg, General Secretary, Sally Anne Kinahan, Assistant General Secretary, Peter McLoone, Impact and Manus O’Riordan, SIPTU.

The Council was restructured in early 2010 to include an environmental pillar. To accommodate this, the representation of each of the existing pillars was reduced by 20 per cent. The number of independent expert appointees to the Council was increased from 4 to 8 but these have not yet been named. NESC meets on a monthly basis and publishes regular reports intended to advise the Government on economic and social policy.

Perhaps the best analysis of the crisis facing Ireland was prepared by NESC and published two years ago, under the title *Ireland’s Five Part Crisis: An Integrated National Response*. It argued that the current crisis has five dimensions – banking, fiscal, economic, social and reputational – which cannot be effectively dealt with if approached separately or sequentially. NESC contended that: “... it is now necessary to formulate an integrated national response to the five part crisis.... An effective Irish response would have a number of characteristics. It would address all five dimensions. It would be based on social solidarity and a positive perspective on Ireland’s future prosperity. It would combine high level coherence with maximum engagement and local problem solving. It would take short term measures that have long term logic.”

Had this advice been accepted it is arguable that our country would be in a better place today.

The Council has also published separate reports on Ireland’s experience of European integration in general (No 118) and of the single currency in particular (No 121). These reports are timely and very useful in the context of the complex situation the country finds itself in now, in relation to membership of the Eurozone and the likelihood of a more intense form of economic and fiscal coordination in the future.

On the social policy front the Council has conducted an analysis of well being in Ireland (No 119). This is a study of the economic, social, environmental and psychological factors that influence the quality of life for citizens. It is based on the belief that something more than GDP needs to be considered in order to evaluate social progress in a meaningful way. Interestingly, work on the study commenced in 2007 and it therefore transcends the period between boom and recession.

Had this advice been accepted it is arguable that our country would be in a better place today

Chapter Six - YouthConnect, UnionConnect and Fair Hotels

YouthConnect

The YouthConnect *The Working World* resource pack, achieved broad support from teachers and students alike during the last twelve months when it was piloted at a number of centres around the country. The ASTI, INTO and TUI along with the Irish Second-Level Students' Union (ISSU), were all involved in defining the best way to approach the engagement with schools in preparation for a national roll-out of the project during the 2011 academic year.

High levels of enthusiasm for the project was evident in the feedback from the pilot which helped determine the final resource as well as the supporting activities and resources to be used as part of the engagement with students.

The five modules of the *The Working World* teaching resource are supported by the programme website from which new material will be made available. Modules include The Workplace, Trade Unions & Solidarity, Know Your Rights, Globalisation and An Unequal Society. Five thousand copies have been printed to ensure a copy is available for every school and their library, for union libraries, Youth Committee members and project champions.

During the course of the development phase, a strategic alliance was developed with the Irish Second Level Students' Union (ISSU) which aims to enhance the potential of both organisations to connect with students. The Youth Connect/ISSU alliance will provide a platform for the second-level students' union to proactively access and engage with students to establish working student councils in a more sustainable way than has been possible to date. This in turn will engage students in participative activities similar to those of trade union activism and explain the relevance and operation of trade unions in the workplace.

Joint activities will concentrate on providing information for students on their rights and entitlements, both in school and the workplace, raising awareness of the work of ISSU and the role it plays in ensuring the voice of the second level student is heard, creating awareness of the work and role of trade unions in society and encouraging student participation and involvement in Youth Connect campaigns.

The collaboration includes the provision a range of new products including '**iConnect**', a second-level student card which entitles students joining to ISSU membership, YouthConnect membership and a range of negotiated retail discounts. It will also provide them with access to

current news and information, online support services -jointly developed between ISSU and YouthConnect - and provide a platform for young people to which they can contribute on issues of concern to them.

Members of YouthConnect/ iConnect card and will be able to access rights support by email. This service will provide a range of information, support and advice on rights based issues including rights at school and rights at work.

School Champions

To ensure the success and permanent positioning of this programme it is intended to provide a class speaker to every school in the country and to proactively encourage this to happen through ongoing promotion and direct contact. This is being facilitated by the appointment of school champions on a regional basis. Teacher unions have helped access 40 trainee teachers who will undertake extensive training in preparation for the national roll-out. It is intended that this core of school champions will be supplemented by affiliate staff, activists and youth committee members who are interested in this area of work.

Each champion will visit a school in their designated area to promote the YouthConnect project, encourage activism and participation in school life. An introductory lesson will typically include raising awareness amongst students of the role of trade unions, real-life case studies from the workplace, an introduction to their rights at work and introducing concepts such as fairness and solidarity both nationally and globally.

Communications

The YouthConnect website was launched in May. The website target audience is both teachers and students. Its purpose is not only to provide information but also to serve as a platform from which students can raise questions, voice their concerns and comment on issues. The aim of the website is to provide an opportunity for young people to access information and get involved on issues of concern to them. The site will harness the use of emerging technology and facilitate social networking to maximise connection and participation.

Promotional information about the programme was sent to schools from March 2011 to ensure inclusion in school timetables in advance of the new academic year. A presentation was made to a conference of ASTI Principals

SOMEONE'S TRYING TO STEAL YOUR PAY. IS IT YOUR BOSS?

The Government has cut the Minimum Wage from €8.65 an hour to €7.65, but if you are already in a job and your boss tries to cut your wages without your agreement, he or she may be breaking the law.

So if you are earning the Minimum Wage and are being threatened with a pay cut, call us – we may be able to help.

Call 0818 300 900, or visit fairwage.ie



and Deputy Principals in April and both TUI and ASTI made stand space available to YouthConnect over the course of their conferences. Up to one hundred schools have already signed-up and expressed an interest in having a speaker in advance of the official launch.

YouthConnect is a valuable resource for the trade union movement. It is important that affiliates are involved in its continued development, resourcing and communication. Critically, unions need to put in place the infrastructure and systems to facilitate the engagement and active participation of young members within their own organisation and ensure that all activities remain relevant to young workers.

UnionConnect

UnionConnect was launched in April 2009 as part of a Congress obligations arising from the joint ICTU/ NERA memorandum of understanding. It is a development of the generic union concept and seeks to provide advice and information to workers on their rights and entitlements and on the options available to them. While the appropriate union for particular sectors is known to those on the inside of the union movement, such information is less well known to potential members. Those contacting Union Connect are provided with advice and an application for the relevant union is forwarded to them. The service was initially provided in a unionised call centre. In October 2009, as part of the support for the Get Up Stand Up campaign, the service was made an exclusively web based service and was brought in house: www.unionconnect.ie. Visitors to the site can access information on a range of topics either through 'frequently asked questions' or by downloading a fact sheet.

During the calendar year 2010, the site had 16,875 visits- an average of about 400 visits a week. During that period 500 people sought to join a union and were either emailed an appropriate application form or referred to the appropriate union for contact.

The UnionConnect number can be used as the contact point for specific campaigns, and is a valuable campaigning tool. Just how valuable became clear in February 2011 when Congress utilised the service as an integral part of its campaign against the cut in the minimum wage by establishing a sub-brand service: www.FairWage.ie. Advisory services were provided in conjunction with the **Congress Legislative Group** through a telephone helpline in addition to the online support service for those who were affected by the wage cut. Among the first to make contact with the helpline were five female workers from the Davenport Hotel. The rest, as they say, is history.

The Fair Wage campaign demonstrated the potential of UnionConnect. The service has the capacity to be scaled up or down as required and to be developed further to facilitate 'direct' joining over the telephone or online and to set up paperless direct debits on behalf of unions. The service is also capable of handling specific queries and if necessary being developed to provide direct back-up to unions in advocacy services including more detailed information on rights and advice.

It is worth noting that a similar service is provided by union centres in the Scandinavian countries, and the STUC commenced such a service in Autumn 2010.



Davenport Workers picket 2011.

UnionConnect Research Project with UCD

The Union Connect research project has looked at union membership, organisation and strategy in the five participating unions. These are SIPTU, Mandate, Impact, CWU, and TEEU. In each of these unions interviews have been conducted with the General Secretaries, full-time officials and organisers. The research has been undertaken by Dr Sophie Gamwell and Professor John Geary of University College Dublin. Dr Gamwell has been appointed as the ICTU Newman Fellow in Industrial Relations.

At this point, the research in the CWU and Mandate has been completed and preliminary confidential feedback has been provided to the General Secretaries and lead organisers. Further research interviews will be undertaken with Impact and TEEU. An extensive piece of research work will be undertaken in SIPTU linked to current sectoral organisation campaign

The focus on union organising is a relatively recent phenomenon, covering the period of the last three Biennial Conferences. The development of the organising departments in unions has in many cases been more recent. The work with unions is focussing on a number of areas ranging from single to sectoral organising campaigns in the private and public sectors. Another aspect of the study is examining the extent to which organising is supported by mainstream union officials and how equipped branches are to take up the organising agenda.

The research will attempt to follow two organising campaigns in each union in order to get a clear picture of the organising strategies in use and the degree of variation between campaigns. It will also examine the change in union officials' work and will provide a critical case study of the prospects for union organising in the future.

Following the completion of the fieldwork, the researchers provide a preliminary report to the individual unions. Their feedback will then be incorporated into the final analysis and will be shared, with their permission, with the other unions participating in the Union Connect project. A number of key themes from the research will be shared through a special round table forum involving General Secretaries, Congress and the researchers to discuss and share the main findings of the research project. There will be a similar event with the lead union organisers. These round table meetings will offer a unique opportunity to critically reflect on our research findings, and will offer participants the opportunity to understand how their individual approach to organising compares with other approaches adopted within Ireland and elsewhere, and will hopefully provide a platform for the sharing of ideas and for networking amongst union organisers. Following these feedback sessions a report to the unions will be

prepared outlining critical opportunities and challenges around union organising in Ireland. It is expected that this work will be concluded, and the research will be available to the unions concerned in autumn 2011.

This Congress/UCD research project commenced in 2009 with the appointment of Dr Gamwell. The co-operation between UCD, Congress and the five participating unions has been excellent and offers a unique opportunity to reflect upon the status and prospects for union growth and influence in Ireland in coming years.

The Fair Hotels Initiative

Fair Hotels is an initiative of hotel workers employed in Fair Hotels throughout Ireland and trade unions.

Fair Hotels are defined as hotels that treat their staff fairly. Fair Hotels pay a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. They take their responsibilities as employers seriously and respect the fundamental human right of workers to organise collectively and have a voice in their place of work.

Fair Hotels accept that in order for a hotel to run efficiently and safely, workers need to have a voice in minimising potential risks to their health from accidents and injuries.

Fair Hotels realise that hotel workers value decent jobs - jobs that are worth protecting. Both collectively and individually, workers in Fair Hotels strive to protect their livelihoods by securing the viability of their hotel.

Hotels listed on the Fair Hotels' website, www.fairhotels.ie, were invited to participate in the Fair Hotels campaign by their own staff and staff representatives. Each of the hotels listed has agreed to participate. There are currently some 48 hotels participating in this campaign.

The objective is to support and promote quality employment in the hotel industry in Ireland.

In March, 2010, the Executive Council formally endorsed the initiative. On June 21, 2010, trade union conference bookers came together at a meeting in Buswells Hotel, Dublin, to discuss how best to support the initiative. A central booking system for the Fair Hotels was developed and bookings for accommodation can be made through the website: www.fairhotels.ie

The venue for BDC 2011 was selected on the basis of its participation in the Fair Hotels Campaign. It is the policy of Congress and affiliates to only use Fair Hotels for their annual/biennial conferences.

In April, 2011 Congress organised a Fair Hotels Expo in Liberty Hall. This was attended by over 30 hotels involved in the project and by over 30 trade union/NGO conference bookers. It is planned to hold this as an annual event.

At the time of going to print, the following hotels are members of the Fair Hotels Campaign:

Connaught: Best Western Hotel, Sligo, Breaffy House Hotel and Breaffy Woods, Castlebar, Co Mayo, Clayton Hotel, Galway, Carlton Hotel, Galway and Jury's Inn Spanish Parade, Galway.

Leinster: Best Western Dublin Skylon Hotel, Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, Buswells Hotel, Dublin, Clarion Dublin Airport, Dublin, Conrad Hotel, Dublin, Croke Park Hotel, Dublin, Green Isle Hotel, Dublin, Jury's Inn Custom House, Dublin, Jurys Inn, Parnell Street, Dublin, Jurys Inn, Christchurch, Dublin, Montrose Hotel, Dublin, Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny, Radisson Blu, Dublin Airport, Talbot Hotel, Wexford, The Ardboyne Hotel, Navan, Co Meath, The Gresham Hotel, Dublin, The Westbury Hotel, Dublin, Whites Hotel, Wexford.

Munster: Ard na Sidhe Country House, Killorgan, Co Kerry, Best Western Pery's Hotel, Limerick, Brandon Hotel, Tralee, Co Kerry, Brehon Hotel, Killarney, Co. Kerry, Castleross Hotel, Killarney, Co Kerry, Clare Inn Hotel, Dromoland, Co Clare, Europe Hotel Resort, Killarney, Co Kerry, Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney, Co Kerry, Granville Hotel, Waterford, Gresham Metropole Hotel, Cork, Hotel Dunloe Castle, Killarney, Co Kerry, Imperial Hotel, Cork, International Hotel, Killarney, Co Kerry, Ocean Cove Hotel, Kilkee, Co. Clare, Park Inn Shannon Airport, Co Clare, Radisson Blu, Cork Airport, Silver Springs Hotel, Cork, The George Boutique Hotel, Limerick, The South Court Hotel & Suites, Limerick, Tower Hotel, Waterford and West County Hotel, Ennis, Co Clare.

Ulster: City Hotel, Derry, Mount Errigal Hotel, Letterkenny, Co Donegal, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast



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Chapter Seven - Congress Education & Training

Background

The last two years have been difficult for education and training within the union movement. The continuing economic crisis and the collapse of Social Partnership brought challenges in terms of how training could respond to new needs and also difficulties in securing release for potential trainees, while there were serious resource difficulties created by the cessation of funding from FÁS, which had previously supported trade union training courses.

Union Learning Advocates at USN Awards Ceremony Arigna, Co. Leitrim

(L-R) Kevin Harte Group T&D Manager Bord na Mona, Sean O'Brien ULR B na Mona Belivor, Susan Bray Manager Mullingar Centre, Sean O'Rourke ULR B na Mona Boora Works, Pat Brady ULR Bna Mona Derrygreenagh

Union Skills Network

The USN Project, delivered in partnership with FAS, concluded in September 2010. The project was remarkably successful in developing an accredited training course which equipped workplace representatives to take on a new role of Union Learning Representatives (ULR) within the movement in the Republic. Over 240 ULRs were recruited and trained, who in turn activated in excess of 3,000 learners in a variety of sectors around the country. While an interim evaluation of the project was very positive in documenting its successes, it was also clear that the project encountered difficulties in recruiting participants in a number of areas, both geographic and sectorally. A new strategy for the project was prepared with the cooperation of affiliated unions which would have put the project back on track in terms of meeting its original targets. This became the subject of on-going negotiation with FAS and it was confidently expected that the project would secure a time extension to implement this plan. Regrettably, FAS was unable to support the proposals for a continuation of the project and the contract expired in September. Congress secured very positive support from all the unions who had trained ULRs in putting in place on-going support for them through their individual unions.



Education and Training Symposium

In an effort to address the issues facing education and training, Congress organised a symposium – “*Mapping the Way Forward*” - which was held in All Hallows in June 2010. Attended by education and training officers and senior officials from most affiliates in the Republic, the event represented an opportunity to conduct a SWOT analysis on the new circumstances we faced, and sought to map a strategy to address this. The symposium results were very positive and constructive and were based on a commitment to increase the level of cooperation and collaboration between unions on a wide range of areas effecting education and training provision.

A summary of recommendations from the symposium is set out below:

General policy approaches:

- » Prioritise trade union education in union budgets
- » Develop partnership and sharing of existing resources where appropriate

Actions for immediate implementation:

- » Reconstitute Education and Training Committee of Congress
- » Conduct a comprehensive audit of physical resources, course offerings and tutor availability
- » Identify training courses offered by affiliates that might be open to members of other unions
- » Congress to set up a web-based information system on training offerings
- » Set up a register of qualified tutors who could be called upon to deliver training

Longer term initiatives

- » Explore possibilities offered by on-line learning
- » Identify funding opportunities and streamline the approach to applications
- » Investigate the scope for linking with VECs in the provision of appropriate training
- » Congress to provide information on progression routes for trade union-related studies
- » Set up universal quality assurance systems for training programmes across all unions
- » Develop programmes aimed specifically at young activists
- » Target transition year students (link to *Youth Connect* schools programme).

These recommendations essentially became the work-programme for Congress in this area.

Education & Training Advisory Committee

The Education and Training Committee was reconstituted in late 2010. Affiliated unions were invited to confirm their formal nominees, while those representing Congress on various educational bodies were also given ex-officio membership.

Terms of reference for the committee were agreed as follows:

- » To promote the development of education and training activities for union activists and officials
- » To support lifelong learning opportunities for union members
- » To monitor training needs and develop appropriate training responses
- » To liaise with relevant external organisations such as the Department of Education and Science, FAS, the VEC Sector and other education institutions
- » To ensure the development and maintenance of high standards in the provision of trade union education and training
- » To advise the Executive Council and General Purposes Committee of Congress on matters related to trade union education and training
- » To encourage the collaboration of trade unions in the development and delivery of trade union education and training
- » To engage with relevant bodies (e.g. FETAC, HETAC, NQAI) in ensuring appropriate certification and accreditation and quality assurance of trade union education and training
- » To co-ordinate services and initiatives designed to support the development, efficiency, accessibility and effectiveness of trade union education and training
- » To identify and co-ordinate proposals to access resources, funding and otherwise, that will support trade union education and training
- » To prepare and maintain a register of approved training providers for use in trade union education and training
- » To facilitate the sharing of resources between trade unions in the area of education and training.

The committee meets on a monthly basis and has set up various working groups dealing with subjects such as certification and accreditation, e-learning, liaison with the VEC sector and Training Needs Analysis.

The Committee is engaged as a priority on preparing a comprehensive TNA focussing on core training for union representatives at all levels. The results of the TNA will be used to devise training approaches to meet new needs that may have emerged and to amend existing courses as required.

The Committee has also acted on some of the other issues raised by the symposium and has organised seminars on

- » e-learning (March 2011) where presentations included the UCD School of Distance Learning and the British TUC and the INTO;
- » EU Funding (April 2011) where contributions were made by the European Trade Union Institute, the Equality Authority, Léargas and Skillnets.
- » These and other seminars to be arranged will contribute to concrete proposals for collaboration.

Sally Anne Kinahan, Assistant General Secretary speaking at the USN Awards Ceremony Arigna, Co. Leitrim



Skillnets Networks

There are two trade union-organised networks funded by Skillnets. The Women at Work Skillnet has the participation of Congress, CWU, IBOA, INMO, MANDATE and SIPTU while the UnionLearn Skillnet includes IMPACT, TEEU and SIPTU.

Both networks have been important in supporting the delivery of key training, and have been able to manifest the commitment to collaboration from the All Hallows symposium by opening opportunities to participants from other unions. A wide range of courses have been offered by the networks including representative training, media skills, leadership, ICT and courses aimed at youth activists.

UnionLearn Web Portal

Reflecting a commitment also arising from the All Hallows symposium, a new website has been created to serve as a concrete means of sharing information and resources between unions. While still in development, the site – at <http://www.ictu.ie/unionlearning/> - will offer a means of show-casing all trade union-provided training, including training courses offered by the Congress Centres Network, and also provides for a secure area where education and training resources can be shared among unions.

Congress / SIPTU Certificate in Business Studies (Trade Union Studies)

The HETAC Certificate Course in Trade Union Studies (previously offered separately by Congress and SIPTU) was substantially revised following the requirement to revalidate the qualification. A decision was made to amalgamate the two programmes previously offered. The course has a modular structure with a cycle of three modules being offered each year. Students may join the course at any point in the cycle.

Bachelor/Diploma in Business Studies (Trade Union Studies)

The BBS and Diploma courses continued to be offered in conjunction with UCD School of Distance Learning. Congress succeeded in negotiating on-going grant support for eligible students who are currently enrolled, who will be supported through to the end of the programme. Unfortunately, grant support for new students coming onto the course ceased to be supported by FAS.

Peoples' College

An event of huge significance for the College was the recent retirement of Sheila Conroy, long-serving President, from active participation in its activities. This creates new challenges for the College in what is a very difficult climate.

Since BDC 2009, the College has maintained its position as a key provider of opportunities of life long learning for its members – trade unionists, their families and the general public. We continue to provide a comprehensive range of courses at very reasonable rates.

The 45 courses offered over the two years include Modern Languages, Art & Music, Political, Social, Cultural & Environmental Studies and Personal Development & Social Skills.

English for speakers of other languages courses attract many people to the College and many continue to participate in other classes and activities.

Recent new courses include Genealogy, Hill-Walking and Bridge, while Birdwatching continues to attract enthusiastic support as do the perennials of Languages, Music and Art Appreciation, Yoga and Creative Writing. Courses in Politics and Current Affairs have been reinstated and are proving popular. This is a positive development – presumably influenced by the current political and economic situation – ensuring a balance between the kinds of courses we provide.

Enrolments have remained stable during the period under review at some nine-hundred each year. However, a fall off was evident in January 2011: a combination of bad weather and the impact of the Universal Social Charge, which hit pay-packets in the very week we were enrolling.

All classes took place in the evenings, with the exception of Art Appreciation, which took place in the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery. Many classes take place in the Teachers Club and some in Congress House.

A survey of students was undertaken over Autumn 2009/ Spring 2011 which provided encouraging information. Many of our students return to the College year after year. Over 70 % of those who responded had been attending courses for between one year and ten, with the majority in the two-to-five year range. The age pattern is also balanced: The majority of students (45%) are between 45 and 59; some 23% are over 60 while the remaining 32% are under 44. A further 14% are between 30 & 44 and 18% below 30. These figures augur well for the future of the College. Overall, 79% of the respondents were Irish and the majority of the remainder were Polish.

The Student Committee continues to play a key role in the College, both as a support to the administration and in representing the views of the student body. It also organises social and cultural events each year and an annual visit to Paris.

The Choir continues to flourish, participating in choral festivals at both national and international level. It also performs at social events for the College.

The Debating Society also plays a major role in College life organising debates and training sessions for its members.

Other activities included the Wexford Outreach programme. We maintained our links with the Wexford Peoples' College Project and will explore ways of strengthening further cooperation.

Our priority for the next two years will be to address the challenges we face– given the changes in the College, with the departure of its long serving President, Sheila Conroy, and the difficult economic situation. This will enable us to continue to promote the principles and activities enshrined in our constitution and provide our students with the learning opportunities they require in an increasingly difficult and changing world.

Global Solidarity Champions

The Global Solidarity Champions training courses and Summer Schools are important tools in raising awareness and in broader trade union education. The training course gives an insight into the main social justice problems that beset our world, but it also offers explanations and reasons for the *existence* of these problems. The course covers many issues, including human and trade union rights, climate change, gender equality, migration and globalisation. Crucially, it looks at how international trade union solidarity is the key to progressive change. To date 50 members have participated in the training. The aim is that the Champions will contribute to strengthening the international solidarity work and development education within their own trade union. The vast majority of the participants in the training courses to date have actively engaged in global solidarity work. Helping to sustain this work in affiliate unions will be a priority for the project into the future.

We also organised very successful Global Solidarity Summer Schools in 2009 and 2010 which built on the themes of the training courses. A total 130 trade unionists from the North and South attended. The overall evaluation was very positive and some of the participants later joined the Global Solidarity Champions training course.

Chapter Eight - Campaigns & Communications

Communications Group

Following a decision at Biennial Conference 2009, the Executive Council established the Commission on Trade Unions to chart a course for the trade union movement. As part of this process the Executive Council undertook to examine and make proposals on a comprehensive range of policy and organisational issues. It was recognised that our capacity to communicate our message, build loyalty and activism across our membership, persuade popular opinion and ultimately, influence political discourse and policy making is a key concern for the movement. In light of this and the many challenges faced, the Congress Executive took a decision at the end of 2009 to establish a Communications Group to consider and develop recommendations for a more strategic approach towards communications and campaigning and to build greater collaboration across the trade union movement in this area.

Members of the Group

Sally Anne Kinahan, Assistant General Secretary (Chairperson)
Frank Connolly, SIPTU
Seamus Dooley, NUJ
Brian Forbes, MANDATE
Conor Griffin, TUI
Bernard Harbor, IMPACT
Rob Hartnett, UNITE
Mike Jennings, IFUT
Pat Montague, MANDATE
Peter Mullan, INTO
Maria Murphy, INMO
Charlie O'Neill, CWU
Eoin Ronayne, CPSU
Niall Shanahan, IMPACT
Seamus Sheilds, IBOA
Gemma Tuffy, ASTI
Macdara Doyle, Congress Communications Officer
Deirdre Keogh, Congress Secretariat

The Communications Group has undertaken an extensive programme of work since its establishment covering general coordination of communications; message development and coherence; campaign planning and execution; resource production; research and development including action learning; capacity building and training; the development of a comprehensive strategic plan which has the potential to greatly enhance the impact and effectiveness of all or our communications work.

Research – The Communications Audit

One of the first areas of work undertaken with the Communications Group was an analysis of the current state of trade union communications and campaigning activity. The audit set out to construct a comprehensive picture of where we were at and to gather views of what needed to be done to enhance the impact of our work. The detailed survey completed by most unions looked at the the extent of resourcing of communications and campaigning activities across the trade union movement; the effectiveness and impact of activity; it sought information on how unions communicate with their members, activists and other important audiences; set out to establish the core messages and themes of importance to unions and to identify opportunities to work collaboratively and the barriers to making this happen.

The outcome of the audit provided a comprehensive picture of our communications' base indicating clearly what was required to build on success and overcome potential weaknesses and unnecessary duplication of effort. The audit established the extent of the expenditure allocated annually on communications-related activities including personnel costs. It showed that whilst large unions tend to have dedicated communications personnel, many smaller unions are without professional assistance and there is a clear interest in being part of a collaborative effort. What become absolutely clear from the research is that our combined resources in terms of money, facilities and professional staff is sizeable compared to other civil society organisations and, if leveraged effectively, has the potential to be powerful.

We have established that there are more than twenty union publications produced on the island with a potential reach of about 300,000 people (40% of members/15% employees) on a periodical basis ranging from weekly to twice a year. Most unions produce a journal aimed at members with format, content and frequency varying across different organisations. From the audit conducted last year, it is estimated that emails from unions reach up to 100,000 general and activist members and mobile texts about 60,000, numbers most likely included within the 300,000 in receipt of union journals. There is limited data available on readership versus circulation of union publications.

There is enormous potential to improve and extend union communications particularly that between unions and their membership in order to build relationships and levels of engagement in union organisations.

Unions which responded to the audit self-assessed the impact of their communications and campaigns work as being moderate to effective, with scope for improvement. The main impediments to increased impact were identified internally as resourcing, the inability to communicate directly with members, the dearth of research and analysis and self-inflicted ones such as conflicting views/voices emanating from unions, whilst externally, the greatest difficulty was seen as the ideologically-motivated opposition from political and some media sources. Conversely, the actions required to improve our impact focussed on pooling resources, planning, greater collaboration and unified working and improved interface with members.

Priorities for collaborative working emanating from the audit include developing a shared communications strategy, joint training provision, establishment of best practice guidelines, a shared research unit, developing shared services including media analysis and 'political watch' and producing a union journal.

Quantitative Research

The key objective of the quantitative research undertaken during 2010 was to determine current perceptions and satisfaction levels amongst members towards their union. The research covered work and life concerns and issues, the relevance and role of unions, involvement of members in their unions and in organisations other than unions and issues related to member contact and communications. It also dealt with member attitudes and expectations of their unions as well as general union awareness levels, media consumption and campaigning.

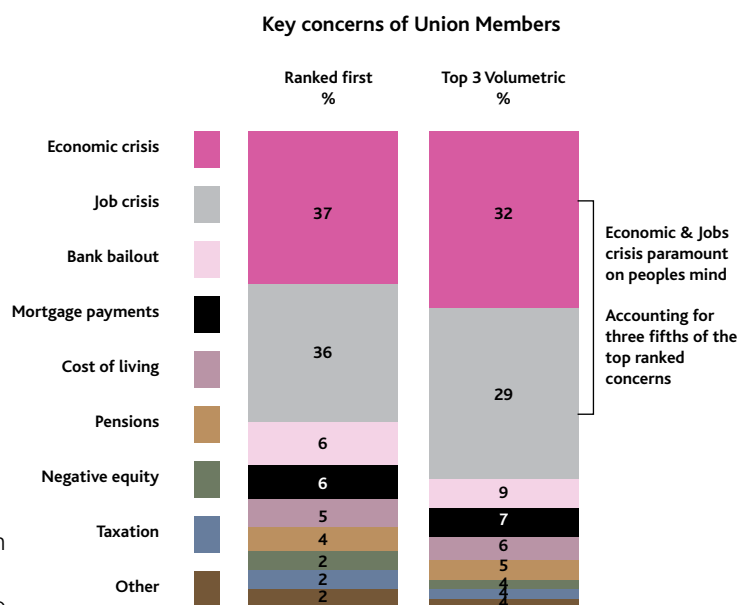
Qualitative Research

The second phase of member research was undertaken during the later half of 2010 through a series of focus groups which enabled a more in-depth discussion with trade union members on issues related to union membership. The qualitative research was undertaken among members who had indicated an interest in deepening their involvement in their union organisation. The research covered lifestyle and the impact of the economic crisis, experiences in the workplace and an exploration of member knowledge, perceptions and satisfaction levels towards their unions. The research also covered member references in relation to contact, communications and general engagement with their union organisations. Overall the research provided a useful insight into the views and attitudes of union members who are not especially active but have potential to be so.

Research Outcomes

Broad attitudes of members:

- » For members, the benefits of being in a union have shifted towards protection of existing terms and conditions as a result of the experience of uncertainty in the workplace.
- » On the big issues, there is a desire for solutions rather than critique or analysis, which suggests a need for less emphasis on 'blame' and more on policy research and development followed by the clear presentation and pursuit of credible solutions. Members and the public generally, are looking for leadership and a way forward out of the current crisis.
- » Unions remain relevant but positive attitudes towards unions among members have weakened. Members have high levels of confidence in the ability of unions to represent them but while support remains strong, it is weakening.
- » There is a perception of a disconnect among members which undermines the sense of 'belonging' and weakens the potential of unions to reach, engage with and mobilise members around priority concerns. Over-reliance on traditional union structures and weak relationship management may be contributing to this problem.
- » Irish attitudes towards price and value have shifted very rapidly with the changing economic circumstances and the price and value of union membership is at a potentially serious tipping point.



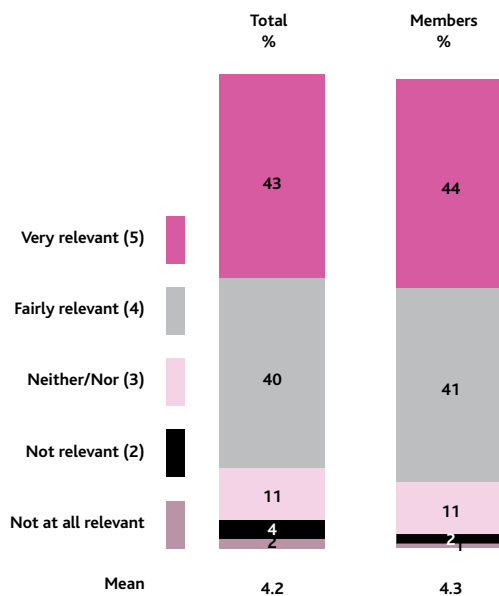
Economic crisis and job crisis on a par in relation to key current concerns of both current and lapsed members of Trade Unions.

Activism:

- » Levels of activism (self-defined) have halved since the research was last undertaken. Active involvement is linked to commitment and lower levels of strong commitment were shown in the research. For the majority of members, other commitments take precedence over trade union activism.
- » Skills is as much a barrier to activism as time, which suggests the need to reassess the content of activist training to ensure that ‘activism’ has a relevance to potential activists
- » Community, sports and other groups are enjoying a growth in participation/activism but unions are failing to tap in to this growing culture of community/solidarity.
- » However, the chief expectation among members is that unions should ‘deliver’ rather than expect its members to act. The difficulty with this attitude is that it prompts a passive relationship and weakens the potential to create self-organising, self-sustaining unions.

- » Different constituencies of members (including by age) value different types of union media (with younger members generally preferring digital and text and older members more traditional methods) and unions place different emphases on the various media reflecting, in part, the needs, expectations and media habits of their membership.
- » Union print communications are not widely read, although some affiliates place a high value on union newspapers and magazines as effective communications and organising tools.
- » There is clear demand from members for more face-to-face communications between members (particularly young members) and officials.

High levels of Endorsement Among Members for the Relevance of Unions



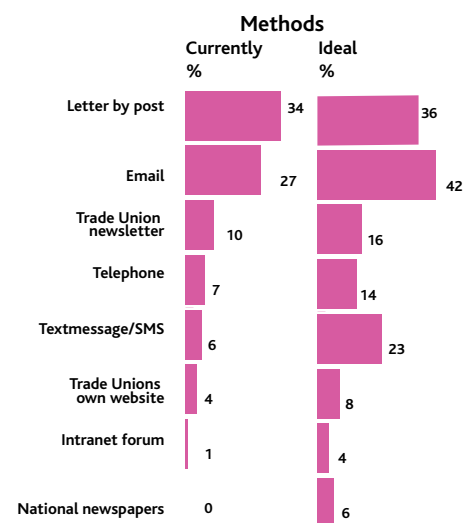
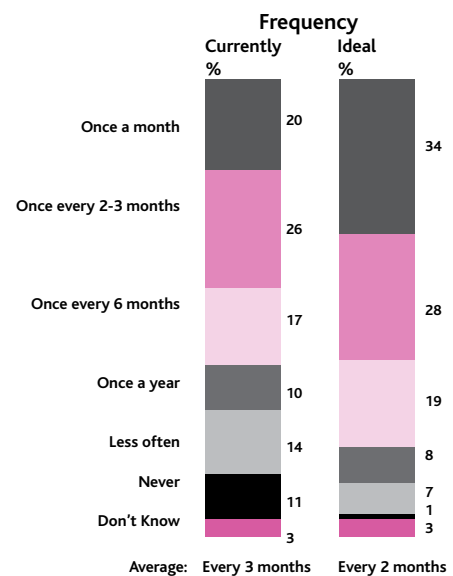
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Communications:

Members take information and ideas from a wide range of sources but the mass media is (and is likely to remain) their main/most trusted source.

- » Members are critical of the level of communications and want ‘more’ from their unions but they want communications that are specifically relevant to them, delivered at the right time and through their preferred channels.

Communication from Trade Union



Preference for more frequent contact - email is the most preferred method with post and texts also showing high preference.

Messaging:

By and large, unions and members appear to have the same priorities (economy, jobs, incomes)

- » There is mixed evidence of members' exposure to core union messages (although election exit polls showed a shift towards support for social solidarity and maintaining levels of public spending).
- » In terms of membership generally the biggest challenge is not communicating on 'issues' but communicating the 'value' of members (why union membership is necessary and good value) and values such as collective action, community and solidarity.

The Operating Environment

No national media exists in isolation from the society in which it is located; it reflects the structures of society, particularly the array of political forces and the dominant ideology.

We do not operate in a neutral or benign media environment: the news making/gathering process involves a high degree of subjective, value judgments that will serve to colour or slant the final output.

The Irish media differs from that in other developed countries insofar as it is dominated by conservative outlets and overwhelmingly right of centre commentary. Almost uniquely, there is a critical absence of what could loosely be described as 'centre left' or 'social democratic' media outlets. We operate in the absence of any significant media 'counterweight' and have a very limited media space in which to build and articulate an alternative economic and political narrative.

An examination of the editorial and the commentary line in all domestic media outlets for the duration of the crisis shows just how limited that space was and is. Support for official policies – austerity, wage and welfare cuts - was overwhelming. Ironically, the greatest 'dissenters' were often to be found in the pages of the conservative international business press, such as the

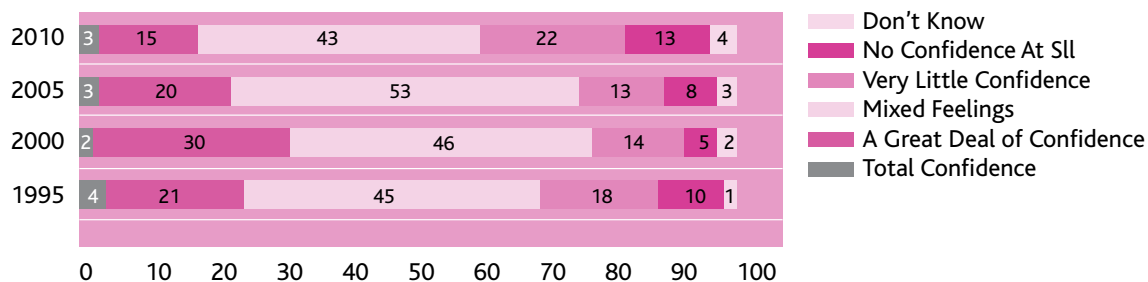
Financial Times. By contrast, opposition to austerity in the UK is a mainstream position within both media and politics. This was reflected in coverage of the TUC's March 26 2011 London demonstration. The centre right press featured predictable criticisms, a focus on later violence and begrudging recognition that large numbers had turned out. Meanwhile, the *Observer* – part of the Guardian family – devoted three very positive pages to the demonstration, including the front page lead. Protestors' criticisms of Government featured prominently and the event was presented as a positive response to 'dangerous' austerity measures. Expert commentary within the paper provided the intellectual underpinning for opposition to official policy.

Proportionately, on successive occasions Congress has turned out far bigger crowds than what was achieved by the TUC. Indeed, the attendance at some of our demonstrations would be the equivalent of several million in many European capitals. Yet, coverage in the domestic media has never reached the favourable levels achieved by our counterparts in the UK.

Public confidence and trust

Relative to other institutions, levels of confidence and trust in unions remains strong. In the middle of the last decade Amara research for RTE's Prime Time had shown that unions were the only institution that had experienced an increase in public trust in a period spanning two decades (the timing of this may have been crucial in the aftermath of the Irish Ferries dispute and at the height of Social Partnership talks). However, more recent research conducted by B&A - in January 2010 - showed that whilst confidence in unions was waning, it was still higher than for almost all other institutions.

Confidence in Trade Unions



A Strategic Approach

Cognisant of the research, the external environment we operate in and the priorities of individual unions and Congress, the Communications Group developed a strategic approach for trade union communications which has received the endorsement of the Executive Council and was submitted to the Commission of the Union.

The strategy recognises our very many challenges but also emphasises the enormous potential we have as the largest civil society movement on the island, comprised of almost 800,000 members, with a strong voice and representation in the mass media and control of a substantial 'owned' media. We have had resounding successes most recently including the Fair Wage campaign for the reinstatement of the National Minimum Wage, the formidable outcome of the Davenport Hotel workers campaign, the victory of the Aer Lingus cabin crew dispute and, in Northern Ireland, the mass mobilisations in protest at the murder of PSNI Officer Ronan Kerr – demonstrating the essence of trade unionism. The strategy sets out to build on our strengths which can only be achieved with the full commitment and total accountability of each and every affiliated union.

Core Objectives from the strategy that we aim to consolidate our work around are:

1. Demonstrate the relevance of trade unions:

Be clear about what we stand for. Develop and mainstream a framework approach to campaigning and communications to set-out and explain the purpose and mission of the trade union movement by placing working people at the centre of our narrative and illustrating our story through the efforts, experience and achievement of our membership.

2. Communicate the value of union membership:

Work to improve the effectiveness of *Union to Member* communications in order to enhance the relationship and improve the emotional connection of members to their unions and to demonstrate the value and merits of trade union membership both to them and potential members.

3. Speak with greater unity: Recognising the challenge of union dependency on the mainstream media to communicate to their members and the inherent threat of negative representation or disunity, we will prioritise managing our 'differences' and improving the effectiveness, value and impact of all media activities and the achievement of message coherence and consistency across the movement.



Mass messaging for the Better Fairer Way campaign

4. Provide an alternative viewpoint: Recognising the importance of the origination, governance and dissemination of news in raising awareness and in opinion-forming, we will explore new ways to communicate including examining the feasibility of establishing own or owned channel/s of communication through which we can generate an alternative perspective to that of the dominant orthodoxy currently championed across existing channels.

5. Create the momentum for change: Retake the leadership and restate the requirements for fair recovery and a better society. Develop alliances with key civil society organisations that share our aims and values in order to build a community of interest and extend our influence to protect the interests of working people and towards the achievement of our vision of a fairer, more equitable society.

6. Increase the efficiency and impact of our activity: Agree a basis on which the majority of unions can collaborate in planning and evaluation on systems and services to enhance what we can achieve and obtain greater value for the resources we use.

The Communications Group is undertaking a planning exercise to involve detailed clear, and measurable actions for implementation across the movement.



Illustration for the September 29 Rally

Campaigns & Publications

On October 20, 2009, Congress publicly launched a campaign of opposition – *Get Up, Stand Up* - to the Government's austerity programme and announced it would be holding a National Day of Action, on November 6. Demonstrations were scheduled in eight centres around the country: Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick, Waterford, Sligo, Tullamore, and Dundalk.

In order to create greater understanding of the rationale behind the campaign, Congress published *A Better, Fairer Way*, which outlined the key arguments against what was proving to be disastrous Government policy. We also published our own *10 Point Plan for National Recovery*.

And to ensure we could communicate to as wide an audience as possible, a letter was dispatched to every home in the country, highlighting the National Day of Action and the Congress campaign. A dedicated *Get Up, Stand Up* website was also launched, for the duration of the campaign.

In the aftermath of a very successful Day of Action, which saw well over 100,000 people demonstrate around the country, a series of Town Hall Meetings was organised to ensure that momentum was kept up and public pressure was placed on Government, in advance of the Budget. The meetings took place five locations around the country.

Early in 2010, Congress published *Shifting the Burden*, which looked at how Government policy was making working people and those on welfare pay for the crisis. The publication exposed the myths behind the attack on incomes and the policy of deflation. It predicted that Government would inevitably move to cut the Minimum Wage – which happened seven months later.

On September 29, Congress organised a 'Welcome Back' demonstration for Government ministers as they returned from a remarkably long summer break. This involved a representative gathering of union members at the Dail, where a specially-commissioned postcard was handed in, by way of protest. The postcard illustrated the damage done to economy and society, by official policies.

Within weeks, Congress announced the holding of a major national demonstration for November 27, in Dublin. It was called in support of Congress proposals on alternative ways to tackle the economic crisis, including a focus on job creation, investment and growth.

Major efforts were made to include other civil society groups, in tandem with the mobilisation of union members. The journalist and author Fintan O'Toole agreed to speak and emcee the event, while the platform included representatives of youth, the unemployed and the retired.

As part of the preparation for the demonstration, Congress undertook to produce a 24 page tabloid newspaper that would be distributed across every population centre in the country. Over 500,000 copies of *The Peoples' Voice* were ultimately printed and distributed nationwide. It was a major logistical undertaking and its success was due primarily to high levels of union coordination and cooperation.

As it transpired, the November 27 demonstration coincided with the arrival in Dublin of the IMF/ECB/EU troika. It was the largest demonstration seen in Dublin in recent years, with a turnout close to 100,000 – despite the terrible weather conditions.

All publications are available at the following links:

<http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/congress-10-point-plan-for-national-recovery/>

<http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/better-fairer-way/>

<http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/shifting-the-burden/>

<http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/peoples-voice-november-2010/#issueumbed>

Advertorials

Advertisement Feature

ACTION ON JOBS NOW

There have been 100,000 jobs lost in the last year. That's a record. It's a record that the Government has set. It's a record that the Government has set. It's a record that the Government has set.

HOW CAN WE DO IT?

Congress, which has a population of 100,000 people, has been able to do it. We can do it. We can do it. We can do it.

No recovery without saving jobs

Millions have joined the ranks of people out of work. The job is to be a great parent and they're not doing it.

THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

Register at home. It's free. It's free. It's free.

CONGRESS

JUST WHEN WE NEED A HELPING HAND, THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO GIVE US A KICKING.

Over 100,000 jobs have been lost in the last year. That's a record. It's a record that the Government has set. It's a record that the Government has set. It's a record that the Government has set.

CONGRESS

GET UP, STAND UP

For a better, fairer way

Advertisement Feature

A BETTER, FAIRER WAY TO RECOVERY

There's a better, fairer way to deal with our country's problems. A way that doesn't punish the middle income families.

CONGRESS

JOB LOSSES INCOME HITS WELFARE CUTS HOMES AT RISK SERVICES SLASHED

There's a better, fairer way to deal with our country's problems. A way that doesn't punish the middle income families.

CONGRESS

HANDS UP IF YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH

There's a better, fairer way to deal with our country's problems. A way that doesn't punish the middle income families.

CONGRESS

Time to Budget or Butcher-it

There's a better, fairer way to deal with our country's problems. A way that doesn't punish the middle income families.

CONGRESS

GET UP, STAND UP

For a better, fairer way

Advertisement Feature

THOUSANDS FEAR LOSING THEIR HOMES

Nearly half a million people are now out of work. Their incomes have plummeted or disappeared altogether. And so it goes across the country.

CONGRESS

THERE IS A FAIRER WAY - A NAME FOR FAMILIES

There's a better, fairer way to deal with our country's problems. A way that doesn't punish the middle income families.

CONGRESS

HANDS UP IF YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH

There's a better, fairer way to deal with our country's problems. A way that doesn't punish the middle income families.

CONGRESS

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CONGRESS

GET UP, STAND UP

For a better, fairer way

Building an Alternative Economic Vision: Public Lecture Series

With the publication of the 10 Point Plan and proposals for a Social Solidarity Pact, in January 2009, Congress warned that Government would be wrong to embark on a programme of deflation and austerity, as this would inflict more damage on an already distressed economy.

Government chose not to listen. In doing so, they received enormous moral, political and intellectual support from virtually all mainstream economic and political commentators.

Their views found a ready platform in national media outlets - both print and broadcast. The same message was relentlessly hammered home: There Is No Alternative (TINA).

That this same injunction had been employed by Margaret Thatcher in defence of her own free market follies in the 1980s was telling, but the irony was lost on those who took to repeating it in Ireland two decades later.

Congress was the only national body that consistently opposed the Government's response to the crisis and warned that it would cause greater harm, turning a recession into a prolonged depression.

The simple reality is that free market madness has led directly to the Irish Crash of 2008. Yet, those in power looked to the same failed ideology to deliver a solution.

That the majority of institutional, media and political commentators subscribed to this view meant that there was very little public space for dissent, little tolerance for the view that there were other ways to deal with the crisis.

In late 2009, internationally-renowned economist Professor David Blanchflower gave an interview to a major Irish media outlet in which he heavily criticised Government economic policy, primarily the campaign to cut incomes and deflate the economy. He said it was precisely the wrong thing to do and would lead to even greater problems.

This was the same argument that had been advanced by Congress since early 2009. But while unions were routinely dismissed as 'vested interests', Professor Blanchflower was an entirely different prospect.

A former member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, he was known widely as 'the man who saw the crash coming'. He could not be dismissed so easily.

Suddenly it appeared that a public space might be opened up in which dissenting and contrasting opinions could be heard and tested.

The illusion lasted for all of 40 minutes, at which point an advocate of deflation and cuts was ushered on to 'explain' why Professor Blanchflower was just plain wrong. He assured people that the good professor just didn't understand the situation in Ireland. Well-meaning, but misinformed. Normal service was resumed.

That single incident spoke volumes about the false and constrained 'debate' that took place in Ireland during 2009 and 2010. It was a telling indicator of the failure of our national institutions to create a space in which debate could flourish and thrive. Arguably, that failure led directly to the arrival of the IMF and EU, in November 2010.

'Banks Could Yet Bankrupt Ireland'

In May 2010, Congress initiated a series of open public lectures under the title *Building an Alternative Economic Vision for Ireland*.

The lectures were deliberately kept free of charge in order to maximise public attendance and participation and also help stimulate wider debate on policy alternatives.

The series opened on May 12, 2010, with a lecture delivered by Will Hutton on the theme of Building an Alternative Economic Vision. A noted economic and policy analyst and head of the Work Foundation in the UK, Mr Hutton is also the author of several best-selling books.

His lecture looked at the rise of "unproductive entrepreneurship" in the banking system and spelt out how a sustainable knowledge economy might be built. He lamented the low spend on research and development in both Ireland and UK, compared to countries such as South Korea and the United States.

Mr Hutton spoke of building an 'innovation ecosystem' and outlined the central role of the State and public sector in the new knowledge economy.

Ominously, he warned that "the banks could yet bankrupt Ireland." That was 18 months before the IMF and ECB arrived in Dublin to confirm that they had actually done so.

There were also contributions from Joan Burton, TD, then Labour Spokesperson on Finance, Paula Clancy of TASC and Congress General Secretary David Begg. The event was chaired by Congress President, Jack O'Connor.

Saving the Bondholders

This was followed on July 7 with a lecture featuring economic and financial analyst Michael O'Sullivan, who is the author of two books on the Irish economy: *Ireland and the Global Question* and *What Did We Do Right?*

Mr O'Sullivan's talk posed the question: *Is Irish Society being Sacrificed to Save the Bond Markets?* In his view, the answer was yes.

He looked at the history of debt crises over the last 200 years and examined the massive institutional and political failure that had led to the collapse of 2008. Mr O'Sullivan went on to detail the necessity to reshape and rebuild - socially, politically and institutionally.

It was his view that we needed to start afresh and establish a Second Republic.

The debate also heard from Dr Mary Murphy of NUI Maynooth and David Begg, It was chaired by Congress President Jack O'Connor.

Apostles of Austerity

The final lecture in the series took place on October 12, in Liberty Hall. It occurred in the lead-in to the December budget as it became clear that the FF/Green coalition was planning to make even deeper cuts than had previously been envisaged.

The talk was delivered by Professor Robert Skidelsky, Emeritus Professor of Political Economy at the University of Warwick and the author of an acclaimed three volume biography of the economist John Maynard Keynes.

Professor Skidelsky is also the author of *Keynes: The Return of the Master*, which outlined the centrality of Keynes' thinking to any successful resolution of the current global crisis.

**Lord Robert Skidelsky Guest
Speaker at Congress Economic
Lecture Series 2010**



Skidelsky attacked the 'apostles of austerity' whose policies were exacerbating the crisis in Ireland and across Europe.

Professor Skidelsky deconstructed the economic theories advanced by 'the cutters', showing them to be quite illogical and bearing little relation to reality. They were based, he said on a worldview that was rooted in the 18th century.

Central to that view was that no matter what the problem, it was always the State (public sector) that was to blame, even when we were dealing with a massive failing on the part of private banks.

General Secretary David Begg responded on behalf of Congress and the event was again chaired by Congress President Jack O'Connor.

All the three lectures were broadcast live over the Congress website and can still be viewed online at <http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/10161557>

The Robert Skidelsky lecture alone has been viewed almost 900 times since it was delivered.

The Union Post

While there is a developing internal debate about the value and role of union media, it is worth looking at the progress of the Union Post since it first launched in February 2009.

In retrospect, launching just six months into an enormous global, financial crisis could be deemed unwise, but the Union Post has thus far weathered that storm. And the climate has been difficult: following a brief flirtation with Keynesian economics, many Governments soon returned to neoliberal type and tried to shift the entire burden of adjustment onto the backs of working people.

And large sections of the mainstream media played their part in setting the agenda, justifying repeated attacks on incomes, jobs and services. While trade unions attempted to set out an alternative vision - as with the Better, Fairer Way Campaign - they had limited space in which to do so. In its own small way, The Union Post has tried to redress that balance. We cannot pretend it to be other than it is: The Post does not have a massive editorial or promotions budget. It is simply an online monthly digest of trade union news and views from North and South that is produced produced in association with Congress.

But it is unique in being the only cross-union publication on the entire island of Ireland. All union voices are heard in the Union Post. Small as it may be, it is a platform that does not exist anywhere else on the island.

But the Union Post relies entirely on union support. It cannot and will not continue to exist without that support. The Post relies on trade unions taking out 'support advertising'. It has no other source of income. If that support cannot be secured that support, the Post cannot do its job and continue to report on events from a pro-trade union, pro-civil society standpoint.

Despite the difficult climate some unions have been steadfast in their support which has helped us produce 22 editions to date. Each issue has played a role in documenting the onslaught on jobs and services and the fight back from unions.

A sample of the front page headlines give a flavour of the publication and of the difficult times we live in:

The Union Post features as a free, downloadable pdf download or digital paper on more than 15 Congress affiliated websites. Needless to say, we'd like that number to grow. In addition, each edition is emailed to thousands of contacts across Ireland, Europe and the world. You can sign up to receive your free copy at braziermedia@btinternet.com

The Union Post can only survive with union support.



May Day Festival

This year saw the inauguration of the first ever May Day Festival, organised jointly by Congress the Dublin Council of Trade Unions and the Larkin Hedge School.

A celebration of May Day this was a festival of poetry, protest, music and public debate. The incorporation of the renowned Larkin Hedge School into the festival programme added a much needed cultural aspect to proceedings.

It ran from April 28 to May 7 and was opened formally with an event to mark International Workers' Memorial Day. This focused on work-related suicide and featured contributions from unions and organisations working in the area of suicide prevention.

Speakers and participants included Congress President Jack O'Connor; Ciaran Austin of Console; Breffni McGuinness, bereavement expert and author; Eamon Devoy, General Secretary, TEEU and Chair of Congress Health & Safety Committee.

The Festival will also included a series of lunchtime talks on key current issues. Renowned labour law expert Professor Keith Ewing of King's College London delivered a talk on Trade Union Rights in Ireland. This was hosted by the TEEU.

A further debate on the EU Debt Crisis heard from Micheal Collins of Trinity College, Dublin. This event was hosted by the INTO.

The series closed with a very detailed look at EU Commission plans to drive down wages and conditions, in response to the crisis. This featured Ronald Janssen from the ETUC and was hosted by the IBOA.

The May Day festival also featured a public demonstration in Dublin on May 1.

From May 5-7, matters took a cultural turn and the baton was passed to the Larkin Hedge School, hosted by the Cle Club. This was officially opened by Michael D.Higgins.

It is hoped to build on the success of the inaugural event and make the May Day Festival a permanent addition to the political and cultural life of the capital.



Micheal Collins, TCD speaking at Seminar on the European Debt Crisis Chaired by Sheila Nunan, General Secretary INTO

Chapter Nine - Report On Biennial Delegate Conference 2009

The Irish Congress of Trade Union's 2009 Biennial Delegate Conference took place from 7-10 July, in the Brandon Hotel Tralee, Co Kerry.

The members of Standing Orders Committee were: Brian Campfield, Jack Kelly, Mary Maher, Liam O'Meara, Michael Sharp.

The following Tellers were elected – Ms Phyllis Behan, PSEU, Ms Kate Varley, IBOA, Mr Paddy Mackell, NIPSA, Mr Seamus Brisco, SIPTU and Mr Kevin Gaughran, CPSU. There were also five Scrutineers elected – Mr Frank Barry, Unite, Mr Billy Hannigan, PSEU, Ms Annette Dolan, TUI, Mr John Kelleher, AHCPs and Mr Jack McGinley, SIPTU.

580 delegates and 117 observers attended the conference. 72 motions, including 6 from the Executive Council, were submitted to BDC, of which 67 were adopted, 1 defeated, 3 remitted and 1 ruled out of order. A report on the Actions on Motions to BDC2009 is contained in an appendix to this report.

The keynote and fraternal speakers at BDC were An Taoiseach, Mr Brian Cowan, TD, Mr Martin McGuinness, Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, Mr Eamon Gilmore, TD, Leader of the Labour Party, Mr John Monks, General Secretary of the ETUC, Mr Luis Alberto Vanegas, Columbian Trade Union Confederation, Ms Sheila Bearcroft, President of the TUC, Mr Grahame Smith, STUC and Ms Penny Schantz, AFLCIO. Mr Terry O'Brien, Mayor of Tralee welcomed delegates on the opening day and Mr John Boner, Tralee Council of Trade Unions also extended a welcome to delegates and guests. Congress was also addressed by Ms Deirdre O'Connor, Congress Disability Committee, Mr Peter Sands, Congress Retired Workers Committee, Mr Tom Murphy, Congress Centres Network and Mr Edward Mathews, Congress Youth Committee.

Mr Jack O'Connor, SIPTU was elected President, Ms Patricia King and Mr Eugene McGlone, UNITE were elected as Vice Presidents and Mr Joe O'Flynn was elected as Treasurer. The following were elected to the Executive Council Ordinary Panel: Mr Larry Broderick, IBOA, Mr Brian Campfield, NIPSA, Mr Shay Cody, IMPACT, Mr Eamon Devoy, TEEU, Mr Pamela Dooley, UNISON, Mr Seamus Dooley, NUJ, Mr Liam Doran, INO, Mr John Douglas, MANDATE, Mr Steve Fitzpatrick, CWU, Mr Tom Geraghty, PSEU, Ms Noirin Greene, UNITE, Mr Arthur Hall, TEEU, Mr Brendan Hayes, SIPTU, Mr Mike Jennings, IFUT, Mr Jimmy Kelly, UNITE, Mr Peter MacMenamin, TUI, Ms Patricia McKeown, UNISON, Mr Peter McLoone, IMPACT, Mr Jim Moore, UCATT, Ms Maria Morgan, NIPSA, Ms Louise O'Donnell, IMPACT, Mr Paddy O'Shaughnessy, BATU, Ms Sheila Nunan, INTO, Ms Máire Ní Chuinnegáin, INTO, Mr Jerry Shanahan, UNITE, Ms Anne Speed, SIPTU, Ms Linda Tanham, MANDATE, Ms Clare Treacy, INO and Mr John White, ASTI. Mr Eric Fleming was elected to the Local Reserve Panel.

Congress held Fringe Meetings at BDC as follows: Tuesday 7 July, Global Solidarity, Wednesday, Equality Paper Launch and Youth Committee BBQ, Thursday, TASC Event and Trade Union Friends of Palestine.

Congress would like to acknowledge the support of our exhibitors at Conference and also for the support of the advertisers in the Executive Council Report 2009.

Back Row L-R: Macdara Doyle, David Begg, Sally Anne Kinahan, Peter Bunting, Deirdre Keogh, David Joyce & Frank Vaughan

Front Row L-R: Barbara Keogh, Paul Sweeney, Liam Berney, Mary Twohig, Esther Lynch, Natalie Fox, Eileen Sweeney & Paula McGrath





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- industrial relations Conciliation services
- industrial relations Advisory services
- a Rights Commissioners service
- A Workplace Mediation service
- assistance to Joint Labour Committees and Joint Industrial Councils in the exercise of their functions

The Commission undertakes other activities of a developmental nature relating to the improvement of industrial relations practices including:

- the review and monitoring of developments in the area of industrial relations
- the preparation, in consultation with the social partners, of codes of practice relevant to industrial relations
- industrial relations research and publications
- training services
- organisation of seminars/conferences on industrial relations/human resource management issues.

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The Labour Relations Commission wishes Congress and delegates every success with your Biennial Conference, 2011.

Europe & the Wider World

Chapter One - Europe & the Wider World

No to Austerity!

On May 18, Congress General Secretary David Begg addressed the Brussels Economic Forum. Described as the European Union's "premier platform for debate on economic issues," the 2011 Forum also heard from EU Commissioner Olli Rehn, Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble.

Speaking to delegates Mr Begg warned plainly that the policies being pursued by the European Commission and the European Central Bank (ECB) were "pushing Ireland towards default."

He pointed out that the austerity programme was undermining any chance of economic growth and longer term recovery: "To deal with public debt we need to generate a sufficient level of primary surplus. This depends on growth *but there is no growth* because deflationary budgetary policy has collapsed domestic demand."

The General Secretary also said that the EU and ECB were not blameless in the current crisis.

"The people from the EU and the ECB who are dictating the terms of our existence are not without responsibility for the crisis in Ireland, nor are they disinterested actors in determining who bears the burden of austerity.

"Economic and Monetary Union was based on the idea of an optimal currency area. Monetary policy dominated and the ECB operated an interest rate policy that suited France and Germany but was pro-cyclical for Ireland and unsuitable. Moreover, deregulation of financial markets combined with low interest rates was irresistible to the Irish banks and at least facilitated the orgy of lending."

He contrasted the disastrous impact of austerity on peoples' livelihoods with the fact that the European financial system that caused the crisis remained unreformed.

"Despite the hardship they are enduring they see little by way of real reform of the European financial system. The hedge funds remain unregulated, there has been no reinstatement of the equivalent of the Glass-Steagall Act to separate retail and investment banking and, of course, the bonus culture operates as it always did."

His remarks echoed themes that had been taken up by the ETUC in the high-level campaign against austerity – No to Austerity.

This has featured a number of demonstrations across a number of EU capitals in protest at what the ETUC describes as: "The policies that the European institutions and national governments are pushing through in the aftermath of the financial collapse."

These opportunistic policies, it says, "are based on major and widespread austerity measures and fiscal consolidation plans that focus only on cutting public expenditure, public services, wages with very dangerous interferences with the collective bargaining processes and the social dialogue at national level."

Ireland has already experienced the impact of this 'interference' in relation to the Review of ERO and REA wage-setting mechanisms.

"This happens while bankers and CEOs are continuing to receive huge and scandalous bonuses and pay and very little has been done to remove the real causes of the crisis."

The recent ETUC Congress in Athens, in May, heard how the European Social Model was being undermined and attacked, precisely at a time when it needed to be strengthened and shored up.

Bernadette Ségol, ETUC General Secretary made the union movement's demands clear.

The advances achieved during the voting of the European Parliament's Economic Committee must be preserved: the independence of the social partners must be secured, particularly as regards wages and their negotiating framework;

Public spending for sustainable investments must be independent from a budget straightjacket;

European economic governance must include harmonisation of the tax base with a minimum tax rate for companies;

Eurobonds must be issued to finance investments in European development and infrastructure networks and projects;

The Council and the Parliament play an important role in the European democratic process. This role must be preserved.

Global Solidarity

The Congress' Global Solidarity Committee is active on a wide range of social justice and development issues, working in conjunction with national and international networks to maximise the impact of its solidarity activity.

Justice For Colombia

This network was created in December 2008 to support the struggle of trade unions in Colombia – the most dangerous country in the world to be a trade unionist.

We successfully conducted an awareness campaign among the Irish public and lobby work with TDs and MEPs: all 12 Irish MEP's signed a letter protesting against the EU Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

A Congress delegation led by Congress President, Jack O'Connor and Congress General Secretary, David Begg met with then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Micheal Martin TD to make our case against the Free Trade Agreement.

Justice For Colombia has hosted a number of Colombian guests, including: Tarsicio Mora, General Secretary of the Colombian Trade Union Congress (CUT); Jorge Gamboa, member of the Executive Committee of CUT; Luis Alberto Vanegas, the Director of the CUT Human Rights Department; Congressman Hernando Hernandez, representative of indigenous people in the Colombian Parliament; Lina Malagon of the Commission of Jurists and a specialist in compliance with UN and ILO standards; Reinaldo Villalba, a leading human rights lawyer from the Jose Alvear Restrepo Collective.

More than 200 individual trade unionists have joined the Justice For Colombia network. In addition, 12 unions and 4 Trades Councils have affiliated to JFC-Ireland.

On December 9, 2009, Congress along with the TUC and the ETUC organised a hearing on Colombia in the EU Parliament in Brussels.

More than 100 people, including MEPs, from across Europe attended the hearing and several speakers mentioned the Congress letter demanding the suspension of the EU negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement with Colombia. Congress was represented by the chair of the Irish branch of Justice for Colombia, Mick Dowling and Global Solidarity Officer Stellan Hermansson.

Congress President, Jack O'Connor also visited Colombia in July 2010 as part of a European delegation of trade unionists, academics and politicians and gave a detailed feedback on his trip at the Global Solidarity Summer School, in August 2010.

The report from the Irish Branch of Justice for Colombia covers much of our activity in solidarity with trade unions in Colombia. Congress protested at the initial signing of the EU-Colombia trade agreement.

But the campaign continues as the European Parliament will have to give its formal consent later this year (2011) before the Treaty can be fully ratified. Congress has repeatedly called on all MEPs to consider the appalling levels of violence still suffered by trade unionists and other human rights defenders in Colombia, before they vote. The problems facing our Colombian sisters and brothers are longstanding and deeply ingrained and will not be solved with the addition of some inspirational, but entirely unenforceable text, in the margins of a trade agreement.

We need to see concrete progress at ground level in regard to ending the violence, dealing with the culture of impunity surrounding attacks on trade unionists and securing labour law reform and enforcement so that trade unionists can organise freely. MEPs must uphold the values of the European Union and demonstrate that they will not allow basic human rights to be sidelined in the pursuit of increased profit.

Political Prisoners

There are hundreds of political prisoners currently languishing in Colombia's jails. They include numerous trade unionists, student activists, community and indigenous leaders and human rights defenders. Many have been jailed without charge and fundamental human, social and economic rights have led them to be jailed – many without held for years without trial. Leaders of civil society organisations and community groups are particularly targeted by the Colombian authorities. The Irish Branch of Justice for Colombia has been engaged in a campaign to free political prisoners Jose Samuel Rochas and Rosalba Gaviria Toro.

Clean Clothes Campaign

Together with the retail workers union Mandate, Trocaire, Comhlamh and the Ethical fashion group Re-Dress, we launched the Irish branch of the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) in October 2010. The campaign is focused on educating and mobilising consumers and direct solidarity with garment workers and their trade unions, in the global south. The CCC has organised a number of well attended public meetings on these issues.

Working Group on Trafficking & Forced Labour

The Global Solidarity Committee, has formed a working group on trafficking and forced labour, which has developed strong cooperation with the Migrants Right Centre and the Immigrant Council of Ireland.

Climate Change

In April 2011, the Committee established a working group on climate change and is working to develop a Congress position on the issue, to include a strong demand for a 'just transition' and the creation of decent jobs.

Lesotho Partnership Programme

This trade union capacity building project for Lesotho has been developed by ICTU in collaboration with Lesotho Congress of Democratic Unions (LECODU) and started in 2008. The overall aim is to build and capacitate a strong trade union organisation as well as addressing issues of HIV/AIDS in Lesotho.

Other Activities

Global Solidarity is also responsible for other international solidarity activities, with a focus on Burma, Sri Lanka, and Iran, for example, and has been very active to ensure that Congress has a strong voice on international issues. The Global Solidarity newsletter is been published twice yearly and the dedicated website also plays an important role.

Palestine

Congress continues its ongoing work in solidarity with the people of Palestine. To this end we have created a dedicated Palestine page on our website: <http://www.ictu.ie/globalsolidarity/palestine/>

In April 2010, Congress held a major international conference on Palestine, in Dublin Castle. While disruption resulting from the Icelandic ash cloud caused difficulties for some speakers and resulted in some absences, the conference proved to be a major success and heard from a wide variety of voices, on the issue.

Conference on Palestine and the Middle East





Speaking Out On Palestine

In addition to trade union speakers, these included: the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Micheal Martin, TD; Arieh Lebowitz, Communications Director, Jewish Labour Committee; Michael Letwin, International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network and Labour for Palestine (U.S.); Avital Shapira-Shabirow, Director of International Department, Histadrut (the General Federation of Labour in Israel); Omar Barghouti, Palestinian National Committee for BDS; Mr. Raed Sadeq, of the Democracy and Workers' Rights Centre, Palestine; Mary-Jo Nadeau, International Solidarity Committee of CUPE Ontario and Labour for Palestine, Canada.

Congress has continued to representations to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the conflict and called on the Government to oppose Israel's proposed membership of the OECD in 2010. There has been regular education of global solidarity champions on the issue, including at the Global Solidarity 2010 Summer School.

Congress also helped organise protests following the Israeli attack on the humanitarian flotilla in 2010. We will continue to educate trade union members on the issues; seek to take actions in support of our position on Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions and maintain to links with the international trade union movement in this matter.

The EU and ECB
are not blameless
in the current crisis.

KILLARNEY TOWN COUNCIL

**Killarney Town Council is happy to welcome
the Irish Congress of Trade Unions'
Biennial Delegate Conference 2011
to be held in the INEC from 4-6 July, 2011**

**We wish you a successful
Conference and we thank you for
choosing Killarney as your venue.**



Appendices

1-7

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Accounts

Irish Congress of Trade Unions Income And Expenditure Account – Number 1 Account 2008 -2010

Income	2010 €	2009 €	2008 €
Affiliation Fees	2,622,429	2,642,987	2,563,818
Conference Income	17,433	73,556	49,678
Administrative Charge to Education Training & Advisory Service	-	-	79,501
Grant & Project Income	43,040	66,539	-
Other Income	91,030	118,065	196,588
Total Income	2,773,932	2,901,147	2,889,585
Expenditure			
Administration			
Staff Costs	1,266,320	1,226,773	1,458,916
Ex-gratia Pensions	112,685	115,304	113,329
Motor & Travelling Expenses	52,190	36,644	55,355
Light & Heat	11,910	13,631	19,980
Telephone	28,794	44,039	59,040
Postage	14,340	14,777	12,106
Rent & Rates	27,003	25,526	48,499
Repairs & Renewals	47,607	39,326	62,861
Insurance	11,262	1,493	4,359
Legal & Professional Fees	51,159	90,850	100,956
Event Costs	58,054	58,040	44,571
Activity Costs	259,371	275,933	290,251
Audit Fees	8,000	8,000	8,000
Grants & Subscriptions	2,851	6,833	1,599
Books, Papers & Periodicals	6,997	10,099	7,541
Leasing of Office Equipment	31,760	31,894	16,625
Bank Charges & Interest	26,588	24,423	53,760
Cleaning	24,077	28,917	19,445
Sundry Expenses	(14,698)	6,281	26,038
Loss of disposal of fixed assets	6,338	-	-
Advertising	-	-	2,018
Total of Administrative Expenses	2,032,607	2,058,783	2,405,249
Publications & Stationery			
Publications	175	983	-
Stationery	17,495	16,807	15,048
Total of Publications & Stationery Expenditure	17,670	17,790	15,048

**Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Income And Expenditure Account – Number 1 Account 2008 -2010 (continued)**

	2010 €	2009 €	2008 €
Expenditure			
Meeting Expenses			
Biennial Conference	933	100,361	10,251
Committees & Conferences	9,498	561	12,696
Total Meeting Expenses	<u>10,431</u>	<u>100,922</u>	<u>22,947</u>
Other Expenditure			
International Affiliation Fees	189,078	180,628	192,175
Profit on Foreign Exchange	(17,897)	(28,377)	(95,429)
Depreciation	13,231	34,858	40,804
Total Other Expenditure	<u>184,412</u>	<u>187,109</u>	<u>137,550</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>2,245,120</u>	<u>2,364,604</u>	<u>2,580,794</u>
Operating Surplus for year	528,812	536,543	308,791
Deposit Interest (net of DIRT tax)	26,198	25,491	-
Taxation	-	-	-
Surplus for year	<u>555,010</u>	<u>562,034</u>	<u>308,791</u>

**Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Balance Sheet – Number 1 Account
2008-2010**

	2010	2009	2008
	€	€	€
Fixed Assets	3,207,164	3,222,174	3,253,670
Current Assets			
Bank Balance and Cash	1,725,462	1,526,386	176,470
Debtors and Prepayments	1,180,924	970,495	706,178
Stock of Stationery	1,434	1,434	1,434
	<u>2,907,820</u>	<u>2,498,315</u>	<u>884,082</u>
Less Current Liabilities			
Bank Loans and Overdrafts	(85,200)	(639,201)	(41,608)
Creditors and Accrued Expenses	(1,518,451)	(1,046,323)	(534,758)
	<u>(1,603,651)</u>	<u>(1,685,524)</u>	<u>(576,366)</u>
Net Current Assets	1,304,169	812,791	307,716
Creditors: Amounts due After more than 1 year			
Bank Loans	(547,796)	(626,438)	(714,893)
Net Assets	<u>3,963,537</u>	<u>3,408,527</u>	<u>2,846,493</u>
Represented by:			
Accumulated fund	1,700,784	1,145,774	783,740
Funding Accounts	2,262,753	2,262,753	2,062,753
	<u>3,963,537</u>	<u>3,408,527</u>	<u>2,846,493</u>

**Irish Congress Of Trade Unions Education, Training & Advisory Service
Income & Expenditure Account – Number 2 Account
2008-2010**

	2010 €	2009 €	2008 €
Income			
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Innovation			
- Main Funding	1,073,000	1,200,000	1,510,000
- Less provision <small>(see note 5 below)</small>	(268,250)	-	-
- WIF Project	-	231,788	-
Participants' Fees	(38,239)	47,503	1,045,306
Grant & Project Income	729,043	1,178,761	607,952
Other Income	40,595	36,878	316,145
	<u>1,536,149</u>	<u>2,694,930</u>	<u>3,479,403</u>
Expenditure			
Staff Costs	1,852,874	2,380,468	1,643,322
Administrative Charge HO	-	-	54,327
Education Division – SIPTU	156,147	182,842	182,842
Education Division – UNITE	27,109	31,743	31,743
Motor, Travelling & Subsistence	47,696	35,454	29,904
Research & Consulting	37,950	41,463	106,941
Training Courses & Seminars	31,078	187,774	814,025
People's College Grant	25,000	31,740	31,740
Activity Costs	258,602	229,025	82,182
Printing & Publications	10,141	7,649	34,076
Legal & Professional Fees	1,350	13,835	18,847
Stationery	62	2,635	8,276
Insurance	10,543	9,387	7,260
Audit Fees	8,000	8,500	9,187
Light & Heat	11,911	23,731	17,078
Postage & Telephone	20,663	11,162	7,060
Rent, Rates & Service Charges	27,004	31,328	16,403
Repairs & Renewals	29,608	34,533	2,972
Bank Interest & Charges	17	165	155
Contribution to Project Expenditure			
Information & Advisory Service	-	-	293,065
Cleaning & Sundry Items	(12,754)	25,636	37,132
Depreciation	3,855	8,641	9,920
	<u>2,546,856</u>	<u>3,297,711</u>	<u>3,438,457</u>
Surplus (deficit) for year	<u>(1,010,707)</u>	<u>(602,781)</u>	<u>40,946</u>

Note 1- Provision re Department of Enterprise, Trade & Innovation Grant

A provision has been made against the 2010 ETAS grant allocation due from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation. This arises due to a misunderstanding regarding the drawdown procedure and is currently under discussion by Congress management with the relevant authorities.

Irish Congress Of Trade Unions Education, Training & Advisory Service
Balance Sheet – Number 2 Account
2008-2010

	2010	2009	2008
	€	€	€
Fixed Assets	7,158	11,014	17,611
Current Assets			
Bank Balances & Cash	-	-	-
Stock of Printing, Publications & Stationery	3,600	3,600	3,600
Debtors & Prepayments	680,028	992,967	1,423,983
	<u>683,628</u>	<u>996,567</u>	<u>1,427,583</u>
Less: Current Liabilities			
Bank Overdraft	807,912	686,184	480,542
Creditors & Accrued Expenses	1,517,930	945,746	986,220
	<u>2,325,842</u>	<u>1,631,930</u>	<u>1,466,762</u>
Net Current Liabilities	(1,642,214)	(635,363)	(39,179)
Net Liabilities	<u>(1,635,056)</u>	<u>(624,349)</u>	<u>(21,568)</u>
Represented by:			
Accumulated Deficit	<u>(1,635,056)</u>	<u>(624,349)</u>	<u>(21,568)</u>

Congress Northern Ireland Committee Training & Advisory Services Account 2008-2010

	2010 £	2009 £	2008 £
Income			
Government Grant Funding	180,000	180,000	180,000
Contributions from TUC & Similar Bodies	31,554	27,832	29,801
Contributions from Congress	361	5,522	799
Other Income	659	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	212,574	213,354	210,600
Expenditure			
Salaries & National Insurance Training Service	68,505	78,551	75,445
Salaries & National Insurance Advisory Service	39,856	39,446	38,117
Pension Fund Contributions Training Service	34,818	31,655	27,845
Shop Steward, Health, Safety & Equality Training	33,207	29,918	46,702
Accreditation Fees	16,831	-	-
Publications, Papers & Magazines	1,490	1,800	4,370
Rent & Rates	8,281	10,200	13,600
Insurance	462	1,200	1,600
Heat & Light	1,272	1,800	2,400
Cleaning	875	2,400	3,200
Stationery	1,426	3,000	4,000
Postage	523	2,400	3,200
Telephone	943	3,000	4,000
Travelling & Subsistence Expenses	2,064	5,337	4,492
Audit & Accountancy	1,939	1,898	1,880
Bank Charges & Interest	82	106	109
Subscriptions	-	643	668
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	212,574	213,354	231,627
Surplus (Deficit) for Year	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
	-	-	(21,027)

Congress Northern Ireland Committee Training & Advisory Services Account 2008-2010

Balance Sheet

	2010 £	2009 £	2008 £
Current Assets			
Debtors	31,708	25,803	13,436
Cash at Bank	44,855	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year	(76,563)	(25,803)	(13,346)
Represented by Accumulated Surplus	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-	-

Appendix 2 - Executive Council, General Purposes Committee, Northern Ireland Committee

The Executive Council held 20 Ordinary meetings and 4 Special meetings (24 in total) between July 2009 and May 2011.

The attendances at these meetings were as follows:

Executive Council:

Name	Ordinary	Special	Total
J O'Connor (President) (SIPTU)	19	4	23
P King (Vice President) (SIPTU)	14	3	17
E McGlone (Vice President) (UNITE)	19	3	22
J O'Flynn (Treasurer) (SIPTU)	11	2	13
L Broderick, (IBOA)	14	3	17
B Campfield (NIPSA)	18	2	20
S Cody (IMPACT)	19	4	23
E Devoy (TEEU)	16	1	17
P Dooley (UNISON)	13	2	15
S Dooley (NUJ)	19	4	23
L Doran (INO)	18	2	20
J Douglas (MANDATE)	17	4	21
S Fitzpatrick (CWU)	18	3	21
E Fleming (LRP)	17	3	20
T Geraghty (PSEU)	18	3	21
N Green (UNITE)	10	2	12
A Hall (TEEU)	14	1	15
¹ B Hayes (SIPTU)	1	1	2
B Horan (CPSU)	18	3	21
² L Huston (CWU UK)	7	0	7
M Jennings (IFUT)	16	3	19
J Kelly (UNITE)	15	3	18
P MacMenamin (TUI)	16	2	18
P McKeown (UNISON)	12	3	15
P McLoone (IMPACT)	18	1	19
J Moore (UCATT)	16	2	18
M Morgan (NIPSA)	13	1	14
M Ní Chuinnegáin (INTO)	16	2	18
S Nunan (INTO)	19	3	22
L O'Donnell (IMPACT)	15	2	17
P O'Shaughnessy (BATU)	13	1	14
³ J Shanahan (UNITE)	11	2	13
A Speed (SIPTU)	20	3	23
L Tanham (MANDATE)	16	3	19
⁴ D Thomas (AHCPS)	3	0	3
C Tracey (INO)	14	2	16
J White (ASTI)	17	3	20

1 B Hayes retired from the Executive Council in January 2010 to take up the position of Deputy Chair of the Labour Court.

2 L Huston replaced B Hayes in February 2010.

3 J Shanahan retired from the Executive Council in December, 2010 to take up the position of Worker Member of the Labour Court.

4 D Thomas replaced J Shanahan in January 2011.

General Purposes Committee:

The General Purposes Committee held 18 Ordinary meetings and 4 Special meetings (22 in total) between July 2009 and May 2011.

Name	Ordinary	Special	Total
J O'Connor (President) (SIPTU)	16	4	20
P King (Vice President) (SIPTU)	15	4	19
E McGlone (Vice President) (UNITE)	16	3	19
J O'Flynn (Treasurer) (SIPTU)	13	2	15
Eamon Devoy (TEEU)	13	3	16
J Douglas (MANDATE)	15	3	18
J Kelly (UNITE)	6	4	10
P McKeown (UNISON)	6	1	7
P McLoone (IMPACT)	17	3	20

Northern Ireland Committee

The Northern Ireland Committee's Biennial Delegate Conference was held in the City Hotel, Derry on 27 and 28 April 2010 and the following were elected as members of the Committee for 2010-2012:

Kieran Smyth (USDAW), P McKeown and P Dooley (UNISON), K McKinney (SIPTU), E McGlone, J Pollock, T Trainor (UNITE), M Morgan and B Campfield (NIPSA), S Searson (NASUWT), Kevin Smyth (INTO), A Hall-Callaghan (UTU), L Huston (CWU), M Langhammer (ATL), G Hanna (IBOA), B Lawn (PCS), E Coy (GMB), E McCann (Derry Trades Council).

At its inaugural meeting in April 2010, Avril Hall-Callaghan was elected Chair and Pamela Dooley as Vice-Chair.

Obituaries

A number of close colleagues of the trade union movement died since BDC 2007, including:

Dominic Murphy, who died 2009. He was a member of the TSSA and a former President of Congress.

Harold O'Sullivan, died in 2009. He was a member of the Local Government and Public Services Union and a former President of Congress.

John Freeman, died in 2011. He was a member of ATGWU and former President of Congress.

Frank O'Reilly, died 2009. He was former General Secretary of ETU/TEEU and member of Congress Executive Council.

Nora Roberts, wife of Ruairi Roberts former General Secretary of Congress, died in 2010.

Elizabeth Mulvey, died in 2011. She was a member of CPSU and Congress Women's Committee Member.

Brendan Conway, who died in 2011. He was a member of the Congress Disability Committee.

Paul Clarke, died in 2011. He was a member of SIPTU, and former member of the Congress Executive Council.

On behalf of the Executive Council Congress wishes to extend its deepest sympathies to the families of those deceased.

Appendix 3 - Affiliated Membership

Unions affiliated to Congress 2011 (Membership figures in respect of 31 December 2010)

RO=	Regional Officer	IS=	Irish Secretary
R=	Republic of Ireland	DS=	District Secretary
NI=	Northern Ireland	NS=	National Secretary
HO=	Head Office	RS=	Regional Secretary
GS=	General Secretary	JGS=	Joint General Secretary
IR=	Irish Representative	NO=	National Officer/ National Organiser
DO=	Divisional Organiser/Officer	HC=	Honorary Chairperson
W=	Women	CEO=	Chief Executive Officer
PO=	Policy Officer	SNO=	Senior Negotiating Officer
NO =	National Organiser	AS=	Area Secretary
SS=	Scottish Secretary		

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
ACCORD	R	0	GS	Ged Nichols Simmons House, 46 Old Bath Road, Charvil, Reading, Berkshire RG109QR, United Kingdom Telephone: 0044 7973 642 592 Fax: 0044 11893 20 208 Ged.Nichols@AccordHQ.org info@AccordHQ.org
	NI	1,500		
	Total	1,500		
	WR	0	RO	Jim Fielding Simmons House, 46 Old Bath Road, Charvil, Reading, Berkshire RG109QR, United Kingdom Telephone: 00447786664119 Jim.Fielding@AccordHQ.org
	WNI	913		
Association of Higher Civil and Public Servants	R	3,450	GS	Dave Thomas Flemings Hall, 12 Flemings Place, Dublin 4 Telephone: 01-6686077 / 6686064 Fax: 01 – 668 6380 dthomas@ahcps.ie info@ahcps.ie
	NI	0		
	Total	3,450		
	W R	1054		
Association of Irish Traditional Musicians	R	165	GS	Pádraig O Ceallaigh 32 Cearnóg Belgrave Square, Monkstown, Co. Dublin Telephone: 01-2800295 Fax: 01 -2803759 eolas@comhaltas.ie
	NI	1		
	Total	166		
	W	62		

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address		
Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland	R NI Total	18,025 0 18,025	GS	Pat King ASTI, Thomas McDonagh House, Winetavern Street, Dublin 8 Telephone: 01-6040160 Fax: 01- 8972760 patk@asti.ie info@asti.ie		
	W R	12,535				
Association of Teachers and Lecturers	R NI Total	0 2140 2140	GS	Mary Bousted, 7 Northumberland St., London WC2N 5RD Telephone: 0044 2079306441 info@atl.org.uk		
	W NI	1512			IR	Mark Langhammer, Unit C2 16 Westbank Drive Business Park, Westbank Drive Belfast BT3 9LA Telephone: 0044 7918 195 070 mlonghammer@atl.org.uk
Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union	R NI Total	0 500 500	GS	Joe Marino Stanborough House, Great North Road, Stanborough, Welwyn Gardens City, Hertfordshire AL8 7TA Telephone: 0044 1707 260 150 Fax: 0044 1707 261 570 joe.marino@bfawu.org		
	W R W NI	0 220			NI	Billie Gallagher, 1st & 2nd floor, 157 Bloomfield Avenue, Belfast BT5 5AB Telephone: 048 90454242 Fax: 048 90451554 Billie.gallagher@bfawu.org
					RO	Martin Hanlon 2 Tower Road, Clondalkin Village, Clondalkin, Dublin 22
Broadcasting Entertainment Cinematography and Theatre Union	R NI Total	44 511 555	GS	Gerry Morrissey 373-377 Clapham Road, London SW9 9BT Telephone: 0044 2073460900 Fax: 0044 1707 261 570 gmorrissey@bectu.org.uk		
	W R W NI	8 181			NO	Dan Cooke, 373-377 Clapham Road, London SW9 9BT Telephone: 0044 2073460900 dcooke@bectu.org.uk
Building and Allied Trades Union	R NI Total W R W NI	4,000 - 4,000 32 -	GS	Paddy O'Shaughnessy Arus Hibernia, 13 Blessington Street Dublin 7 Telephone: 01- 8301911 / 8301280 poshaughnessy@batu.ie		

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
Civil and Public Service Union	R	13,775	GS	Blair Horan CPSU, 19/20 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-6765394/661 Fax: 01 – 676 2918 bhoran@cpsu.ie headoffice@cpsu.ie
	NI	0		
	Total	13,775		
	W R	9,896		
Chartered Society of Physiotherapy	R	0	SNO	Claire Ronald Arthur House, 41 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GB Telephone: 0044 2890 446 247 Fax: 0044 2890 447 110 ronaldc@csp.org.uk
	NI	965		
	Total	965		
	WR	0	PO	Tom Sullivan (CSP Policy Officer for NI) Arthur House, 41 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GB Telephone: 0044 2890 446 249 sullivant@csp.org.uk
WNI	932			
Communications Workers' Union	R	19,550	GS	Stephen Fitzpatrick Aras Ghaibreil, 575 North Circular Road, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-8663000 Fax: 01: 8663099 stevie@cwu.ie sarah@cwu.ie
	NI	0		
	Total	19,550		
	W R	3,920		
Communication Workers Union (UK)	R	0	GS	Billy Hayes CWU, 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1RX Telephone: 0044 2089717200 bhayes@cwu.org
	NI	5,082		
	Total	5,082		
	W NI	1,147	RS	Lawrence C Huston, c/o CWU UK, 27 Knockeen Crescent, Ballymena, Co. Antrim, BT42 4DQ Telephone: 048 256 40679 l.huston@btinternet.com northernirelandregion@cwu.org
EQUITY	R	0	GS	Ms Christine Payne Guild House, Upper St. Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9EG Telephone: 0044 2073796000 Fax: 0044 207 379 7001 info@equity.org.uk
	NI	324		
	Total	324		
	W R	0	NO	Drew McFarlane 114 Union Street, Glasgow, G13QQ Telephone: 00441412482472 Fax: 0044 141 248 2473 dmcfarlane@equity.org.uk northernireland@equity.org.uk
W NI	160			
Electricity Supply Board Officers' Association	R	1,740	GS	Fran O' Neill 43 East James's Place, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-6767444 franoneill@esboa.ie
	NI	0		
	Total	1,740		
	W R	980		

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
Fire Brigades' Union	R NI Total	0 1,711 1,711	GS	Matt Wrack Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey KT2 7AE Telephone: 0044 2085411765 Fax: 0044 208 546 5187 Matt.wrack@fbu.org.uk
	WNI	76	RS	Jim Quinn 14 Bachelors Walk, Lisburn, Co. Antrim BT28 1XJ Telephone: 0044 2892664622 Mobile: 0044 7788700675 Jim.quinn@fbu.org.uk 02rc@fbu.org.uk
First Division Civil Servants (FDA)	R NI Total	0 320 320	GS	Jonathan Baume 8 Leake Street, London SE1 7NN Telephone 0044 845 470 1111 jonathan@fda.org.uk info@fda.org.uk
	WNI	144	SS	Jim Caldwell 104a Titchfield Street Kilmarnock KA1 1PH Scotland Mobile: 00447967126778 jim@fda.org.uk
GMB	R NI Total	65 12,351 12,416	GS	Paul Kenny 22-24 Worple Road, , London SW19 4DD, Telephone: 0044 2089473131 Fax: 0044 208 944 6552 general.secretary@gmb.org.uk info@gmb.org.uk
	WNI	5690	IR	Eamonn Coy Victoria House, 1a Victoria Road, Hollywood BT18 9BA Telephone: 028 9039 3340 Fax: 028 9042 7360 Eamon.coy@gmb.org
Guinness Staff Union	R NI Total	1,309 0 1,309	GS	Sean Mackell 107 James's Street, Dublin 8 Telephone: 01- 643 5484 Fax: 01 - 677 0019 sean.mackell@diageo.com
	W R	518		
Irish Bank Officials' Association	R NI Total	16,002 5226 21,228	GS	Larry Broderick IBOA House, Stephen Street Upper, Dublin 8 Telephone: 01-475 5908 Fax: 01 - 4780567 larry.broderick@iboa.ie
	W R W NI	11,762 3,576		

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
Irish Federation of University Teachers	R NI Total	2,050 0 2,050	GS	Mike Jennings 11 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01- 661 0910 Fax: 01 – 6610909 generalsecretary@ifut.ie admin@ifut.ie
	W R	891		
Irish Medical Organisation	R NI Total	5431 0 5431	GS	George McNeice 10 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01- 676 7273 Fax: 01- 6612758 jhaugh@imo.ie imo@imo.ie
	W R W NI	2246 0		
Irish Municipal, Public and Civil Trade Union	R NI Total	63,566 60 63,626	GS	Shay Cody Nerney's Court, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-817 1500 Fax: 01 -8171501 scody@impact.ie
	W R W NI	44,496 42		
Irish National Teachers' Organisation	R NI Total	31,363 8,001 39,364	GS	Sheila Nunan 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 Telephone: 872 2533 Fax: 01 8722462 snunan@into.ie
	W R W NI	26,839 6,161		
Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation	R NI Total	40,100 0 40,100	GS	Liam Doran The Whitworth Building, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7 Telephone: 01- 6640600 Fax: 01 - 661 0466 liam@inmo.ie inmo@inmo.ie
	W R	39,238		
MANDATE	R NI Total	40,286 0 40,286	GS	John Douglas O'Lehane House, 9 Cavendish Row, Dublin 1 Telephone: 874 6321 Fax: 01-8729581 johndouglas@mandate.ie
	W R	28,200		
Medical Laboratory Scientists Association	R NI Total	1,815 0 1,815	GS	Terry Casey, 4th Floor, Liberty Hall, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01 - 8586472 Fax : 01- 8780085 tcasey@siptu.ie mlsa@siptu.ie
	W R	1,420		

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers	R NI Total	0 12,802 12,802	GS	Chris Keates, Hillscourt Education Centre, Rose Hill, Rednal, Birmingham B458RS Telephone: 0044121 453 6150 chris.keates@mail.nasuwt.org.uk nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk
	W R W NI	0 9,250	IR	Seamus Searson Ben Madigan House, Edgewater Office Park, Edgewater Road, Belfast BT 3 9JQ Telephone: 0044 289 0784480 rc-nireland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk
National Union of Journalists	R NI Total	3,083 850 3,933	GS	Jeremy Dear Head Land House, 308 -312 Gray's Inn Road London WC1X 8DP Telephone: 0044 207 843 3705 generalsecretary@nuj.org.uk info@nuj.org.uk
	W R W NI	1,130 301	IS	Seamus Dooley 2nd Floor, Spencer House, Spencer Row, Off Store Street, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01- 8170340 Fax: 01 – 8170359 seamusd@nuj.ie info@nuj.ie
National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT)	R NI Total	74 99 173	GS	Bob Crow Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD Telephone: 0044 20 7387 4771 Fax: 0044 207387 4123 info@rmt.org.uk b.crow@rmt.org.uk
	W R W NI	9 14	RO	Ian McIntyre 180 Hope Street, Glasgow Lanarkshire, G2 2UE, Scotland Telephone: 0044 141 332 1117 i.macintyre@rmt.org.uk
Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance	R NI Total	0 45,659 45,659	GS	Brian Campfield Harkin House, 54 Wellington Park, Belfast BT9 6DP Telephone: 048 - 9066 1831 Fax: 048 - 9066 5847 Brian.campfield@nipssa.org.uk info@nipssa.org.uk
	W NI	30,739		
Operative Plasterers and Allied Trades Society of Ireland	R NI Total	615 0 615	GS	Billy Wall 72 Shantalla Road, Beaumont, Dublin 9 Telephone: 01- 8625185/8625188 Fax: 01- 8625199 bwall@plastersunion.com
	W R	0		

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
Prison Officers' Association	R	3,328	GS	John Clinton 18 Merrion Square Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-6625495/6768501 Fax: 01 - 6678563 shirleysullivan@poa.ie admin@poa.ie
	NI	0		
	Total	3,328		
	W R	471		
Prison Officers' Association Northern Ireland	NI	1,688	GS	Steve Gillan Cronin House, 245 Church Street, Edmonton, London N9 9HW Telephone: 0044 20 8803 0255 gs@opauk.org general@poauk.org
	Total	1,688		
	WNI	387	AS	June Robinson Castelle House, 116 Ballywalter Road, Millisle, Co Down BT22 2HS Telephone: 048 91861928 adminni@poauk.org.uk
Prospect	R	28	GS	Paul Noon 8 Leake Street London SE1 7NN Telephone: 0044 20 7902 6600 Fax: 0044 2079 026667 paul.noon@prospect.org.uk amy.hong@prospect.org.uk
	NI	1599		
	Total	1627		
	W R	3		
	W NI	297		
Public Service Executive Union	R	12,000	GS	Tom Geraghty 30 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-676 7271 Fax: 01 - 6615777 tgeraghty@pseu.ie info@pseu.ie
	NI	0		
	Total	12,000		
	W R	6,000		
Public and Commercial Services	R	0	GS	Mark Serwotka 160 Falcon Road, London SW11 2LN Telephone: 0044 2079242727 Fax: 0044 2079241847 Mark.serwotka@pcs.org.uk
	NI	2344		
	Total	2344		
	WR	0	IR	Barney Lawn Barney.lawn@hmce.gsi.gov.uk Lynn Henderson – Scottish Secretary Glenorchy House, 20 Union Street, Edinburgh, EH1 3LR, Scotland Telephone: 0131 556 0407 Fax: 0131 557 5613 LYNNH@pcs.org.uk
	WNI	1348		
Services Industrial Professional Technical Union	R	199,881	GS	Joe O'Flynn Liberty Hall, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01- 8586300 Fax: 01 - 8749466 gensec@siptu.ie
	NI	7,000		
	Total	206,881		
	W R	77,580		
	W NI	3,000		

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
Society of Radiographers	R NI Total W NI	0 758 758 689	CEO	Richard Evans 207 Providence Square, Mill Street London SE1 2EW Telephone: 0044 20 7740 7200 Fax: 0044 207740 7204 richarde@sor.org info@sor.org
Teachers' Union of Ireland	R NI Total W R	15,800 0 15,800 6,320	GS	Peter MacMenamin 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6 Telephone: 01 - 4922588 Fax: 01 - 4922953 pmacmenamin@tui.ie tui@tui.ie
Technical, Engineering and Electrical Union	R NI Total W R	39,000 0 39,000 574	GS	Eamon Devoy 6 Gardiner Row, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-8747047 Fax: 01-8747048 eamon_d@teeu.ie info@teeu.ie
Transport Salaried Staffs' Association	R NI Total W R W NI	1123 476 1,599 337 143	GS IR	Gerry Doherty, TSSA Walken House, 10 Melton Street Euston, London SW1 2EJ info@tssa.org.uk Patrick McCusker, Senior Irish Organiser TSSA, Nerney's Court, Off Temple Street, Dublin 1 Telephone: 0876503658 mccuskerp@tssa.org.uk
UNITE	R NI Total W R W NI	31,594 40,496 72,090 10,282 8,160	GS RS	Len McCluskey 128 Theobald's Road Holborn London WC1X 8TN Tel: 020 7611 2500 Fax: 020 7611 2555 Len.Mccluskey@unitetheunion.com Jimmy Kelly 26-34 Antrim Road, Belfast BT15 2AA Telephone: 048 90232381 jimmy.kelly@unitetheunion.com Unite offices in Dublin : UNITE the Union 55-56 Middle Abbey Street , Dublin 1 Telephone: 01 8734577 UNITE the Union 15 Merrion Square Dublin 2 Telephone: 01 661 1063

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
University & College Union	R NI Total	0 4,170 4,170	GS	Sally Hunt Carlow Street, London NW1 7LH Telephone: 0044 207 756 2500 Fax: 0044 207756 2501 shunt@ucu.org.uk
	W NI	2,049	IR	Jim McKeown 94 Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5HP Telephone: 048 90665501 Fax: 048 90669225 jmckeown@ucu.org.uk Belfast@ucu.org.uk
Ulster Teachers' Union	R NI Total	84 6121 6,205	GS	Avril Hall-Callaghan 94 Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5HP Telephone: 048 90662216 Fax: 048 289068 3296 office@utu.edu
	W R W NI	68 5,223		
Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians	R NI Total	8,750 1300 10,050	GS	Alan Ritchie 177 Abbeville Road, Clapham London SW4 9RL Telephone: 0044 207 622 2442 Fax: 0044 207 720 4081 info@ucatt.org.uk
	W R W NI	10 90	NS	Jim Moore 56 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-873 1599 Fax: 01 – 873 1403 info@ucatt.ie
Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers	R NI Total	0 14,557 14,557	GS	John Hannett 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ Telephone: 0044 161 224 2804/249 2400 Fax : 0044 161 257 2566 enquiries@usdaw.org.uk
	W NI	8,324	IR	Kieran Smyth First Floor, Unit 2, 41 Stockmans Way Belfast BT9 7ET Telephone: 048 90663773 Fax: 048 9066 2123 belfast@usdaw.org.uk
UNISON	R NI Total	0 39,100 39,100	GS	Dave Prentis Unison Centre 130 Euston Road London NW1 2AY Telephone: 0044 207 1215301 Fax: 0044 207 1215184 d.prentis@unison.co.uk
	W NI	32,050	IR	Patricia McKeown Galway House 165 York Street Belfast BT15 1AL Telephone: 048 90270190 Fax: 048 903 27929 p.mckeown@unison.co.uk

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
Veterinary Ireland	R NI Total	1,282 0 1,282	CEO	Finbarr Murphy 13 The Court Yard, Kilcarbery Park, Nangor Road, Dublin 22 Telephone: 01-4577976 Fax: 01- 457 7998 hq@vetireland.ie
	W R	334		
Veterinary Officers' Association	R NI Total	310 0 310	President	Ray Finn Fleming's Hall 12 Fleming's Place Dublin 4 Telephone: 01-668 6077/ 668 6064 Mobile: 0868317817 Ray.Finn@agriculture.gov.ie
	W	64		

**Unions with Associate Status affiliated to Congress 2011
(Membership figures in respect of 31 December 2010)**

Name of Union of Union		Number of Members		General Secretary/Address
ASPECT	R NI Total	0 157 157	HO	John Chowcat General Secretary ASPECT Woolley Hall, Woolley Wakefield West Yorkshire WF4 2JR England Telephone 0044 1226383428 Email: john@aspect.org.uk
	W R WNI	0 104		
Community	R NI Total	0 150 150	HO	Michael J Leahy, OBE General Secretary Community 67-68 Long Acre London WC2E 9FA Telephone: 0044 2074204000 Email: mleahy@community-tu.org
	W R WNI	0 75		
National Association of Head Teachers N1 (NAHT)	R NI Total	0 497 497	HO	Fern Turner Director of Union Services & Regional Officer NAHT Carnmoney House Edgewater office Park Belfast BT3 9JQ Telephone: 0044 2890776633 Email: fernt@naht.org.uk
	WR WNI	0 396		

Local Councils Of Trade Unions Affiliated To Congress 2011

Athlone Council of Trade Unions

Denis Rohan
Secretary
IMPACT Trade Union
23/24 Mulvoy Business Park
Mulvoy Road
Galway
Telephone: 091 778030/1
Mobile: 087 6308357
Email: drohan@impact.ie

Ballina and District Council of Trade Unions

Matt Farrell
Chairman
Laughty
Ballina
Co. Mayo
Mobile: 087 261 7167
Email: mattgfarrell@gmail.com

Belfast and District Trades Council

Kevin Doherty
Secretary
c/o ICTU
4-6 Donegall Street Place
BELFAST
BT1 2FN
Telephone: 00442890 247940
Email: Kevin.doherty@ictuni.org

Bray and District Council of Trade Unions

Kieron Connolly
Secretary
c/o Connolly Metcalfe House
7 Marine Terrace
Bray
Co Wicklow
Mobile: 087 234 1555
bray@congresscentres.net

Castlebar and District Trades Council

Cathy Blake
Secretary
13 Cherrington Place
Castlebar
Co. Mayo
Mobile: 0879315289
Email: Catcon26@gmail.com

Clare Council of Trade Unions

Tony Carroll
Secretary
c/o SIPTU
Liberty Hall
Dublin 1
Telephone: 061 – 471981
Email: tcarroll@siptu.ie

Clonmel Trades and Labour Council

Aileen Atcheston
Secretary
15 Bolton Street
Clonmel
Co Tipperary
Telephone: 052 77 010 / 052 21900
No email

Craigavon Trades Council

Mel Corry
Secretary
9 Desmond Ave
Lurgan
Co. Armagh
Telephone: 00447789250353
Email: mel@trademarkbelfast.com

Cork Council of Trade Unions

Sharon Cregan
Hon Secretary
c/o SIPTU
Connolly Hall
Lapps Quay
Cork
Telephone: 021 4277466
Mobile: 087 0511219
Email: scregan@siptu.ie

Derry Trades Union Council

Liam Gallagher
Secretary
35 Marlborough Road
Derry BT48 9BH
Telephone: 0044 28-71261432
Email: liamgallagherdtc@hotmail.co.uk

Drogheda Council of Trade Unions

Frank Gallagher
Secretary
40 New Field
Drogheda
Co. Louth
Mobile: 087 6650885
Email: frankgallagher40@yahoo.co.uk

Dublin Council of Trade Unions

Sam Nolan
Secretary
194 Ballymun Road
Dublin 9
Email: Eric Fleming
efleming@siptu.ie

Dundalk Council of Trade Unions

Frank O'Brien
Secretary
The Old Schoolhouse
Carlingford
Co Louth
Email: lfobrien@iol.ie
Mobile: 087 279 7798

Fermanagh Trades Union Council

Marie Steward
Secretary
114 Windmill Heights
Enniskillen
Co. Fermanagh
Telephone: 0044 28 – 66323938
No email

Galway Council of Trade Unions

Tom Browne
Secretary
c/o Galway City Library
St. Augustine Street, Galway
Mobile: 087 7691439
Emails: tombrowne@ireland.com

Kildare Council of Trade Unions

Larry Lynam
Secretary
Kileen , Narraghmore
Athy
Co Kildare
Telephone: 059 8636586
Email: berla@eircom.net

Killarney Trades Union Council

Tom Murphy
Secretary
c/o Resource Centre
8 College Street
Killarney
Co Kerry
Telephone: 064 6636863/ 0646636876
Email: coordinator.killarney@congresscentres.net

Letterkenny & District Trades Union Council

Anne Wilkinson
Secretary
c/o Congress Resource Centre
Pearse Road
Letterkenny
Co. Donegal
Telephone: 074-9128010
Email: marievslevin@hotmail.com

Limerick Council of Trade Unions

Mr Mike McNamara
President
Mechanics Institute
Hartstonge Street
Limerick
Co. Limerick
Mobile: 0874129789
Email: m.mcnamara@batu.ie

Mid – Ulster Trades Union Council

Mr Harry Hutchinson
Secretary
c/o 64 Ballygrooby Road
Moneymore
Co.Derry BT457XD
Telephone: 0044 7909530232
Harry_hutchinson2004@hotmail.com

Co. Monaghan Trade Union Council

Peter McAleer
Secretary
11 Cherry Park
Clones
Monaghan
Telephone: 047 52041
Email: Petermcaleer05@eircom.net

Newry & District Trades Union Council

Cara Murchan
Secretary
16 Carnmore Drive
Newry
Co Down BT358FB
Telephone: 0044 7894 746940
Email: caramurchan@btinternet.com

North Down and Ards Trades Council

Janette McNulty
Secretary
9 Cranley Gardens
Bangor Co. Down BT19 7EZ
Telephone: 0044 7882831643
Email: janette.mcnulty@deni.gov.uk

Omagh Council of Trade Unions

Anton McCabe
7 Sunningdale
Omagh BT78 1JX
Telephone: 0044 – 7713416234/ 048 82250133
Email: omaghtradescouncil@fastmail.fm

Sligo Council of Trade Unions

Hugh MacConville
Chairman
Carnadough Strand Hill
Co. Sligo
Mobile: 0879564328
Email: hughmacconville@gmail.com

Strabane Area Trade Union Council

Ivan Barr
Secretary
64 Owenreagh Drive
Strabane, BT82 9DT
Mobile: 00447708529888

Tralee Council of Trade Unions

Con Casey
Secretary
Connolly Hall
Upper Rock Street
Tralee
Co. Kerry
Telephone: 066 7171244
Mobile: 087 9728830
Email: ccasey@siptu.ie

Waterford Council of Trade Unions

Marie Butler
Secretary
c/o SIPTU
Connolly Hall
Summerhill
Waterford
Telephone: 051 874773
Mobile: 087 6776806
Email: mbutler@siptu.ie

Wexford Council of Trade Unions

Michael Wall
Secretary
SIPTU Town Parks
Coolcotts Wexford
Telephone: 053 9146774
Email wexcountu@gmail.com

Congress Centres for the Unemployed 2011

Dr. Steven's Resource Centre,
Athlone, Lloyd's Lane, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
Co-ordinator: Bernie Mannion, phone: 090 647 3001,
fax: 090 647 8291
e-mail: coordinator.athlone@congresscentres.net

Athy Resource Centre,
38 Duke Street, Athy, Co. Kildare
Co-ordinator Mary Maguire phone: 059 863 8523,
fax: 059 863 1445
e-mail: coordinator.athy@congresscentres.net

Ballina Centre for the Unemployed ,
Teeling Street, Ballina, Co. Mayo
Co-ordinators Lucy Cunningham and Deirdre Carroll,
phone: 096 70885, fax: 096 71900
e-mails: coordinator.mayo@congresscentres.net
cfuballina@eircom.net

Belfast Resource Centre,
45-47 Donegall Street, Belfast BT1 2FG
Co-ordinator Frank Tipping, phone: 04890 961111,
fax: 04890 961110
e-mail: coordinator.belfast@congresscentres.net

Caherciveen Congress Information Centre,
3 New Street, Caherciveen, Co. Kerry
Co-ordinator Mike Morris, phone: 066 947 2866,
fax: 066 947 2123
e-mail: coordinator.caherciveen@congresscentres.net

Castlebar Centre for the Unemployed,
Chapel Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
Co-ordinators Lucy Cunningham and Deirdre Carroll,
phone: 094 902 2814, fax: 094 902 2814
e-mails: coordinator.mayo@congresscentres.net
cfucastlebar@eircom.net

Congress Information & Opportunity Centre,
Elevation Business Park, Clonraod, Ennis, Co. Clare
Co-ordinator Andrea Lynch phone: 065 684 1009, fax:
065 684 2132
e-mail: coordinator.clare@congresscentres.net

Cork Council of Trade Unions Employment Resource Centre,
13 North Main Street, Cork
Co-ordinator Willie Fitzpatrick phone: 021 427 5876,
fax: 021 427 9661
e-mail: coordinator.cork@congresscentres.net

Drogheda Resource Centre,
7 North Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth
Co-ordinators Jacqui Taaffe and Bernadette Dowd,
phone: 041 983 5754, fax: 041 983 9064
e-mail: coordinator.drogheda@congresscentres.net

Dublin 12 Congress Centre,
155a Drimnagh Road, Drimnagh, Dublin 12
Co-ordinator Margaret Fitzpatrick,
phone: 01 405 9377, fax: 01 405 9198
e-mail: coordinator.dublin12@congresscentres.net

Dundalk People's Centre for Information & Training,
30 Clanbrassil Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth
Co-ordinator John Mathews phone: 042-933 8820,
fax: 042 933 0696
email: coordinator.dundalk@congresscentres.net

The Fingal Centre,
5 Cardiffsbridge Road, Finglas, Dublin 11
Co-ordinator Mary Ryan phone: 01 884 5228,
fax: 01 884 5226
e-mail: coordinator.fingal@congresscentres.net

Galway People's Resource Centre,
Hynes Building, Merchant Road, Galway
Co-ordinator Margaret Cullinane phone: 091 564822,
fax: 091 566758
e-mail: coordinator.galway@congresscentres.net

Noreside Resource Centre,
22 Vicar Street, Kilkenny
Co-ordinator Yvonne Moriarty, phone: 056 776 2146,
fax: 056 776 1580
e-mail: coordinator.kilkenny@congresscentres.net

Killarney Resource & Information Centre,
8 College Street, Killarney, Co. Kerry
Co-ordinator Tom Murphy phone: 064 6636863,
fax: 064 36876
e-mail: coordinator.killarney@congresscentres.net

Leixlip Resource Centre,
Unit 3, Leixlip Shopping Mall, Leixlip, Co. Kildare
Co-ordinator Joan Kenny phone: 01 624 2511,
fax: 01 624 6492
e-mail: coordinator.leixlip@congresscentres.net

Congress Resource Centre Letterkenny,
Celtic Apartments, 8/9 Pearse Road,
Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
Co-ordinator Marie Slevin phone: 074 912 8010,
fax: 074 912 9491
e-mail: coordinator.letterkenny@congresscentres.net

Limerick Resource Centre for the Unemployed,
Unit 6/7 Hunt's Lane, Dominick Street, Limerick
Co-ordinator Padraig Malone phone: 061 416056,
fax: 061 411696
e-mail: coordinator.limerick@congresscentres.net

Employment Development & Information Centre,
Longford, 11a 2 Mastertech Business Park,
Athlone, Longford
Co-ordinator Mary Smith, phone: 043 33 47515,
fax: 043 33 48823
e-mail: coordinator.longford@congresscentres.net

Mullingar Congress Information & Development Centre,
Harbour Court, Friers Mill Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
Co-ordinator Susan Bray phone: 044 9345060,
fax: 044 9345675
e-mail: coordinator.mullingar@congresscentres.net

Newbridge Resource Centre, Lower Eyre Street,
Droichead Nua, Co. Kildare
Co-ordinator Theresa Whelan phone: 045 432763,
fax: 045 433275
e-mail: coordinator.newbridge@congresscentres.net

North Leitrim Resource Centre,
New Line, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim
Co-ordinator Gerry Cornyn phone: 071 985 6029,
fax: 071 985 6185
e-mail: coordinator.northleitrim@congresscentres.net

Congress Employment Information Centre,
Tralee, Milk Market Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry
Co-ordinator Marilyn Bulman, phone: 066 712 7617,
fax: 066 712 7920
e-mail: coordinator.tralee@congresscentres.net

Wicklow Trade Union Centre,
97 (rear) Main Street, Bray, Co. Wicklow
Co-ordinator Patricia Shortt phone: 01 286 6730,
fax: 01 282 9276
e-mail: coordinator.bray@congresscentres.net

Affiliated Membership

Total membership was 797,399 based on membership figures of 31 December, 2010, an increase of 19,449 over 2009.

Total female membership accounted for 410,097. There are 49 unions affiliated to Congress.

Total membership in the Republic of Ireland was 579,688, in 33 unions, an increase of 17,055 on 2009.

Total membership in the Northern Ireland was 217,711 in 29 unions – in decrease in membership of 2,394 over 2009.

Amalgamations

Connect amalgamated with Prospect in 31 December 2009 under the name 'Prospect'.

Amicus Unite and ATGWU Unite affiliated as one union in 31 December, 2009 under the name of 'Unite the Union'.

SMAUI amalgamated with MANDATE in 31 December 2010 under the name of 'MANDATE'.

NUSMWI amalgamated with UCATT from 31 December, 2010 under the name 'UCATT'.

New Affiliations

NAHTE became an Associated Member August, 2010.

Disaffiliations

The Dairy Executives' Association ceased affiliation to Congress in December 2009.

Associate Membership

Three unions have affiliated to Congress as Associate Members as of 31 December, 2010.

The Society of Chiropractors & Podiatrists, the Association for Educational Psychologists and the British Orthoptic Society have not affiliated as Associate Members as of 31 December, 2010.

Appendix 4 - Congress Secretariat

Staff at Congress (as of May 2011)

Head Office, 31/32 Parnell Square, Dublin 1
(Telephone: 01 8897777 Fax: 01 8872012)

Northern Ireland Office, Carlin House,
4-6 Donegall Street Place, Belfast BT1 2FN
(Telephone: 048 90247940)

General Secretary's Department

General Secretary – David Begg

Assistant General Secretaries –
Peter Bunting, Sally Anne Kinahan

General Secretary's Program Manager – Eileen Sweeney

Clerical Officer – Natalie Fox

Finance, Administration & Communications Department

Communications Officer – Macdara Doyle

Communications Assistant/ PA to AGS – Deirdre Keogh

Union Connect & Youth Connect
Project Manager – Fiona Dunne

Finance Officer – Pat Quinn

Accounts Technician – Catherine McLoughlin

Northern Ireland Department

Union Services Officer (Equality and Social Affairs) –
Pauline Buchanan

Union Services Officer (Education & Training) -
Clare Moore

Union Services Officer (Union Learn & Communications) –
John O'Farrell

Project Worker (Union Learn) – Gillian Belch

Project Worker (A Shared Workplace Programme) –
Kevin Doherty

Project Worker (Migrant Workers) – Kasia Garbal

Administrative Manager – Laura Neill

Administrative Officer - Jacqueline McGonagle

Clerical Officer – Eileen Gorman

Policy Department

Development Education/Equality Officer - David Joyce

Chief Economist – Paul Sweeney

Legislative/Social Affairs Officer – Esther Lynch

Disability Champion Project – Jane Clare

Global Solidarity Project - vacant

Union Services Department

Union Services Officer Public Sector - Liam Berney
Union Services Officer – Peter Rigney
Union Services Officer Private Sector - Fergus Whelan
Construction Safety Partnership
Programme Manager – Pat O’Neill
Administrator Union Services/
CSPP Project - Louisa Gavin

Education and Training

Director of Union Learning - Frank Vaughan

Congress Centres for Unemployed

Coordinator - Sylvia Ryan
Administrator - Fiona Elward

Congress Secretariat Changes

A number of staff changes took place during the period 2009-2011 as follows:

Left Congress

Left Congress	Date
Anne Casey	September 2010
Michael Corrigan	August 2010
Seamus Dowling	September 2010
Marian Flynn	April 2011
Tom Gillen	April 2011
Mary Guihan	December 2010
Bill Hallidan	January 2010
Una Herbert	August 2010
Stellan Hermansson	March 2010
Barbara Keogh	April 2011
Denise McBride	September 2010
Hugh McConville	September 2010
Paula McGrath	June 2010
Mary Muldowney	September 2010
Jan Roche	July 2010
Mary Twohig	April 2011

Date

New Appointments

Catherine McLoughlin	Accounts Technician (Temporary)
Pat Quinn	Finance Officer October 2010 ⁶

On behalf of the Executive Council Congress wishes to extend best wishes to those who have left or joined Congress since BDC 2009.

⁶ Previously on service contract.

Appendix 5 - Membership of Congress Committees and External Bodies

Appeals Board

A Dolan (TUI), D Keatings (UNISON), G Light (MANDATE), C Martin (UNITE), P Ward (SIPTU), A Hall (Sub) (TEEU), B Lawn (Sub) (PCS), L Polin (Sub) (FDA)

Culture and Arts Committee (Northern Ireland)

A Ley (UNITE), B Miller (UNITE), C Ozdemir (GMB), D McFarlane (EQUITY), D Campbell (GMB), F Brown (NASUWT), G Garrett (UTU), J Lilley (NIPSA), R McKinney (Belfast & District Trades Council), S McKeever (EQUITY), J Swallow (UNISON), S Farrelly (PCS).

Disability Committee (Northern Ireland)

B Crawford (NIPSA), J Foster (Belfast & District Trades Council), A Madden, (INTO), B Rushton (UCU), B McCrea (UNITE), M Trimble (UNISON), R Murray (UNISON), M Goligher (UCU), R Adams (ATL), S McKee (UTU), H McGowan (Belfast & District Trades Council), J Coghlan (NUJ), M Cotton (IBOA), F Brown (NASUWT), F Warwick (IBOA), J Donley (GMB), M O'Neill (CWU), M Holmes (UTU), S Gribben (CWU), M Scullion (GMB), S Foster (Belfast & District Trades Council), G Matthews (PCS), N Boyle (UCU), S Larkin (PCS).

Disability Committee (Republic of Ireland)

M Naughton (Disability Federation of Ireland), J McDonald (Sligo Council of Trade Unions), M Lavin (PSEU), B Hannigan (PSEU), S O'Murchu (ASTI), M Mulcahy (ASTI), G Monaghan (IMPACT), P Fallon (IMPACT), C Scheffer (CWU), P Kenny (CWU), T Cregan (SIPTU), M Gogarty (SIPTU), F Jones (SIPTU), D O'Connor (INTO), M Masterson (INTO), S Dooley (NUJ), J Kelleher (AHC PS), I Firth (UNITE), M Brannigan (UNITE), I Breen (IBOA), F Warwick (IBOA), B McCrea (UNITE), J O'Sullivan (UNITE), D Gallagher (UNITE), K Gaughran (CPSU), J Roe (CPSU), B Perry (ESBOA), J Thomas (Wexford Council of Trade Unions), P Loftus (Wexford Council of Trade Unions), A Dolan (TUI), E McElligott (TUI)

Education Trade Union Group (Northern Ireland)

A Carr (UCU), A Perry (GMB), A Donaghy (ATL), A Hall-Callaghan (UTU), B Ferguson (UNISON), B Lyttle (NASUWT), D Limb (UCU), E Coy (GMB), F Turner (NAHT), G Kelly (UNITE), G Murphy (INTO), J McKeown (UCU), J McAnulty (INTO), K Sims (NASUWT), K McAdam (UNITE), K McKinney (SIPTU), K Smyth (INTO), L Kerr (UNISON), M Kiddle (UCATT), P Mackel (NIPSA), P Corry (NAHT), R Clifford (NIPSA), S Searson (NASUWT), T Lavery (ATL).

Global Solidarity Committee (Republic of Ireland)

D Bonass (DCTU), T Dowling (TEEU), J Kelly (TEEU), M Leydon (ASTI), A Piggot (ASTI), A Dunne (INTO), D O'Donoghue (INTO), S Cody (IMPACT), B Harbor (IMPACT), P Wall (IFUT), M Killeavy (IFUT), A Atcheson (Clonmel TLC), M Rowe (Wexford CTU), M Roche (Wexford CTU), K Gaughran (CPSU), B Forbes (Mandate), D Miskell (Mandate), M Dowling (SIPTU), J Bowen (Cork CTU), T Erbsloh (Waterford CTU), B Archbold (UNITE), C McKinney (CPSU), A Speed (SIPTU), M Hegarty (TUI), P Healy (TUI), E Quinn (PSEU), P McCrea (PSEU), B Scanlon (INO), J O'Brien (UNITE)

Health & Safety Committee (Northern Ireland)

J Reid (UTU), J Saulters (TSSA), L Brennan (UNITE), A McCay (NASUWT), B Martin (UNISON), C Glenn (INTO), G Alexander (NIPSA), G Kilcoyne (CWU), S Larkin (PCS), J Thompson (UNITE), J Magee (INTO), J Orr (UTU), L Ross (IBOA), P Archer (UCATT), R Rafferty (UNISON), R Adams (ATL), R Thompson (IBOA), S Doherty (CWU), S Lewis (TSSA), R Young (Belfast & District Trades Council)

Health & Safety Committee (Republic of Ireland)

F Barry (UNITE); B Carty (IMPACT); S Cronin (SIPTU College); E Devoy (TEEU); M Dowling (SIPTU); K Gaughran (CPSU); G Maybury (PSEU); M McKillen (IFUT); D Robinson (IMPACT); C Samuels (INO); K Varley (IBOA); M Malone (BATU); P Kenny (CWU); P Ward (SIPTU); P King (ASTI); R Cahill (UNITE); S Tweed (IBOA); T Delaney (POA)

Health Services Committee (Northern Ireland)

B Ferguson (UNISON), B Graham (NIPSA), E McGlone (UNITE), K McAdam (UNITE), K McKinney (SIPTU), M Kiddle (UCATT), M Mulholland (GMB), T Sullivan (CSP).

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Committee (Northern Ireland)

B O'Dochartaigh (INTO), B Fitzpatrick (UNISON), D G Halliday (PCS), F Carolan (UNISON), G Lee (PCS), J Reid (UTU), J Meek (UNITE) M McCafferty (NASUWT), M Hamilton (NIPSA), P Ambrus (NIPSA), S McCarron (INTO).

Private Sector Industrial Committee

L Broderick (IBOA), B Byrne (UNITE), W Cullen (UNITE), T Delaney (CWU), E Devoy (TEEU), S Dooley (NUJ), J Douglas (MANDATE), A Hall (TEEU), J Kelly (UNITE), J King (SIPTU), P King (SIPTU), S Mackell (GSU), G McCormack (SIPTU), J O'Connor (SIPTU), O Reidy (SIPTU), C Rowland (SIPTU), A Speed (SIPTU), M Staunton (IMPACT), L Tanham (MANDATE)

Public Services Committee

Terence Casey (MSLA), John Clinton (POA), Shay Cody (IMPACT), Walter Cullen (UNITE), Liam Doran (INMO), Ray Finn (VOA), Tom Geraghty (PSEU), Blair Horan (CPSU), Mike Jennings (IFUT), Pat King (ASTI), Peter MacMenamin (TUI), George McNiece (IMO), Gene Mealy (SIPTU), Sheila Nunan (INTO), Dave Thomas (AHCPs)

Retired Workers Committee (Northern Ireland)

M Galloway (PCS), R Gray (NASUWT), E Harvey (UNITE), M McColgan (NIPSA), J Hanna (GMB), J Hughes (FBU), S Dodds (NIPSA), R Atkinson (UTU), V Murphy (UNISON), M Holmes (GMB), G Cassidy (UNITE), F Hughes (PCS), J Martin (CWU), J Clarke (CWU), H Rafferty (UNITE), L McConnell (NUJ), S Caul (CSPA), M Ferris (UNISON).

Retired Workers Committee (Republic of Ireland)

P Donegan (SIPTU), M Doyle (ASTI), N Fitzpatrick (MANDATE), C Hammond (CPSU), B Harnett (UNITE), J Keegan (GSU), C Kerrigan (UNITE), E MacCurtain-Pearse (NUJ), M O'Halloran (SIPTU), T Quigley (AHCPs), C Ryan (AHCPs), J Roche (UNITE), D Griffin (UNITE), L O'Flaherty (ASTI), JJ Higgins (CWU), B Keelty (IBOA), D Sheridan (IBOA), C O'Clearigh (IFUT), M Duffy (IMPACT), G Walsh (IMPACT), J Nealon (IMPACT), M Gilligen (INMO),

M McCann (INMO), H Kirkpatrick (INMO), F Farrell (MANDATE), J Coulton (MANDATE), C Percival (NUJ), B Doyle (OPATSI), C Ó'Donnchu (PSEU), A Gilligan (SIPTU), J Browne (SIPTU), T Dowling (TEEU), T Richardson (TSSA), F McCarthy (TUI), C Conville (TUI), R Hatton (TUI).

Strategic Implementation Committee

A Dolan (TUI), M Mulcahy (ASTI), C Bond (BECTU), M Geoghegan (IBOA), S Searson (NASUWT), J Caldwell (FDA), J Quinn (FBU), C Treacy (INMO), S Browne (ESBOA), L Huston (CWU), J Boushell (SIPTU), P Dooley (UNISON), J Reid (UTU), P Keating (IMPACT), D O'Connor (Disability Committee), R Donaghy (Women's Committee), R Higgins (Youth Committee), M Malone (BATU), T Dwyer (CPSU), P Buchanan (ICTUNI), S McKee (UTU), B Hannigan (PSEU), C Scheffer (CWU), K McCorry (UNITE), T Trainor (UNITE), N Ward (INTO), C Rohan, (AHCPs), E Healy (INMO).

Trade Union Education & Training Advisory Committee (Northern Ireland)

G Sachno (UNITE), A Jones (GMB), A Donaghy (ATL), L Rowan-O'Neill (FBU), M Leacock (NIPSA), M Kiddle (UCATT), B McAnoy (UCU), M McSherry (PCS), W Carville (NASUWT), C Friel (UNISON), K Smyth (USDaw), N Boyle (UCU), L Scott (UTU), M Houston (UTU).

Women's Committee (Northern Ireland)

P Dooley (UNISON), G Alexander (NIPSA), M Morgan (NIPSA), T Graham (NASUWT), E Captain (Belfast & District Trades Council), T Devenney (ATL), T Trainor (UNITE), F Stanley (FDA), M McKee (UNISON), R McCay (NASUWT), J Reid (UTU), A Donnelly (Derry Trades Council), G McGowan (INTO), D Kirby (NUJ), A Stewart (UTU), T Cregan (SIPTU), F Doherty (SIPTU), M Morton (Belfast & District Trades Council), K Thompson (GMB), M Gregg (GMB), S Fitzpatrick (CWU), V Holding (CWU), G Kelly (UNITE), M Goligher (UCU), P Collins (UCU), C Crozier (INTO), K Taylor (PCS), G Matthews (PCS).

Women's Committee (Republic of Ireland)

A Atcheson (Clonmel TLC), M Brady (SIPTU), M Brannigan (UNITE), M Browne (IBOA), S Browne (ESBOA), J Byrne (CPSU), S Casey (CWU), M Cox (TUI), C Curraoin (SIPTU), C Degrave-Kane (MANDATE), A Dolan (TUI), C Treacy (INMO), R Donaghy (Dublin CTU), T Dwyer (CPSU), J Gaffney (MANDATE), M Geoghegan (IBOA), E Gorman (Kildare CTU), Y Harvey (UNITE), C Henegan (ASTI), H Long (PSEU), M Mulcahy (ASTI), B Murray (GSU), C O'Brien (UNITE), K O'Loughlin (Limerick)

CTU), M O'Reilly (UNITE), B Perry (ESBOA), C Scheffer (CWU), M Sexton (IBOA), H Sheridan (VOA), D Smith (GSU), P Tobin (PSEU), K Wrigley (VOA), A Hazik (TEEU), J Irani (TEEU).

Youth Committee (Northern Ireland)

K McCann (IBOA), K Fleck (Belfast & District Trades Council), A Dickey (ATL), C McGeough (NIPSA), M Hamilton (NIPSA), S Carey (NIPSA), D Topping (NIPSA), R Wilson (NIPSA), G Carroll (Belfast & District Trades Council), C Murphy (UCATT), D Lyons (NUJ), R Creaney (Craigavon Trades Council), P Mackel (CWU), C Devenney (GMB), H McAnulty (UNITE).

Youth Committee (Republic of Ireland)

M Anderson (INTO), K Byrne (SIPTU), S Byrne (SIPTU), F Elward (SIPTU), B Furey (IMPACT), T Guilfoyle (TEEU), C Hanna (UNITE), S Kelly (TEEU), G Keogh (SIPTU), D Lyons (UNITE), R McNamara (MANDATE), L Mulligan (SIPTU), P Mulville (SIPTU), J O'Donnell (GSU), K Reilly (MANDATE), D Stanford (UNITE), B Kelly (UNITE), C Browne (IMPACT), C Doherty (UNITE), G Murphy (IBOA), K Grimes (OPATSI), M Sherlock (SIPTU), M Wynne (INMO), N Ward (UNITE), N McCarthy (UNITE), O Carroll (CPAU), PJ Niton (UNITE), R O'Donnell (UNITE), S McGearty (CPSU), J Clare (SIPTU)

BODIES ON WHICH CONGRESS IS REPRESENTED - REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Industrial Relations

Civil Service Arbitration Board
Courts Services Board
Employment Appeals Tribunal
Labour Court
Labour Court Users Council
Labour Relations Commission
Personal Injuries Assessment Board
Private Security Authority
Redundancy Panel

Economic Affairs

County and City Development Boards
County Enterprise Boards
EU Structural Funds – Monitoring Committees
Harbour Boards
Hidden Economy Working Group
Local Government Strategic Policy Committees
Monitoring Committees for Community Employment Programme

National Development Finance Agency
National Competitiveness Council
National Economic & Social Council
National Statistics Board
Pobal

Education and Training

Expert Group on Future Skills
FAS (various committees)
Further Education Training Awards Council
FETAC Standards Advisory Board
Governing Authority of National University of Ireland
Governing Bodies of Institutes of Technology
Governing Bodies of Universities
Higher Education Training Awards Council
Irish University Quality Board
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
National Qualifications Authority of Ireland
NCI Human Resources and Industrial Relations Advisory Group
Qualifax
Quality Assurance Group Education Sector
Skillnets
Teaching Council

Safety, Health & Welfare

Health and Safety Authority
National Irish Safety Organisation
Railway Safety Advisory Council

Social Affairs

Dublin Employment Pact
Equal Opportunities Framework Committee
Equality & Rights Alliance
Global Campaign for Education for All
Irish Child Labour Taskforce
National Disability Authority
National Pensions Board
Social Welfare Tribunal
Equality Authority
National Women's Strategy Monitoring Group
Workplace Diversity Committee; Consultative Forum on Comprehensive Employment Strategy for people with Disabilities
National Childcare Coordinating Committee
Equality Tribunal Users Forum
Fairtrade Mark Ireland
Universal Periodic Review Stakeholders Group

Other Bodies

Abbey Theatre
Company Law Review Group
Construction Workers Benevolent Fund & Construction Workers Health Trust
Dublin City Council Fire Brigade Development Board
Dublin Transportation Office Advisory Committee
Fair Trade Mark Ireland
For Diversity Against Discrimination
Forest Certification Stakeholder Consultation Group
Irish Auditing & Accounting Supervisory Authority
Justice for Colombia
Law Society's Complaints and Client Relations Committee
National Roads Authority
Personal Injuries Assessment Board
The Public Transport Accessibility Committee

NORTHERN IRELAND

Industrial Relations

Fair Employment Tribunals
Health & Safety Executive
Industrial Court
Industrial Tribunals
Labour Relations Agency
LRA Arbitration Panels
Staff Commission for Education & Library Boards

Economic and Social

Economic Development Forum
Peace III Cluster Groups
Economic Research Institute for Northern Ireland
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Statistics Advisory Committee

Education and Training

Essential Skills Taskforce

EU Structural Fund Monitoring Committees

EQUAL
PEACE III Monitoring Committee
NI Competitiveness and Employment EU Structural Funds Programme

OTHER BODIES

Bar Council Professional Conduct Committee
Basic Skills Committee
Trademark
District Policing Partnerships
Equality Commission
Intertrade Ireland
National Transport Authority
Northern Ireland Local Government Superannuation Committee
Social Economy Agency

International Bodies

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
CEDEFOP
EU Advisory Committee on Vocational Training
EU Advisory Committee on Freedom of Workers
EU Advisory Committee on Health & Safety at Work
EU Advisory Committee of Social Security Systems
EU Advisory Committee on Social Security for Migrant Workers
EU Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene
EU Advisory Committee on Vocational Training
EU Economic and Social Committee
EU Social Fund Advisory Committee
EU Social Security for Migrant Workers
EU Standing Committee on Employment
European Agency for Safety and Health at Work
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
European Social Fund Advisory Committee
European Trade Union Confederation, (ETUC)
ETUC various committees
European Institute for Gender Equality
European Trade Union Institute
International Labour Office
International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
Trade Union Advisory Committee, OECD

Appendix 6 - Action On Motions To Bdc 2009

1. Pensions (Executive Council)

In the Congress submission in advance of publication and in response to Governments Pension Framework March 2010, we argued for a mandatory pension scheme located within the public sector.

2. Pensions Protection Fund (Guinness Staff Union)

Congress continued to demand a Pension Protection Fund. The decision by Government to initiate the Pension Insolvency Payments Scheme would have been a step in the right direction had its scope been more widely applicable.

3. Pensions (Unite)

Congress continued to demand a Pension Protection Fund. The decision by Government to initiate the Pension Insolvency Payments Scheme would have been a step in the right direction had its scope been more widely applicable.

4. The Economy (Executive Council)

Congress pursued the employment objective relentlessly with our *Union Post* publications, *Budget Submissions* in 2010 (Nov 2009) and 2011 (Nov 2010), in our *10 Point Plan* (Nov 2009) in our paper "*General Election 2011: A Better, Fairer Way to Recovery*" (February 2011), speeches eg David Begg to TASC economic conference in Oct 2010, our *Protecting & Creating Jobs*, May Day 2010 and more.

5. Moratorium on Evictions/House Repossessions from Family Homes (Technical, Engineering & Electrical Union)

The protection of family homes is a central aim of the Better Fairer Way Campaign. During the period under review Congress held a number of meetings with FLAC and other organisations working to protect ordinary people from losing their family homes. Congress met with the Expert Group on Mortgage Arrears and made a submission outlining proposals for an Office Of Indebtedness to provide a non judicial debt settlement option that would enable the over-indebted person to

come to an arrangement with his or her creditors to repay as much of their debts as possible over a specific time period whilst retaining a reasonable minimum income and their home.

We also highlighted the need to protect debtors and their families from undue demands and harassment by their creditors in particular in the workplace.

6. Taxation (Association of Higher Civil & Public Servants)

Congress sought greater taxation equity in various publications but especially our Budget Submission in 2010 (Nov 2009) and publication "*Areas where tax end and should be raised*" where fiduciary taxes were raised specifically and Budget Submission 2011 (Nov 2010).

7. Restoring Public Finances (Public Services Executive Union)

Our Ten Point Plan did capture public attention. Based on equity and fairness, it stood the test of time and with other Congress publications, speeches etc., we made a strong case for a longer period of adjustment, the transfer of Pension Fund money into job creation etc. Regrettably, the previous Government implemented a Blitzkrieg (Front-loading) on the economy, sucking demand out of domestic demand, with little regard to equity.

8. Manufacturing in the Economy (Unite)

In response to the crisis, Congress argued that the best way to address it was through some form of a Social Solidarity understanding. This view was rejected in favour of the pursuit of the tried and failed liberal economic polices which are, of course, not working. Significantly, Congress was invited and made a presentation to the Regling-Watson Investigation into the Causes of the Banking Crisis and we set out our polices in great detail showing how, if our policies in the noughties had been followed by Government, the crisis would have been greatly reduced. (published on May 2010 on our website).

9. Capitalism in Crisis (Rail, Maritime & Transport Union)

Through the Congress' Ten Point Plan and other Congress publications, speeches etc., we made a strong case for a longer period of adjustment, on banking etc and the transfer of Pension fund money into job creation, our *Protecting & Creating Jobs*, May Day 2010 and more.

10. Financial Services (Irish Bank Officials Association)

Congress sought not just a radical reform of banking but of the basis of Irish capitalism shareholder value to be replaced by stakeholder interests, after the crash of 2008. Congress rejected the whole emphasise on public sector reform when the kernel to the crisis was the necessity for private sector reform, especially around, of its deeply flawed system of corporate governance.

11. Tax Base (Public Services Executive Union)

In the noughties Congress had argued against the level of cuts in direct taxes on income and profits, and in favour of reduction in spending taxes to reduce inflation which was running at twice the EU level. We were ignored and it was this regressive restructuring of the taxation system which led to the collapse in tax revenue.

12. Anti-Worker & Anti-Public Sector Agenda (Civil Public & Services Union)

As part of the Congress response to the economic crisis in the Republic of Ireland we continue to run a campaign seeking support for the Congress alternative approach to the problems in the economy. The Congress 10 Point Plan includes a strong commitment to protecting and improving public services. As part of this campaign Congress organised two hugely successful national days of protest in February 2009 and November 2010.

13. Regulatory Impact Analysis (Communications Workers' Union)

Congress continued to work for a better and more balanced approach to economic regulation. Congress is represented on the High Level Group on Business Regulation. As part of the work of the Group, Congress sought an improved form of Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and its wider use in framing regulations. New guidelines for the use of Regulatory Impact Assessment were published by the Department of An Taoiseach and Congress will continue to monitor their impact.

14. Ethics, Standards & Regulations Governing the Market (Kildare Council of Trade Unions/ Transport Salaried Staff Association)

Congress continued to work for a better and more balanced approach to ethics, standards and regulations governing the market. Congress is represented on the High Level Group on Business Regulation and continues to pursue this motion through this group.

15. Opening Postal Markets to Free Competition (Communication Workers' Union)

The European Union Directive (2008/6/EC) requires the opening up of postal services to competition. While the Irish Government is required to transpose the Directive into Irish law they can do so while protecting postal services and the Universal Service Obligation by ensuring a viable An Post and protecting standards of employment in the sector. Congress publically supported the 'Protect Your Post' campaign of the unions in the sector for a balanced approach to the transposition of the Directive. At the time of writing this report the proposed legislation to transpose the Directive fell with the dissolution of the Dáil. Congress and the unions in the postal sector will continue the campaign following the election of a new Government.

16. Election of Local Reserved Panel {Constitutional Amendment} (Galway Council of Trade Unions)

This motion was defeated.

17. Representation of Young Workers (Executive Council)

The Commission on Trade Unions which was established by Congress is considering the issues raised in this motion.

18. Allocation of Resources (Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance)

The Commission on Trade Unions which was established by Congress is considering the issues raised in this motion.

19. Commission to Review Trade Union Membership in Ireland (Services Industrial Professional Technical Union)

Following the 2009 BDC the Executive Council agreed Terms of Reference to guide the work of the Trade Union Commission. The membership of the Commission was also agreed by the Congress Executive. The members of the Commission are David Begg, Jack O Connor, Peter McLoone, Eugene McGlone, Patricia McKeown and Avril Hall O Callaghan. Liam Berney acts as the Secretary to the Commission. The Executive was keen to have an external Chair for the Commission and Phillip Jennings and Phillip Bowyer from UNI Global Union agreed to act as Chair. The Commission has engaged extensively with unions and other groups and will present its interim report to the BDC.

20. Black Workers' Conference (Communications Workers' Union, UK)

This motion was remitted. Congress successfully pursued resources from the Office of the Minister for Integration via the Equality Authority to support trade unions taking initiatives in relation to Migrant Workers. We have also facilitated a survey of trade union action in this area and are planning to highlight trade union activity and publish a strategy for the integration of workers with a minority ethnic background into trade unions at an event in May 2011. (More at <http://www.ictu.ie/equality/race.html>).

21. Representation of Retired Workers from ROI & NI at BDC (Fermanagh Trades Council)

Following consultation with both the Retired Workers' Groups, the content of this motion will be operational as and from BDC2011.

22. Political Awareness of Trade Unionists (Services Industrial Professional Technical Union)

While this motion is addressed to affiliates it is a fact that the campaigning and advocacy work of Congress over the last several years has had to focus on issues which are political in a straightforward way. The approach of the two main centre right parties to fiscal consolidation is in direct conflict with Congress whereas the Labour Party campaigned in the General Election on a similar platform. In addition the attacks on the public service are very clearly politically motivated. Congress took a very clear position on the issues facing the electorate in the General Election. On the day the election was called the President and General Secretary jointly issued a statement which is contained elsewhere in this report.

23. Observer Seat on Executive Council for Youth Committee (Limerick Council of Trade Unions)

Ruled Out of Order.

24. Building Union Strength (Civil Public & Services Union)

Congress, through the Union Connect service, now provides an opportunity for workers to contact the trade union movement, avail of advisory support and join a union through a central contact point both online and by telephone. The service was actively promoted through various campaigns in the last two years including the mailing sent to all households, the advertisements taken out for the Better, Fairer Way campaign, in print and online, and most recently, as part of the Fair Wage campaign to protect the national minimum wage. Due to financial constraints it was not possible to roll-out a national promotional campaign but the service is capable of being scaled-up as necessary to accommodate any a more proactive approach. A parallel project undertaken in conjunction with Professor John Geary at UCD, has set out to establish best practice in relation to organising activity and to clarify the role that Congress might play in supporting the organising agenda. This is important as it will establish the basis for collaboration among unions to support activity to access and recruit vulnerable workers.

The collective bargaining agenda and the pursuit of improved rights has been a central part of the Better, Fairer Way campaign since BDC2009.

25. Establishment of Forum of Social, Political, Community & Cultural Groups (Dublin Council of Trade Unions)

Congress, in collaboration with a number of other stakeholder organisations, was a founding member of the Claiming Our Future movement, which was established as a collaborative effort to give voice to citizens concerns in relation to the multi-part crises and the policy approaches adopted by government. Claiming Our Future was responsible for the organisation of the extremely successful forum at the RDS in October 2010, the success of which was due to the excellent participation of civil society in particular, representatives of the trade union movement. Subsequent events have been organised by COF to progress its agenda, fully supported by Congress.

26. Equality (GMB)

Congress continues to work on a broad equality agenda by seeking to influence European and national policy, supporting trade unions and working to improve the representation of underrepresented groups in our structures. Since BDC 2009 this has included: a strong equality component of the Better Fairer Way campaign and meeting with the Minister with responsibility for Equality on a broad range of Equality issues; submissions to the review of the National Women's Strategy and the preparation and dissemination of equality policy issues for General Election 2011. Participation in European social dialogue on parental leave; participation in National Women's Strategy Sub-committee and ETUC project on promoting women to leadership positions; publication of workplace guidelines on domestic violence; active participants in ETUC project on extending equality to LGBT people in trade unions.

27. Pay Gap (Irish Bank Officials Association)

The last pay increases agreed with Government and employers in the Review and Transitional Agreement *Towards 2016* was weighted in favour of the lower paid

28. Equality (Irish Bank Officials Association)

Congress continues to work on a broad equality agenda by seeking to influence European and national policy, supporting trade unions and working to improve the representation of underrepresented groups in our structures. Since BDC 2009 this has included: a strong equality component of the Better Fairer Way campaign and meeting with the Minister with responsibility for Equality on a broad range of Equality issues; submissions to the review of the National Women's Strategy and the preparation and dissemination of equality policy issues for General Election 2011. Participation in European social dialogue on parental leave; participation in National Women's Strategy Sub-committee and ETUC project on promoting women to leadership positions ; publication of workplace guidelines on domestic violence; active participants in ETUC project on extending equality to LGBT people in trade unions. (More at <http://www.ictu.ie/equality/>).

29. Quality of Life of Older People (Executive Council)

The opportunity to influence policy development through the social partnership process was removed during 2009. However, the Better, Fairer Way campaign embraced the provision of high-quality public services as one of the five planks of its campaigning agenda since the collapse of social partnership.

30. Women's Right to Choose (Belfast & District Trades Council)

The NIC-ICTU has taken a position that the 1967 Abortion Act should be implemented fully in NI. Congress has also taken a position to support the logic of the December 2010 ECHR decision and has called for the Government to legislate on that basis. Noting the absence of a comprehensive trade union policy on reproductive rights, and the responsibility upon us to reach agreement on such a policy, Congress has also proposed to facilitate discussion and resolution on the key issues. A special informative seminar with expert input/advice on reproductive rights is to be agreed by the GPC pre BDC 2011. This will be followed by the development of a policy in consultation with the joint Congress Women's Committee and presented to the Executive Council for formal and final approval in Autumn 2011.

31. Rights of People with Disabilities (Executive Council)

Congress has included this demand in our work at national policy level.

32. Equal Opportunities for Same Sex Couples (National Association of Schoolmasters & Union of Women Teachers/National Union of Journalists/Irish Nurses Organisation)

Congress has included this in our national policy agenda and has helped to promote the Marriage Equality Campaign.

33. Northern Ireland (Association of Higher Civil & Public Servants)

The building of a stable peaceful Northern Ireland is centre stage to all aspects of Congress work in Northern Ireland. Congress is of the belief that crucial to that work is the implementation of a Bill of Rights which we continue to pursue.

34. Arts in Recession (Equity)

Congress, along with the affiliates in this sector, have met the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to whom they presented a submission on the funding issue.

35. Engagement with Excluded Sections of Society (Belfast & District Trades Council)

Congress throughout the Island has engaged with many Civil Society Groups and all political parties on building a coalition against austerity measures being implemented by both Governments which place a greater burden on those least able to pay for a financial crisis not of their making.

36. Economic Recession and the Need for Fundamental Rights (Unison)

Congress has pursued the full implementation of the Bill of Rights and the Charter of Rights across the Island by hosting a number of events, responding to public consultations and lobbying respective political representatives and active participation in campaigns.

37. Debate on the Future of Electricity Generation in Ireland (Cork Council of Trade Unions)

Congress continued to campaign for the development of a coherent, integrated and sustainable plan to meet the demand for energy on the island of Ireland. As part of this campaign we participated in the consultation on the positioning of electricity transmission infrastructure. We continue to assist the unions in Bord Gáis in discussions concerning the transposition of the third energy directive. In November 2009 we also published a policy paper identifying the potential for “green jobs” in the economy and contribution the energy sector could make to creating new employment opportunities.

38. Building a New Society through World Class Services (Unison)

As part of the Congress response to the economic crisis in the Republic of Ireland we continue to run a campaign seeking support for the Congress alternative approach to the problems in the economy. The Congress 10 Point Plan includes a strong commitment to protecting and improving public services. As part of this campaign Congress organised two hugely successful national days of protest in February 2009 and November 2010. The policies of the newly elected Government in Britain meant that Public Services in Northern Ireland would be subject to extensive cuts. The Northern Ireland Committee organised a series of public demonstrations and a series of cross party meetings with Ministerial involvement to promote the retention of effective public services. At the time of writing this report the Northern Ireland Committee were co-operating with the TUC, STUC and WTUC on a series of actions to be taken later in 2011.

39. Media Control & Ownership (National Union of Journalists)

Following the BDC in 2009 the Executive Council established a Communications Group. While the primary work of the group is to develop an effective campaigning strategy for Congress it is also concerned with promoting balanced reporting and fair media coverage. The Commission on the Trade Union Movement which was also established following the 2009 BDC is also considering some of the matters referred to in this motion.

40. Film & Television Production (Equity)

The Congress North South Group is currently in the process of identifying sectors of the economies North and South that could benefit if their development was approached on an all island basis. A strategy for the development of film and television production is been considered in this context.

41. Provision of Public Health Services (Irish Medical Organisation)

This point was strongly made in our Budget submissions and in other fora.

42. PPP/PFI (Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance)

Congress continued to campaign for the provision of public services by public sector workers. In 2008 and 2009 Congress saw a considerable decline in the use of PPP's in the Republic of Ireland with the cancellation of some high profile projects including housing redevelopment projects in Dublin and Thornton Hall Prison. In Northern Ireland the use of PFI procurement method has all but ceased for affordability and cost reasons. Both jurisdictions appear to have withdrawn from any policies on future PPP/PFI contracts.

43. Creating an Inclusive, Equal & Fair Society (Irish Nurses Organisation)

As part of the Congress response to the economic crisis in the Republic of Ireland we continue to run a campaign seeking support for the Congress alternative approach to the problems in the economy. The Congress 10 Point Plan includes a strong commitment to protecting and improving public services including vital health services. Congress continues to argue for the establishment of a system of universal health insurance with access to health

services based on need and not on ability to pay. In this regard Congress welcomes the failure of the Minister of Health and Children to make progress on her “trophy project” of co-located private hospitals.

44. Protecting Public Services (Irish Municipal Public & Civil Trade Union)

As part of the Congress response to the economic crisis in the Republic of Ireland we continue to run a campaign seeking support for the Congress alternative approach to the problems in the economy. The Congress 10 Point Plan includes a strong commitment to protecting and improving public services. As part of this campaign Congress organised two hugely successful national days of protest in February 2009 and November 2010. In 2010 the Public Services Committee of Congress also concluded an agreement with Government on conditions of employment in the public sector and public sector reform. The Croke Park Agreement includes clauses that seeks to protect income levels in the public sector, prevent compulsory redundancies and affords the opportunity for the restoration of pay scales in return for savings generated by public sector reform. A more comprehensive account of the Croke Park Agreement is contained in the body of this report.

45. Carers in Society (Guinness Staff Union)

The valuable role played by carers in society was highlighted as part of the Congress Better Fairer Way Campaign. As the motion sought, we pressed for the recognition of the role played by carers. Congress continues its close contact with Carer’s Association including: highlighting the affects of the cutbacks to carer’s allowance, supporting the ‘Carers Count’ campaign to quantify the unpaid work undertaken by Irelands army of Family Carers; and attending the annual Carer’s awards ceremony.

46. Cutbacks in Frontline Health Services (Irish Medical Organisation)

As part of the Congress response to the economic crisis in the Republic of Ireland we continue to run a campaign seeking support for the Congress alternative approach to the problems in the economy. The Congress 10 Point Plan includes a strong commitment to protecting and improving public services including vital health services.

47. Evaluation of Cuban Medical Model (Dublin Council of Trade Unions)

Congress wrote to the Department of Health and Children seeking a study of the Cuban Medical model. At the time of writing the report no response had been received.

48. Performance Management Systems (Connect)

In response to this motion Congress sought to include an examination of performance management systems as part of its training programmes for shop stewards and officials. The aim of this was to raise awareness of the dangers of such schemes and to devise a model of best practice for the negotiation of schemes with employers. This work is ongoing.

49. Contracts of Employment & A Living Wage (Mandate)

From Congress’s perspective, reverting to full-time employment should be a legislative entitlement and our analysis of the EU Directive on Part-time Work (97/81/EC) is that it supports our demands. In March 2010 we called on the then Minister for Labour to amend the legislation to require employers to i) inform part-time employees of the availability of extra hours; ii) oblige them to seriously consider all requests from employees to move from part-time to full-time; and iii) permit refusal of the requests to limited and objective reasons.

Disappointingly the Minister for Labour was not in favour of amending the legislation to give effect to these rights. Congress also secured support from Proinsias De Rossa MEP to put a written question to the Commission on their view of the transposition. Work is ongoing on this with the new coalition Government.

50. Redundancy Consultation & Pay (Union of Shop, Distributive & Allied Workers)

Congress has made representations to DEL on this issue in the context of improved employment rights for workers in Northern Ireland.

51. Testing for Intoxicants (Technical, Engineering & Electrical Union)

Congress successfully campaigned that any testing for intoxicants should be agreed with the employees and their unions, should be for safety critical work and should conform to the legally defensible standard (European Laboratory Guidelines for Legally Defensible Drug

Testing). Congress secured agreement and inclusion of these principles at the Health and Safety Authority and their inclusion in the H S A guidelines on testing for intoxicants at work published in Spring 2011.

52. Employment Rights (Unite)

Congress has consistently campaigned to secure proper respect for the right to collective bargaining, for recognition of trade unions and fair employment rules. Key milestones include a complaint to the ILO on foot of the ruling of the Supreme Court in Ryanair and preparation and submission of a Shadow Report to the United Nations in respect of Ireland Human Rights record and specifically the failure to secure respect for the human right to freedom of association and collective bargaining in particular.

In February 2011, Congress welcomed the recognition of the new coalition Government that Ireland needs to take action to properly protect trade union human rights and work is ongoing to ensure the fulfilment of their pledge in their Programme for Government -Towards Recovery - *'We will reform the current law on employees' right to engage in collective bargaining (the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2001), so as to ensure compliance by the State with recent judgments of the European Court of Human Rights.*

53. Rights for Agency Workers (GMB)

The campaign to secure the rights of agency workers continues, particular milestones during the period under review are the engagement with the political process to secure proper regulation of employment agencies under the Employment Agency Bill and the coordination of the trade union position and submission to the governments consultation on the transposition of the EU Directive on Temporary Agency Work, this Directive must be transposed by December 2011. A key entitlement is the right to equal pay/treatment for agency workers. Congress is also seeking a prohibition on the use of agency work to replace workers undertaking collective action including strike action. This work is ongoing.

54. Respect for Shop Workers (Union of Shop, Distributive & Allied Workers)

Congress fully supports the aims of this motion and has endeavoured to raise these issues with the respective Governments during discussions on anti-social behaviour and the more publicly aired attacks on public services.

55. Union Learning & Upskilling (Mandate)

This matter was pursued under the Expert Group for Future Skill Needs. There was a major setback to this work when FAS pulled all funding from the Union Learning Project (Union Skills Network). Separately Congress published a major policy document on Skills in April, 2011.

56. Possible Effect of WiFi on Health (Ulster Teachers' Union)

Congress, in collaboration with UTU, has processed this motion.

57. Special Needs & Alternative Education Provision (National Association of Schoolmasters & Union of Women Teachers)

Congress, again in collaboration with the teaching unions continue to raise this matter at and especially in discussions on austerity measures facing the educational sector.

58. Knowledge Economy (Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland)

Congress publications, speeches etc., made a strong case for investment in the knowledge economy and sought the transfer of Pension Fund money into job creation etc.

59. Education Cutbacks (Teachers' Union of Ireland)

While education related issues were all raised with the appropriate departments, the fact is that austerity has made it difficult to maintain key services let alone make progress. This consideration serves to contextualise work done on all education motions.

60. Higher Education Tuition Fees (Irish Federation of University Teachers)

While education related issues were all raised with the appropriate departments, the fact is that austerity has made it difficult to maintain key services let alone make progress. This consideration serves to contextualise work done on all education motions.

61. Lifelong Learning (Galway Council of Trade Unions)

While education related issues were all raised with the appropriate departments, the fact is that austerity has made it difficult to maintain key services let alone make progress. This consideration serves to contextualise work done on all education motions.

62. Education Cutbacks (Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland)

While education related issues were all raised with the appropriate departments, the fact is that austerity has made it difficult to maintain key services let alone make progress. This consideration serves to contextualise work done on all education motions.

63. Support Services for Education Workers (Ulster Teachers' Union)

While education related issues were all raised with the appropriate departments, the fact is that austerity has made it difficult to maintain key services let alone make progress. This consideration serves to contextualise work done on all education motions.

64. Access to Education (Teachers' Union of Ireland)

While education related issues were all raised with the appropriate departments, the fact is that austerity has made it difficult to maintain key services let alone make progress. This consideration serves to contextualise work done on all education motions.

65. Equality of Education Opportunities (Irish Municipal Public & Civil Trade Union)

While education related issues were all raised with the appropriate departments, the fact is that austerity has made it difficult to maintain key services let alone make progress. This consideration serves to contextualise work done on all education motions.

66. 'Rationalisation' of University Courses (Irish Federation of University Teachers)

This issue was raised through the Irish Universities Quality Board and the Expert Group on Future Skill Needs. While education related issues were all raised with the appropriate departments, the fact is that austerity has made it difficult to maintain key services let alone make progress. This consideration serves to contextualise work done on all education motions.

67. European Court of Justice Anti-Trade Union Judgements & Lisbon Treaty (Rail, Maritime & Transport Union)

Congress closely monitors legal developments at the European Court of Justice (ECJ) and the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). During the period under review there were both positive and negative developments. The rulings of the European Court of Human Rights in *Wilson*, *Demir* and *Enerji* highlight that the right to collective bargaining has been held to be an essential feature of the right to freedom of association. The European Court of Human Rights has held that freedom of association (Article 11 of ECHR) must be read to mean that it includes the right of trade unions to bargain collectively and the right of trade unions and workers to take collective action (i.e. to strike). In so holding the ECHR stated that the substance of these rights must be consistent with the minimum standards laid down by the ILO and the Council of Europe in its Social Charter of 1961. Congress also drew the attention to the need for proper respect for the right to strike, in line with ILO principles. We have highlighted problems with the system of 'immunities' as increasingly employers are turning to the courts to seek injunctions to halt the strike action. This gives power to employers to disrupt, curtail, delay and halt strikes. Likewise we have sought restrictions on the use of alternative or agency labour during a strike, contrary to the right to strike as enshrined in Article 28 EU Charter and the basic principles of the ILO (ILO.1996d, paras.473-475).

68. International Issues of Concern to Irish Trade Unionists (Unite/Services Industrial Professional Technical Union)

Congress' activities 2009-2011 for Palestine, Colombia and Cuba have all been a part of our international solidarity work.

The conference in Dublin Castle in April 2010 was an expression of ICTU's solidarity with the Palestinian trade union movement and the struggle for an independent Palestinian state. Congress has also developed cooperation with solidarity movements; Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign and SADAKA. Trade Union Friends of Palestine (TUFFP) continues to play an important role within the trade union movement on this issue.

The Irish branch of Justice For Colombia (JFC) has developed strong concrete solidarity work with the Colombian Trade Union movement. Several Colombian trade unionists have visited Ireland and ICTU President Jack O'Connor took part in an international human rights delegation to Colombia in July 2010. JFC lobbied all the Irish MEPs and succeeded in getting to co-sign a letter with the General Secretary urging that a Free Trade Agreement between EU and Colombia cannot be adopted as long as Colombia is in breach with basic human and

trade union rights. Ireland is so far the only EU-country where all MEPs supported this position. JFC has also developed a campaign to free political prisoners (trade unionists) in Colombia.

Congress has taken a clear stand against the US embargo and sanctions against Cuba. Regarding the campaign to release the Miami 5, Congress has also given concrete support and contacted all the Irish TDs/ senators on this issue.

Palestine covered under motion 70.

69. Sri Lanka – Human Rights (Fire Brigades Union)

Congress has sent a strongly worded letter to the Sri Lankan Government. Congress also wrote to the former Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr Micheál Martin regarding the Sri Lanka Government's war against the Tamil population in 2009 and again after the massacre of Tamils in 2010. In March 2011 the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Eamon Gilmore was also contacted regarding the issue of Sri Lanka's forgotten prisoners and the importance of the Tamil people's human and national rights. The Global Solidarity Committee has also organised two meetings on the right for self determination of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

70. Palestine (Derry Council of Trade Unions)

Congress continues its ongoing work in solidarity with the people of Palestine. Since 2009, this has included: creation of a Palestine page on our website - <http://www.ictu.ie/globalsolidarity/palestine/>; the holding of a major international conference in Dublin Castle April 2010 to highlight our position; representations to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the conflict, including calling on the Government to oppose Israel's proposed membership of the OECD in 2010; regular education of Global Solidarity Champions on the issue, including at our Global Solidarity Summer School in 2010; organising protests about Cast Lead and the Israeli attack on the Flotilla in 2010; continued contact with our sister organisations in Europe and beyond on this issue.

71. Colombian's Human Rights Record (Limerick Council of Trade Unions)

Congress, along with the Irish branch of Justice For Colombia, has very strongly campaigned against the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA). For example, it was successful in getting all 12 Irish MEPs to co-sign a letter with the General Secretary, to the EU-Commission urging that a FTA can not be accepted until human and

trade union rights are respected in Colombia. A number of meetings have been organised with the Department of Foreign Affairs, including meetings with the former Minister for Foreign Affairs, on this issue. The former Government strongly supported the FTA. In March 2011 the General Secretary wrote a letter to the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Eamon Gilmore urging a change in the new Government's position on this issue.

72. Columbia's Human Rights Record (Cork Council of Trade Unions)

Congress, along with the Irish branch of Justice For Colombia, has very strongly campaigned against the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA). For example, it was succeeded in getting all 12 Irish MEPs to co-sign a letter with the General Secretary, to the EU-Commission urging that a FTA can not be accepted until human and trade union rights are respected in Colombia. A number of meetings have been organised with the Department of Foreign Affairs, including meetings with the former Minister for Foreign Affairs, on this issue. The former Government strongly supported the FTA. In March 2011 the General Secretary wrote a letter to the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Eamon Gilmore urging a change in the new Government's position on this issue.

73. Emergency Motion on Ryan Report (Executive Council)

Children and vulnerable people are entitled to expect the highest levels of protection against abuse. It is incumbent upon the State to ensure that the law both protects children and vulnerable adults from sexual abuse/ exploitation and at the same time respects the rights of those working with children and other vulnerable persons.

Congress requested the then Minister for Justice Mr Dermot Ahern TD to ensure that provisions would protect children and vulnerable adults with strong safeguards in line with the Ryan Report. We further recommended that the collection and use of 'soft information' would be strictly regulated to ensure it is accurate and not the result of malicious or speculative allegations or part of a campaign of intimidation or bullying against a teacher for example. The vetting of those who work with children and vulnerable adults is progressing with union support. Resource constraints in the Garda Vetting Unit in Tipperary have however slowed a full roll-out of vetting.

Appendix 7 - ICTU Disputes Committee Report - No. 09/01

Parties: SIPTU: Irish Nurses Organisation (INO)
Date of Hearing: 12th October 2009
Dispute: Representation of nurses at Stewarts Hospital.
Committee: Linda Tanham, (Chair and Executive Council) Peter Nolan, Impact and Arthur Hall, TEEU

Introduction

This case concerns the representation of the nursing grade at Stewarts Hospital, Palmerstown, Co Dublin.

SIPTU's Case

SIPTU argued that its organisation had been recognised by Stewarts Hospital for a very long time as the sole negotiating body for all clerical/administrative, ancillary, paramedical, residential and day service staff at the hospital (i.e. all grades other than doctors).

SIPTU alleged that there had been a campaign to lead nursing members out of SIPTU and into the Irish Nurses Organisation. SIPTU further argued that the nursing grade was not a negotiating unit. The negotiating unit is the entire hospital staff of 470 employees in the various categories. The Hospital is a stand alone employer with its own Board and pension scheme.

SIPTU submitted that even if the Disputes Committee formed the view that the nursing grade did constitute a negotiating unit under the Congress constitution the INO at no time had application from more the 60% of that grade.

SIPTU expressed the view that it was time to resolve this matter and expressed some concern that the INO had given comfort to those who were seeking to opt out of SIPTU. SIPTU further argued that the INO should not have met with SIPTU members and should not have sought to represent SIPTU members. SIPTU pointed out that they had a House Committee at the hospital for negotiating with management and that nurses participate in the committee and in negotiations with management on a regular basis.

INO case

The INO have a good relationship with SIPTU and had not sought to encourage the members concerned to leave SIPTU. On the contrary when the INO was approached by 90% of the nursing staff they were encouraged to meet with SIPTU and resolve their differences with their union.

An internal SIPTU meeting failed to resolve the matter and the INO received 115 applications from a total nursing staff of 130.

All the terms and conditions of employment of these nurses are negotiated nationally and the INO have full negotiating rights at the national level. In every other hospital in the State the INO can represent nurses.

The INO further submitted that the members concerned would be unlikely to agree to return to SIPTU and that it was likely that a non-Congress union would become involved in the hospital.

Finding

The Disputes Committee has given careful consideration to the arguments made by both parties.

The Disputes Committee is satisfied that,

1. A collective agreement which gives the SIPTU sole representational rights for all the grades and categories excluding doctors has operated for many years at Stewarts Hospital.
2. The INO very properly consulted with SIPTU as required under the paragraph 46 of the Congress Constitution and fully complied with the terms and the spirit of the Constitution of Congress.

The Disputes Committee finds that SIPTU established sole representational rights for all grades at the hospital other than doctors and remains the only union which may represent these workers. Therefore the INO should withdraw from the situation and advise the members of SIPTU to re-engage with their union to resolve their difficulties and if this fails to refer any complaints they may have through the Congress complaints procedures.



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An Post
CWHT
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Congress would also like to thank all our Exhibitors at Conference. We would take this opportunity to encourage delegates and guests to visit the many interesting stands which will be exhibiting at Conference.

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