



STRONGER TOGETHER

CONGRESS

Irish Congress of Trade Unions



**DECENT
WORK
BETTER
FUTURE**
BDC_2013

**LOCKOUT
1913_2013**

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Biennial Delegate Conference
Belfast 2-4 July 2013







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Introduction

Legacy of the Lockout

The Lockout Centenary is important not just because it saw the birth of the modern labour movement and the defeat of the most determined attempt by employers ever undertaken in this country to crush mass trade unionism, but because it is a reminder of what we have failed to achieve since - the right to collective bargaining, to organise and to represent people in their place of work.

This is unfinished business and, until these rights are secured, a major democratic deficit will continue to fester at the heart of Irish society.

These are matters of concern for everyone, not just for trade unionists and other people at work, but for the wider community. Apart from taxation, collective bargaining is the most effective means of redistributing wealth in a market society. When this right is eroded, or denied, the risk of inequality increases. Erosion of incomes affects long term life choices, such as the possibility of further education and career development for our children and a lowering of aspirations for the general working population, as well as causing immediate cuts in living standards.

The richer those at the top of society become the greater their capacity to deny workers a fair share in the wealth that they have created. This is not to deny the importance of legislation enacted in recent years (largely thanks to campaigns by Congress and its affiliates), to protect the rights of individuals at work. Ironically these gains weakened links between unions and workers, particularly the most vulnerable elements of the workforce who often now look to the courts and the legal profession for assistance, unaware of the high financial costs this can involve.

The individualisation and commercialisation of workers' rights run contrary to the social solidarity values that sustained the trade union movement in 1913. However they do suit the agenda of the wealthy elite who manipulate the media, mould public opinion, intimidate governments and are determined to do whatever is necessary to frustrate workers' organisations acting collectively to fight for their rights.

The objectives of the employers were essentially the same in 1913. Although William Martin Murphy and his allies were much weaker than their modern counterparts they came perilously close to achieving their objectives, despite the immense support Irish workers received from the British TUC. Ironically it was the advent of the First World War that helped rejuvenate the Irish trade union movement. This was because the British Government facilitated union recognition as part of its strategy for securing industrial peace at home while it was fighting Germany.

Between 1913 and 1919 trade union membership grew from 100,000 to 250,000 in Ireland and from four million to eight million in Britain. After the First World War trade union membership fell precipitately as the post-war boom imploded into the Great Depression. Trade union membership in Britain did not begin to recover until the onset of the Second World War, when the active intervention of the British Government once again ensured industrial peace through measures that strengthened unions and their capacity to represent workers.

The British trade union movement continued to grow in the aftermath of the war. The quarter century after the defeat of fascism marked the high water mark of social democracy across Western Europe. The European employers' counter-offensive would begin in Britain under Margaret Thatcher. Today British trade union membership is back at 1941 levels in a much larger labour force.

Ireland's political and trade union trajectories were different but one thing they shared was a pattern of growth that was facilitated by the state. The recession, coupled with the growth of union free employment and failure of successive governments to legislate for collective bargaining have seriously undermined the influence of trade unions.

This is not to deny the vital importance of trade union organisation and militancy in developing our movement, or that of underlying economic factors in determining the fundamental balance of power between capital and labour. Indeed it is the imbalance in that power relationship that requires the state to redress the balance.

All of these factors were at play in 1913. The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union and the Dublin Trades Council were infinitely strengthened through their links with the British labour movement. This strong identification of British workers with their comrades across the Irish Sea reflected the support Dublin workers, and particularly ITGWU members, had given the railway workers during the 1911 strike.

But this on its own would not have mobilised support on such a scale in 1913 without Bloody Sunday, when the Dublin Metropolitan Police and Royal Irish Constabulary were unleashed in the city. The scale of the assault shocked public opinion across the United Kingdom. For a brief period the Lockout became a battle over the basic democratic rights to free speech, freedom of association, freedom of assembly and freedom of conscience. Undeterred by the bloodshed and violence, employers proceeded to demand that workers sign declarations that they were not members of the ITGWU, would immediately resign if they were and would not associate with ITGWU members if they were in other unions. Some employers even demanded that unions expel members who refused to sign these declarations, while the Dublin Chamber of Commerce and Dublin Employers' Federation rejected settlement proposals from the Board of Trade's special tribunal, chaired by Sir George Askwith, to end the dispute.

In overplaying their hand Dublin's employers isolated themselves briefly. However they soon found a new weapon in the well-intended but poorly thought out proposal from Dora Montefiore to take strikers' children to foster homes in Britain. The Catholic Church condemned the scheme and put the trade union movement in the city on the defensive again.

In the end the Lockout became a war of attrition which could only end in one way. Larkin did try to recruit the big battalions of British trade unionism to his cause in 1913. The problem was, as Larkin's British supporters quickly discovered, that refusing to handle tainted goods from Dublin degenerated quickly into disputes about reinstating the men concerned. The British TUC lacked both the organisational power and the political capacity to win Dublin's battles for it. The unions were simply outmatched by the employers.

The figures speak for themselves. The TUC sent over £93,000 in strike pay and provisions to Dublin in 1913-1914 and at least another £13,000 came from other sources. But lost wages in Dublin are estimated at £400,000. Business suffered more in absolute financial terms and the overall cost of the dispute to the city's economy was approximately £2.3 million (including the £400,000 in lost wages). But this was widely spread and, as Murphy constantly reminded workers, the employers

could still afford three square meals a day. The revenue of the Dublin Port and Docks Board, one of the enterprises most affected only fell by 8.4%. The Dublin United Tramway Company, a Murphy enterprise at the epicentre of the dispute saw net profits fall by 16%, but the annual dividend on ordinary shares was only cut by 0.5%.

The cost of subsidising the Lockout for allies of Dublin's employers was less than £20,000, with the largest amounts coming from the British Shipping Federation, the Engineering Federation and Lord Iveagh, head of the Guinness dynasty. In other words for every £5 spent by the TUC on class war in Dublin, the enemy was spending £1. (Some commentators calculate total British aid at £150,000 or more than £7 for every £1 of the enemy).

Without a coherent strategy to either defeat the Lockout or at least fight the enemy to a draw unions turned increasingly on each other. Larkin and James Connolly accused the TUC leadership of selling them out, while increasing numbers of TUC leaders accused Larkin of destroying the unity of the movement. The last straw came in the Dublin Municipal elections of January 1914 when a slate of ten 'Larkinite' candidates secured 70% of the vote secured by nationalist councillors but only won one seat. This was due in large part to a restrictive franchise and to a massive media campaign by the Independent group of newspapers, augmented by many of the Catholic clergy, but it was also down to tactical political errors by the Labour movement itself and a belief that the justice of their cause would be sufficient to secure victory.

At a more fundamental level the Lockout exposed one of the paradoxes of modern Irish history in that defeat in 1913 helped alienate workers from the British TUC and support the struggle for national independence. As a result the labour movement in the South found itself a small minority in a state overwhelmingly dominated by farming and property owning interests. Workers paid a high price in the coming decades.

Today the labour movement is much larger and has more potential than ever before, but it still lacks a coherent strategy and ideology to challenge effectively the status quo.

While immediate economic problems may demand the need to fight cutbacks and shift at least some of the tax burden onto those who can afford to pay, the first political priority remains collective bargaining and, with it, the capacity to organise to enable the trade union movement to realise its social and economic aspirations.



General Secretary's Overview



Congress General Secretary, David Begg

Everyday people leave Ireland simply because they cannot make a living here. That is a dreadful and damning indictment of the impact of the crisis and the official policy response.

It's hard to blame them because in many cases the alternative is to become part of a growing cohort of people who are long term unemployed.

Unemployment deprives people of dignity. We work for more than wages. Work defines who we are. On meeting someone for the first time chances are the second question we will be asked after our name is, 'What do you do!' It must be soul destroying to have to answer, 'I am out of work'.

As the weeks and months go by, hope diminishes for people who cannot find a job. They lose confidence and self-respect.

Unemployment is undoubtedly one of the worst catastrophes to befall a person. We know that for young people it leaves a scarring effect for the rest of their lives. In many cases these are our best and brightest. The generation who reached maturity after 2008 may turn out to be a lost generation. If so, this will represent an appalling failure of public policy.

Of course this is not just an Irish problem. There are 25 million people unemployed across Europe. A social problem on such a scale cries out for a

dramatic response. The European authorities - and Britain - have managed a coordinated deflation of the European economy.

In the face of compelling evidence that austerity is not working, they plough on regardless epitomising Keynes' characterisation of "madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back."

Coordinated austerity can only result in a downward deflationary spiral, as all the evidence and experience of recent years show.

For many people, even those with jobs, personal indebtedness is a major worry. For the past 20 years cheap credit has been the opium of the masses. Financial deregulation unleashed a drive for more and bigger returns on investment.

People contracted into mortgages which were disproportionate to their incomes. A society was engineered in which people bought things they didn't need with money they didn't have to impress people they didn't like.

Now many people who could otherwise have expected quite a decent lifestyle are in deep trouble. Personal insolvency legislation may help in some cases but quite how it will work is unclear, at the time of writing. There is speculation that people will have to give up health insurance and even jobs, where childcare costs are too high.

One thing is clear; one way or another people will feel the burden of personal debt for a long time. It is a burden which can be morale sapping and corrosive of family life.

Congress has made strong representation on this question at all levels, including to the IMF.

Another thing that is clear is that there will be no further arrangements to help Ireland.

The head of the Euro group of Finance Ministers, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, said in the context of the Cypriot crisis that the ESM fund will not be asked to recapitalise banks. This is contrary to an agreement made to separate sovereign and banking debt at the European Council on June 29, 2012.

That this has happened is a vindication of our decision to hold a series of demonstrations on the bank debt, on February 9 last.

The European Economy must be reflatd. A continuation of the current policies will be ruinous. We know from what President Obama is managing to do in the United States in the teeth of Republican opposition that there are better alternatives. Such high levels of unemployment are not socially, economically or politically sustainable.

In fact, Congress believes - and has proposed - that EU governments should act as employers of last resort. In short we need a combination of a Marshall Plan and a New Deal for Europe.

For certain the strategy of competitive austerity cannot return the Eurozone to economic health. It guarantees a feeble Eurozone economy, high debt and banking and joblessness crises for the indefinite future.

Perhaps the most interesting outcome of the Cypriot crisis was the imposition of exchange controls. Free capital movement has been the key principle of neo-liberalism. Indeed, a currency union with internal exchange controls - such as exist in Cyprus - is something of a contradiction in terms. In fact, the Cypriot example shows that the economic order which has dominated the world for the last 30 years is in decline.

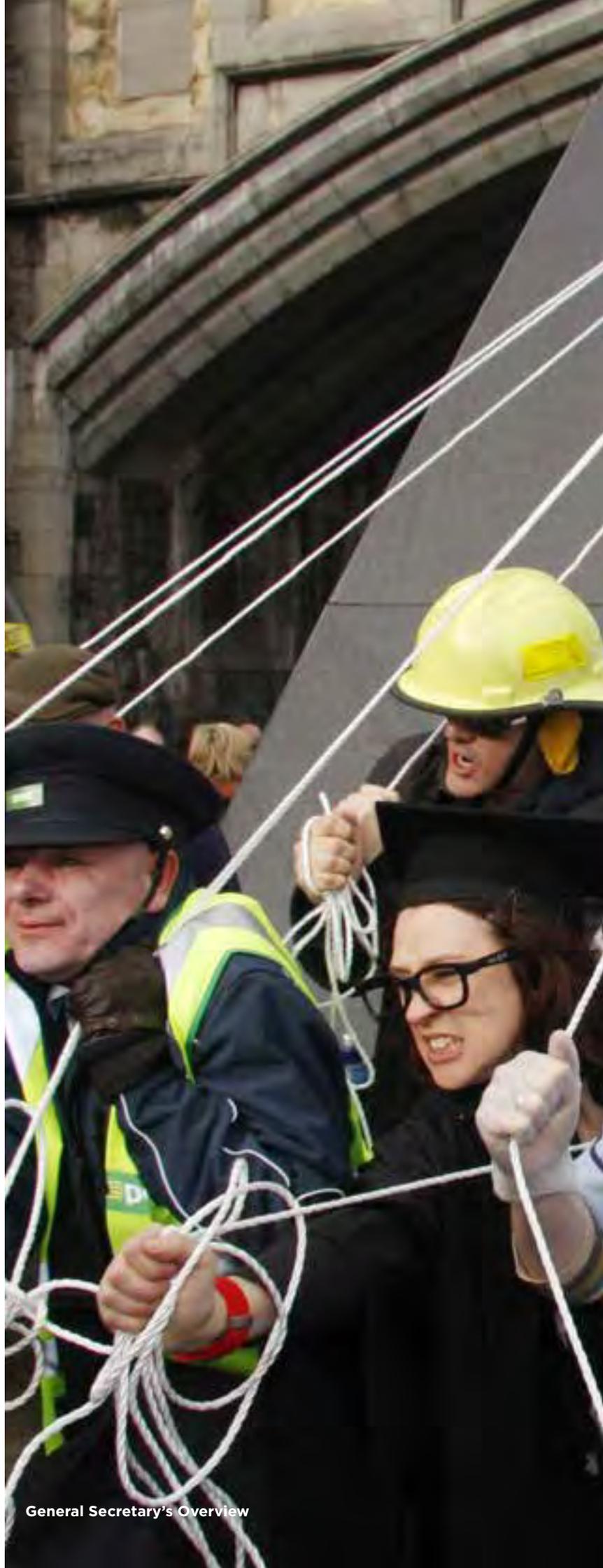
It is unfortunate that so many in positions of authority refuse to acknowledge this reality.

There are weaknesses in the Irish economy but there are fundamental strengths too. Given half a chance, a gradual recovery could be engineered. But if the country is left with a debt of €64 billion from the recapitalisation of the banks and an incoherent policy line from Brussels, it will be very difficult to make progress.

For the trade union movement these last five years have been very difficult. Unable to deliver on our mission to protect pay and conditions in all circumstances, and assailed by ideological opponents of left and right, it has been an uphill task to get our alternative analysis accepted. But time has proven much of that analysis to be correct.

Looking back we can see now that the movement was not equipped to handle the tsunami that hit us in 2008. Since then Congress has been restructured and the Nevin Economic Research Institute is well established and accepted. Nevertheless, the trade union movement as a whole is too fragmented to be fit for purpose.

At BDC 2013 we can address this problem if a report on the Trade Union Commission and an enabling motion is accepted and passed by delegates.





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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
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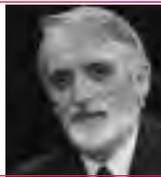
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SCHWEPPE'S
TABLE WATERS

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ONE

A JUST
RESOLUTION

Introduction

In 2009 the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) suggested that Ireland was suffering from a five part crisis - economic, banking, fiscal, social and reputational - and that all needed to be tackled together. This was an analysis with which Congress concurred.

From the onset of the crisis, which was precipitated by the collapse of Lehman's Bank in September 2008, Congress has consistently advocated and campaigned for a policy approach that grasped:

- » The necessity to consolidate the public finances over a sufficiently long period to avoid damaging prospects for growth. We suggested an adjustment period up to 2017;
- » The need to find alternative sources of investment to stimulate economic activity and job creation especially in infrastructure.

These remain the core elements of our strategy and we have produced countless policy documents to underpin this.

At a European level we have sought - via the ETUC - an acceptance of the notion that social policy must not be subordinated to economic policy.

European solidarity requires the mutualisation of debt, since the problem is a crisis of the European banking system, not of any one country.

As of late March, 2013, with the Cypriot economy almost destroyed, there is no evidence of a willingness to accept that a banking union is imperative for stability and that this requires debt mutualisation, along with common deposit insurance and bank resolution processes.

One can observe that the re-introduction of capital controls in Cyprus is a clear signal that the neoliberal flagship project of capital deregulation is on the rocks.

It seems likely too that the agreement reached at the European Council on June 29, 2012, to sever the link between bank and sovereign debt, and to allow the ESM to recapitalise the Irish banks, is actually dead and buried.

While Irish bond yields are down to 4.1% and we will probably be able to re-enter the capital markets, the truth remains that we are loaded down with a €64 billion debt which is not of our making. In addition there is about €17 billion of unpayable debt owed by over 80,000 mortgage holders who are three months or more in arrears with payments.

The downward drag of this debt on domestic demand is significant. The savings level in Ireland is over 14% and approximately half of this is being used to retire debt. Taken together with the austerity created by five harsh budgets, this means that people are not spending. Domestic demand has fallen by 26% since 2008.

It is domestic demand that creates jobs.

Breaking this vicious circle is the key to getting the economy moving again. In truth the European economy needs to be reflat. But President Barosso told an EU Social Summit in March that this was not going to happen. This is in marked contrast to the successful Keynesian demand strategy of the United States under President Obama.

The policy mix in Europe is all wrong. The US is relying on a combination of Keynesian demand management and private sector confidence and investment. The Nordic countries are pursuing a combination of fiscal consolidation and public investment.

Europe has the worst mix from both worlds. It is pursuing fiscal consolidation in the *hope* of generating private sector confidence and investment. It isn't working.

It is now clear that the structure of EMU is such that, without the possibility of devaluing the currency, and in the event of a macro-economic shock, the whole burden of adjustment falls on



Congress meeting with German unions and Chancellor Angela Merkel

labour markets. This policy was designed to give the Euro credibility with markets. It changed in Cyprus – five years too late.

There are two big dilemmas facing Europe. The first is a collective action problem. Some countries, the Nordics in particular, have tried to ring-fence their welfare states from EU interference. The unintended outcome of having social policy as a domestic competence, in circumstances of 27 divergent policies, is that it is impossible to act collectively to balance the ECB. There is no other EU institution which has the power and independence of the ECB. It is concerned only with price stability and this puts the entire focus of policy on austerity. Unemployment does not get a look in.

Given these constraints, and the fact that the EU/ECB/IMF Troika imposes this policy on Ireland, we must find ways of investing, off balance sheet, to try to create employment, as seen in repeated proposals put forward by Congress.

Properly applied, the fiscal leeway afforded by the IBRC Promissory Note restructuring can help. This will be the main thrust of our submission for the coming Budget.

Congress Meeting with Chancellor Merkel

Through the good offices of Michael Sommer, President of the German union confederation, DGB, a meeting between the General Secretary and Chancellor Merkel was arranged, in March 2012. It was organised with the aim of facilitating

a discussion on the financial crisis and was an opportunity for Congress to present our perspective on the problem.

It would be fair to summarise the discussion by saying that the Chancellor seemed to have a very settled view on the crisis, namely that ‘competitiveness’ should be the primary consideration.

We now have the extraordinary situation where we have a European Germany in a German Europe. Germany has emerged as the reluctant hegemon which is remaking Europe in its own image, through simple inaction. If Germany withholds money, individual countries fall into the abyss. So to survive, Europe must accept the discipline of the Bundesbank.

As the German sociologist, Ulrich Beck, put it, Germany is exporting a hard-nosed neoliberalism while at home it maintains a consensus based on domestic policy with a social democratic tinge. The single most important lesson from that meeting was that Ireland does not matter in the greater scheme of things.

The Troika Process

Congress has been meeting with representatives of the Troika (EU/ECB/IMF) since Ireland went into the bailout programme in 2010. These meetings take place on a quarterly basis.

Overall, there has never been a point at which any measure of agreement has materialised. As the evidence against austerity has mounted, the Troika

has refused to concede one inch of ground. Even at our most recent meeting on April 29, 2013, when it was put to them that the President of the European Commission had stated that austerity had reached the outer limits of political acceptability, they insisted that he had been misinterpreted.

Nevertheless, Congress has considered it better to maintain a dialogue with the Troika, in order to continuously challenge their analysis. It is highly unlikely that they are similarly challenged by any of the other groups they meet. This challenge is also conducted at a technical level, through papers prepared for Congress by NERI. Above all it is important for us to relentlessly confront the Troika with tangible evidence of the consequences of their policies, in terms of the human misery and social damage that results.

It must also be recorded that Congress has had extensive bi-lateral independent discussions with the IMF, which have been much more meaningful. This is surprising given the IMF's reputation, but so also is their willingness to admit that their early assumptions about the impact of austerity have been wrong.

The Economy Fails to Recover

Five years of recession and austerity and there is still no sign of real recovery. The only surprise is that some people are surprised at this outcome. Five years of deep cuts and tax rises and the best that can be said is that all key indicators are no longer falling. That's hardly a mark of success.

GDP, GNP, unemployment, employment and debt - personal and public - seem to have stabilised. What little growth there is, is barely perceptible.

Congress has long warned that recovery would take far longer as this recession came on top of a deep financial crisis. This synchronised recession in Europe and the US was exacerbated with simultaneous deflationary policies in many countries.

Unemployment is stuck at over 14%, where it has been for the previous 30 months. One possible bright note is that the rate of unemployment in February 2013 was a full 1.1% below its peak in February 2012. However, that could easily be accounted for by emigration or other factors.

To get some understanding of the extent of the crisis wrought by the banks, remember that just five years ago, in 2008, unemployment was below 5%.

The two years since BDC 2011 have been the worst for unemployment. The rate of those who would like to work but could not find employment rose to over 25% - a figure rightly described as "staggering" by the IMF.

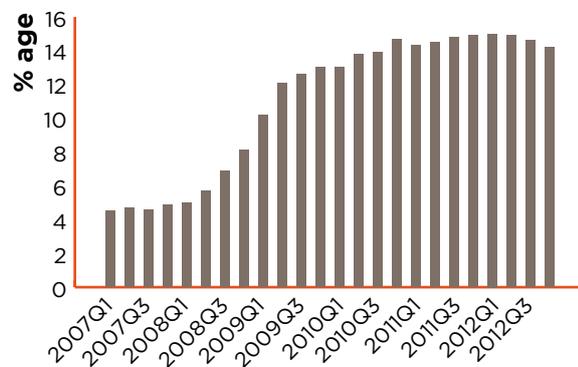
An important indicator of the health, or otherwise, of the job market is the job vacancy rate.

The chart below (Figure 1) shows there were 7.4 unemployed people per job vacancy in the EU27 in 2010.

However, the figure for Ireland was far higher, with 31 people per job vacancy.

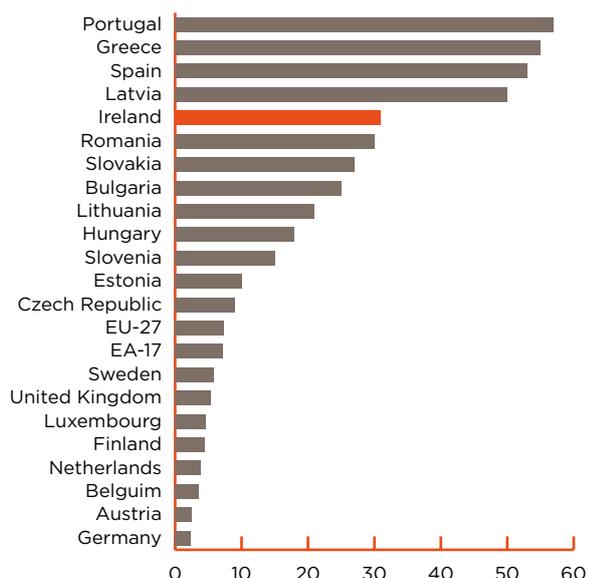
The situation was worse in Portugal, Greece, Spain and Latvia.

Fig 1: Unemployment Rate



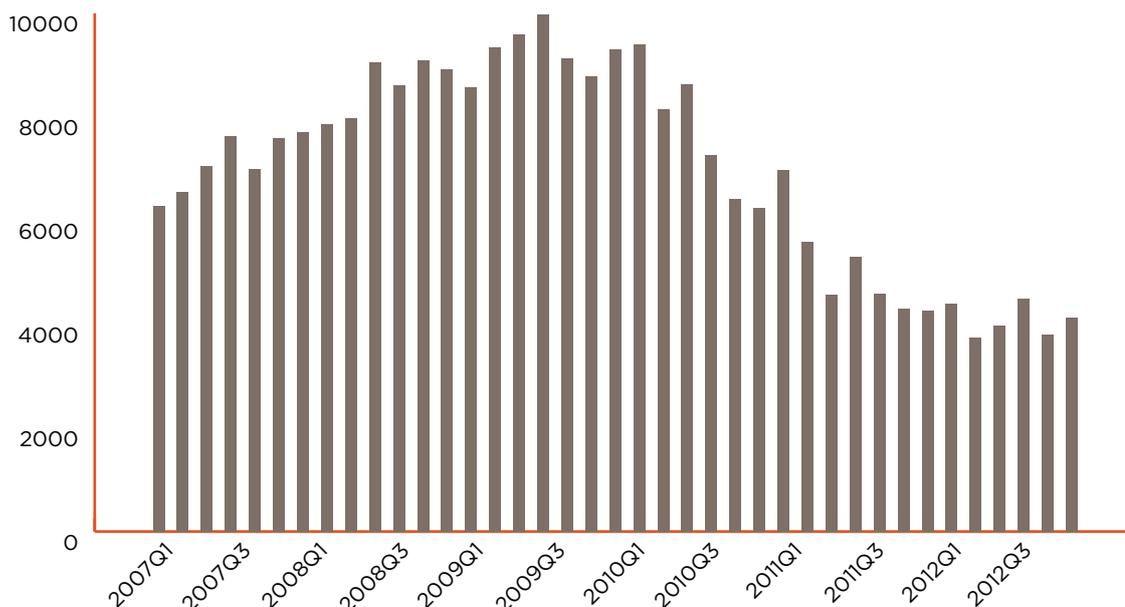
Source: CSO

Fig 2: Vacancy Rate in European Countries 2010



Source: CSO

Figure 3: Total Investment in Ireland



Source: CSO National Income

Indeed, the gravity of the crisis is illustrated by the fact that if all the available jobs were filled instantly, 30 of the 31 jobless people in Ireland would still be out of work.

This highlights the limited impact that training and upskilling programmes would have on the immediate jobs crisis and underlines the necessity for a significant stimulus that would actually create jobs.

Investment is the Key

A correct level of investment in an economy is essential for growth and progress, but like bank lending Ireland has veered from too much, to too little. The level of investment in the Irish economy has fallen dramatically, as Figure 3 below shows. While it was bubble investment when close to €10bn a quarter was being spent at its 2007 peak, it fell to just €4bn in 2012. Total investment in the economy is the lowest in the EU.

As a proportion of GDP it was just 9% compared to the average investment level of 19% in Europe. It was even lower than Greece at 12%.

An economy does not cut investment but postpones it. Therefore these low levels will have to be made up later and will be a drag on recovery. What better time to invest than when

unemployment, especially in construction, is so high? Congress set out a planned programme for investment and job creation in June 2012 (*Delivering Growth & Jobs*) <http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/delivering-growth-jobs-updated-june-2012/>

This proposed an investment programme of €9bn over three years, potentially creating 100,000 jobs. We also detailed how it would be funded innovatively. The government response was positive in principle, but the policy pursued has been to focus on the supply side when it is *demand* that is lacking as Figure 4 demonstrates.

Indeed, cutting investment to the levels now pertaining in Ireland will endanger future competitiveness. Competitiveness is correctly defined by the National Competitiveness Council which takes a holistic view of the issue, unlike many economists and institutions which see it only as “short term movements in unit labour costs.”

While unit labour costs are undoubtedly important, they are but one part of the overall issue. A good definition is “*Competitiveness is understood to mean high and rising standards of living of a nation, with the lowest possible level of involuntary unemployment on a sustainable basis.*”

But this does not inform on how to properly measure it.

1 European Commission Report on Competitiveness 2003

Congress Pre-Budget Submissions



Pre-Budget Submission, 2012

The 2012 Pre-Budget Submission outlined a number of key measures that could be taken in order to create job and deliver growth. The following is a summary of key points.

Invest, Employ & Grow

Unemployment damages individuals, families, communities and the wider economy. It can be tackled by halting the downward spiral that has gripped Ireland since late 2008.

Cutting welfare rates and raising taxes on low to middle income earners feeds this downward spiral by removing consumer spending from the economy. This is made worse by cuts in key services like health, education and transport.

This deflationary spiral is self-defeating. Studies by the ESRI and the IMF have found that economic 'shock therapy' – cutting incomes and shedding jobs - doesn't work.

The IMF study showed how austerity hits wages harder than profits: for every one per cent cut in GDP, salaries fall by 0.9%, while profits fall by just 0.3%. The priority for this budget must be to avoid measures that make the dole queues longer as that translates into lower tax revenue and a higher welfare bill.

So far, Government has focussed on cutting costs in order to grow exports and kick-start a recovery. There is no evidence this has halted the rise in unemployment. While there has been an increase in training for the unemployed and greater numbers staying in education, there has been no increase in job opportunities.

The public service is often the first port of call for young people entering the job market, but this is being cut while demand for services increases. Government has failed to fill the void left by the collapse in private investment and consumption. Domestic demand has already fallen by a staggering 25%, costing thousands of jobs.

It should now invest in targeted initiatives that will create jobs and boost competitiveness: water conservation, a national broadband scheme, retrofitting of homes to cut energy bills.

Key Tax Proposals

- » The Universal Social Charge should be progressively restructured to reduce the rate paid by low earners. As women are concentrated in lower income jobs, the charge has had a disproportionate impact on them.
- » There should be a new levy on wealth above €2 million, with 'wealth' defined as current value of all assets. This could yield up to €500 million. The minimum tax for high earners should be 35% with the threshold cut to €100,000.
- » A temporary 'solidarity levy' should be placed on incomes over €100,000. The incomes of working people have been levied, but Corporation Tax is unchanged. There is an overwhelming case for a temporary levy of 2.5% to be placed on corporate profits. Citizenship is a two-way obligation.
- » The 183 day requirement for tax residency must be halved to at least 90 days - as in the UK - and 'tax fugitives' must pay more.
- » There should be a new 12.5% oil and gas royalty tax, on production. Higher taxes should be considered for larger oil and gas finds. It seems inevitable that Government will introduce a property tax in some form. It is essential this is not a flat tax, but is linked to ability to pay.
- » Congress would back a shift towards taxing consumption with a high carbon content, but with built-in protections for low-income households. Property-based Capital Allowances should be discontinued, along with interest relief against rental incomes for individuals and companies.
- » Yields from Capital Acquisition Tax remain low and existing thresholds could be lowered. Business and agricultural reliefs should be restricted to the first €4 million of business assets. Raise Capital Gains Tax from 25% to 30% and apply the Universal Social Charge. A proportion of gains on private dwellings worth over €1 million should be subject to CGT.

- » Remove the property-based tax reliefs that cost the state more than half a billion euro in lost revenue. Tax breaks for high earners and investors should also be progressively removed.
- » Taxation on saving should be increased from 27% to 30%. Pension provision in Ireland is patchy and many people have no adequate contributory or occupational pension. There is a strong case for the introduction of an additional state pension into which savers can invest. This would give government a new source of immediate capital, while offering savers lower charges and a secure place to invest.
- » Congress is opposed to plans to reduce tax relief on pensions to 20%, given the lack of an adequate universal state pension. There is the added risk that this would hit contributions to existing schemes and undermine future pension provision.
- » Congress is opposed to the temporary stamp duty on the value of pension fund assets. As 75% of defined benefit pension schemes are in deficit, the cost of this levy will mean higher contributions for members, a reduction in benefits - or both. Pension funds which increase investments in the domestic economy by 5% of asset value should be exempted from this levy.
- » But the investments should be in approved activities that contribute to job creation. We must extend the 'period of adjustment' from 2015 to 2017. It is worth noting that the target date has already been moved twice.
- » The entire process of adjustment must focus on growing domestic investment and avoiding further cuts in demand. The entity formerly known as Anglo-Irish Bank/INBS continues to be a severe drain on public resources: from the billions government plans to pay out to unsecured, unguaranteed bondholders, to the enormous liabilities that will result from the issuance of Promissory Notes.
- » This could see us pay out over €4.2 billion every year for the next 14 years. There is an option in the deal with the 'bailout Troika' to review and amend this arrangement and make real savings. Not to do so would be reckless. Capital investment should be a priority and good quality public services must be maintained to deal with the needs of a rising population.
- » Major savings will continue to be made as a result of the Croke Park Agreement. This is in addition to savings from cuts in the interest rate on our borrowing. These savings should be ploughed back into public services and bolstering social protection. This will promote domestic demand

and boost employment. For every €1 million invested in infrastructure, up to 12 direct jobs are created.

Funding for Growth

Congress has identified various sources of funding for growth. These include:

- » €2bn from the National Pension Reserve Fund over the next three years, invested in job creation;
- » Private pension funds should be encouraged to increase their investment in the Irish economy by 5%, raising an extra €4bn a year;
- » Encourage investment in Solidarity Bonds by pension schemes, as agreed by Congress, IBEC and the IAPF;
- » The State Holding Company should be set up in such a way as to attract pension funds;
- » A new state pension scheme would give a substantial flow of funds to the Exchequer and we should encourage PRSAs to invest in scheme. This could raise €1bn over the next year;
- » Multinationals could defer repatriation of some of their profits and set up a commercial fund to invest here.

The Role of State Companies

State companies can spearhead a drive to create jobs, acting as engines of the recovery. Giving the state holding company access to private capital for expansion and re-investment is a better way of raising funds than privatisation. History shows that partial sales become full privatisations and - as Eircom showed - this means control of key assets is transferred outside Ireland. Investment in infrastructure would boost our competitiveness:

- » A state-of-the-art water and waste network could create up to 12,000 permanent jobs;
- » Retro-fitting energy inefficient buildings: developing a new €8bn industry to upgrade Ireland's 700,000 energy inefficient homes.

Social Protection

Government must act in a fair and balanced way to help householders in mortgage arrears. Family homes and living standards must be protected and realistic ways found to help people out of indebtedness.

There should be no further cuts to social welfare and strategies are needed to help the working poor and safeguard income supports for people with disabilities. More flexibility should be shown around part time work when assessing benefits or allowances for people out of work.

Community projects that protect and boost employment should be safeguarded and supports which help people take up work - affordable childcare - must be maintained.

Congress Response to Budget

In December 2011, Congress published a formal, written response to the Budget. This is an abridged version.

This is not a time for economic orthodoxy. Yet that is what we are enduring in Ireland and Europe. Paralysed by the deepest recession since the 1930s, the response of governments has been deeply conservative and deeply wrong. Everywhere, the crisis is deepening.

In Ireland domestic demand has fallen for 14 consecutive quarters - by a staggering 25%. This tells us that austerity is killing the patient. A few recent small rises in GNP - following a fall of almost 16% - does not represent 'green shoots.'

The level of budgetary 'adjustment' will cost us in jobs. This is particularly damaging as it is now clear that exports cannot do the 'heavy lifting' on job creation. Budget 2012 has brought to just over €24 billion the total size of the negative fiscal adjustment to-date.

Congress has argued consistently that the period of adjustment should be extended to 2017 in order to minimise the deflationary, job-destroying impact.

Yet again we see that projections for GDP, GNP and total domestic demand have been adjusted downwards by the government, since the publication of the Medium-Term Fiscal Statement in November.

We see that the latest pre-budget projections for economic growth and employment are more optimistic than those published by other analysts, including the Economic & Social Research Institute. The net impact of this budget will therefore be to reinforce recent negative employment trends.

In the absence of a jobs investment stimulus this budget will serve only to aggravate the downward economic spiral. Instead government continues to pursue austerity policies that are contracting the economy and embedding debt.

The domestic economy must be encouraged in recovering by creating jobs and generating significant additional revenues over time.

Spending Cuts

In this Budget the Government opted to cut public spending in key areas that will impose further hardship on:

- » **People in work**, because the burden of taxation continues to fall on low to middle-income households, while average or effective taxes on high-income earners will not usually exceed 40%;
- » **People out of work**, because the net impact of the budget will be to further deflate the economy, depress consumer demand and lower investment in urgently needed infrastructure;
- » **The working poor**, who will continue to suffer the effects of insecurity, reduced wages and shorter hours;
- » **Families, children and women** through adjustments in various social welfare payments and entitlements especially those that impact on lone parents and those already living in poverty.

Growth is the Key

Noticeable by its absence from this Budget was a credible strategy to make **serious inroads into unemployment**. Government needs to focus on labour intensive infrastructural projects, such as:

- » Broadband;
- » Water and waste;
- » Energy retrofitting;
- » Elimination of prefabs from all schools over the next two years.

It would be possible to fund such an investment programme from a range of sources:

- » A redirection of **private Irish pension funds** into domestic infrastructure (of which there is over €70bn) and follow the model proposed by Congress, SIPTU and adopted in the UK. We estimate that €4 billion - or 5% of current pension funds - could be leveraged into the economy;
- » Tap into resources from the **European Investment Bank** (EIB);
- » Use some of the remaining resources from the **National Pension Reserve Fund** (NPRF).

Conclusion

The presence of an **expansionary fiscal contraction tooth fairy** is implied by claims that budgetary cuts will give greater certainty and confidence to consumers. There is no evidence that continuing reductions in public expenditure and tax increases have boosted consumer spending. A country is not a household where you must keep spending down to meet income and balance your books every month. A country is like an enterprise where you need to save seeds, plant and nurture growth. There is little evidence that this government has:

- » a vision of where Irish society needs to go;
- » a sense of justice that puts the interests of working people, the poor and the excluded before that of international creditors and high-income / high-wealth individuals living here; and
- » a strategy to create employment and renew economic activity.

Instead, it is a case of the slow strangulation of our economy and society with more cuts planned for 2013, 2014 and 2015. Ireland deserves far better.

Pre-Budget Submission, 2013

In the 2013 Pre-Budget Summary, Congress outlined 10 Key Recommendations designed to stimulate growth and deliver jobs.

1. Undertake an investment stimulus of €3bn a year for three years to create some 100,000 new jobs overall and boost GDP by 2% per annum.
2. Introduce a new 48% tax rate for individual incomes over €100,000, along with a 1% Wealth Tax. Profitable corporates must contribute more (by restricting write-offs) abolish SARP, tackle tax fugitives and clamp down on evasion and avoidance.
3. Introduce the Financial Transaction Tax - 10 EU countries have already agreed to do. The tax could raise €500 million annually for Ireland.
4. The EU must mutualise Ireland's bank debts, which were run up by private banks.
5. Deal effectively with the Irish Pension crisis with policies that boost pension take-up and phase in the reform of state pensions (raising the age for pension take-up) to allow workers time to adjust and prepare.
6. Extend the period of adjustment to 2017 and reverse the planned ratio of spending cuts to tax rises.
7. Congress supports Labour Market Activation but it must be fair and focused on encouraging people into the workforce and not just a way of managing expenditure cuts. Broaden the apprenticeship system and introduce a Youth Guarantee to help link young people to skills training and the workplace. Increase the effectiveness of monitoring of employment

standards to staunch the haemorrhage of tax revenue being lost because of misguided public procurement practices.

8. Effective policies are needed to address poverty traps and fuel poverty. There must be far greater efforts to tackle inequality. The new eligibility criteria for the state pension, for example, impacts most severely on women. The level of cutbacks in disability funding to date - 14% over the past four years has gone too far and must be reversed.
9. There must be no privatisation of major indigenous enterprises to repay the debts of failed Irish banks. Indigenous enterprise should be developed under NewEra and become an engine of the recovery, not eviscerated.
10. The focus on public sector reform has detracted from the necessity to radically reform corporate governance in the private sector, where obsessive secrecy and perverse incentives abounded and the emphasis was on deal-making rather than creating value. This must become a priority to stop the mistakes of the past being repeated.

Congress Response to Budget

In the aftermath of Budget 2103, Congress General Secretary David Begg was critical of the measures outlined by Government, which he said "did nothing for jobs and effectively penalise working families.

"In fact, the budget could cost us up to 40,000 jobs, due to the on-going extraction of money from the economy.

The money taken from the pockets of working families is money that will *not* be spent in local shops and on local services and will cost us jobs.

The abolition of the PRSI Allowance is particularly harsh and sees working families lose €5 per week.

In effect, this budget could cost working families up to €1000 per year, in terms of increased taxes and charges. What makes this particularly unfair is that families with an income of €30,000 will pay the same as those on €300,000. We believe this cut must be reversed.

In addition, the cut in Jobseekers' Allowance payment from 12 months to nine means that working people are getting less benefits from the system while their contributions have increased.

Meanwhile, business has not been asked to pay more - instead we have seen a package of tax breaks that will do nothing for domestic demand and job creation."

The General Secretary concluded that after six austerity budgets “we have seen some 360,000 jobs lost, some €28 billion extracted from the economy and we have made just a minimal impact on the deficit.”

The documents are available to view at

<http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/budget-submission-summary/>

http://www.ictu.ie/download/pdf/pre_budget_10_key_recommendations.pdf



ETUC DAY of Action 29 Feb 2012

The Case for the Financial Transaction Tax

In September 2012, Congress published a research document that looked at the likely impact of a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) on the Irish economy.

The aim of the FTT is to raise revenue and ensure the financial sector pays its fair share of the cost of the crisis. It also helps reduce speculative trading, an activity which gives the sector too much power over the productive economy, a key factor in causing the present crisis.

Financial sector support resulting from the crisis in Europe has cost about €4.6 trillion or 39% of EU27 GDP in 2009. The European Commission put forward proposals to ensure a common European approach to averting a repetition of past practices in the financial sector, and particularly addressing the risky behaviour of some segments of financial markets. In June 2010 the European Parliament asked the Commission:

“To prepare a report considering as to how the financial sector could make a fair and substantial contribution toward paying for any burden associated with government interventions to repair the banking system.”

The Commission proposed a Financial Transaction Tax of 0.1% on transactions in bonds and equities, and 0.01% on derivatives transactions. While this failed to secure unanimity due to objections from a number of member states - including Ireland - it was not consigned to political limbo, as is usual with failed proposals for EU law.

Instead, a number of countries proceeded with the initiative - under the enhanced co-operation procedures of the Treaty of Lisbon - and agreed on the introduction of a Financial Transactions Tax. At the time of writing, those countries were: Austria, Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia and Spain.

The tax rates are set between 0.1% to 0.01%, with the aim of ensuring that they are not so high that they encourage tax evasion, but equally that they are not so small that they are incapable of acting as a brake on reckless speculative activity. Equally, the rates were set at a level that would not encourage any considerable ‘emigration’ of transactions to other ‘FTT-free’ marketplaces.

The purpose of the Congress document was to advance the case for the FTT in the Irish context. Among the issues highlighted by the report were the excessive influence of the Irish Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in setting government financial policy and the failure of the German bank - Depfa - which was based in the centre.

The Irish taxpayer only narrowly avoided having to pay out for this collapse, the cost of which could have been quite significant.

The Clearing House Group is a working group comprising IFSC firms and supported by the Department of the Taoiseach. Designed to make the views of the industry known to government, it reached the point where the Clearing House Group were the virtual authors of government policy on the financial sector. This may well be to the detriment of other sectors in the economy.

There is a perception that by standing aloof from the tax, it would be business as usual for the Irish financial sector. This is not the case, as the design of the tax, involving both the issuance principle and the residence principle will mean that the tax will be levied on all trades transacted in the FTT zone, on behalf of any company in the zone, or issued in the FTT zone.

For example if a German bank carries out a transaction with an insurance company based in Dublin, the tax is due twice to the German authorities. This means that the Irish government is foregoing tax receipts of between €490m and €730m per annum to tax authorities in other member states, at a time when there is unremitting pressure to cut expenditure and with it public services. It is for this reason that Congress will continue to press for Ireland to implement the Financial Transaction Tax.

The document is available to read or download at this link <http://www.ictu.ie/publications/fulllist/the-case-for-the-financial-transaction-tax/>



David Begg addresses the February 9 Rally in Dublin's Merrion Square

Revisiting the Crash: the Case for Corporate Governance Reform

A key driver of Ireland's economic crash was the mismanagement of many leading companies. In the endless debate about public sector reform, we have failed to examine the governance of our leading private firms. Until there is major reform here, history will repeat itself.

Anyone who has read the reports of the demise of the Quinn Group, of Anglo Irish Bank, Treasury Holdings or Quinlan's luxury hotel chain, can only be shocked at the behaviour of some of Ireland's former enterprise leaders. Had they only brought down their own private companies, it would be bad enough, but some of them have seriously damaged the Irish sovereign state and we the public, will pay for their failure for decades.

The Fianna Fail/ Green government - in the most devastating economic policy error in Ireland's history - socialised the private losses of the banks.

The behaviour of some key private firms - banks, developers and in the professions (accountants and lawyers) has almost destroyed our public finances and the Irish economy. It will take decades to recover. They have imposed heavy debts on all citizens.

No one has been held to account. No one has gone to jail. Many of the directors remain in key position in business and even in public institutions. What is surprising is that there has been no call for the systemic reform of the way in which the private sector is governed.

For too long, we have suffered under what the Financial Times dubbed 'Irish Crony Capitalism', where a small, elite of business leaders did what they wanted, with the acquiescence of the state and its bodies.

It would be wrong to tar all company executives with the same brush of the corrupt and scandal-ridden. Our member unions have robust relations with thousands of excellent company executives who are doing their best in this recession to win business and keep the show on the road.

Many good businesses have failed because of the actions of greedy and incompetent executives. Many leading professionals colluded in the creation of the asset bubble and the eventual collapse of our economy. It is our view that many were either greedy and/or blinded by a *groupthink* ideology of free unregulated markets.

However, the heart of bad governance is at the very top of Ireland's corporate pyramid. The boards and top executives of the banks lead and are closely followed by the property developers / speculators. Many within key professions are not far behind.

The lack of prosecutions for the corruption and value destruction demonstrates that white collar thieves always seems to go unpunished in this country. As Bob Dylan wrote "*steal a little and they put you in jail, steal a lot and they make you king.*"

The impact of the rotten business model did not just spill over into the real economy and the public sector, but almost bankrupted the state, while destroying thousands of viable businesses and over 360,000 jobs, since 2008.

The rising gap between executive remuneration and that of regular workers contributed substantially to the collapse.

Some of the leading accounting and legal firms were at the heart of the problem. They acted like advance storm troopers, lobbying for de-regulation, low direct taxation, weak enforcement, poor legislation and tax avoidance schemes.

The governance structures of the modern Irish company facilitated the takeover of shareholder firms by the top executives.

Shareholder Value

The idea of 'shareholder value' originated in 1976 when many firms shifted focus solely to maximising value for shareholders. Its greatest advocate was Jack Welch, then head of GE. However, he was also one of first to realise it was not working.

Welch later admitted it was wrong. He described it as the "dumbest idea in the world", because it ignored workers and customers.

Part of the idea was to align the interests of shareholder with management and this was done (to great excess and with perverse results) by

granting share options to top managers. In many cases, this had the effect of making them focus on the short term.

The dispersal of share ownership in some companies allows management to exercise untold and unchallenged power. This is sometimes called Anglo American Capitalism as it is in stark contrast to the Nordic or continental governance system of firms.

Shareholder value is at the heart of the Irish Crash of 2008. The top executives, incentivised by bonuses and share options based on short-term profits, did all they could to boost immediate profits.

AIB, Bank of Ireland and Anglo are case studies in what is wrong with this model. It is not just that there is asymmetrical information, conflicts of interest or moral hazard, but the system is wholly deficient.

It serves neither the interest of the firms, the shareholder, the workers, the community or the taxpayers. Yet we are not even debating replacing shareholder value in Irish company law, let alone reforming it.

There have been elected Works Councils in all large companies throughout Europe for over a decade, but these Councils are largely consultative. In Germany, under the policy of *co-determination* key decisions are made by both management and employee representatives, jointly.

Employees elect up to half the supervisory board in companies with over 2000 workers and for companies with over 500 employees, they elect one third. It is clear that the German model of *co-determination* has helped create some of the finest companies in the world.

In many European countries, a proportion of company boards are nominated by unions/employees.

In 10 EU states (including Norway it is 11) employee interests can be represented on boards. Board level representation is widespread in Scandinavia, where up to one-third can be employee representatives.

In the Anglo model, a few rich shareholders exercise disproportionate power, where lack of an independent voice allows a small elite to misuse this power, with bad results for the companies, employees and the public.

The stakeholder view – as seen in Germany and other EU countries - tends to encourage firms to pursue more long-term strategies.

The lack of debate in Ireland on this issue is in marked contrast with Europe, where the EU Commission drew heavily on the report of the High Level Group of Company Law Experts (2002) for its *Action Plan on Modernising Company Law and Enhancing Corporate Governance* (2003).

The Reflection Group on the Future of Company Law which followed in 2010 was mainly composed of lawyers and it presented in 2011. This was followed by two public consultations, where there was a distinct shift in opinion on corporate governance from shareholder dominance.

It is suggested that a distinction might be made between internal stakeholders - workers and shareholders - and external stakeholders like the public and creditors, with the former having the right to be on company boards.

If Siemens, Volkswagen BMW and the world's best firms are governed by supervisory boards under co-determination, surely it is worth exploring in Ireland?

We cannot endure this deep, manmade recession and then revert to running the economy and business the same way as we did before.

We cannot afford to go back to *Cosy Irish Capitalism*. There has to be a transformation in the way companies are run. This means a change in the power relationship.

Every large company with limited liability should be required to publish its accounts in full to allow the public to assess risks in trading and help employees and others to be aware of its performance.

With globalisation, financial regulators and tax authorities need to be able to assess the cross - border actions of companies. Aggressive tax avoidance and evasion by multinational companies must be stopped.

In the UK, the House of Lords found that “the Big Four auditors' domination of the large firm audit market limits competition and choice.” These are Price Waterhouse, Deloitte, Ernst & Young and KPMG.

The huge influence of these big four companies in Ireland, along with the top legal firms is troubling. They seem to get the most lucrative of state work, no matter what their role in the collapse of the Irish banks.

There are now over 4,000 unlimited companies in Ireland - none of which publish accounts. They should not be allowed to avoid disclosure of full accounts.

All public interest companies should have to disclose the full accounts of those individual subsidiaries which are deemed to be of interest to the public. Congress holds that the Irish subsidiaries of European companies which are public interest companies should no longer be able to lump all their assets and sales into one big company.

In addition, companies should no longer be allowed to operate in Ireland by profiting from activities here - if they are registered in tax havens like Liechtenstein or the Bahamas, without also having an Irish registered base and disclosing all information in accordance with Irish law.

Companies should publish both accounts and the tax paid in each country in which they operate. It is unacceptable that major companies are allowed by the European Law not to publish accounts for the countries in which they have major operations.

There is no reason in the world why anyone who advocates competition should oppose this modest demand, provided it is applied equally to each firm, in each jurisdiction.

Furthermore, no major public contract should be awarded to companies that do not uphold the highest employment, safety and tax standards.

Many more tax audits of larger firms must be carried out. The cost will be effectively zero due to the revenue generated.

There is an unanswerable case for a full and deeply probing Banking Enquiry carried out in public scrutiny by a group of people of real integrity.

The gap in pay between the top and bottom earners has contributed substantially to the collapse of the Irish economy. The system of reward was perverse and encouraged risk and poor performance by top executives. Pay should be good, but no longer excessive, with bonuses capped and share options terminated. A fairer economy works better.

Company boards must show a greater diversity with many more women and representatives of other interests like workers and the community.

In the light of the performance of the boards of some of Ireland's leading companies, we must consider establishing Supervisory boards, as in Germany, with half of the directors nominated by workers and unions.



The younger generation turn out to help lift the burden, February 9, 2013





**SECTION
TWO**

**DECENT
WORK,
BETTER
FUTURE**

**Resolution from Twentieth
Annual Irish Trades Union Congress
City Hall, Cork, 12-14 May, 1913**

**Methods of Employers During
Lock-Outs and Strikes**

“This Congress protests against the methods of several employers of labour in victimising and locking out their employees, and, though the medium of the Capitalist Press, misrepresenting the workers’ position, by stating that the trouble was due to Syndicalism, whereas the cause of all the trouble was due to the tyrannical attitude of those employers towards Trades Unionism. Further, we respect and admire the fighting spirit of the Trades Unions involved, and affirm that if any of the other Unions not affected had been treated in the same manner, they would have retaliated”.

Moved by Mr. Moran, seconded by Mr. Farren
**Adopted, Twenty First Annual Irish
Trades Union Congress, 1914**

Consequently, Decent Work was “not just the creation of jobs, but also the creation of jobs of acceptable quality.”

Although the concept of ‘quality jobs’ will diverge across different societies, Decent Work has evolved over the succeeding years to encapsulate certain universal values.

Decent Work is characterised as work that is productive and freely chosen and where people enjoy rights of representation and consultation in the workplace.

The right to organise in unions and bargain collectively with employers is a key element.

A system of social dialogue that embraces unions, employers and all key interests, is seen as pivotal to the creation and maintenance of Decent Work.

In 2006, the European Commission endorsed the Decent Work concept and said it could be measured by reference to key statistical indicators on: job quality, skills, lifelong learning, gender equality, health and safety at work, flexibility and security, inclusion and access to the labour market, social dialogue and worker participation.

Trade unions across the globe have embraced the Decent Work agenda and made it a key campaign and organisational priority.

It is synonymous with the core work of trade unions and the values we promote.

While Decent Work may have emerged in a radically different era – one of global expansion and growth - it may prove to be of far greater relevance in the current age of austerity.

Growth and sustainable recovery cannot be built on the back of ill-paid, insecure and precarious work. Thus, the creation of good, decent jobs can become a driver of recovery.

For trade unions in Ireland, in the centenary of 1913, the idea of Decent Work has a special resonance.

Overview

The concept of Decent Work emerged during the late 1990s, as the process of globalisation created a new dynamic between job creation and sustainable economic progress.

In 1999, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) declared the achievement of Decent Work for all as a primary policy goal. It defined this as work carried out in conditions of “freedom, equity, security and human dignity.”

While globalisation added millions of new jobs to the international labour market, the ILO pointed out that many at work were experiencing even greater levels of insecurity.

One hundred years on from that formative battle, it is timely to reflect on how far we have travelled and how much remains to be done in the essential human struggle to attain a decent standard of living and create a decent society for all.

Europe is currently immersed in a titanic battle of ideas, the outcome of which will determine the future viability of the European Project itself. The secret history of last four decades has been one of subjugating the needs of society to the demands of business.

And as business has demanded greater 'freedom' governments have obliged by curtailing the role of the state and opening up ever greater areas of public space for the extraction of private profit.

Similarly, regulations designed to protect working people and set basic standards on wages and conditions are routinely presented as 'burdens' on business that damage 'competitiveness'.

The UK's Conservative-dominated coalition recently exempted hundreds of thousands of companies from health and safety inspections. They spoke of the need to "set businesses free."

From April 2013, it became easier for UK employers to sack workers, while the Spanish authorities also responded to record unemployment by weakening workers' rights.

In Ireland, it is instructive to note that following the onset of the crisis, two high profile targets of business were the Minimum Wage and the Joint Labour Committee system, both of which regulated low paid sectors of the economy.

Simultaneously social welfare rates were cut and qualifying periods shortened in a perverse attempt to force people to take up jobs that do not exist - or to accept badly paid work.

This is all the more remarkable as it is widely accepted that the absence or weakness of regulation was the primary cause of the current global crisis.

By way of contrast, the ILO has highlighted the centrality of unions to economic recovery across Europe.

The ILO has argued that far from weakening standards and protections, governments would be better placed providing support for union rights and collective bargaining processes as a "key to recovery."

The organisation cited the role of unions in battling wage inequality, increasing productivity and enhancing competitiveness. They also highlighted the effectiveness of collective bargaining as a tool to assist with economic adjustment and, ultimately, recovery.

The last global depression occurred in the aftermath of 1929 Wall Street Crash. And that crisis was ended when governments - particularly in the United States - enhanced regulation in the financial system and ensured greater security in the workplace.

Thus, the 40 hour working week was enshrined in law, through the Fair Labor Standards Act, while the Glass-Steagall Act prevented banks from engaging in speculation.

It is not a simple coincidence that the 'highly-regulated' Nordic countries have all emerged relatively unscathed from the current European crisis.

Typically, they enjoy greater levels of social protection, higher union density and stronger labour laws.

Resolution from Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress City Hall, Cork, 12-14 May, 1913

Fair Wages Resolution

"That, having regard to the unsatisfactory interpretation given to the Fair Wages Resolution by the greater number of Irish administrative bodies, this Congress instructs the Parliamentary Committee to use its influence with County Councils, Poor Law Boards, and other departments of Irish administration to adopt and enforce the Fair wages Clause, clearly defining that only firms who pay Trade Union rates and observe Trade Union conditions shall be eligible to tender for their contracts".

"That this Congress pledge itself to inquire minutely into the conditions of labour which employees on all Government Contracts work under, and see that the Fair Wage Resolution of same be put into full effect to secure to these workers the remuneration which they are entitled to by law".

Proposed by Mr. James Nolan (Dublin), seconded by Mr. T. Lawlor (Dublin).

Adopted, Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress, Cork, 1913

Part I: Decent Jobs

Background

The number of people unemployed in the EU continues to rise, hitting a new historic high of 26.2 million in January 2013, corresponding to an unemployment rate of 10.8%.

The increase in unemployment in the EU in the 21 months to January 2013 has led to a second wave of unemployment, with close to 3.7 million more people now out of work, an increase of 16.3%.

In Ireland, the rate of unemployment has remained stubbornly high. Unemployment stands at c.14.5%, whilst long-term unemployment (unemployed for more than one year) has risen to 60% of the total.

The actual extent of unemployment is masked by the steep rise in emigration, as a result of younger adults remaining in education for longer and through the significant numbers that have become detached from the labour market, as evidenced by falling participation rates.

It is important to note that whilst thousands of jobs were created in the so-called 'boom years', the majority were low-skilled, low-paid, precarious jobs with poor progression prospects. There was also an underlying education deficit affecting about a quarter of those in the workforce (lower secondary level) which was never adequately addressed, increasing the vulnerability of a large cohort of older members of the workforce.

Ireland continues to have one of the most flexible labour markets in Europe with weak protection generally compared to the EU15. This has facilitated 'labour shedding' as employers have resorted with relative ease to ending employment contracts.

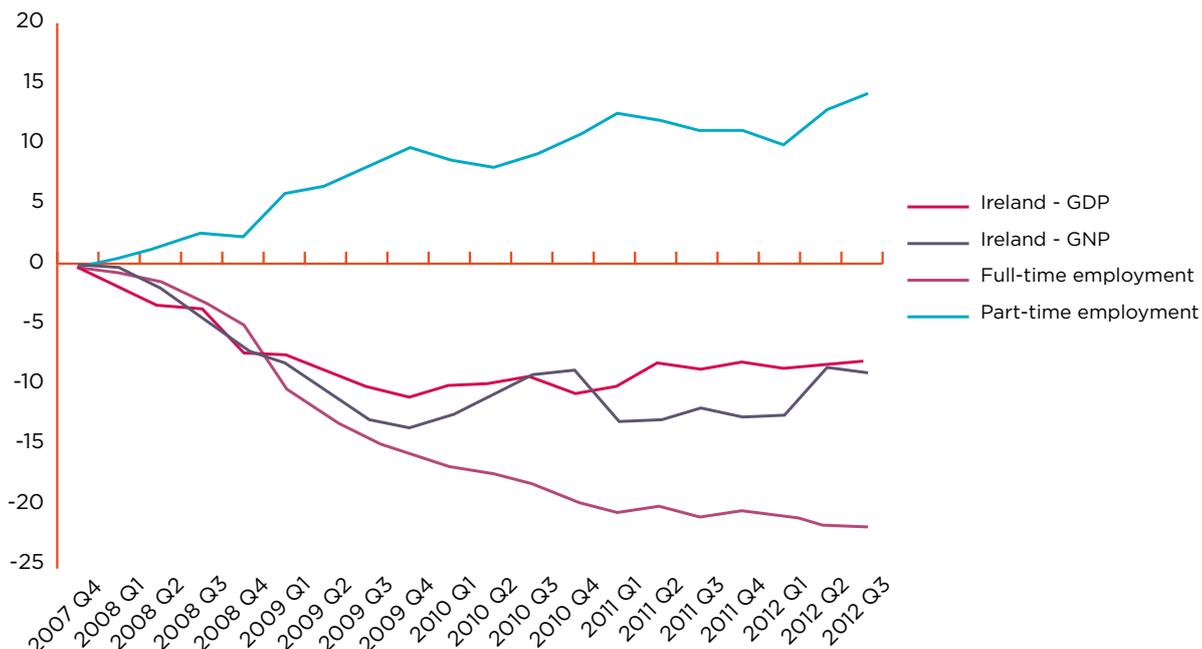


Coalition of the Low Paid mark World Day for Decent Work, October 7, 2012

Quality Jobs Create the Conditions for Recovery

The true measure of genuine recovery is not increases in GDP or GNP or even rising exports, but a sustained and measurable rise in full time jobs. Over the period under review, there has been an increase in the number of part time jobs, while simultaneously full time jobs continue to disappear. This is shown in the graph below.

Fig 4: Rise in part time employment



It shows the steady rise of almost 15% in part time or precarious jobs since the end of 2007 to the present and the much greater fall in full time jobs of 22%, in the same period.

The graph also illustrates the collapse of national income, measured either by GDP or GNP, to well below its 2007 level. The only positive news on growth is that GDP has been stable since the end of 2009 and GNP saw a small rise at end of 2010.

We have witnessed an extraordinary level of retrenchment, from cuts in public spending and cuts to investment, allied with a distinct lack of growth in Europe and lack of confidence in most of the private sector, all of which has driven this massive loss in jobs and the growth of part time work.

Demand is the Key

The extraction of some €28 billion from the Irish economy since the beginning of the private sector-induced Great Recession has reduced demand massively. It is equivalent to 24% of GNP (GNP was unchanged in 2011, 2012 and 2013 at €127bn). This has destroyed tens of thousands of jobs.

The best that could happen for employment would be a recovery in Europe. That is unlikely as the European elite are hell bent on the mindless pursuit of the same economic policy which brought us the Crash and for five years this elite - comprised of the EU Commission, the Council and the ECB - has stuck to austerity despite its failure.

Thus the next best bet is a Jobs Plan for Ireland. The government initiated an *Action Plan for Jobs* in 2012, followed by an update in 2013. While it has a welcome aspiration to create an additional 100,000 jobs, it is short on real direction. It focuses on supply-side issues like greater subsidies for firms or labour market de-regulation. One problem Ireland has is that its taxes on corporations are so low that it is difficult to reduce them further as an incentive in bad times, such as we have now, in order to boost jobs.

Congress has argued that if its economic policy proposals had been followed during the bubble years of 2001/2 to 2008, the crash would have been greatly reduced. Similarly Congress' policy since 2008 has been to focus on the demand side and not to cut public spending so harshly, to increase taxes on high incomes and wealth and prevent the short-termist sell off of good state companies. It is offensive to argue that we should support the privatisation of excellent companies because up to half of the money realised would be used for subsidising private firms, with faint and very unlikely hopes of stimulating job creation.

Delivering Jobs & Growth

Congress has contended for the last number of years that the biggest obstacle to creating employment is the depressed state of domestic demand in the Irish economy. We have argued that the solution is economic growth, investment and job creation which can generate new revenue and save on public spending by getting people back to work.

Whilst the government's state-led stimulus plan announced in July 2012 was a good start, Congress has contended that the extent of the crisis required a response on a much greater scale. Congress proposed that government should establish a targeted, frontloaded, strategic investment of upwards of €3bn per annum, over at least three years, in addition to the public capital programme already provided for. These proposals were detailed in the Congress 'Jobs and Growth' document published in June 2012 and provided a more detailed analysis of propositions contained in the Pre-Budget Submissions for both 2012 and 2013.

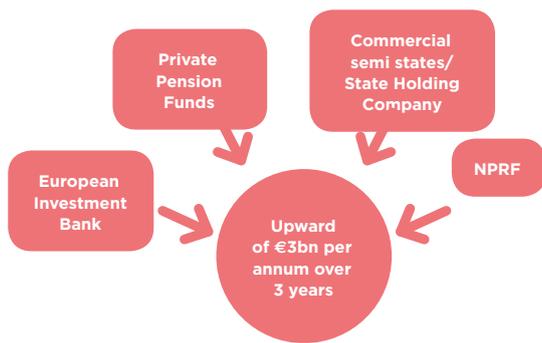
The 'Jobs and Growth' document demonstrated how the proposals would lead to an annual boost worth almost 2% as a share of GDP to the Irish economy, generating in the order of 30,000 jobs per annum or some 100,000 jobs over the three-year period.

In addition to creating jobs, such an approach would deliver much needed strategic infrastructure at a fair cost to the state. It would also begin to offset the deflationary impact of fiscal austerity, which has taken up to €28 billion out of the economy, in cuts and planned 'adjustments'.

Congress presented a structure for funding the investment stimulus to ensure that it could be kept off the state's balance sheet and argued that this could be done through a mix of public, private and European/international funding sources. These included:

- » €2bn from the National Pension Reserve Fund over the next three years, invested in job creation;
- » Private pension funds should be encouraged to increase their investment in the Irish economy by 5%, raising an extra €4bn a year;
- » Encourage investment in Solidarity Bonds by pension schemes, as agreed by Congress, IBEC and the IAPF;
- » The State Holding Company should be set up in such a way as to attract pension funds;
- » A new state pension scheme would give a substantial flow of funds to the Exchequer and we should encourage PRSAs to invest in scheme. This could raise €1bn over the next year;
- » Multinationals could defer repatriation of some of their profits and set up a commercial fund to invest here.

Funding Model



The proposal for a productive investment package was put forward by Congress as one part of a long-term strategy to achieve decent work, economic recovery, sustainable development and greater equality. A number of other areas have also been identified where policy approaches need to be developed to more comprehensively address the challenges faced.

Congress also argued that in parallel to providing a stimulus for capital and infrastructural works, a new policy on **labour market social clause** must be developed for inclusion in all contracts funded by the public purse. Such a clause would place stronger requirements on successful bidders for state contracts to meet demanding targets for employing quotas of apprentices and long term unemployed. There is a real need to ensure that our investments have the desired effect of providing employment for those on the live register and meaningful training-to-work, apprenticeship opportunities for at risk young people.

The 2012 and 2013 Congress Pre-Budget Submissions outlined a number of key measures that could be taken in order to create job and deliver growth and called on government, yet again, to invest in targeted initiatives that would create jobs and boost competitiveness: water conservation, a national broadband scheme, retrofitting of homes to cut energy bills.

Preserving Employment & Enhancing Employability

The **EU Employment Package** adopted in April 2012 sets out a range of measures with the potential to contribute towards the achievement of a job-rich recovery. In particular we point to the EU's call for:

- » Investment in skills and in areas with job potential for the future such as health service, new technology and the green economy;
- » Establishing decent and sustainable wages and avoiding low-wage traps, and;

- » Ensuring appropriate contractual arrangements to prevent excessive use of non-standard contracts.

Congress responded that these proposals are important and need to be incorporated into a strategy for retention as well as job creation and also warned of the very significant growth in involuntary, part-time employment and the increase in precarious jobs among those in employment, particularly in sectors such as retail, as a worrying development. We must make it more difficult or costly for employers to change contractual arrangements and create conditions more precarious and insecure for workers.

Equally, in relation to job shedding, Ireland is almost unique among the EU 15 in that we have high levels of flexibility and low levels of security. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on preserving the jobs we have, whilst reducing vulnerability through upskilling and training. Congress has repeatedly pointed to examples across Europe where flexicurity policies have been used effectively to keep workers in jobs or make it less easy for employers to shed workers, during the current crisis. Thus in Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands, where greater security and protection is afforded to workers, unemployment has remained relatively low during the last five years.



Campaigning for Youth Guarantee, ETUC Rally, March 2013

Youth Employment

Youth unemployment stood at 23.6% in January 2013. In a presentation to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education & Social Protection, Congress stressed the following key messages:

- » The failure of austerity policies and need to emphasise demand side measures;
- » The consistently lower levels of youth unemployment in countries with a well- designed and broadly based apprenticeship system;

- » The challenge posed by the growing number of NEETS – or young people not in employment, education or training;
- » The need to include social clauses in public procurement policies, with recruitment targets for long term unemployed and for young people.

Congress stressed that such measures were in conformity with EU law, and had already been adopted by the devolved administration in Northern Ireland.

In a related development the European Commission announced its intention to present a quality framework for traineeships in 2012. In April 2012, the Commission circulated a Staff Working Document for consultation to all, including the social partners. The employers have indicated their opposition to such a quality framework.

An item of particular concern is growing number of young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs).

The NEET rate rose in all member states between 2008-2012, except in Austria, Germany, Luxembourg and Romania. The largest increases were seen in: Greece, Cyprus, Latvia and Ireland, where the rate of increase was 5.1%.

European Youth Guarantee

EU Commission President, Jose Manuel Barossa, sent a fact finding delegation to all the member states experiencing a high level of youth unemployment in February 2012 and Congress met with them during their time here.

This resulted in a proposal that the Commission take specific action on aid to member states with a high level of youth unemployment. It is hoped that this matter will be brought to a conclusion by the Irish presidency and budget of €6bn is planned for the initiative.

It is proposed to target countries with a rate of youth unemployment over 25%. Based on Eurostat figures, this would comprise 13 or 14 EU states.

Negotiations on the finalisation of a Youth Employment package are close to a conclusion. If successful, it will result in a framework of actions agreed between the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), Business Europe, the European Centre for Employers & Enterprises providing Public Services (CEEP) and the European Association of Small & Medium Enterprises (UEPAME).

Implementation of any programmes in Ireland will be the responsibility of Congress and IBEC.

Congress Special Initiative on Youth Labour Market

As part of its on-going response to the youth unemployment crisis, Congress embarked on an initiative to engage with key stakeholder groups representative of a broad cohort of youth in Ireland.

In addition to work with youth representatives from affiliate unions, Congress also undertook a number of engagements with a range of organisations, including second and third level student bodies, other organised youth groups, political groups and through focus group discussions.

This process of dialogue also formed part of a broader communications' exercise to better understand the key concerns and priority issues for young people in relation to the social and economic crises. Through this work we have sought to establish a collaborative approach that would help identify areas of commonality and develop a set of policy proposals and recommendations as a youth-centred response to the crisis.

Research was undertaken during the summer of 2012 with representatives of second and third level students, with a particular emphasis on young people with experience of the workplace. This was highly informative in providing insights into some of the problems experienced by young people in the workplace, as well as helping to better define concerns around education, activation and work, and understanding of the Decent Work concept.

This was followed up with a broader engagement with third level student unions and the Congress Youth Committee and union representatives. Subsequent to this support was received from the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) for the February 9 *Shift the Burden* series of demonstrations. Congress was invited to participate in the annual USI Conference on the Youth Guarantee and Internships, where a broad invitation was issued to all student unions to participate in drafting a policy paper, in conjunction with the Congress Youth Committee.

Congress is currently convening a series of consultations with student unions, affiliates and other relevant organisations, which will identify and agree key priorities for all represented organisations and deliver a position which each organisation can endorse and on which they can campaign.

It is envisaged that this paper will become the primary focus of the Congress' Youth Agenda for action, addressing the concerns of young people from second and third level, along with young workers and the young unemployed.

It is envisaged the paper will cover education, youth unemployment, job creation and workers' rights, recognising that the needs of young people are



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as diverse as they are complex, and will include a specific focus on a tiered approach to the transition of young people from their current position to the labour market.

This process will lead to a greater understanding of the difficulties confronting students and young workers and help build strong future relationships between the student population at second and third level, young workers and the trade union movement. This can be further built upon through the work of the Youth Committee.

ETUC Youth Committee & the Youth Guarantee

The ETUC Youth Committee has been deeply involved in negotiations on the Youth Guarantee initiative. The initiative aims to identify ways in which unions and business can assist young people to gain employment, covering areas such as vocational education and training, apprenticeships and participation in the implementation of Youth Guarantee schemes.

Moreover, the need for appropriate negotiated terms and conditions, including protections, for young workers at the workplace is recognised. Affiliates of the organisations involved must sanction the document before it is approved. If ratified, the next challenge would be to prompt IBEC and the government to engage constructively in relation to areas where progress can be made, such as ensuring young people are equipped with the skills they need to succeed in the labour market.

The ETUC Youth Committee had a vocal presence at the ETUC Congress in Athens in May 2011, with a number of contributions highlighting the need for the trade unions to focus on organising young workers and addressing issues in relation to youth employment.

The committee organised a conference in Krakow, Poland, in November 2011 on the theme of *Quality Education for a Quality Job*. The findings of a report on the topic were presented, examining issues such as skill mismatches, the importance of education for employment prospects and financing.

Part II: Social Protection

Impact of Austerity on Vital Public Services

One of the primary functions of a progressive taxation policy is to redistribute wealth through the provision of accessible and properly functioning public services. The aim is to ensure that those with lesser means can access services - some of which are vital - which they otherwise could not afford. Many would regard this system of wealth redistribution as the hallmark of a properly functioning, civilised society.

In the Republic of Ireland the policy of reducing public spending coupled with the burden of private bank debt (otherwise known as austerity) has meant vital public services have come under very significant pressure.

Over the last five years, the health service has experienced savage cuts. Since 2008 the budget for the public health service has been reduced by over 20%. By 2015 it is expected that the numbers working in the public health service will have been reduced to 95,500, down from 110,000 in 2008.

The depth and pace of the cuts being experienced in the public health service are more acute than those occurring in any other OECD country and are also more severe than the cuts imposed in any other 'programme' country.

While the mantra of the Minister for Health, in particular, is that the public health service must continue to provide more services with fewer resources, the simple reality is that the ongoing programme of cuts is having a dramatic and debilitating effect on services.

While there are numerous examples of the negative impact of cuts on services, we highlight four that are causing particular hardship:

- » At the time of writing, there are 2400 closed beds in acute and non-acute settings in the public health system. Strict budgeting means that hospital administrators are faced with no option but to close down access to in-patient treatment.
- » There has been a dramatic rise in waiting lists for some vital treatments. In orthopaedics the waiting list is four years for some basic treatments.
- » The so called Fair Deal scheme has been compromised because of the severe lack of long term care spaces. This shortage means that people who are capable of being medically

discharged from acute settings remain in situ, with obvious consequences for the capacity of hospitals to admit new patients.

- » The cuts have severely affected public mental health services and services for those with an intellectual disability. The withdrawal of funding has meant that patients are being deprived of vital services and carers and parents of patients are suffering in silence as their ability to access adequate respite is withdrawn.

Despite repeated government claims of protecting education to the greatest extent possible, schools, teachers and students are also suffering from the impact of austerity policies.

At primary level more than 20% of pupils are being taught in classes of 30 or more, while Ireland's class sizes remain the second highest in the EU. School funding for running costs has been steadily reduced. Day to day funding at primary level is now less than a euro per pupil per day.

In the last two years teaching supports for Traveller children have been eliminated, English language teaching for (overseas) children is now virtually non-existent and modern language teaching is no longer provided. At second level, guidance counselling has been abolished. The remaining teachers have absorbed the workload of their former colleagues.

In schools and classrooms up and down the country more and more children are falling victim to the prevailing 'austerity only' policy. On average, one in five children is at risk of poverty. This compares with almost one in ten of the elderly population. In terms of poverty, children are the most exposed age group in modern Ireland with a consistent poverty rate of 8.1%. This means more than two primary school pupils in every Irish classroom are living in constant poverty. An estimated 5% of children in the lowest income families do not get breakfast each morning, while one in eleven children are living with a parent with a serious alcohol or drug abuse problem.

The often severe impact of these problems on the welfare and learning capacity of our schoolchildren is dealt with on daily basis by our schools and teaching staff, at all levels.

Ultimately, such policies are short-sighted and self-defeating as it will cost us more as a society to deal with the longer-term consequences. Equally, it damages our prospects for recovery as sicker and less educated societies invariably perform worse than those which prioritise the 'common good' and invest in good public service provision.

In early 2013, the Nevin Economic Research Institute addressed the impact of on-going austerity on public services and warned there were "signs of dis-improvement in the quality and quantity of some public services with possible immediate and long-term implications for social well-being and general economic competitiveness."

In a publication from 2012, NERI had opined that there was "*no necessary contradiction between having high and sustainable levels of public spending and revenue - if society so chooses - and proceeding with a pro-business and pro-competition policy and pursuing a sound fiscal policy. If society decides to pay for, and insist on, quality public services then this is what it can get.*"

"Public expenditure does not (automatically) guarantee better outcomes in areas such as health, education or income equality. It is necessary to change the direction of spending and improve efficiency through public sector reform. However, it seems extremely difficult if not impossible to realise positive social change by taking Ireland further away from EU norms of spending and taxation as envisaged under existing policies.



Jozef Niemec, ETUC, Kristina Krupaviciene, ETUC, Minister for Jobs & Enterprise, Richard Bruton, EU Commissioner Laszlo Andor, Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton, Sarah King, ETUC, David Begg, Congress General Secretary

Unemployment & Activation

The Congress 2013 Pre-Budget Submission (published November 2012), looked at the consequences of public spending cuts, in what it described as "the assault on secondary social welfare benefits."

The submission pointed out that the very ethos of social protection - along with core benefits - was being systematically undermined and devalued.

“While it is understandable that the gap between revenue and public spending must be reduced, the ‘adjustment’ focus on cuts as opposed to taxation means reductions in public services.”

A decent welfare system should act both a safety net and as a springboard to work. Re-training should be central, equipping workers with new skills for the changing demands of the workplace. A good welfare system has another major benefit: it acts as an ‘automatic stabiliser’ in a crisis, helping to steady the decline in spending and demand.

The best way to cut the welfare bill is to create jobs. Nothing saves money faster. Each person off welfare and working saves the state some €13,000 per annum and generates approximately €8,000 in taxes and PRSI contributions.

The two major forces bearing on social protection are the pressure exerted by the Troika and the guarantees to maintain existing rates contained in the *Programme for Government*. Social protection, hitherto considered the exclusive preserve of national governments, has de facto become an EU competency - due to our position as a programme country.

Since the arrival of the Troika, it would seem that the main emphasis of policy makers has shifted from income adequacy - based ultimately on the report of the Commission on Social Welfare - to an approach based on employment as the means for combatting poverty.

The NESC report *Supports and Services for Unemployed Jobseekers: Challenges and Opportunities in a Time of Recession* laid the basis for this approach. This raises potential problems as can be seen from the Harz reforms in Germany, which resulted in the proliferation of ‘mini jobs’ or low paid, precarious employment.

Within the system of EU governance introduced in the so-called Six Pack, labour market and social protection policies are now open to peer review. But what has not been made public is the fact that programme countries - such as Ireland - are exempt from this process.

When the country emerges from Troika supervision, it will immediately be subject to this new form of scrutiny. This will require a new level of engagement by unions, both at a national and at an EU level.

The term ‘activation’ is understood as continued receipt of social welfare benefits being subject to some conditionality in relation to evidence of job seeking. This can have a multitude of meanings, ranging from increased Department of Social Protection (DSP) engagement with jobseekers, to claimants being pressurised into taking jobs at exploitative wages and conditions.

This process requires vigilance from the trade union movement if labour standards are to be maintained. Congress considers that a robust system of social insurance provides real benefits for jobseekers to take up work. Regrettably, the last decade has seen the systematic erosion of the premium for insurance-based supports over means-tested payments.

JobBridge

This scheme was introduced in July 2011. Participants may work for an employer for a period of up to nine months, in exchange for their social welfare payment and a top up of €50 per week. Congress was not represented on the committee which monitors this scheme, and took a position of cautiously welcoming it. *JobBridge* vacancies are monitored on a regular basis as are social media websites and Congress maintains a continuing dialogue with DSP on the operation of the scheme.

Some 15,615 internships have commenced as at March 14, 2013 with 5,939 participants on an internship and 2,377 internship opportunities advertised as of that date. The interim evaluation of the scheme conducted by Indecon found that 61% of individuals who have participated in *JobBridge* have progressed into employment within five months of completing their internship placements, although not necessarily in the enterprise where the *JobBridge* placement was undertaken. The final evaluation report is awaited at time of writing.

Social Insurance Benefits

At 23.7%, Ireland has the sixth highest rate of part time work in the EU. Included in that figure are the underemployed, whom the CSO define as those working part time and who would work more hours if they were available.

The CSO estimates that the *underemployment* rate was 9.5% of the total number of employees. This high rate of underemployment will dampen the effect of any economic recovery in reducing unemployment.

Erosion of the system of social protection often has the result of depriving people of benefits they have paid for.

For example, the cuts in dental treatment provision - paid for by workers’ and employers’ PRSI - has hit working class people hardest. Many are now avoiding preventative treatment as they are uncertain of the cost.

Congress has called for the reductions in free preventative care treatments to be reversed as a priority – particularly as this short-term saving seems as it will almost certainly result in longer-term costs to the state.

The social insurance system supports those on part time work, through a range of measures such as Family Income Supplement and Jobseeker's Benefit. Outcomes are mixed, at best.

At the time of writing, processing times for claims for Family Income Supplement (FIS) are an estimated at six months. The support available to part time workers through unemployment insurance was eroded in Budget 2012, as new arrangements were introduced for calculating benefits for those working part time.

The changes involved the redefinition of the working week from six to five, and the changed status of Sunday. Prior to July 26, 2012, where a Jobseeker's Benefit recipient was working for part of a week, the benefit paid is based on a 6-day week.

For each day that a person works, one sixth of the normal rate of Jobseeker's Benefit was deducted from their payment. After that date the week was based on a five day week and for each day worked the deduction was increased to one fifth. Additionally, earnings on a Sunday were taken into account in calculating the social welfare entitlement of a part time worker, whereas prior to that date Sunday earnings were disregarded.

Congress met with the Department to voice our concern and protest at these changes. Congress also met with the Chair of the Oireachtas Committee regarding a report on the social welfare status of casual workers.

The key issue here is the increased incidence of precarious work, sometimes encouraged by schemes for lower employers' PRSI for part time workers.

In order to combat these perverse incentives, Congress suggested (in its most recent pre-Budget submission) that an *index of precarity* be developed and those firms Congress with a high level of precarious contracts should pay a higher level of employers' PRSI.

Congress has lobbied for changes in how the Universal Social Charge is applied and sought for it to be progressively restructured to reduce the rate paid by low earners. As women are concentrated in lower income jobs, the charge has had a disproportionate impact on them.

Low paid, insecure work is of benefit to anyone but exploitative employers and is not socially or economically sustainable. It does nothing to enhance prospects for an overall recovery.



Wake Up to Pension Reform! Congress Seminar on pensions' crisis, April 2012

The Attack on Pensions

The age at which the state pension is payable is increasing across Europe. But in Ireland the changes are being implemented more quickly than elsewhere. The UK is raising the pension age to 67, but in Ireland it will only become payable at age 68.

The speed and which this is being changed takes no account of the legitimate expectations of workers who have been paying significant amounts of PRSI their entire working lives. Neither does it allow them time to change their pension arrangements to cope with the period of up to three years – the gap between retiring at 65 and receiving the pension at 68 - where they are likely to have no work and no income.

This so-called 'reform' unfairly targets a section of the workforce in the private sector who are mid-career. The Society of Actuaries has surveyed employers and most have decided that the changes will not result in them keeping workers on after age 65.

This is a recipe for serious industrial unrest as workers will resist being cast into poverty come retirement. In addition, the changes in the qualification bands for the state pension will mean that those with an average of 29 annual contributions stand to lose €1500 every year, for life from next September.

That is grossly inequitable and will adversely affect vulnerable workers, particularly women.

Child Supports

Congress has continued to make the case for investment in our national childcare infrastructure for the benefit of children, families and wider society. Surveys have shown that the cost of one childcare place in Ireland – approximately €1000 - is more than half the average net family income. This compares with much lower costs in countries such as Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and France. Many other countries also invest in childcare at a higher level than we do in Ireland, and for very good reasons.

The Nevin Economic Research Institute (NERI) has pointed to the benefits of such investment, which are more pronounced for children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. These include:

- » improved literacy and numeracy;
- » longer education participation;
- » better labour market outcomes, including women returning to work more quickly;
- » better life outcomes;
- » reduced societal costs from crime etc;
- » benefits to children's parents;
- » additional future tax revenues.

Congress will continue making the case for such investment in order to increase job opportunities, help bolster competitiveness, improve gender balance in the labour market and ensure better outcomes for our children.

Recent speculation on whether women could be forced out of their jobs under the new insolvency regime is quite disturbing and we will work to ensure that this does not occur. The high cost of childcare and women's relatively low earning power are the real issues to be tackled.

Interestingly, a February 2013 survey - *Snapshot of Parents' Experiences of Childcare & Afterschool Care* - (organised by OPEN, Barnardos, National Women's Council and Start Strong), found that 75% of respondents said yes, when asked if would they accept an increase in taxes to help fund childcare and afterschool care services.

Congress continues to be represented on the National Childcare Co-ordinating Committee (NCCC). We wrote to Minister Frances Fitzgerald regarding staffing issues in community childcare settings caused by changes to CE rules and subsequently met with the Department of Children to discuss the issue.

The Department of Social Protection has developed a new model for Community Employment in Childcare. They are piloting the scheme in Meath and are also looking at Kildare and Dublin North for a further pilot. It allows CE workers in Childcare three years placement with a FETAC 5 Childcare

qualification at the end, and also one year's work experience as part of the three years. Also, the national Early Year's strategy is currently being prepared and stakeholders are to be consulted in spring 2013.

Finally, Congress, and a number of affiliated unions, played an active role on the Yes side during the successful Children's Referendum campaign in November 2012.

Supporting Child Benefit

As the principle official income support mechanism for parents, Child Benefit is in line with Article 18 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which obliges states to support parents and legal guardians in caring and providing for their children.

In the most recent budget we saw Child Benefit cut by €10 per month (from €140 to €130) for the first and second child, by €18 per month (from €148 to €130) for the third child, and by €20 (from €160 to €140) for fourth and subsequent children. This was the fourth consecutive budget to reduce the payment, resulting in a cumulative monthly loss for families with three children or more of almost €100.

Research undertaken in 2012 by the Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice on the cost of raising children established that child income supports do not reflect the varying needs of a child and that, depending on a child's age, location and employment status of their parents, the payments are mostly inadequate. Furthermore, the Nevin Economic Research Institute found that 33% of households have a gross income of less than €30,000.

The failure in Budgets 2011, 2012 and 2013 to compensate those on the lowest incomes for these cuts interferes with a child's right to an adequate standard of living. Congress has continued its call for budgetary measures to be equality-proofed and will make a similar case in relation to future budgets, to ensure that children and families are protected from unnecessary cuts and associated distress.

Mortgage Debt

In addition, Congress has consistently argued – from the outset of the crisis – that government must move in a fair and balanced manner to help householders in mortgage arrears. Family homes and living standards must be protected and realistic ways found to help people out of indebtedness.

Disability Protection

We continued our engagement with government and political parties on the need to row back on disability cutbacks: some 14% has been over the past four years. We also called for the publication of an Implementation Plan for the National Disability Strategy, including delivery on the long overdue comprehensive employment strategy. Congress also called for the continuation of the reform programme set out in the Government's mental health policy - *A Vision for Change* - and for the promised ring fencing of €35 million annually from the health budget to develop community services to be realised.

We also facilitated discussion with disability groups on the Croke Park Agreement and its impact on disability services. We got agreement in principle to jointly state that there were no more savings available in the system, that services are dependent on skilled staff and any further cutbacks would have a detrimental effect on the most vulnerable groups in society.

Resolution from Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress City Hall, Cork, 12-14 May, 1913

Medical Benefits

“That the delegates of the various trades affiliated to the Irish Trades Congress demand that the Medical Benefits be extended to Ireland, and we consider a 7s. 6d. capitation fee per insured member sufficient to cover member, wife and family up to 16 years of age, and we strongly condemn the dispensary and Poor Law at present in vogue in Ireland, as it makes a person a pauper; and we desire that a true and proper system of help for deserving cases shall be instituted in place of the present degrading system, and the sooner it is done the better for the welfare of the country. The inquiry which has been held has not given satisfaction to organised Labour”.

Proposed by: Mr. Grogan (Amalgamated Society of Painters).

Adopted, Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress, Cork, 1913

Part III: Decent Incomes

Protecting Incomes

Fair pay is fundamental both to Decent Work and wider social cohesion. It also contributes to economic stability as it allows working people to purchase goods and services, thereby creating and maintaining jobs.

Since the crisis began, take home pay for most workers in Ireland has dropped. Workers who have escaped pay cuts are taking home less than they did in 2006, while those who suffered cuts to basic pay are pinned back to the 2004 earnings.

At a European level there has been a sustained campaign to erode workers bargaining power through undermining the traditional pay bargaining systems. The European Commission views pay determination as an adjustment mechanism through which it can try to restore 'competitiveness'.

But various EU treaties specify that pay determination is an issue best decided at the national level, normally through social dialogue between employers and unions.

If the Commission's view prevails, then wages will continue to be frozen or reduced.

In addition to questioning traditional systems of indexation and relativities, the EU Commission is also urging a 'better' alignment of wages on productivity in many countries. Taken literally, this implies limiting wage dynamics to the evolution of short and medium term productivity, while removing inflation and other traditional yardsticks as determinants of wages.

This will result in stagnation, or even a fall in average real wages, in some years.

These attacks on wages and decent working conditions are ultimately self-defeating.

They will simply increase the numbers out of work (meaning a higher welfare bill), reduce workers' bargaining power and reduce wages. That means less spending in the economy, more people out of work and a deeper recession.

It's a downward spiral.

Income has two economic aspects: it is a cost to business and it creates demand.

The share of national income going to wages has fallen considerably in most developed countries, since the early 1970s. While overall national income rose, the labour share fell in most countries including Ireland. This undermines demand as labour (wage earners) tend to spend most or all of their income. Thus the fall in labour share was a major factor behind the Crash of 2008.

One explanation for the falling labour share and rising share to capital might be that there has been an intensification of capital investment. However, against that, there has been a huge improvement in 'human capital' with all countries seeing major increases in educational and skills attainment. This investment in human capital is not being rewarded by increases in labour's share of national income. As less national income is going to workers, this has an impact on aggregate demand and thus on economic growth.

The issue of the decline in labour's income share involves equity, social cohesion and personal income distribution, longer-term wealth distribution, macroeconomic stability and the composition of aggregate demand.

Fall in Labour Share of National Income

| | 1973 | 2011 | Fall |
|---------|------|-------|------|
| France | 62.2 | 58.7 | 3.5 |
| Germany | 63.2 | 57.9* | 5.3 |
| Italy | 67.3 | 55.1 | 12.2 |
| Ireland | 65.3 | 52.5 | 12.8 |

Source: Ameco. * West Germany only until unification.

The value of the fall between 1973 and 2011 is substantial in monetary terms. Even with the smallest decline - France, 3.5% - it still represents a transfer of €71bn from labour to capital. For Germany it is €137bn and for Ireland, the value of then transfer represented 12.8% of GDP in 2011.

The reasons for the decline are complex, including:

- » globalisation;
- » greater competition, nationally and internationally;
- » the financialisation of the economy;
- » deregulation;
- » the reduction of labour's bargaining power;
- » opening up new markets with Soviet collapse; China and Asia's embrace of markets;

- » offshoring;
- » outsourcing;
- » increased investment and thus returns to capital;
- » the relative decline of nation states and increasing power of corporations and
- » privatisation.

Some of these drivers overlap.

Action is need to strengthen labour's bargaining power with legislation on collective bargaining and minimum wages, on financial disclosure by corporations, by ensuring corporations pay due taxes, through greater education - particularly of the lower skilled - coherent and wide ranging industrial policy; a process of re-regulation and the development of national champions of private and state firms, all with a commitment to Ireland.

The Living Wage

Within the parameters of the Congress Campaign for Decent Work, the concept of a living wage has begun to attract attention. The concept was highlighted on a number of occasions over the 2012/13, including in a presentation at the Congress Seminar on 'Making the Case for Decent Work', which took place on January 24, 2013 (see section 8).

A **living wage** is defined as an hourly wage rate sufficient to ensure that a worker earns enough to enjoy a decent standard of living.

Speaking at the January 2013 seminar NERI economist Micheál Collins pointed towards the experience of the Living Wage Campaign in parts of the UK, most particularly London.

There, the concept has gained a broad degree of support and acceptance among both employers and employees. Crucially, there is an understanding that *both* gain from its introduction.

The NERI presentation also noted that as we try to plan for the future, a major concern and focus will have to be the growing income and earnings disparities that have emerged in our society in recent years.

While much of that focus tends to be on the top of these distributions, in terms of taxing higher earnings and cutting excessive salaries, we should also remember the potential to make adjustments towards the bottom of the earnings distribution.

In that context, decent pay in the form of a living wage offers the potential to make notable impacts on the living standards of a large number of low income households.

DEDICATION

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In April 2013 the issue of the living wage was again highlighted in a NERI seminar, with a presentation from Professor Jane Wills of the University of London, the author of a recent study on the costs and benefits of the London living wage. She also participated in a Congress roundtable on the issues where the challenges and opportunities of a living wage campaign were discussed.



Fair Deal for Cleaners Campaign demonstrate in Dublin, June 2011

Attack on Wages

Since the onset of the crisis, the term 'competitiveness' has provided useful camouflage and cover for those campaigning to drive down incomes and cut wage costs for business. Adopting a very simplistic, limited and self-serving interpretation of what constitutes competitiveness, their campaign particularly targeted the lower paid and 'wage floors' - such as the Minimum Wage and Joint Labour Committees.

The intention to do so was clearly flagged in the *Review of Labour Cost Competitiveness*, a report published by Forfás in 2010, prior to the arrival of the Troika.

Recommendations from the report were subsequently incorporated into the National Recovery Plan and attempts made to introduce key elements through the annual budgetary process.

The 'key challenges' set out in the Forfás report included: the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and sectoral wage-setting mechanisms such as Joint Labour Committees (JLCs) and Registered Employment Agreements (REAs).

The Minimum Wage, whilst covering less than 5% of the labour force, or circa 80,000 workers, was seen to influence levels of pay of a far more substantial number of workers: in excess of 350,000 people

whose earnings were within 1.5 times the level of the Minimum Wage and workers covered by sectoral wage mechanisms.

A cut of €1 per hour to the Minimum Wage rate was passed by the then government in December 2010. It was duly reversed by the current government in July 2011. However, shortly afterwards, the Joint Labour Committee system was the subject of a successful legal challenge.

Review of Joint Labour Committees

There can be little doubt that the July 2011 ruling of the High Court continues to have an on-going negative impact on the pay and conditions of workers in the sectors of the economy covered by JLCs.

In the judgement in *John Grace Fried Chicken Ltd and Others v The Catering Joint Labour Committee, The Labour Court, Ireland and the Attorney General* (July 2011), the High Court declared some sections of the Industrial Relations Act 1946 and the 1990 Act to be unconstitutional.

Essentially the Court found that the legislation did not provide sufficient direction to the Labour Court on the procedures for making an Employment Regulation Order. The effect of the judgement is that while all JLCs remained in existence their Employment Regulation Orders (EROs) became unenforceable and ceased to apply.

As a result, the National Employment Rights Authority (NERA) could not enforce the minimum pay and conditions of employment prescribed in EROs, in force at the time of the High Court decision. Where prosecutions for non-compliance with an ERO had been commenced these were withdrawn and no further prosecutions could be initiated in relation to compliance with EROs in place prior to July 11, 2011.

An examination of the District Court records show that literally hundreds of cases were struck out.

This placed severe downward pressure on existing wages and conditions because of the removal of the legally-enforceable floor on anything other than statutory requirements.

Left unchanged it will in time result in continued downward movement in pay and conditions, invariably driving these sectors down to the level of the Minimum Wage.

Employers operating in sectors covered by Joint Labour Committees are now legally obliged to pay only the minimum wage of €8.65 per hour, in relation to new employees engaged since that decision. Existing employees contracts must

be paid in accordance with the previous ERO system and these terms can only be varied with their consent.

However there are numerous examples of employers 'offering' new contracts on 'a take it or leave' it basis, or through more indirect routes such as reducing the hours of work for existing staff and replacing these with new recruits paid national minimum wage rates and with contracts stripped of other JLC entitlements, such as sick pay, overtime and Sunday pay.

Submissions from SIPTU, Mandate and Unite clearly demonstrated examples where employers have also cut the pay of existing staff and have not honoured existing terms of conditions.

The Labour Inspectorate has direct experience of enforcement and their case report for breaches of the Joint Labour Committees during the January to July 2011 period - the six months immediately prior to the Employment Regulation Orders becoming unenforceable - show some 33,576 workers were owed €741,929 in unpaid wages.

High levels of non-compliance underline the need for effective enforcement including increased fines and other penalties for persistent offenders.

No New Jobs or Price Reductions

Contrary to the claims of employer representative groups there is no evidence of increased job creation since the Employment Regulation Orders were placed in abeyance.

Nor have the promised price benefits to the consumer materialised, apart from sporadic 'special offers'.

Overall, the most vulnerable workers have experienced a worsening in pay and conditions of employment and genuine local business people who have tried to maintain decent terms and conditions have been undercut by more unscrupulous employers, in a case of bad jobs driving out the good.

Cost of Labour Low in JLC Sectors

In the sectors covered by Joint Labour Committees, the cost of labour generally represents less than a third of the costs to an employer. Even in the labour intensive 'accommodation and food & beverage services' sector, only 31.6% of the 'basic price' is due to worker compensation (which includes wages and social insurance).

The 'basic price' is the price received by producers - not that which is paid by consumers. Therefore, once taxes are included, the share of employee compensation in the final price will be below 31.6%.

In addition, labour costs in these sectors are below international norms.

Resolution from Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress City Hall, Cork, 12-14 May, 1913

The Housing Question

"That this Irish Trades Congress, speaking on behalf of the workers of Ireland, reiterates its demand for a thorough solution of the Housing Question, which has become one of the most pressing questions calling for the attention of Local Authorities; that if any substantial progress is to be made with this reform, the cities and towns must be assisted by State Grants; we are of opinion that legislation ought to be passed giving County Borough Councils power to obtain money for this purpose on the same terms as regards the rate of interest and repayment of capital as loans are at present obtained by Rural District Councils in this country; and we call for the extension to Ireland of the Town Planning Bill".

Proposed by Mr. W. O'Brien (Chairman), seconded by Mr. W.P. Partridge, (Dublin).

Adopted, Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress, Cork, 1913

JLCs Support Decent Work

Workers in the JLC sectors do not benefit from collective bargaining and without the Joint Labour Committee they have no say in their pay, terms and conditions. Unlike most other developed countries Ireland does not have in place statutory support for the right to collective bargaining.

The JLC sectors are, in the main, service industries and they continue to be affected by the conditions and factors that gave rise to the need for Joint Labour Committee mechanisms in the first instance, such as:

» Low levels of Trade Union density;

- » In the absence of a JLC system, worker will not be covered by Collective Bargaining, nor will they have an opportunity to engage in Collective Bargaining and will be disadvantaged as a result;
- » Workers are more likely or vulnerable to the risk of exploitation.

In summary, JLCs provide the only mechanism by which the interests of workers in these sectors can be protected and advanced.

JLC Review

On January 25, 2013 – following from the July 2011 High Court Ruling - the Labour Court gave notice of its intention to review the Joint Labour Committees in line with the provisions of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2012.

Congress established a coordinating group comprising John Douglas (Mandate), Patricia King (SIPTU), Gerry Light (Mandate), John King (SIPTU) and Brendan Byrne (Unite) and Esther Lynch, Congress Legislation & Legal Affairs Officer.

The group met on numerous occasions during January and February and met on two occasions with Janet Hughes, as part of her considerations on behalf of the Labour Court. The Labour Court requested that submissions be made in relation to each JLC separately having regard for the criteria set out in the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2012 and specifically the criteria set out in section 11.

The Congress Group adopted this approach and SIPTU, Mandate and Unite prepared and made submissions dealing with the specific scope etc. of the relevant JLC with the individual submissions supported by Congress. The submissions made a strong case for:

Five Joint Labour Committees

1. Agricultural Workers JLC
2. Retail Grocery and Allied trades JLC
3. Law Clerks
4. Hairdressing
5. Hospitality JLC

And Two New Registered Employment Agreements

1. Security Industry
2. Contract Cleaning

At the time of writing the report from the Labour Court was with the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation.

Registered Employment Agreements

The current crisis has seen repeated attempts to undermine Ireland's wage-setting mechanisms. A series of long-running and protracted legal cases finally made their way into the Supreme Court on the May 9, 2013.

The employers taking the cases challenged the constitutionality of the provisions of the Industrial Relations Act (1946), concerning the registration and enforcement of Registered Employment Agreements (REAs). The employers who took the case comprised a number of electrical contractors who were not party to the original electrical contracting REA and who objected to being bound by its provisions and, in particular, took exception to those provisions of Part III of the 1946 Act which created a range of criminal offences for employers who were deemed non-compliant with an REA which purported to apply to them. District Court prosecutions were in train against a number of the plaintiff employers.

The Supreme Court's ruling centred on whether Part III of the 1946 Act results in an *impermissible delegation* of law-making power to the Labour Court.

The Supreme Court held that Article 15.2.1 of the Constitution requires that the Oireachtas is the only body that has power to make law within the state. However, the Court went on to rule that it is acceptable for the Oireachtas to set out in primary legislation (an Act) the principles and policies by which a particular activity should be regulated, in this instance by the Labour Court.

The REA ruling confirms the High Court decision in the John Grace Fried Chicken case already anticipated by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, who had rectified the possible shortcomings in the 1946 Act in the Industrial Relations (Amendment) 2012, which passed into law on July 24, 2012.

The Supreme Court did not explicitly discuss the 2012 Act and outlined that the ruling did not refer to the amended legislation. However, the Court's wide-ranging criticism of the very concept of an agreement entered into by private parties being legally binding on an entire sector of industry threw up questions as to whether the amendments in the 2012 Act were sufficient to address the concerns.

At the time of writing the Attorney General had not determined the status of the provisions of the 1946 Act amended by the 2012 Act.

Congress immediately sought the expert opinion of John Hendy QC on the compatibility of the Supreme Court ruling with Ireland's obligations under International Labour Conventions and the European Social Charter. At the time of writing Congress was in the process of identifying methods

of complaint to ensure that the policy of 'internal devaluation' pursued since 2009 would not result in the REA mechanism being consigned to industrial relations history.

This issue is also addressed in the report of the Congress Construction Industry Committee, in Section 2, Part IV (*Progressing Workplace Rights*).

Addressing the Gender Pay Gap

On average, women are paid 17% less than their male counterparts across the EU. In Ireland the gap is at 13.9%, a disturbing rise of about 1% on recent years. The causes are complex and include:

- » Occupational segregation;
- » Reduced labour market attachment;
- » Discrimination in recruitment, training, pensions and pay systems.

Since the onset of the economic crisis there have been few concrete legislative proposals at EU, or national level. Soft options such as awareness raising Equal Pay Days and EU-wide initiatives such as 'Equality Pays Off' are more popular but have limited impact. Congress and the ETUC have repeatedly pushed for more concerted actions such as:

- » Pay audits;
- » Improved statistics with gender breakdown;
- » Gender impact assessments regarding policy measures being taken in response to the crisis;

The economic crisis has proved infertile ground for any such proposals.

Congress has participated in events organised to mark Equal Pay Day, including the Equality Authority and European Commission event on February 28, 2013. A brochure - *Tackling the Gender Pay Gap in the European Union* - which explains the gender pay gap, its causes and the benefits of closing it, was published in conjunction with the day. Congress used the opportunity to promote our Negotiators' Guide on the issue.

Congress is also engaged with an ETUC project known as *Bargaining for Equality: How Collective Bargaining Contributes to Eliminating Pay Discrimination between Women and Men Performing the Same Job or a Job of Equal Value*. This was funded by the European Commission.

There will be four regional *Bargaining for Equality* seminars and a final conference in Vilnius in the Autumn of 2013 to coincide with the Lithuanian EU Presidency.

Pensions

State Pension Changes

The state pension age will rise to 66 in 2014, 67 in 2021 and 68 in 2028. This was agreed with the Troika. There was no political debate, no consultation with employers or workers representatives and no cost benefit analyses of the measure.

In 2014 many workers who have worked, paid taxes, and PRSI throughout their entire careers will be plunged into poverty by this one decision.

There is no equity or justice in this and it will prove very damaging to social cohesion in Ireland. Employers and unions have been given no opportunity to consider the labour market issues involved. Congress understands from many employers that they will dismiss most of their workers at age 65, whether they qualify for a pension or not.

Congress has good reason to believe that the Department of Social Protection - who sponsored the legislation - will continue to terminate its own lower paid employees at age 65, regardless of whether such employees qualify for a state pension. It is clear that this is not designed to help older workers to stay in employment. Rather, it is designed to deny them an entitlement that they and their employers have paid dearly for over many years.

The Department of Social Protection have said that a workers dismissed at age 65 can go on Jobseeker's Allowance for nine months. By way of response, Congress said that for a worker who has never known unemployment and has paid taxes and social insurance for 50 years to be forced on the dole at the end of their working life, would be unconscionable.

The legislation makes nonsense of the advice that department and the Pension Board constantly lectures workers about the need for financial planning for retirement. How can workers plan for their retirement if after paying PRSI for 40 years if they can be denied three year pension with very little notice?

Congress has argued that making major pension changes in such a short term and *ad hoc* manner in not just a cruel injustice, it is a gross denial of the right of legitimate expectation.

Long term damage will be done to the reputation of all pensions. Why would any worker agree to pay into either a public or a private pension if the rules can be changed at the last minute to deny that worker their entitlements?

This change is being hurried through for no good reason. Most other countries are raising their pension age, but not as quickly as us. Nor are they going anywhere near 68. Workers across the EU are being given much more time to adjust to much less severe change.

Congress accepts that the pension age must rise over time. However if the government persist in driving forward with this unjust and inequitable reform, then private sector workers will justly feel that they are being targeted. Congress has called on the Minister to postpone this change to 2016 in order to allow for the labour market and employment law aspects be examined. Change should then be introduced on monthly rather than an annual basis.

In February 2012 the department promised a consultation process on the labour market issues involved. One meeting was held - on December 12, 2012. At time of writing, nothing further has been heard. It is obvious that they are going to brazen it out and scrap the transitional pension. Consequently, many thousands of PRSI payers who have been given no warning of the change will receive no pension in 2014.

Changes to PRSI Bands

From September 2012 the government reduced pension entitlement for certain categories of vulnerable workers. Changes in the qualifications bands mean that those who have an average of 29 annual contributions have lost €1500 a year for life, from September 2012. Congress lobbied the department not to proceed with this grossly inequitable initiative. Our efforts were dismissed out

of hand by Department Officials. As we predicted this cut adversely affected vulnerable workers - particularly female workers.

Congress Actions

In March 2012 Congress hosted a conference in the Croke Park Conference Centre entitled *Wake Up to State Pension Changes*. We wrote to and lobbied the Minister for Social Protection and the department seeking to have the changes delayed and the establishment of a forum to discuss the labour market issues at stake.

Press statements issued by Congress and letters to newspapers were the only notice most workers received about this withdrawal of their entitlements.

The graph below shows how Ireland is to the fore in its effort to deny workers the state pension they have paid for.



Eugene McGlone speaking at Women's Seminar 2013

Pension changes by country

| Country | Change | When |
|-------------|---------------|---|
| Australia | from 65 to 67 | between 2017 and 2023 |
| Denmark | from 65 to 67 | between 2024 and 2027 linked to life expectancy thereafter |
| Germany | from 65 to 67 | by 2030 |
| Netherlands | from 65 to 67 | between 2020 and 2025 |
| Norway | already 67 | |
| Spain | from 65 to 67 | between 2013 and 2027 |
| UK | from 65 to 68 | starting in 2020 |
| US | currently 66 | increasing to 67 in 2022 |
| Canada | currently 65 | potential change being debated |

Protecting Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

For many years, Congress has been to the fore in trying to protect Defined Benefit Schemes. At time of writing (April 2013) members, trustees, unions, and sponsoring employers remain in the dark as to what either the government or the Pension Regulator intends. The Minimum Funding Standard (MFS) which was withdrawn in October 2008 is to be re-instated in June 2013. If this happens without any remedial action, Congress believes that many viable schemes will be forced to close resulting in catastrophic losses for workers.

Congress built an alliance with the Irish Society of Actuaries, the Irish Association of Pension Funds and IBEC to draw up a comprehensive set of proposals regarding modifications of Section 48 of the Pension Act, which would help troubled schemes survive and make it easier for viable schemes to reach the MFS.

Despite numerous cogent submissions, briefing papers and a presentation to the Department of Social Protection, at the time of writing, the key stakeholders have no idea as to whether any heed will be taken of our agreed position.

The Failure of the Regulatory System for Defined Benefit Schemes

In April 2012 the Minister for Social Protection asked the OECD to examine and report on the Irish pension system. A delegation from Congress met the Review Group and submitted an analysis of the failures of the system. What follows is a summary of the Congress analysis.

The regulatory system established under the Pensions Act (1990) has failed in its primary purpose of ensuring that workers receive the pension promise made to them and which those workers earned and paid for.

Congress believes that basing policy on a notional, inflexible Minimum Funding Standard and on enforcing certain trustee behaviour was ill-conceived. The system forced trustees to take the advice of experts who were themselves almost totally unregulated.

In short we believe our regulation system was misdirected. No effort was made to regulate investment advisors in terms of competence, behaviour or charges. For instance, if investment managers had been obliged to link investment strategy to the liability profile of individual schemes, this might have moderated their instinct for year-on-year fund maximisation which has proved so destructive of Defined Benefit (DB) provision. In spite of claims to the contrary, no alarm bells were rung and no regulatory action was taken throughout the years when Irish pension funds were over-exposed to equity markets.

The state should have obliged pension funds to retain so called 'surpluses' earned in good time as a hedge against losses in the downturn. Instead, it forced schemes to reduce these imaginary 'surpluses', thereby damaging the long term viability of the funds. Of course these schemes were never in surplus, they just appeared to be according, by virtue of an inflexible notional Minimum Funding Standard that was never fully rooted in reality.

Great effort was expended by the Regulator over the years in loading ever-increasing obligations on lay trustees. They were forced to seek large

Resolution from Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress City Hall, Cork, 12-14 May, 1913

Wages at Haulbowline

“That the wages of both labourers and mechanics at the Dockyard of Haulbowline does not come up to that paid in the Royal Dockyards of England; and, as the wages and conditions generally are below that paid in private yards, this Congress, in support of the recent demands of the workers, pledges itself to use its influence to bring the yard up to the standard of those in England and compare favourably with the conditions of labour in outside private yards”.

“As regarded the Superannuation Act, that was an investment by the men themselves; sums from one shilling to three shillings per week were deducted from the wages to allow them a pension when they were sixty years. As to the labourers, their wage had been proved over and over again to be quite insufficient to obtain for them even the necessaries of life. He appealed for fair play for the Irish Dockyard workers.

Moved by Mr. Daniel Cotter (Queenstown). Seconded by Mr. Ronayne.

Adopted, Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress, Cork, 1913

volumes of expensive professional advice and were placed at the mercy of a pension advisory industry by the Pensions Board. The pension advisory industry is disproportionately represented on the Pensions Board.

For more than a decade now, trade unions through Congress sought to influence public policy in relation to the various on-going and the emerging problems besetting DB pension schemes. As a result of our 'coalface' involvement with the day-to-day running of schemes we were able to give early warnings of problems and were often the first to propose sustainable solutions for schemes in trouble. In recent years we have been frustrated by the refusal of either the Department or the Regulator to give any weight or consideration to what we have had to say.

This is unacceptable and profoundly undemocratic for a number of reasons. Firstly unions represent the vast majority of members of DB schemes. Most schemes emerged from collective bargaining initiated by trade unions. Congress regards pension funds as deferred wages and these funds belong to those we represent.

Yet the government dictates how the assets of these funds are allocated on wind-up. The Pension Board forces employers and workers to pay for the revaluation of deferred members' pensions, while the workers themselves are facing wage freezes and pension benefit reductions. The failure of government to solve this relatively straightforward problem is indicative of an advisory and decision-making system which is moribund and not fit for purpose. We believe that some of these failures result from a misplaced concern to protect the system from criticism, rather than looking to the interests of pension scheme members.

When individual schemes are in difficulty it is often the trade union which negotiates the restructuring necessary to save the scheme. Yet the Department of Social Protection and the regulatory system seem determined to raise the bar as high as possible in the worst financial crisis Europe has ever seen.

Regulators in the United States and some European countries (Sweden and Denmark) have taken steps to mitigate the distortion of annuity prices brought on by crisis. The Regulator in Ireland prefers to insist trustees make the most pessimistic assumptions based on the worst conceivable financial conditions.

The approach seems to be that is better to kill off DB schemes now than give them the flexibility to weather the crisis. Whoever this approach is designed to serve, it clearly damages the interests of those who are paying for the regulatory service - the pension scheme members.

A basic principle of collective funded occupational pension provision in Ireland is that it involves three parties: employers, workers and the state. Employers and workers (with the help of highly paid professional advisors) agree to fund the schemes and agree the contribution rates and benefits. The state encourages participation by tax-incentives and providing a regulatory environment that is supposed to provide security. In most cases employers and workers have maintained their part of the bargain.

The state, by failing to regulate pensions appropriately, has not. Huge damage has been done and many thousands of workers now stand to lose the benefits they worked hard and paid for. Whatever about the massive losses which will be suffered by workers the reputational damage done to pensions in general has been immense and will take at least a generation to abate.

Since the onset of the crisis the department seems determined to ensure that when a scheme gets into difficulty, it becomes the sole problem of the members of that scheme.

This is not sustainable in the long run. What we are witnessing is a systemic failure of public policy and regulation. The union representing the Waterford Glass workers who lost their pensions successfully took their case to Europe and, at the time of writing, Congress was awaiting a full, official response on the implications of the April 2013 European Court Ruling in their favour.

The failure of our system of pension regulation has led to some to advocate an even less appropriate system. Pension funds are not banks or insurance companies. A system for regulation designed to protect customers and society in general from sharp practice by profit seeking enterprises is not appropriate for regulating pension schemes.

The current regulatory system, which seems design to protect the state, should be replaced with a system designed to protect the best interests of scheme members and society. The regulator and the policy makers should be obliged to take into account the view of scheme sponsors, scheme members and their representatives. They should be obliged to regard the interests of scheme members as a major priority.

Part IV: Progressing Workplace Rights

In its *Global Report on Equality at Work 2011*, the International Labour Office (ILO) noted that in spite of continuous positive advances in anti-discrimination legislation, the global economic and social crisis has led to a higher risk of discrimination against certain groups such as migrant labour.

In the period under review, Congress continued to make the case that national recovery should not be achieved by way of dismantling hard-won protections for the rights of the weakest in our society, or undermining institutions that combat discrimination and promote equality.

There is an abundance of evidence that more equal societies almost always do better. For example:

- » A November 2011 ESRI / Equality Authority study concluded that formal equality policies are associated with benefits for both employees and the organisations they work for;
- » Improving equality between women and men is essential to the EU's response to the current economic crisis, according to the European Commission's 2012 annual report on gender equality.

Our national ambition for equality has been disappointing. Congress has repeatedly said that greater workplace equality could aid our economic recovery and help ensure that we create a more sustainable growth model in the years to come. Yet, our equality and human rights infrastructure continues to suffer. Congress opposed the decision to merge the Equality Authority and the Irish Human Rights Commission. We believe that such a move is counter to the provisions of the Good Friday Agreement and compromises the independent and internationally recognised status of the IHRC.

However, the Government has indicated its intention to proceed but, at the time of writing, had yet to publish the Bill to merge both bodies. The Congress nominees (David Joyce and Annette Dolan) completed our terms of office on the board of the Equality Authority in 2012. There has been no board since then.

During the Government consultation process on the merger, Congress has engaged to seek to influence the outcome. We made submissions to the Working group convened to consider how best to progress the merger and on the heads of bill, published in 2012. We were not included in the Working Group and while the heads of bill recognise that "for the purpose of assisting it in making a review (of legislation), the Commission

shall consult such organisations of trade unions and of employers as it considers appropriate," this move away from providing for nominations by employer and employee bodies to the Equality Authority is a departure from the spirit of the equal treatment directives that require the member states "in accordance with their national traditions and practice to take adequate measures to promote dialogue between the social partners with a view to fostering equal treatment." We believe that a new body with responsibility for promoting workplace equality and combating workplace discrimination will inevitably be deficient as a result of the exclusion of trade unions and employers.

Trade unionists were of course free to apply to be considered for board membership in the process announced later in 2012. However were any appointees to these bodies, following this selection process, minded to raise or reference the policies or concerns of representative bodies, there would be no formal accountability in this regard.

The outcome of the Public Appointments Commission process was announced in April 2013 and, of the 14 people selected, none were trade unionists.

Our submissions also demanded that this would not be another accounting exercise done simply to satisfy an already failed austerity policy. Rather, the merger should reflect a real commitment to the necessary renewal of our equality and human rights infrastructure. It should genuinely seek to create a body that has effective powers to promote equality and protect human rights.

In relation to Minister Bruton's stated intention "to deliver a world class workplace relations service", Congress convened a meeting with Department officials regarding equality related issues and submitted our views in this regard. Among the issues raised were:

- » *EU anti-discrimination Directives guarantee easy access to redress*: The Equality Tribunal structure is compatible with the Directives in that it is a free service. Congress recommended strongly that this principle of free access to justice be maintained;
- » *Equal Status cases*: Congress strongly insisted that all equality claims both employment Equality and Equal Status should be dealt with through this new forum. The Department agreed with this view.

There was a high degree of equality-related activity during the period under review.

A formal launch by the Minister for Disability, Equality, Mental Health & Older People, Kathleen Lynch, of a series of workplace equality resources and guides. The materials include: resources for

gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender workers and trade unions; a revised disability code of practice for trade unions, to include mental health issues; guidance on taking an equality case and a study on developing an integration strategy for unions, in relation to migrant workers.

We continued with provision and development of equality training opportunities for unions, including:

- » Taking an equality case
- » Mental health courses with See Change
- » Development of online learning equality module hosted on the INTO learning platform - <http://www.ictu.ie/equality/onlinelearning.html>

In addition, Congress continued its participation on the Irish Council for Civil Liberties review of Equality legislation, project advisory group.

Congress also participated in the February 2012 launch of *Equality & Mental Health - how the law can help you*, which provides practical information for people with experience of mental health difficulties on their equality rights in employment.

We worked with the IBOA, CWU and MANDATE on implementing an Equality Authority funded project on Equality and continued our engagement with political institutions regarding the rights of LGBT people at work (the Labour Party Bill revising Section 37.1 of Employment Equality Act was recently accepted by Government) and made a submission to government.

Workplace Equality

Congress facilitated funding from the Equality Authority for union related projects including the development of the TEEU guide *Equality & Diversity - a Guide for TEEU Workplace Representatives*. SIPTU, UNITE and PSEU also completed projects under this initiative.

Congress also participated on behalf of ETUC in the annual European Equality Summits in Poznan Poland, 2011 and Cyprus 2012.



Launch of Congress Equality materials featuring Minister Kathleen Lynch who has responsibility for Disability, Older People, Equality & Mental Health

'Leaves Agenda' Developments

The review of the various leave schemes promised in *Towards 2016* never materialised and we are yet again reliant on EU initiatives to seek improvements.

In late 2011, the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme (CPP) and the Equality Authority released *Pregnancy at Work: A National Survey* - a major new research report which presents the findings of Ireland's first nationally representative survey of women's experiences at work during and after pregnancy.

The survey also investigated the uptake of maternity and parental leave and found evidence that strongly points to inequality between women of differing socio economic classes.

Thus, women with higher earnings potential, better levels of education and an employed partner are more likely to avail of the extended period of unpaid maternity leave and to receive top-up payments from the employer, while on maternity leave. But women with lower earnings potential are not only less likely to receive employer-provided top-up payments, but financial pressures result in a lower take-up of unpaid leave and an earlier return to work, for them.

Responding to the survey, Congress pointed out that evidence of continuing discrimination against a significant number of working women was clear proof of the need to reform our systems of parental leave to ensure equality of opportunity. We welcomed the fact that the report provided clear evidence that discrimination is alive and well and provides us with an opportunity to finally end these practices.

It is also clear from the findings that women who have had a positive experience cite protective factors such as the existence of an equality policy and flexible working arrangements - *all of which are more likely to be present in unionised workplaces*.

EU Directive

A more imaginative reform of Ireland's 'leave system' could promote equality of opportunity and the opportunity to do this presented with the transposition of the EU Parental Leave Directive. Previous studies have shown that gender imbalance in employment is harmful to both men and women and to the economy as a whole. Gender equality offers an innovative and tangible tool for expediting economic recovery and for generating a new era of sustainable prosperity.

The Minister for Justice, Equality & Defence Mr Alan Shatter, signed regulations extending parental leave from 14 weeks to 18 weeks on March 8, 2013. The changes give effect to EU Council Directive

2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 which implements a revised Framework Agreement on parental leave, concluded by the European Social Partners. The main changes are:

- » an increase from 3 to 4 months;
- » the extra month being non-transferable between parents. (It is hoped that this non-transferable period will encourage men to take parental leave and encourage a more equal sharing of family responsibilities between men and women);
- » the right to request flexible working arrangements upon return from leave.

While we welcome this transposition, it also marks a missed opportunity to tackle parental inequality in a more ambitious, comprehensive manner. The minimalist approach adopted in transposition simply copper-fastens inequalities in the workplace and the home in relation to parental leave and childcare.

In a briefing with Congress in February 2013, the Department communicated a commitment to consolidate all family leave legislation into one unified act. Congress believes any such process should seek to rebalance care duties to ensure there is greater equality and have indicated that a statutory right to Paternity Leave, combined with an extension to at least one year of the period of time allowed to mothers to breastfeed, would be a step in this direction.

Congress also joined with Start Strong and the National Women's Council to call on Government to introduce in Paternity Leave and more flexible work arrangements. With regard to the Pregnant Workers' Directive (revision), following the European Parliament's (EP) adoption of its own position in 2010, a problem emerged in the European Council where the initiative remains blocked.

The ETUC and the European Women's Lobby have called on the Council to deliver on the maternity leave directive. Both are very concerned that over two years have passed since the European Parliament adopted its first reading position on the European Commission's proposal to revise the Pregnant Workers' Directive and that no official response has been forthcoming from the Council. Refusal to adopt a strong maternity directive is sending a negative message to society as a whole. The EU must reaffirm and fulfil its long standing commitments and treaty obligations to equality between women and men. Congress raised this issue with the Irish Government as it took up its Presidency of the EU Council in January 2013.

Forced Labour

A joint paper developed by Congress and the Migrant Rights Centre of Ireland (MRCI) on tackling forced labour in Ireland was presented at a fringe meeting at the 2011 BDC. The paper was a contribution to the debate on how an integrated approach to tackling forced labour can be developed. Forced labour is an extreme form of exploitation that can involve deception, coercion, debt bondage and threats or actual physical harm. It is a growing problem in Ireland and at international level.

Finding a solution to situations of forced labour is a huge challenge. Our learning from international experience, and the recommendation from the International Labour Organisation (ILO), is that "action against forced labour, including trafficking, requires an integrated approach that blends rigorous law enforcement with prevention and victim assistance measures."

An integrated approach would contain the following elements:

- » Criminalisation of Forced Labour;
- » Protections for victims of forced labour;
- » Mandating key responsibility to state agencies to tackle forced labour.

Without this type of integrated approach, attempts to address this problem will be insufficient.

The joint paper was timely as the Irish government was considering the introduction of an offence of forced labour into Irish law.

Following a number of high profile instances where workers in this country were treated as slaves by their employers (MRCI have uncovered over 180 cases of slavery in domestic, restaurant, agricultural, construction and entertainment sectors), earlier this year the government introduced legislation to include a definition of forced labour in trafficking legislation.

Trade unions welcomed the initiative as it would contribute towards greater protection for victims of modern day slavery. Experience tells us that victims will not come forward if there are not clear protections, rights and supports in place. It also helps to eliminate discrimination and exploitation of workers in Ireland. Crucially, it means that employers who commit this criminal act can now be prosecuted.

Congress Global Solidarity cohosted an event on Forced Labour - *From Global to Local Responses* - with the MRCI, in February 2013. Congress vice President, John Douglas, publicly welcomed the proposal to bring forward a law to criminalise all forms of modern-day slavery. "This sends a strong

message to employers that inhuman treatment of workers will not be tolerated. This law needs to be monitored to ensure that victims of slavery are identified and steps need to be taken to ensure the phenomenon is clearly understood by the authorities.”

In the context of our work on Employment Permits, Congress has repeatedly made the point that the existence of an informal labour market is a ‘pull-factor’ for irregular immigration and the accompanying exploitation of non-EU nationals. We have called for the transposition of the EU Sanctions Directive – a set of rules to counter the effect that the availability of undocumented work plays in attracting irregular migrants.

Adopting this Directive would bring tangible benefits to undocumented workers in Ireland who are frequently the victims of unpaid wages, dangerous working conditions and other employment rights abuses, including by some recruitment agencies.

Undocumented workers who attempt to remedy their situation experience immigration-related threats as the labour inspectorate does not pursue the employer to vindicate the employment rights of the undocumented worker, but rather the undocumented worker for breaching employment permit rules. The upcoming Employment Permits Bill should be used to remedy the situation. It should also ensure that employers are subject to other sanctions including criminalisation of Forced Labour.

For more information about our Equality work and regular updates, please visit: <http://www.ictu.ie/equality/>

The Right to Collective Bargaining

The rash of industrial disputes which broke out in 1911 and culminated in the 1913 Lockout all had a common thread: the right of workers to bargain collectively for their labour. One hundred years later that right has still not been secured here.

It is enjoyed by workers in every other European country and is embodied in Article 28 of the European Union’s Charter of Fundamental Rights. The Irish Supreme Court, in a landmark judgement, effectively stated that this right does not and cannot exist here. Significantly, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has rejected that view.

Congress continued to campaign on this issue, in the period under review. Central to our campaign is the simple fact that trade union rights are fundamental human rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees everyone “the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests (Article 23.4).”

Notwithstanding other judgements, the Irish Constitution - in Article 40.1.6 (iii) - also declares that: “The State guarantees liberty for the exercise of the following rights, subject to public order and morality....(iii) The right of the citizens to form associations and unions.”

Notwithstanding these national and international obligations, the position here remains somewhat unique in the western world in that trade unions have no legislative right to be recognised in the workplace for collective bargaining purposes, or to make representations to their employer through their union.

During the period under review, several affiliates reported instances where employers have shown themselves willing to use all manner of techniques to interfere with and undermine the union, or to coerce, threaten, penalise and dismiss employees when they attempt to organise in a trade union.

Congress has used every opportunity to impress upon the government the need for change.

This included preparation of a shadow report to the UN Human Rights Council, under the auspices of the Universal Periodic Review process. This was followed with the Referral of a formal Complaint from Congress to the International Labour Organisation (case number 2780).

The ILO subsequently urged the government to establish an independent inquiry and to legislate in accordance with ILO Convention requirements.

Pressure is growing on the government to meet its obligations and to reconcile Irish law with accepted international standards.

In advance of the last General Election, Congress petitioned the Labour Party to take up this cause. As a result, a commitment to legislate for a legal right to collective bargaining in line with international norms is contained in the current *Programme for Government*.

This states there is a need to “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 early 2013 Richard Bruton, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation initiated work on this issue and Congress was invited to make a written

submission of our position, to the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation. The submission was duly made.

It is worth noting that in order to comply with the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights (ECrHR) *will* mean having to introduce statutory recognition for the right to collective bargaining.

In particular, the ECrHR landmark decision in *Demir* held that the right to collective bargaining is “an essential element” of the right to freedom of association guaranteed in Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR): “Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests.”

In so holding, the ECrHR determined that the substance of the rights afforded must be consistent with the minimum standards laid down by the International Labour Organisation in their Conventions No 87 and 98 concerning Freedom of Association, the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, both of which Ireland has ratified along with the Council of Europe Social Charter of 1961 (Article 5 – the right to organise and article 6 the right to bargain collectively).

This dramatically changes the legal context in which the Supreme Court ruled in *Ryanair*.

Congress has put forward proposals built on the principle that when workers want a union to represent them for collective bargaining purposes, there should be a *duty* on the employer to recognise that right.

Whether employers love or loath trade unions the reform of the legislation must provide a means to deal with employer intransigence. Otherwise the right to collective bargaining, a full century after the monumental struggle of 1913, will remain illusory.

Restrictions on Freelancers

Congress has directly challenged the role played by the Troika in stipulating in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) associated with the EU/IMF Programme of Financial Support for Ireland, that restrictions on the right to collective bargaining for voiceover artists and freelance journalists must remain in force.

The restriction on the right to collective bargaining has been contested by Congress since 2004 when the Irish Competition Authority made collective bargaining unlawful among certain workers - freelance journalists and workers within radio,

television, cinema and visual arts - on the basis that they are ‘workers’ who have an employment contract on a *for service* rather than *of service* basis.

The Competition Authority concluded that these are no longer workers with rights but are to be treated as ‘undertakings’ involved in an unlawful cartel. This turns the clock back over 100 years to a time when unions were illegal combinations.

At the May 2013 Congress Executive Council meeting there was agreement that Congress would submit a complaint to the International Labour Organisation and to the Council of Europe under their Social Charter, on this matter.

Social Dialogue

The withdrawal of the Government and private sector employers at the end of 2009 signalled the formal end of the system of Social Partnership that had existed for the previous 22 years. Thus ended Ireland’s experiment with European style neo-corporatism.

Social dialogue is a European concept that is built into key EU treaties and recognised as a key feature of the modern economy and society.

At a European Union level this manifests itself in the right of employers and unions to come to agreements on certain topics, with these agreements sometimes being given the force of an EU Directive.

Tripartite discussions take place in a range of European fora, including social summits and in relation to wider economic issues. These occur bi-annually and Congress is involved in these discussions whenever Ireland holds the EU Presidency and during the presidency of the two previous incumbents.

At a national level social dialogue requires governments to consult employers and unions on the transposition of Directives affecting the labour market into domestic legislation.

Here, following the 2009 collapse of the system of social partnership, we have seen a significant unwinding of the institutions associated with that process. Effectively, we now have no tripartite forum where employers, unions and the government can discuss labour market issues. This absence has been very obvious in recent years, in the context of a number of high profile disputes and in relation to matters such as pensions.

The General Secretary of Congress and the Director General of IBEC met the Taoiseach 12 months ago with a joint proposal on the establishment

of an Employer-Labour Conference. Nothing has happened since, despite the initial indications that there would be a positive response.

We have seen wage bargaining take place at industry and sectoral level. Major restructuring of the public sector was negotiated by the Public Services Committee but the subsequent LRC proposals were rejected after a ballot (see section on Congress Organisation).

Wage increases averaging 2% per annum have been negotiated in about 30% of private sector companies.

Working Time Developments

During the period under review, Congress continued to press for legislative amendment to give effect to the rulings of European Court of Justice (ECJ) on employees' entitlement to paid annual leave, following periods of sick leave.

To this end, Congress met with officials in the Department of Jobs Enterprise & Innovation (DJEI) on a number of occasions.

While the Department generally agreed with our analysis that the Organisation of Working Time Act (1997) is at variance with the ECJ's interpretation of the Working Time Directive in *Stringer* (C - 520/06) and *Schultz-Hoff* (C-350/06), unfortunately no action was taken.

In *Roskell Limited and Rikmanis* (September 2012) the Labour Court observed in its determination that: "The employer is a private sector employer. Hence the doctrine of Direct Effect of European Law can have no application in this case."

The Labour Court clearly accepts that employees in the state sectors (and emanations of the state), under the principle of Direct Effect, are entitled to claim compensation in circumstances where their right to paid annual leave following periods on sick leave is not provided. With regard to private sector employees, the Court's determination highlighted the desirability of dealing with this by amending the legislation.

However, Congress informed the DJEI that private sector employees who suffer this breach of their rights have a 'definable interest' and when the state fails to act to protect a definable interest, the EU Frankovich Principle means that states may incur the liability. For example, where there is:

- » a breach of EU law;
- » attributable to the member state;
- » which causes damage to an individual.

If these elements are established, then compensation may be claimed in a legal action.

Congress continues to press for amendments, mindful that the economic crisis cannot be used to justify ignoring the rights of employees, in either the public or private sector.

Exceptional Collective Redundancies

In March 2013, Congress sought another three year extension to Part II of the Exceptional Collective Redundancies & Related Matters Act (2007).

Posting of Workers

All workers posted to Ireland benefit from the full protection of all Irish employment legislation, in exactly the same way as employees based in Ireland.

The *Protection of Employees (Part-Time Work) Act 2001* (Section 20) provides that all employment legislation which confers rights or entitlements on an employee applies to a posted worker. This means that, for example, posted workers have a statutory right to be paid at least the national minimum wage. They are also entitled to the terms and conditions of each Registered Employment Agreements (REAs), not just those in the construction sector (and when reconstituted the same provision will apply in relation to Employment Regulation Orders made by Joint Labour Committees).

In 2012, the EU Commission brought forward proposals for an Enforcement Directive (2012/0061 (COD) concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services.

It is the view of Congress that the original objective of the Posted Workers Directive is more vital than ever. Providing a climate of fair competition and guaranteeing equality and respect for the rights of workers is essential.

This is especially so in an era when transnational provision of services is increasingly common and where the global economic crisis is intensifying downward pressure on wages and conditions of employment, as organisations exploit the recession to seek competitive advantage on 'price'.

The Posting Directive plays a key-role in protecting the workers and labour markets concerned by ensuring that employers respect the framework of labour law.

In the period under review, Congress lobbied political figures and parties, including meeting with MEPs and successfully securing from the Minister for Enterprise Trade & Innovation a commitment

that the implementation of the Enforcement Directive would in no way reduce the protections afforded to posted workers in Ireland.

At the time of writing Congress was actively working to secure an amendment to the draft Enforcement Directive to extend the 'joint and several liability' provisions to sectors other than the Construction sector.

Subcontracting chains are becoming widespread and are now commonplace in numerous sectors - not just the construction sector. There is evidence that posted workers are exploited and left without payment of wages or part of the wages they are entitled to under the Directive 96/71/EC. Congress has argued strongly for the introduction of joint and several liability for all industries and sectors, as this mechanism is indispensable to the protection of workers.

At the request of FNV Netherlands, Congress investigated an Irish employment agency which is involved in suspect work practices on a number of large construction sites in the Netherlands, Finland, France and Denmark. This would typically involve the Irish agency employing workers from Poland or Portugal in France or the Netherlands under the social security system of Cyprus.

Congress provided key information to FNV Netherlands and cooperated with the European Federation of Building Workers in the establishment of a European campaign to combat these practices. An Irish agency features strongly in this practice.



European Trade Union Day of Action picket of EU Commission office in Dublin, February 29, 2012

Rights of Agency Workers

The Protection of Employees (Temporary Agency Work) Act became law on May 16, 2012. The legislation gives effect to EU Directive 2008/104/EC on Temporary Agency Work which was adopted in late 2008 and marks an important milestone in the Congress campaign for fair treatment of agency workers.

Congress did not agree to a general derogation such as applies in the UK and Northern Ireland. The legislation provides that equal treatment in terms of basic working and employment conditions must be applied to temporary agency workers in the same way as if they were directly recruited by the hirer to the same or similar job - from day one.

Disappointingly and against Congress advice the enacted legislation provides for the so called 'Swedish Derogation' whereby if the agency employs the agency worker directly and they part-pay between assignments the equal pay provisions do not apply.

To ensure that unions were equipped to represent members and negotiate implementation at the level of the workplace, Congress carried out a series of information and training events.

A central issue was the making of claims for agency workers who were on assignment on December 5, 2011. These workers were entitled to equal pay going back to when the date for transposition had passed but the legislation had not been enacted.

Protection for Whistleblowers

In February 2012, Congress said new government measures on whistleblowing had to be backed by tough sanctions, both in law and in practice.

This was the only sure way to stop employers victimising or targeting people who blew the whistle on bad or illegal practices.

Congress said whistleblower protection would not of itself prevent wrongdoing, but it was a necessary component and something that was long overdue.

In a subsequent submission in May 2012, Congress outlined the case for change, including: a broadening the range of workers who are protected to include interns and apprentices.

Congress also proposed that protections should apply immediately, with no qualifying service period.

Unfair Treatment for Workers in Insolvency Situations

The current downturn in the economy has brought some of the weaknesses in the insolvency legislation into sharp focus.

One of the most blatant injustices relates to 'tactical insolvency', which involves the deliberate creation of insolvencies in order to gain financial advantage by unscrupulous employers at the expense of their employees and suppliers. Unions have reported

situations where employers walk away, leaving workers high and dry despite the existence of profitable 'associated companies' while others open up shop again with a new, but not very different trading name.

Congress has sought to tackle this abuse through introducing powers for the Office of Director of Corporate Enforcement (ODCE) to pursue the associated or start-up company for these debts. Congress believes there are circumstances that justify a piercing of the corporate veil to establish who the directors of these companies are in order to link the debt.

There is also a serious question about the role and advice being given by insolvency practitioners. In particular concerns have been raised about their independence and whether they give sufficient regard to protecting and maintaining employment, or the rights of employees.

Rights of Employees in Informal Insolvencies

Another major failing is the treatment of 'informal insolvencies' where an employer simply ceases trading but does not wind up the business. This is not recognised as an 'insolvency' and employees fall outside the scope of a much needed safety net of the Insolvency Fund.

The Protection of Employees (Employers' Insolvency) Acts 1984 to 2006 provides for payment to workers in respect of their unpaid wages, but only where their employer winds up the company in accordance with insolvency rules.

Working people are paying a heavy toll throughout the economic crisis, through the high level of redundancies and rising unemployment. The need for a safety net guaranteeing payment of remuneration when their employer is in a state of insolvency is recognised and protected by the EU.

It is unacceptable that employees, through no fault of their own, are denied access to this essential financial safety net by virtue of the inaction of their employer.

Congress prepared draft amendments and met with the Minister for Social Protection and with officials from her Department. Disappointingly, at the time of writing, the necessary changes had not been secured.

Reform of Workplace Relations Systems

In April 2012 Minister Richard Bruton launched the *Blueprint to Deliver a World Class Workplace Relations Service*.

This attempts the most comprehensive reform of the system of redress and enforcement of workers' rights ever undertaken in the history of this state.

The blueprint also claims to be a major overhaul of the workplace relations system although the Labour Court and Labour Relations Commission *modus operandi* will remain mostly unchanged.

A new division of the Labour Court will be created. A Workplace Relations Bill will be enacted to give effect to this new structure.

The legislation will provide for the orderly wind down of the LRC, NERA, the EAT and the Equality Tribunal and the transfer of the services of the LRC, NERA and the Equality Tribunal, together with the first instance functions of the EAT and the Labour Court, to the Workplace Relations Commission.

The appellate functions of the EAT will be amalgamated into a reconfigured Labour Court (hence the need for a new division).

Congress welcomed the general approach as outlined in the document. In particular we welcomed the two-tier Workplace Relations structure and the proposal to devolve the appellate functions of the EAT into a reconfigured Labour Court.

Congress participated in all the consultation processes leading up to the launch of the Blueprint and while we would have preferred to have been involved in a more structured manner, we accept that many of our concerns and suggestions have been addressed.

However a number of serious issues remain as a source of concern to Congress.

» **Complaint/Appeal to the Labour Court**

The suggestion that Compliance Officers should be empowered to take complaints to the Labour Court as an alternative to prosecutions needs to be fully thought out. This might have the unintended consequence of increasing the likelihood of employers bringing legal representatives into the Labour Court. This could in turn result in a spate of injunctions, judicial reviews and constitutional challenges to Labour Court procedures and decisions. At the very least we would need to be sure that REA's and JLC's have been made constitutionally robust before making this change.

» **Appointment to Rights Commissioner/ Adjudicator posts**

The existing procedure for appointing Rights Commissioners has ensured that the service is staffed by very experienced people who have vast experience of industrial and workplace relations. It

is reasonable in the immediate future that public servants who have gained experience as Equality Mediation Officers should be utilised in the new role of Adjudicators. However any further recruitment of Adjudicators should be selected on the basis of merit, from a panel nominated by Congress and IBEC, having regard to proportionality.

» **Appointments to Labour Court**

Congress accepted the proposed procedure for the appointment of Chair and Deputy Chairs to the Labour Court as outlined in the blueprint. However Congress and IBEC must be involved in setting the criteria for assessing the suitability of candidates for these posts.

Congress accepts the proposed arrangement for appointing ordinary members of the Court on the understanding that when such appointments come up for renewal the incumbent can be re-nominated on the same basis as at present.

Contact is continuing with the Department as the legislation is being developed.

Industrial Relations

The table below shows the incidence of industrial disputes resulting in strikes since 2001. In the period covered by this report we have seen a return to levels that would be regarded as more normal by reference to data from 2006 onwards (the notable exception been 2009 when there was a one day strike across the entire public sector).

In the period covered by this report we have seen some very high profile industrial disputes. The long running disputes in **Vita Cortex** and **Lagan Brick** saw workers having to resort to workplace occupations in order to secure satisfactory redundancy settlements. There were also workplace occupations in **La Senza** and more recently in **HMV** for similar reasons, but these two disputes were of shorter duration. During the period under review we also saw a number of disputes relating to pay and workplace issues.

In **Irish Cement** there was a dispute relating to the pay and workplace restructuring. Congress assisted in the resolution of this dispute. In **Musgrave's Cork** there was a dispute relating to the implementation of new technology. The dispute in **Eddie Stobart** concerned the issue of pay and conditions of employment allied with union recognition. **Bord Na Mona** also experienced a dispute over pay. Although not captured in the data below there was a recent strike in **St. James's Hospital** over health and safety issues.

Industrial Disputes 2001 - 2012

| Year | Number of Disputes | Firms Involved | Workers Involved | Total 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 |
| 2011 | 8 | 8 | 1384 | 3695 |
| 2012 | 5 | 5 | 1920 | 8486 |

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 a workplace advisory service. The principle dispute resolution mechanism provided by the LRC is its conciliation service. The LRC has on its staff a number of highly professional conciliators who assist unions and their members to resolve what are often difficult and complex disputes. The table below illustrates the high level of settlement achieved by the LRC in disputes coming to conciliation.

LRC Conciliation Conferences 2001-2012

| 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% |
| 2011 | 1155 | 82% |
| 2012 | 1054 | 81% |

Source: LRC

The other main activity of the LRC is the provision of a Rights Commissioner Service. The Rights Commissioners adjudicate in disputes involving claims by individuals of breaches of their statutory rights, or rights they may have arising from their contract of employment or from a collective agreement. In the two years covered by this report there has been a decline in the number of cases that have been referred to the Right Commissioner Service. The decline however must be viewed against the backdrop of the two previous years in which there was a record number of referrals and also against the very significant downturn in activity across many sectors of the economy.

Rights Commissioner Service 2001 - 2012

| Year | Number of Cases |
|------|-----------------|
| 2001 | 4148 |
| 2002 | 5700 |
| 2003 | 4737 |
| 2004 | 4700 |
| 2005 | 5500 |
| 2006 | 7179 |
| 2007 | 9077 |
| 2008 | 10978 |
| 2009 | 14569 |
| 2010 | 15671 |
| 2011 | 9206 |
| 2012 | 8848 |

Source LRC

The LRC is a statutory agency and is accountable to a board. The Congress representatives on the board are Fergus Whelan and Peter McLoone.



Credit: Constanze O'Toole

The Labour Court

The mission of The Labour Court is “to find a basis for real and substantial agreement through the provision of fair, informal and inexpensive arrangements for the adjudication and resolution of industrial disputes”. The table below shows the number of cases dealt with by the Court over the period 2001 to 2012.

The number of cases dealt with by the Court has remained fairly constant over the period with two notable exceptions. There has been a significant increase in the number of appeals to Rights Commissioners in the last four years (including the more recent fall) and in the last two years a moderate fall off in the number of referrals from conciliation. The workers members of the Labour Court are Pádraigín Ní Mhurchú, Jerry Shanahan and Linda Tanham.

The Labour Court

| Source of Referral | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Conciliation | 344 | 386 | 317 | 322 | 324 | 308 | 273 | 261 | 289 | 229 | 199 | 161 |
| Appeal of Rights Comm. Rec's. | 215 | 225 | 214 | 182 | 257 | 180 | 192 | 278 | 537 | 555 | 528 | 538 |
| Equality Appeals | 25 | 37 | 26 | 33 | 31 | 28 | 42 | 31 | 74 | 88 | 67 | 72 |
| Direct Referrals | 183 | 166 | 220 | 204 | 165 | 156 | 123 | 124 | 162 | 135 | 135 | 167 |
| Other | 117 | 126 | 443 | 743 | 582 | 660 | 273 | 482 | 368 | 442 | 323 | 241 |

Source: *The Labour Court*

Resolution from Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress City Hall, Cork, 12-14 May, 1913

The Shops Act

“That this Congress, composed of the Representatives of Irish Trades Unionists, heartily sympathise with the object of a weekly half-holiday and shorter hours for shop assistants. We strongly protest against the manner in which certain public bodies in Ireland endeavour to evade the provisions of the Shops Act, more especially in regard to the granting of the weekly half-holiday and adequate time for meals. We are of opinion that the Act should be amended in the following respects:-

1. There must be a limitation of the hours to 48 per week; a compulsory closing on the weekly half-holiday; and a total abolition of Sunday trading.
2. The provisions of the Act must be extended to all shop assistants and clerks no matter where employed, and the clause exempting towns other than Borough or Urban areas must be deleted.
3. The exemption clause dealing with Licensed Traders must also be amended.

Copies of this resolution to be sent to the Home Secretary, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and to the Whips of the various Parties in Parliament”.

Proposed by Mr. M. J. O'Lehane, seconded by Mr. Johnson (Belfast).

Adopted, Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress, Cork, 1913

*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

Private Sector

Construction Industry Committee (CIC)

At the Biennial General Meeting of the CIC held in December 2012, Mr Jim Moore (UCATT) was elected Chairperson of the committee, Mr Pat Guilfoyle was elected Vice Chair, and Mr James Coughlin was elected Secretary. The CIC membership 2011-13 is as follows:

Tom Fitzgerald (UNITE); Brian Gormley (UNITE); Richard Hurley (NUSMWI); Billy Wall (OPATSI); Eric Fleming (SIPTU); Martin Meere (SIPTU); Christy McQuillan (SIPTU); Pat McCabe (SIPTU); Pat McGrath (SIPTU); Brendan O'Sullivan (BATU); Denis Farrell (BATU); Gerry Fitzpatrick (TEEU); Charlie Prizeman (TEEU).

Fergus Whelan is the Congress Official servicing the CIC. The CIC nominates representative 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 main activity 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 the CIC dealt with in the period under review was a claim by the CIF for yet another pay reduction, following on from a 7.5% reduction in 2010.

The Labour Court issued a recommendation (No LCR20417) in relation to this and other industry matters, on November 19, 2012. It was a complex and comprehensive recommendation which required a great deal of evaluation, consultation and further negotiation before the matter could be brought to finality. The evaluation and consultation processes began immediately and intensive discussions are on-going at time of writing.



The high profile Vita Cortex dispute was one of the longest in the state's history, as 32 workers occupied the Cork plant for 139 days in a successful campaign to receive payments owed to them by the company's management. The workers case made national and international news and attracted huge support, including from then Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson. Congress was among the first to publicly back their campaign, voicing its full support in a statement issued on December 26, 2011.

Registered Employment Agreements

On May 16, 2013, the CIC released the following statement in response to the Supreme Court Judgement in relation to Registered Employment Agreements:

The recent Supreme Court judgement on Registered Employment Agreements (REAs) paves the way for a devastating attack on the standard of living of building workers in Ireland, according to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions' Construction Industry Committee.

The Congress Construction Industry Committee (CIC) met today (May 15) to discuss the implications of the judgement, which has had the effect of striking down the Registered Employment Agreement for the Construction Industry.

"When taking on contracts employers are now free to ignore existing rates of pay set by the Labour Court and free to offer skilled experienced craftsmen the National Minimum Wage. This will amount to a 50% pay cut," said Fergus Whelan of the CIC.

"The judgement may lead to the demise of the Construction Industry Pension Scheme. This pension scheme - which has served hundreds of thousands of Irish workers well since 1964 - has been killed off by a stroke of the judicial pen.

"The clauses in public procurement contracts designed to ensure that public projects and any stimulus package would result in decent jobs for experienced unemployed workers have been struck down.

“Unless something is done, these jobs will go to companies based outside the state who will milk the projects with exploited foreign labour. There will be no jobs for Ireland and little or no indigenous Irish construction industry in the near future,” Mr Whelan said.

“The Supreme Court judgement has left construction workers exposed to a level of exploitation and abuse unknown in this country since the 1930s. The judgement is the latest and most blatant attack on the protections developed over a long period, protections designed to avoid gross exploitation of vulnerable workers.”

Mr Whelan said that unions intend to ensure that all construction projects are carried out under the terms agreed in the Labour Court and “will fight for the national agreement country wide, project by project, and contract by contract. It behoves the political system to work to fix this problem.

“Employers now celebrating the victory the Supreme Court has given them could yet find that they might have been better to honour Labour Court agreements rather than watch idly as our industry is destroyed by social dumping and exploited foreign labour.”

School Building Programme

The CIC met the Minister for Education Mr Ruairi Quinn on November 21, 2012 to discuss the school building program and the issue of runaway contractors. All concerned agreed that it was a positive and productive meeting and the Minister has asked the unions to make specific proposals to improve compliance.

The initial follow-up from officials in the department was very disappointing.

However, on April 24 the Minister for Education announced the appointment of monitors to audit compliance with terms and conditions of employment in the country's school building programme.

The move was welcomed by Congress, but we also warned that public procurers had to “go further” and adopt a policy of ensuring that tender prices were sustainable, so as not to encourage bad practice and to give contractors the possibility of finishing work without having to rely on cheap, exploited labour.

Community Sector Committee

The Congress Community Sector Committee was established in September 2011 in response to a request to the Executive Council from community sector members of the three unions involved: SIPTU, Impact and Unite.

It is comprised of representatives of the sector committees/ branches of the unions involved, together with the key officials. The committee officers are drawn from the three unions and Congress has appointed a convenor (Fergus Whelan).

Overall, the committee has provided a formal structure to pursue and represent the interests of workers in the sector for the first time, along with the opportunity to share information and agree a coordinated union response where necessary.

Key objectives and actions were agreed at the initial stage and these have been completed successfully. Among the main activities undertaken to date have been: participation in the community sector forum convened by the Department of Finance; the pursuance of the implementation of Labour Court recommendations; the publication of a detailed analysis of funding cuts imposed on the sector over the past six years, highlighting the implications for service delivery and jobs and a series of meetings with the parliamentary parties of Labour, Sinn Fein, the independents' Technical Group, the United Left Alliance and Fine Gael.

A highlight of the year was the inter-union coordination that marked our response to the severe funding cuts in the Community Employment Scheme. Representatives of the committee met with the Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton and the key department officials to make the case for the CES and the committee's activity was instrumental in achieving a reversal of the original decision.

In addition, the committee was central to the preparation of proposals on the use of alternative funding for the sector, including from National Lottery funds, dormant accounts and monies recovered by the Criminal Assets Bureau.

We also convened the Dublin youth workers and held a meeting with Dublin Youth Services Board. In December 2012 the Committee reviewed progress and agreed priorities for the coming year.

All the indications show that workers in the community sector and the disadvantaged communities they serve face severe challenges over the coming years. These result from the imposition of further austerity budgets and the ideological fixation among some in government with the continuation of an independent 'third sector'.

This means continuous, disproportionate funding cuts targeted at community and voluntary sector services, the removal of advocacy organisations and the promotion of private sector philanthropy as an alternative to public funding.

The push for privatisation and outsourcing has also had an impact on this sector. In these circumstances it is vital to continue to develop strong and sustainable links with the trade union movement both to protect jobs and services and secure collective bargaining rights, to increase union organisation and membership in the sector and to forge a meaningful relationship in opposition to austerity and the attack on workers and their communities.

**Resolution from Twentieth
Annual Irish Trades Union Congress
City Hall, Cork, 12-14 May, 1913**

Minimum Wage and Apprenticeships

“That owing to the miserably low wage generally paid to shop assistants and the growing practice of introducing boy and girl labour into shops, we are of opinion that a minimum wage for all shop assistants and clerks should be at once established, and we strongly condemn the action of employers who trade on cheap labour, and who induce apprentices to enter shop life under false pretences, knowing that a very large percentage of them will never have an opportunity of making a livelihood. We desire to warn parents and guardians of the fact that shop life is considerably overcrowded, and before being induced to send their sons or daughters as apprentices they should make strict inquiries in regard to the possibilities of the future”.

Proposed by Mr. M. J. O’Lehane, seconded by Mr. Bankhead.

Adopted, Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress, Cork, 1913

Public Sector

Public Services Committee

The Report of the Executive Council approved by BDC 2011 described the previous two years as the most challenging in the history of the Public Services Committee (PSC). However it is without doubt that the years covered by this report have been equally, if not more challenging. In the period under review the public sector workforce and their unions have borne the brunt of persistent attacks, by some media outlets and commentators. In particular the provisions of the public service agreement were continuously attacked by those who wanted the government to unilaterally abandon the agreement.

In this report we will outline the main work undertaken by the PSC over the last two years.

The Public Services Pay Agreement

The Public Services Pay Agreement (Croke Park Agreement) continued to be applied during the two years under review. The agreement provided for a guarantee that there would be no further cuts to the pay of public servants and no compulsory redundancies, while on the other hand it allowed for targeted payroll savings through the achievement of efficiencies, increased productivity and reduced numbers.

The payroll savings continued to be achieved through the implementation of agreed action plans at sectoral and workplace level. The impact of the action plans on payroll costs has been significant, with a reduction in the public sector pay bill of 17.7% between 2009 and 2012 and a fall of 17,300 in the number of staff employed in the public sector in the first two years of the agreement.

In December 2012 the Government indicated that in light of the position of the public finances it wished to enter into discussions with the PSC with a view to extending the Croke Park Agreement and, over the period of the extension, reduce the public sector pay bill by a further €1 billion by 2015, with €300 million of the savings to be achieved in 2013.

Negotiations on a possible extension commenced in January 2013. At a series of meetings the government set its proposals to achieve the required savings. The proposed measures included: a five hour increase in the working week for all public servants; changes to rates of pay for overtime and premium pay; a range of workplace reform measures; pay reductions to be applied to people earning above a particular level; a freeze on incremental progression, possible compulsory redundancy provisions and changes in the pension scheme for serving staff.

The PSC also raised a number of issues that would be required to be addressed in the context of any negotiation. These included an adjustment in the rate at which the pension levy would apply, the elimination of the two tier workforce, consolidation of certain allowance and a range of other issues that were sector specific. The LRC was invited to assist the parties and chaired what proved to be a very challenging set of negotiations. Indeed some unions left the negotiations before they were finalised.

In February 2013 the LRC proposed a range of measure to the parties. The LRC proposals reflected a considerable rowing back on the original government demands and included some progress on issues that had been raised by unions, including a range of sector specific issues. The proposals were also accompanied by a commitment from government that they would not be seeking any further contribution to addressing the budget deficit from public servants. Despite this it is clear that the proposals proved very difficult for unions and their members in the public sector to accept.

Following ballots it was clear that a weighted vote under the rules of the Public Services Committee would result in a rejection of the proposals. At a meeting of the Public Services Committee on April 17, 2013, it was agreed that the committee would inform the government that the LRC proposals had been rejected. At the time of writing, the government had requested the Chief Executive of the LRC – Mr Kieran Mulvey - to assess from contact with the unions, if the basis for an agreement existed.

During the period under review the body charged with monitoring the implementation of the public services agreement continued to operate, chaired by P.J. Fitzpatrick.

It produced a number of reports - including two annual reports - detailing progress made under the sectoral action plans and recording verified and audited payroll savings achieved.

The second report of the Implementation Body for the Public Service Agreement revealed continued pay savings to the Exchequer of €650m in the second year of the deal and non-pay savings of a further €370m.

Congress was represented on the Implementation Body by Shay Cody (IMPACT), Patricia King (SIPTU), Sheila Nunan (INTO) and Tom Geraghty (PSEU).

Public Sector Pensions

In the last Executive Council Report (2011) we reported on negotiations that were taking place between the PSC and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DEPR), on government proposals for a new single pension scheme that would apply to all new public servants.

In the period covered by this review, discussions continued on certain aspects of the government proposals. In July 2012 the Public Services Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 became law and on January 1, 2013 the new scheme came into operation, applying to all new public servants employed after that date.

The standard terms of the new scheme include: pension and retirement lump sum based on career average pay; co-ordination with the State Pension Contributory (SPC); pension age set, initially, at 66 years which will rise in step with statutory changes in the SPC age to 67 years in 2021 and 68 years in 2028; a compulsory retirement age of 70; contribution rates of 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration and 3% of pensionable remuneration; a facility for early retirement from age 55 on cost-neutral (actuarially reduced) grounds; a facility for early retirement on medical grounds, subject to certain conditions; death in service benefit of twice annual pensionable remuneration; pensions for spouses or civil partners and eligible children and, post-retirement pension increases linked to CPI. Special provisions to deal with the unique retirement arrangements of groups such as Fire Fighters and Prison Officers are also reflected in the new scheme.

Sick Leave Arrangements

During the period under review the government sought major changes to sick pay arrangements for public servants. The PSC argued that the scale and scope of the changes sought were inappropriate and unnecessary. In line with the provisions of Public Services Pay Agreement the dispute was referred to the LRC. Following discussions at the LRC a number of disputed matters were referred to the Labour Court. In July 2012, as per the provisions of the Public Services Pay Agreement, the Labour Court issued a binding decision.

While the Court did concede some of the government demands, many of the PSC claims were also upheld. The Court supported the PSC claim for the continuation of arrangements for those public servants who suffer long term critical illness, or serious physical injury.

Officers & Negotiating Committee of the PSC

During the period under review the Officers and members of the PSC Negotiation Committee were as follows:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Chair | Shay Cody (IMPACT) |
| Vice-Chairs | Gene Mealy (SIPTU), Sheila Nunan (INTO) |
| Secretary | Tom Geraghty (PSEU) |

Terence Casey (MLSA), John Clinton (POA), Walter Cullen (Unite), Liam Doran (INMO), Mike Jennings (IFUT), Pat Kavanagh (TEEU), Pat King (ASTI), Diarmuid Lynch (VOA), John MacGabhann (TUI), Greg Macken (BATU), Jim Moore (UCATT), Eoin Ronayne (CPSU), Dave Thomas (AHCPS) Steve Tweed (IBOA), Billy Wall (OPATSI) and Liam Berney (Congress).

Semi-States & the Privatisation Agenda

In the past two years there have been some significant developments in the commercial semi-state sector.

In July 2011 the government published a detailed review of state assets. In September 2011 it established the New Economy and Recovery Authority (NewERA), within the National Treasury Management Agency (NAMA). The core role of NewERA as described on their website is the *“oversight of the commercial state sector in Ireland including, where requested, advising on the disposal or restructuring of State assets and ensuring Government plans for investment in energy, broadband and water are implemented within the sector”*.

In July 2012 the government announced that it had decided to dispose of some state assets commencing in 2013. The assets to be sold included:

- » The Energy Division of Bord Gais Eireann;
- » Some of the ESB’s non-strategic power generation capacity;
- » Sale of some of Coillte’s assets to be considered, though not the sale of land;
- » The state’s remaining 25% stake in Aer Lingus.

As part of this programme of disposals the government also announced that it had reached agreement with the Troika that at least half of the proceeds of the sale of these assets could be used to create jobs and stimulate economic activity.

At the time of writing, no sale had taken place and despite much speculation, no actual date for a disposal of any asset had been announced. Congress, in line with motions passed at previous BDCs, continued to argue that the sale of any individual asset was a mistake and that a state holding company ought to be established.

Such a vehicle would allow the combined value of all the commercial semi-state companies to be leveraged for investment in economic infrastructure, thereby creating jobs and in turn stimulating the economic growth. Individual affiliated unions have also organised campaigns highlighting the potential problems associated with the disposal of state assets.

Ironically, while the government seems intent on disposing of some state assets they have announced their intention to create a new commercial semi-state company, namely *Irish Water*.

The programme for government agreed between Fine Gael and Labour proposed the establishment of a new state-owned water utility company, taking over responsibility for the state’s water services from local authorities. In January 2012, Minister Phil Hogan published a consultation paper on the proposal to establish a new water utility company. Congress produced a detailed response to this, arguing that while we could support the establishment of new water utility company, this was predicated on:

- » An absolute commitment that water services infrastructure and the provision of water services remained within the public sector;
- » That the provision of water services remained the responsibility of local authorities;
- » That government continued to provide funding for the sector, in particular funding for capital investment to improve the water distribution network.

The Congress document can be downloaded here: http://www.ictu.ie/download/pdf/water_report_web.pdf

In March 2012 Congress organised a seminar to highlight our concerns and to call for detailed consultation with workers in the sector and their unions. Following discussions with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Community it was agreed to establish a specific forum to deal with staff concerns. It was further agreed that the IWCG would be chaired by Kevin Foley from the LRC.

In April 2012 the government announced that it had decided to establish *Irish Water* as a subsidiary of the existing Bord Gais Energy (BGE).

The Irish Water Consultative Group (IWCG) has begun its detailed work and at the time of writing, had developed understandings on:

- » the use of contractors in the installation of domestic water meters;
- » surveying of domestic dwellings for the purposes of installing domestic water meters, and
- » the secondment of public service staff to Irish Water.

The main work of the IWCG in the coming period will be to secure an understanding on the content of service level agreements (SLA's) to be entered into between Irish Water and Local Authorities, with particular emphasis on the employment security of local authority staff and the future role of local authorities in water services. It will also be crucial to develop an understanding on the role of the Commission for Energy Regulation in determining water charges.

Aviation Sector

The most notable development in the aviation sector was the decision of Government to separate Shannon Airport from the DAA group. The government decision was based on a revised business plan for the airport which would see it merged with some parts of Shannon Development and Shannon Heritage and established as an independent state owned entity.

Congress commissioned independent advice on the government proposals. This concluded that there was considerable risk associated with the plan. Congress had a number of meetings with government representatives and with various Ministers in relation to the proposed separation.

While noting the Congress concerns, the government proceeded with the separation of Shannon Airport from the DAA from January 1, 2013. At the time of writing the legislation to bring about the merger of the now separated Shannon Airport with Shannon Development and Shannon Heritage had not been published and the government timeline on a full merger by July 2013 seemed unlikely to be met.

The period under review also saw a third bid by Ryanair for Aer Lingus. Although the bid ultimately failed to win the support of the Irish Government or satisfy the competition requirements of the European Commission, Ryanair offered, if successful, to gift another airline with many of the routes currently operated by Aer Lingus.

Ryanair have announced they will appeal the decision to the European Court of Justice. During the period under review negotiations on measures to address the substantial deficit in the Irish Aviation Superannuation Scheme (IASS) continued.

The IASS is the pension scheme for general staff in both Aer Lingus and the Dublin Airport Authority.

Ports

The port sector continues to attract a significant degree of attention. The period under review has seen the merger of Drogheda Port Company with Dublin Port Company. The Department of Enterprise, Jobs & Innovation has also asked the Competition Authority to conduct an examination of competition in the Ports Sector in Ireland. In our submission to the Authority we argued that ports were an essential part of the economic infrastructure of the state and should remain within public ownership. We also called for capital investment in the ports sector so they can reach their maximum potential.

In April 2013 the Department of Transport published a strategy for the sector. In this report the privatisation of the ports was rejected. However further decisions relating to the competition in and between the ports will await the outcome of the Competition Authority Study.

CIE Group

The CIE companies continued to provide the vast majority of public transport services in the state. The continued pressure on the public finances and the economic downturn has had an impact on the financial position of the companies. This has resulted in pressure to reduce costs. Negotiations on cost savings have been concluded or are continuing in each of the companies at the time of writing this report. Separately a review of the direct award contracts between the National Transport Authority and the CIE companies was conducted by the NTA. In our submission we argued for the continuation of the direct award contracts.

At the time of writing a decision was awaited on the outcome of the review. As part of our 2012 Budget Submission Congress agreed for the re-introduction of the VAT rebate that was previously paid to public transport providers. The Government introduced a fuel rebate scheme as part of Budget 2013.





**SECTION
THREE**

**BUILDING
THE PEACE**

SANDYFORD

DUBLIN

SECTION THREE

Building The Peace

Preamble

This chapter deals with the work of the Northern Ireland Committee over the past two years and is centred on the Investing for Peace Strategy which encompasses all socio-economic issues.

Crucial to the success of Investing for Peace is the realisation of all strands of the Good Friday Agreement. This chapter is structured to reflect the main three strands of the Agreement.

Strand 1: Northern Ireland

Strand 2: North/South All-island

Strand 3: East/West relations

Strand One: Northern Ireland



Strike and Rally 2012

Austerity & Northern Ireland

This report outlines the main activities of the Northern Ireland Committee (NIC) since 2011, a period which has been dominated by a campaign of resistance to the austerity programme imposed by the Stormont administration and the UK's coalition government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats.

The NIC has been well served by the committed and efficient leadership of Avril Hall-Callaghan, whose two terms as NIC Chair ended in 2012. Her successor Pamela Dooley now steers the work of the Committee, and acts as its public face, engaging with the media, stating the NIC position during protests and rallies and on one sad occasion, speaking at a commemoration for a murdered worker, Prison Officer David Black.

There has been plenty to protest about and lobby against over the past two years.

The great achievements the past century, from trade union rights and votes for women, to the creation of the welfare state and the prioritisation of full employment after World War II, to the spread of social, cultural, educational and employment rights in recent decades - all are under siege as never before.

Congress has resisted and will continue to resist this attack on our fundamental rights and liberties. With our friends in Scotland, Wales and every region of England, we have been at the forefront of the challenge to the ideology of austerity.

In Northern Ireland, that vanguard role of opposition has been intensified by the structure of the NI Assembly, which does not have a formal system of 'opposition' to the decisions made by the mandatory coalition, which comprises all five parties with more than one MLA.

As a consequence, the Trade Union Movement *is* the opposition, and has acted as such in the committee rooms of Stormont and lobbying MLAs on its granite steps.

We are the opposition outside the offices of ATOS, defending the rights of welfare claimants with disabilities. We are organising public meetings against cuts and closures to care homes and A&E units. We are challenging the enforced 'consensus' on the economy in the broadcasting studios and newspapers offices. We are spreading our message by social media, public actions and the example of trade union representatives in the workplace.

We have balloted for industrial action and have engaged in the largest single day of strike action in the history of Northern Ireland.

We have marched against austerity and cuts and for a society which is peaceful, just and fair. And we will do so again and again because our analysis is correct. Austerity is not working and cannot work. We are determined to stop it being imposed on the people of Northern Ireland by Westminster or by Stormont.



NI Rally for People and Jobs

Building Peace & Justice

The response of the devolved government in Stormont to the UK's triple-dip recession has been as disappointing as the implementation of commitments made 15 years ago on Good Friday.

Unemployment is at a rate not seen since the Agreement was signed. All of the trade unions across Northern Ireland supported the Agreement and campaigned for it, and we have no regrets for doing so. We should never forget that there are hundreds of people alive today who would have been killed or injured or imprisoned or exiled, had the Agreement never been reached. That fact alone makes all the effort worth it.

However, if the price of freedom is eternal vigilance, then the price of ensuring that we are progressing and not regressing is vigilance by an active citizenry through an inclusive civil society.

Sadly, we *are* regressing on certain fronts - most notably, equality, human rights and political participation. We have also seen the abolition of the Civic Forum, which could have acted as a social conscience for the Assembly and Executive.

We have seen the clear commitment to a comprehensive Bill of Rights sidelined. The promised Single Equality Act has never materialised. There is no agreement on any strategy to address sectarianism. Nor do we have agreed or effective strategies on sexual orientation, gender, disability, race, older people, young people, and the long promised anti-poverty strategy.

In 1998, we in Northern Ireland were global leaders on equality and human rights tools. Now we are a decade behind Britain and other EU states. It is unacceptable that key elements of EU anti-discrimination Directives have not been transposed into domestic law.

There is also the fact of declining participation in elections, especially by the younger voters, a creeping non-vote of no-confidence in our emergent 'political class'. There is a real concern that the peace process has become the property of the political parties rather than the people. Add to this, the current scandal of youth unemployment at its highest since 1995 and the visibility of young people in recent protests and disturbances, adds to the sense that we are letting down the supposed beneficiaries of the Agreement.

The NIC upholds the right of all to freedom of expression. When we exercise our right we also take our responsibilities seriously.

Responding to the street protests of December 2012 and the attempted murder of a woman police officer, the NIC called for a halt to all

protests, pickets, and violent and verbal attacks related to the issues of flags, on any building in Northern Ireland.

The NIC also called on the elected representatives in the NI Assembly and local government to suspend motions calling for the raising or lowering of flags with immediate effect.

The trade union movement has years of experience of bringing people onto the streets to protest against violence from all perpetrators, and for equality and justice, but there are rules that we follow.

The first priority is the safety of all who participate and who witness the protest - no one gets hurt. That means dealing with the civic authorities well in advance and ensuring that the protest is well-stewarded by competent people who are clearly identifiable. We always co-operate in advance with the PSNI, Road Service, Translink, local government and anyone else who may be affected, to ensure that everyone goes home safely.

The NIC statement on the December protests concluded by stating that: "Calling for others to take to the streets and then walking away from the consequences is the act of a coward."

THE NIC still believe that a comprehensive strategy to address sectarianism should be a priority for the devolved administration and that the social benefits of a rights-based society would match the economic impact of a Northern Ireland free of division.

Meanwhile, there remain those wedded to the futility of violence. In November 2012, they assassinated Prison Officer David Black as he drove to work. Yet again, trade unionists from all communities took to the streets to express their horror and sadness, as we have done in leading public protest at crimes perpetuated by paramilitaries from both sides.



Belfast City Councillors from all parties, including the Lord Mayor Gavin Robinson (DUP), participating in the Silent Vigil held to protest the murder of Prison Officer David Black in November 2012.

Congress still believes that, as a respected independent and neutral body in the eyes of competing marginalised groups, it has a duty to respond to requests to act as a good-faith facilitator on a range of problems that still bedevil Northern Ireland.

The benefits of 'stability' have not trickled down. While there has been a peace dividend for some, the patterns of disadvantage have remained unchallenged and on issues like health inequality and educational access, the problems are growing.

There are policy choices which can extend inclusiveness and make the weak feel powerful without blocking roads or besieging their neighbours. Stormont ministers have constantly used the line that the money is not there for investment because HM Treasury control the cash supply.

They can, however, do something which will cost very little in monetary terms, but could bring huge social dividends.

A Bill of Rights for All

A comprehensive Bill of Rights and an allied campaign of encouraging people to take part in the decisions which affect their everyday lives, would deepen the roots of democracy and dialogue.

Congress presented evidence to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement on the urgent necessity for the completion of a Good Friday Agreement, in tandem with the completion of promoting equality of opportunity and *Dealing with the Past*.

The obstruction of a Bill of Rights by political parties and the refusal of agreement on genuine strategies towards an equal and shared society may be due to party political resistance to the wide scale participation of the people, a prerequisite of the success of such strategies.

Not enough people feel that they are being listened to and they can't afford lobbyists or sufficiently excite the local press. Congress is fighting to ensure that these voices are heard. Politics should not be the exclusive preserve of specialists, of what Peter Robinson revealingly called "the political class."

That political class was mostly absent during the largest economic protest ever seen in Northern Ireland. In November 2011, every arm of the public sector went on strike over their pensions, their jobs, their services and our future. Political strikes are illegal in the UK, but it was politics which brought onto the streets the largest strike rally in the history of Northern Ireland.

The scale of the strike and its popular support sent a major message to Stormont, coming as it did, after a succession of strikes and industrial action across every vital public service.

The variety of unions which saw large majorities voting for strike action on November 30 covered every conceivable wing of the public sector, from school principals and hospital consultants to cleaners and porters. The vast crowd at Belfast City Hall and hundreds of picket lines said in the clearest manner that 'we are all in this together'.

A large contingent of students attended the City Hall rally, replicating the solidarity shown to them by education trade unions in their fight against tuition fees. Similarly, there were numerous banners representing community groups, links which intensified during the struggle against the attempts to impose wholesale cuts to the most vulnerable in our society under the guise of 'welfare reform.'

This was a major commitment of the resources of the movement, and involved months of lobbying Stormont, street protests, mass leafleting and public information sessions on proposals which will deepen poverty and disadvantage in our society.

For instance, in August 2012 community-based welfare rights and women's groups - together with Congress - organised a protest outside the offices of ATOS Health Care, the private company which operates the Medical Referee Service, to support the "ATOS Games" - Showcasing Disabled People's anger that ATOS had the brass neck to sponsor the London Paralympics.

The function ATOS Health Care performed was previously delivered by the public sector but was privatised in 2010.

Since then, disabled clients have been unable to be examined at Royston House because ATOS claim they cannot facilitate evacuation in the case of an emergency. In addition, new assessment criteria for disability benefits made it much more difficult for disabled people to obtain and retain the relevant benefits. Cases such as this persuaded many that justice was on the side of the protestors, and several further protests and lobbies have been organised since, at the ATOS offices and on the steps of Stormont.

At the time of writing, the Assembly treads with care, as they have lost the argument with the public and the unions. ATOS stay silent and decrees that people with end stage cancer are 'fit for work'.

There was similar public outrage at the revelation by workplace whistleblowers of plans to withdraw from NHS residential care in every Health board area. The swift response from unions and the infuriated eloquence of 90-year-old residents

caught the media's attention, which translated into public anger aimed at a Health Minister who was forced to back off and apologise.

The tide is turning against austerity among the general public, not merely because of the inefficiency and unfairness of the measures, The moral argument against austerity is understood and supported by voters for all parties, and that is why marches and protests, such as in November 2011, October 2012 and on every May Day, are supported by ever bigger crowds, all of whom are saying 'Enough!'

II - Public Engagement & Organisation

As the largest civil society organisation in Northern Ireland, Congress has engaged with elected representatives at all levels, from local councils to the NI Assembly, the Executive, the Oireachtas and Westminster, in the many forums set up to address the economic and social crisis caused by austerity and political inertia.

A major cut in Corporation Tax, touted as the silver bullet for the NI economy, is now unlikely to happen. This represents a major political success for the union movement, as we were the only significant body opposed to tax haven status for Belfast. Opposed to us were those who were going to profit from a cut, who did not fully understand the consequences, or just went with the manufactured consensus.

We must acknowledge the help we received from economists and other tax experts who contradicted the simple and misleading narrative of the tax cutters, most especially Richard Murphy of Tax Research UK.

The assistance from Richard and others in TradeMark's Centre for Progressive Economics and the related Betty Sinclair Winter School helped elevate the level of our engagement with the purse-wielders and decision-makers.

Our capacity was also augmented by the presence of an economist from the **Nevin Economic Research Institute (NERI)**, which has already made significant contributions to the policy debate around the economy (see below).

NERI adds to the intellectual strengths already present in the movement - especially the considerable expertise within affiliate unions about their sectors.

We have a talent pool of considerable depth all of whom grasp the technical details and political context of healthcare, education, equality, human rights, pensions, migration, manufacturing,

agri-food, retail, Europe, social security, local government, justice, culture, and all of the cradle-to-grave issues which affect each citizen.

This knowledge is on top of the wisdom we have learnt as trade union representatives and as negotiators.

Our expertise on employment law has been recognised by at least one government department, the Department of Employment & Learning, which refused to import wholesale the Westminster government's plans for Employment Law, and instead convened a new **Labour Relations Agency Roundtable** for Northern Ireland, with equal representation for trade unions and employers (see below).

This has the aim of utilising the legal fact of devolution to create the most appropriate framework for industrial relations in workplaces across NI.

Making the links between the divergent experiences of our members and the wider campaign for the preservation and extension of a decent society has been a crucial aspect of our campaigning strategy. We have argued with Stormont ministers that we must use whatever fiscal levers we have to at least offset the worst of the recession. That is why we have supported those initiatives when they have arisen, such as the limited stimulus programmes announced by the Finance Minister and Belfast City Council's Investment Programme in February 2012, which has, so far, delivered 156 permanent and 63 temporary job opportunities and over 200 placements, as well as assisting unemployed young people with a bursary scheme, a pre-employment support programme and a new apprenticeship scheme.

The **NIC Biennial Conference** was held in April 2012, in Derry. Most of the motions from affiliates and trades councils related to the economy, and the impact of the endless recession on all parts of society, those in work and those without. Welfare 'reform' was a major issue for conference. A detailed discussion of all of the small changes and their cumulative effect on the welfare state, gave delegates a bigger picture of the impact of the proposals.

Likewise, there were people who shared their experience of the impact of the 'troubles', for them personally, their journey in search of justice, their demand for human rights and their clear message that society needs a genuine process for dealing with the past if we are to move forward.

There is a major issue for trade unionists who supported the **Good Friday Agreement** and campaigned for many years for the parties to agree to work what they had signed and to restore

the institutions for the good of all of the people of NI. The results to date have been meagre and mediocre.

On the fifteenth anniversary of the signing of the Agreement, the NIC issued a statement expressing its frustration at the lack of progress, and the sectional interests who have delayed and blocked many worthwhile initiatives, while and at the same time imposing the worst of Westminster's heartless policies with a resigned shrug.

The NIC statement concluded: "The Agreement is not perfect for everybody, but it is still the best future for us all, together. Complete it."



Trade Union leaders from the Republic, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland at the 2012 NI Committee BDC in L'Derry, including Andy Richards (President Wales TUC), Grahame Smith and Mike Kirby, General Secretary and President of the STUC.

Industrial Relations

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. Employment law is a devolved responsibility for Stormont and there has been considerable pressure from business lobbyists for the extension of plans to 'reform' the law by the Tory-led Westminster government.

The Prime Minister David Cameron commissioned a major donor to his party, Lord Adrian Beecroft, to examine employment law and he dutifully listed his suggestions for change - most of it regression on workers' rights.

As the laws in the UK are being changed for the worse, the NIC decided that protecting the status of working people in Northern Ireland was a priority. A hopeful sign was the establishment of a Labour Relations Agency Roundtable, where an equal number of employers and employees representatives would take a comprehensive view of employment law.

However, there have been significant consultations on proposed changes and the transposition of EU Regulations, the most important of which is the Agency Workers Directive.

Legislation discussed and consulted upon by Congress has included issues covering holiday entitlements, blacklisting of trade unionists, an LRA Code of Practice on time off for trade union duties, agency workers, TUPE, 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 and redundancy situations. These included:

- » Royal Mail
- » HMRC
- » Border Agency
- » Lagan Brick
- » FG Wilson
- » Wrightbus
- » Primark
- » Belfast Telegraph
- » Patten
- » Financial Services
- » Civil & Public Services
- » Education
- » Further Education
- » Health Services

The NIC and the trades councils also organised supportive rallies for workers in struggle across the EU, participating in public events to highlight ETUC Days of Action.

Congress continued its involvement with *The Green New Deal for Northern Ireland*. This is a cross-sectoral initiative which was established in 2009 and is led by key civil society organisations, including:

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

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

By 2012, it became clear that the DUP ministers in the Executive had little or no enthusiasm for the Green New Deal, and the project stalled after an ambitious plan was replaced with a modest boiler replacement scheme.

While most political parties in the NI Assembly pay lip service to the Green New Deal there is a real danger that such an ambitious plan to revitalise parts of the economy, especially construction and

manufacturing, has fallen at the first serious hurdle, tripped by parties whose sole idea was a tax cut for corporations.

Nevin Economic Research Institute

In January 2013, the Nevin Economic Research Institute revisited many of these ideas with its *Policy Options for Investment in Infrastructure in Northern Ireland*, which was launched in Stormont by MLAs from the Greens, Sinn Fein and the DUP.

The NERI paper was supported by many of the proponents of the GND and renewed the debate about employment which is 'sustainable' in both meanings of the term.

NERI has a full-time economist, Paul Mac Flynn, working from the Congress office in Belfast, with his work supported by several NIC-affiliated unions. Since the establishment of NERI in Belfast during 2012, there have been several interventions in both the broadcast and print media, as well as a series of talks and seminars for trade union activists. In March 2013, NERI launched a document outlining possible solutions to the problem of youth unemployment in Northern Ireland, which attracted substantial press attention.

The presence of NERI in Northern Ireland has considerably strengthened the rigour and impact of trade union analysis and evaluation of government economic policies.

Trade Councils Consultative Committee

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

- » *the impact of Austerity policies*
- » *campaigns against cuts in services, particularly health*
- » *the Minimum Wage*

The Trades Councils were particularly active in organising local protests in support of the public sector strikes in November 2011, working with local trade union branches and community organisations, as well as public representatives. Since then, they have played an essential role in mobilising mass public opposition to the cuts.

The early effects in NI of 'austerity measures' and the trade union-based campaign of resistance has resulted in a growth in trades councils.

Ballymena and Antrim, East Down, and Lisburn trades union councils have been recently re-established and the Causeway Trades Union Council is the latest welcome addition. This covers the Coleraine, Ballymoney and Moyle council areas.

They have joined nine other long established councils in Belfast, Craigavon, Derry, Fermanagh, Newry, North Down and Ards, Mid Ulster, Omagh, and Strabane.

The councils come together at the Trades Councils Consultative Committee (TCCC) to share information and initiatives, and to develop and coordinate joint campaigns.

There is also an All-Island Trades Councils Consultative Committee which provides a discussion and planning forum for representatives from all trades councils, north and south.

Over the last two years the councils have been particularly active in organising local protests in response to the impact of public service cuts, working with local trade union branches and community organisations, as well as public representatives.

They have been instrumental in alerting local communities to the scale and social and economic consequences of the cuts and raising awareness that there is an alternative to the government's neoliberal agenda with the aim of mobilising mass public opposition.

A recent seminar in Belfast, addressed by union speakers from Britain, the Republic of Ireland and Greece gave trades council delegates a global perspective on the effects on working people of the current crisis of capitalism and provided an opportunity to consider alternative responses.

As well as continuing to oppose the consequences of public spending cuts locally on health services, education provision and unemployment a key priority that the trades councils are engaging with now involves highlighting the dangers contained in the Welfare Reform Bill.

Other issues they have worked on include: providing solidarity to workers engaged in industrial action; supporting trade union recruitment campaigns; engaging with local media; working with migrant communities; raising awareness of social and economic deprivation, particularly in the North West; supporting local community initiatives such as the 'Pink Ladies' campaign in Derry; holding public meetings with political representatives in the run up to the last election in Newry; having the Minister for Education address a public meeting in Craigavon; organising protests against a visit by the BNP leadership to Belfast; publicising

international human rights abuses such as in Palestine, and opposing costly wars prosecuted by the government.

Unfortunately the councils have also had to continue to organise protests in response to paramilitary violence in NI.

To maintain and develop this work the TCCC appeals to unions to ensure that they affiliate to, and encourage their members and activists to engage with trades councils in their local areas.

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 for dealing with sectarianism and the new challenges of racism and fascism; whilst delivering political education and conducting research and policy development, the unit maintains its roots in intervention and political action.

Since 2011, a grant from the EU Peace III Programme has allowed TradeMark to expand its important work, with a focus on Labour after Conflict.

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 & Integration*. TradeMark has also utilised their network of academics and researchers to establish the Centre for Progressive Economics (CPE), 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.

In 2011, the CPE and TradeMark established the Betty Sinclair Winter School, which has now run two successful residential conferences in Lusty Beg, Fermanagh. As well as speakers from the trade union movement and the CPE's network of economists and political scientists, the Betty Sinclair School has attracted prominent speakers from the UK and the Republic, such as Professor Keith Ewing, John Hendy QC, Dr Mary Murphy and historian Conor McCabe.

For more information:

<http://www.trademarkbelfast.com>

<http://www.centreforprogressiveeconomics.com>

Trade Union Education Programme

The programme for all 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 programme contains pathways for union representatives, health and safety representatives, equality representatives, union learning representatives and offers progression routes for all reps with accredited programmes resulting in awards, certificates and diplomas.

The programme is delivered in partnership with the North West Regional College which employs a network of accredited and experienced part time trade union tutors.

The programme has offered Diploma courses in Employment Law and Occupational Health and Safety for some years. These year-long, day release courses offer reps and trade union officials the opportunity to study an area in some considerable depth. Work is in development to add a third Diploma to the suite of current courses and it is hoped that the Equality Diploma will be offered from September 2013.

Rights to Time Off

In previous BDC reports (2009 and 2011), it was pointed out 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 time off for training in order to carry out their trade union role. These rights have been secured by trade unions and we should ensure that they are protected.

Responses to Consultations

During this period, Congress responded to the Department for Employment & Learning (DEL) consultations on:

- » Tuition Fees
- » Educational Maintenance Allowance
- » Steps to Success – future employment related training programmes.

Copies of the full response are available from the NIC office.

Union Learning

Following an external scoping study of other Union Learn Programmes in the UK, fuller responsibility for administrative and financial management of the programme was delegated to NIC-ICTU by the Department for Employment & 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 2014) were:

CWU
UNITE
BFAWU
UCATT
USDAW
UNISON
FBU
PCS/NIPSA
IBOA
RCN

From April 1, 2013 full financial and administrative management will be handed to the NIC, who will be responsible for monitoring individual union projects including the achievement of targets and budget spend for all unions involved in the Union Learning Fund.

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 (EGSA)

The Education Officer continued to represent Congress on the Board of Directors of EGSA. However, due to the stoppage of contracts, the Board of Directors was forced to take to wind up the organisation.

Congress believes that this is a highly counter-productive cut which runs against the regularly expressed policy of the NI Executive for increasing the skills levels of the workforce and the importance of providing an independent careers and learning advice service for adults.

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Open University

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

Health & Safety

Committee & Officers

Barbara Martin was re-elected as Chairperson of the NIC Health & Safety Committee at the reconstitution in May 2011.

Workers Memorial Day

In 2011, the Congress event heard from the family of David Layland, a GMB member who lost his life at his place of work, a landfill site just outside Belfast.

The Congress Health and Safety committee was keen to mark David's contribution to health and safety and also commemorate the many hundreds of workers who have died or been injured at or because of work. In 2012, the Committee, together with the Chairperson of the Enterprise Trade & Investment Committee at the NI Assembly, planted a native cherry tree in the grounds of Stormont Estate. A specially engraved plaque, sponsored by the GMB union was placed at the tree, in what was a moving ceremony.

In April 2013, the Committee held a reflection ceremony at the tree and afterwards heard from the Chair of the Northern Ireland Committee as well as the Chief Executive of the Health & Safety Executive for Northern Ireland at an event in Parliament Buildings.

European Safety Week

Events for European Safety week were held in 2011 and 2012 and were attended by safety reps and trade union officials.

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. The 2011 winner of the award was **Harry Wade, UNITE/CMA safety rep**. Harry worked tirelessly for safer workplaces in Royal Mail and has been involved in campaigning on many issues including around dangerous dogs and implications for postal workers.

The 2012 winner of the Safety representative Award was **Norman Gray from NIPSA**.

Norman impressed the judging panel by his extensive knowledge of workplace health and safety and his passion and commitment to making workplaces safer and to protecting and enforcing health and safety legislation.

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 Health and Safety Committee welcomes the appointment of a new HSENI Chief Executive and looks forward to a continued fruitful relationship.

RIDDOR

A delegation from the Committee was invited to give evidence to the ETI committee about proposed changes to the RIDDOR legislation.

In the consultation, DETI was proposing to change the reporting requirements for accidents and dangerous occurrences in the workplace from three to seven days, a move which was vigorously opposed by the committee. Following the extensive evidence session, Congress has been informed that there will be no change to the RIDDOR requirements in Northern Ireland.



NI May Day Rally 2012 Youth Committee

Youth Committee

The Youth Committee continues to be a vibrant part of our work and organisation 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:

i. Campaigning

The Youth Committee attended numerous events, rallies and demonstrations to protest at job losses, attacks on services and show 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 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.

The committee also organised a Roundtable Discussion with Youth Organisations to discuss the impact of the cuts on young people and seek their support for the campaign.

We 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.

ii. 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.

iii. 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.ictyouth.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 takes on a wide and varied programme of work with both the Department of Education and the Department for Employment & Learning. The ETUG has established a working group on Educational Disadvantage in Northern Ireland and will work closely with community organisations on this issue.

Following the motion to the BDC in 2012 on the issue of Human Trafficking, the ETUG has also been working on the issue of Human Trafficking and has heard from NGO organisations working on this. The ETUG is organising an awareness raising training session for those working within the education sector.

Health Services Committee

The HSC lobbies on health policy as well as providing expert guidance to the Northern Ireland Committee.

The HSC has met with the Minister for Health and civil servants within the Department of Health to lobby against changes to the health system in Northern Ireland. The HSC has been particularly active in opposing the devastating proposals contained within *Transforming Your Care*. The committee coordinated a protest outside the NICON (NHS confederation) conference in March 2013. The conference, which had no trade union contribution, was seen as an endorsement of the *Transforming Your Care* proposals and a vehicle for the further demolition of the National Health Service in Northern Ireland.

During this period, Congress responded to a number of consultations including: *Transforming Your Care* and *Who Cares, the Future of Adult Care Services*.

Both are available from the NIC office.

Culture & Arts committee

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

In addition, the 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.

May Day 2013

Congress was particularly pleased to work with Belfast City Council as part of the Council's Decade of Centenaries programme. To chart the rise of the Labour Movement from the early 1900s, and particularly around the 1907 Dockers and Carters strike and 1913 Lockout, Congress and the Council commissioned a series of events including lectures on the themes of women and labour, migration and labour, the 1913 lockout and the industrial landscape in Belfast in the 1900s.

A special show to chart the rise of the movement was commissioned for this programme. Written by local singers and musical historians Jane Cassidy and Maurice Leydon, **1913 Words and Music** was performed in Belfast City Hall and also included performances from fiddler Nollaig Casey and Dublin singer Barry Gleeson.



NI May Day Rally 2012

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 Unison by Congress President Eugene McGlone.

The RWC was also involved with the Age Sector Platform in campaigning on several issues:

- » A basic state pension set above the official poverty level 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 been continued through the Age Sector platform and NPC meeting politicians at Westminster and Stormont.

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.

In 2012, a motion was passed at the NI BDC requesting a mapping exercise of union services to retired members across the movement, with the aim of establishing best practice across all unions.

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.

Equality

The following is a report on the work of the Equality Committees in pursuit of our objective for the creation of a fairer and more equal society – *A Better Fairer Way*.

Welfare Reform

Welfare reform has been a priority campaign for the Congress' Equality Committee.

A very effective coalition was built involving trade unions, community organisations, welfare workers and advisors. This lobbied and protested for a fairer welfare system than the present arrangement.

From the autumn of 2011 Congress responded to a series of consultations on Passported Benefits under Universal Credit and the NI Welfare Reform Bill 2011 – and Welfare Reform Equality Impact Assessment. There were further submissions made to the specially convened Stormont committee of MLAs examining the equality and human rights implications of welfare 'reform'. That the NI Assembly felt compelled to create this Ad Hoc Committee is, at least, a small testimony to the campaign, its direct contact with MLAs and the physical presence of protests and lobbies at Stormont itself.

These actions were supplemented with meetings with the Committee for Social Development on Welfare Reform. The comprehensive reports and documents are available on www.ictuni.org

Congress advocates -

- » A Social Security system that ensures everyone has a decent standard of living free from poverty;
- » A Social Security system based on need not moral judgements;
- » To end low pay and poverty wages which push people into the benefits system;
- » A better and fairer way for all.

The Welfare Reform Bill does nothing for the most vulnerable in society and will lead to further deprivation for those in most need if it is implemented.

Equality & Human Rights Sub-Group (EHRSG)

The EHRSG is a sub-committee of the NI Committee which extends its membership to the chairs of the NIC's self-organised groups, equality officers of affiliated unions and trade unionists on the enforcement bodies. The EHRSG's function is to develop on behalf of the Northern Ireland Committee a strategy on equality and human rights, and to co-ordinate ICTU's lobbies, relations and negotiations with Governments, enforcement agencies and others on equality and human rights issues.

The EHRSG has had a series of meetings met with the Joint Ministers with responsibility for equality, the Equality Commission NI and with the NI Human Rights Commission.

Agenda items for ECNI included: *absence of enforcement strategy; welfare and budget cuts impact - particularly on women and those with disabilities; delay in appointment of new Chief commissioner; Invest NI strategy and the Bain Report; the failure to support EQIA system; Race Equality.*

Most recently, the NIC has expressed its deep concern at the failure of the ECNI to pursue a formal investigation into the failure of the Minister for Social Development and his Department to carry out a full Equality Impact Assessment of the proposed changes to the welfare system, which in our view will compound discrimination and disadvantage. The NIC, through its sub-group, and in conjunction with allies in the Equality coalition, is currently preparing a potential legal challenge on the ECNI's failure to discharge its functions.

Agenda items with NIHRC included: *Human and socio economic rights in the current economic climate; Bill of Rights; Dealing with the Past; Confronting attempts at regression on Human Rights; All Ireland Charter of Rights.*

The sub-group also met Kyung-wa Kang, UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights. Issues raised included, Bill of Rights, Justice, Rights of the Child and Plastic Bullets.

Human Rights Consortium

Congress is a member of the Human Rights Consortium which brings together nearly 200 NGO's, trade unions and other groups to campaign for the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, in particular for a strong and inclusive a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

The Human Rights Consortium meets on a monthly basis.

Equality Coalition

Congress is a member of the Equality Coalition which is a broad alliance of non-governmental organisations whose members cover all the categories listed in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 ('s75'), as well as other equality strands. It was founded in 1996 by community and voluntary sector organisations and trade unions.

The Equality Coalition continues to provide a forum for unity between all sectors when campaigning for equality, while allowing for the diversity of its members' work and views. It has regular engagements with government and the enforcement bodies.

The Equality coalition meets every month.

Both the Human Rights consortium and the Equality coalition have established relations with the Equality and Human Rights alliance in the Republic.

Women's Committee

The Officers of the Women's Committee are:
Chairperson - Theresa Devenney, ATL

Vice Chairperson - Vivien Holding, CWU, Secretary - Teresa Graham, NASUWT.

The committee drew up an action plan on a number of issues under the headings of Women & Society, Women in Unions and Women & Workplace and identified the following as the main priorities, for the future:

- » Gender Sensitive Response to Crisis
- » Strategy for women's employment and
- » Austerity having detrimental impact on Women's health

Other areas of work have included:

- » Tackling violence against Women;
- » Caring roles and women;
- » 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 NIC website. The committee has also lobbied through unions and directly at Stormont on these and other barriers to women's full participation in society.



Congress Women's Conference Belfast March 2012

The Women's Committee worked closely with its equivalents in the Republic of Ireland, and both participated in the Congress Women's Seminar and Conferences, in Belfast and in Dublin in 2012 and 2013.

The keynote speaker to the Belfast conference in 2012 was President Michael D Higgins, who told delegates:

"Women have long played a central role in the development of our island, North and South. Women have been central to the trade union movement from the earliest days. Indeed the first female President of Congress was the inspiring Inez McCormack. A strong negotiator and formidable leader, Inez is still active in promoting human rights through a range of activities. Inez followed in the foot-steps of a number of other remarkable women trade unionists including Mary Galway from County Down who became the first woman Vice President of Congress in 1910 and Betty Sinclair who was Secretary of the Belfast and District Trades Union Council for nearly 30 years and the first chairperson of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association.

"It has been my experience that the style of leadership usually pursued by women makes them particularly effective in getting the job done..."

A full report of the 2012 Conference can be found on the ICTU website www.ictu.ie or www.ictuni.org

In April 2011, the Women's Committee, as part of the Women's ad hoc Policy group helped organise the launch of the *Women's Manifesto - NI Assembly and Local Government Elections 2011*.

The organisations involved in the launch of the Manifesto included the Congress Womens Committee, the Women's Resource & Development Agency (WRDA), the Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network (NIRWN), Foyle Women's Information Network, Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

The Women's Manifesto outlined the key policy issues that need to be addressed during the period of the next mandate, in relation to the economy, childcare, women and decision-making, violence against women, education, health and the community women's sector.

Disability Committee

The committee was pleased to welcome the ever increasing numbers of Disability Champions who have been trained and who also attend the Disability Champions Forum. There are now over 150 Champions trained on the island.

The Chair of the Disability Committee, Berni McCrea, represents the committee at various forums including at meetings with the Equality Commission and the Human Rights Commission. The Chair also attends the ICTU Equality and Human Rights Committee

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 which have included, living with sensory disability, suicide awareness and trauma, legal developments at home and European wide, the UN Convention on Persons with Disabilities and 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.

Hardest Hit Campaign

The Chair attended several meetings with interested organisations and partners of the Hardest Hit Campaign. Harry Reid of RNIB and an organiser of the Hardest Hit Campaign spoke to the committee.

The Hardest Hit Campaign set out three key messages and four objectives they seek to achieve:

- » Don't take our independence
- » Keep your promises
- » Don't push us into poverty
- » No cuts to services vital to disabled people.
- » Ensure changes to Disability Living Allowance do not make disabled people worse off.
- » Ensure that Employment and Support Allowance works by improving the assessment process.
- » Ensure that the welfare system supports people with the additional costs of living with a disability.

Health & Wellbeing Project

The committee accessed funding to run a Health and Wellbeing project. The target audience was union members from Retired Committees or those with disabilities. The expectation of recruiting 30 participants was exceeded. The project provides an opportunity over 16 weeks to improve health and wellbeing and learn more about a range of issues.

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.

Two delegations of the committee went to the European Parliament in September 2011 and October 2012 to meet with MEPs and to discuss concerns around LGBT issues. Some particular areas of concern raised were: the right to adopt, full marriage, change of gender on passports and NI being out of step with regard to blood donors.

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 effect change for all LGBT members.

Fuel Poverty

A submission was made to DSD on Fuel Poverty. Congress was represented in Stormont at a round table event which had an MLA from each Department at every table. The meeting was hosted by Alex Maskey, Chair of the Committee, as part of a discussion on the programme for government. Issues discussed included: alternative energy; regulation; pricing; winter fuel payments; energy efficiency and energy advice.

PETAL

2010 saw the launch of the **PETAL** (Progressive Equality Training and Learning) programme. Since then it has expanded to deal with issues using different mediums including drama and DVD.

PETAL offers training on issues that have been identified by our reps as priority in the workplace e.g. stress, harassment and bullying, pregnancy and maternity rights, disability, absence management and taking a case to an industrial. The training is delivered in seven strands,

1. **Equality Law Seminars** which are designed to keep reps up to date with the latest developments in case law.
2. **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.
3. **Disability Champions** series which deals with spotlight topics on disability and also give Disability Champions the opportunity to meet, network and support each other in their work.
4. **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 forty participants from all over the island.
5. **Bill of Rights**. This programme equips participants with the tools to engage in the Bill of Rights debate and to work together to come up with new and creative ideas for Bill of Rights activism.
6. **Women in Leadership**. This OCN accredited (Level 2) training programme is open to all women trade unionists who are interested in exploring issues around women's participation in decision making bodies, trade unions and public life.
7. **Social Guardians**. We are all Social Guardians who have a responsibility to support those who may be vulnerable, feeling unsafe and/or at risk. This one day course will enable participants to gain a better understanding of domestic abuse and its impact in the workplace.

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, Women's Aid, Human Rights Consortium and Public Health Agency. Thanks must be recorded for their help and assistance.

The launch of the 2011/12 programme took place in Unison, around 100 people attended. The second year of the programme has been expanded to include a community outreach programme – *Talking*

Heads, I Came here For ... which consolidates the learning and knowledge gained from previous events.

Migrant Workers

Migrant workers have been especially vulnerable to the global economic storms that created by the financial crisis. The consequences included job losses, the erosion of wages and working conditions, the increased risk of discrimination and xenophobia and development of more restrictive immigration policies.

Also, perceptions of migration and its positive impact on economy and society have regressed, while negative attitudes towards immigrants, often fuelled by right-wing media, have intensified.

Admittedly, in recent years the government, trade unions and voluntary organisations in Northern Ireland have taken some positive measures towards providing better support to migrant workers, however, much still needs to be done to ensure they enjoy equal access to services, employment rights, development opportunities and respect for their cultural background.

As members of the Racial Equality Panel which seeks to develop a new Racial Equality Strategy, we believe that the new strategy needs to address all manifestations of racial discrimination and underrepresentation of minority ethnic people in all areas in the labour market, as well as political and public life and include an action plan with specific commitments from relevant government departments.

As both research and practical experience suggest, migrant workers are more likely to be adversely affected by the economic crisis. They are vulnerable for a number of reasons, such as low local-language skills and limited educational credentials. Also, many are concentrated in sectors that are more sensitive to business-cycle fluctuations such as construction, wholesale, manufacturing, and hospitality. In turn, those employed in health and education will be affected by cuts in public spending.

Migrant workers also tend to have contingent work contracts and arrangements, such as temporary, seasonal, and unauthorised employment.

The 2011 Census has revealed that there were 81,453 people in Northern Ireland, including children, who were born outside the UK or the Irish Republic. This is 4.5% of the total NI population of 1.8 million. People from the expanded EU countries (so called A8 countries of Eastern Europe) have been the main source of migration since 2004 making up 1.97% of the population. The biggest minority are Polish

nationals, with 17,700 indicating having Polish as their first language. The EU citizens from countries that joined before 2004 make up 0.54% of the NI population, whereas residents born outside the EU account for 1.99%.

These numbers confirm that ethnic minorities constitute a small, but important proportion of Northern Ireland society. It is worth noting that the levels of migration have been falling consistently since 2008 and fallen below zero in 2010 – 2011 when there was a net loss of 3,200 people leaving Northern Ireland (21,700 in and 24,900 out), according to Northern Ireland Research & Statistics Agency (NISRA).

It is natural but deeply regrettable that workers - whether born here or abroad - will leave to find work and a better life, as it is witnessed by growing numbers of people from this island emigrating in search of better opportunities elsewhere.

The trade union movement in Northern Ireland has continued its tradition of solidarity. In response to the 2006 report by Dr Robbie McVeigh the NI council for Ethnic Minorities established the Belfast Migrant Workers' Centre. The NIC is represented by its chair Pamela Dooley and Kevin Doherty of the Congress secretariat.

The 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 in accessing services for migrant workers. In 2009 the MWSU was joined by an expert employment rights advisor specialising in employment relations and representation.

A Shared Workplace, A Shared Future 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. Other elements of the programme included development of strategic partnerships, training and outreach programmes.

The Belfast office is continuing to operate a permanent Migrant Workers Employment Rights Centre as well as providing outreach clinics in other locations. In the last year, the unit has dealt with over 300 people, through a combination of advice centre, clinics and information sessions.

The centre has dealt with almost 200 cases of exploitation and mistreatment of migrant workers and represented 105 clients in dealing with employers. The centre also runs a dedicated telephone line, which in the last year received over 230 queries.

The majority of clients come from Eastern Europe, particularly Poland and Slovakia. But overall a total of 23 nationalities were represented from: Canada; Czech Republic; Egypt; Estonia; France; Germany; India; Latvia; Lebanon; Lithuania; Malaysia; Nepal; Nigeria; Philippines; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russia; Slovakia; Spain; Sudan; Switzerland; and Zimbabwe.

Key issues were dismissal, outstanding pay, disciplinary procedure, redundancy and holiday entitlements. Many cases involved alleged race and sex discrimination or less favourable treatment on these grounds.

From the initial contact with our organisation, migrant workers can join a trade union, thus benefiting from its services and increased protection in their employment.

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 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.

The unit is represented on a number of bodies concerned with minority ethnic rights, among others, OFMDFM Racial Equality Panel, DEL Thematic Subgroup and Belfast Migrant Forum.

Recognising the crucial role of active engagement of migrant workers with trade union structures, we organised a residential BME Trade Union Leadership Training in April 2013, which aimed at building the capacity of members of minority ethnic communities to participate in the trade union movement, organise and campaign successfully and promote trade unions in their workplaces and communities.

Another initiative undertaken was to commission a research project into the experiences of migrant workers in the workplace, using the data and contacts gathered by the unit in the last two years. It is anticipated that the research document will be launched in May 2013 with a major conference.

The unit also developed an updated version of a myth-busting handbook *I'm not Racist, but ...* challenging the myths and stereotypes surrounding. This publication has been used as an educational resource in training programmes for shop stewards, distributed at trade union conferences and other events and made available to organisations working in the BME sector.

In addition the *Your Rights at Work* manual has been updated to take account of changes in legislation. They are available in English, Polish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Slovak, Russian, Romanian and Bulgarian.

All the above publications are available from NIC-ICTU office.

Trade Union Friends of Palestine

Trade Union Friends of Palestine (TUFPP) hold formal meetings on a monthly basis in Belfast with the aim of promoting the implementation of Congress solidarity policy on Palestine.

TUFPP also has a broader network of trade union activists who contribute to our work by organising within their affiliate organisation and their local areas.

A number of affiliates support the work of TUFPP by financial donations and are formally represented at meetings. TUFPP distributes frequent reports and articles on the situation in Palestine and on developments in the Palestinian civil society Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions campaign.

In November 2012, Congress affiliates and TUFPP were centrally involved in a successful and peaceful demonstration in Belfast against the Israeli bombardment of Gaza. TUFPP has continued to work closely with Congress, and made a presentation to the NIC in early 2013 to progress the campaign, particularly regarding support for the BDS campaign.

TUFPP have promoted a trade union-led boycott campaign strategy, and with the sponsorship of a number of unions and trades councils have produced a Boycott Israeli Apartheid poster and postcards which have also been distributed internationally. TUFPP have produced a number of leaflets and briefing documents on Palestine including a widely circulated and detailed analysis of the Israeli union federation, Histadrut.

TUFPP have also organised a number of meetings on Palestine to increase awareness of the situation and to promote Congress policy. TUFPP supports affiliates in the drafting of conference motions and in the implementation of their own policies. We have made a range of materials available for delegates at successive BDCs and have organised fringe meetings addressed by Palestinian representatives. We have established a close working relationship with the recently formed Palestinian Trade Union Coalition for BDS, which encompasses all the main Palestinian trade union bodies, including the PGFTU.

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Strand Two: North/South, All Island



Peter Bunting Assistant General Secretary

Congress North/South Committee

The North/South Committee comprises members of the executive council and the Northern Ireland Committee. The current membership is:

Eugene McGlone – Congress President & Unite
John Douglas – Congress Vice-President & Mandate
David Begg - General Secretary Congress
Eamon Devoy – TEEU
Jack O'Connor - SIPTU
Gerry Murphy – INTO
Patricia McKeown – Unison
Jimmy Kelly – Unite
Avril Hall-Callaghan – UTU
Shay Cody – Impact
Brian Campfield – NIPSA
Pamela Dooley – Chair NIC & Unison
Peter Bunting – Assistant General Secretary Congress

The purpose of the N/S Committee is to develop key North/south initiatives in developing all-island socio-economic initiatives and influence where possible the policies originating from all six cross-border bodies under the auspices of the N/S Ministerial council.

The Congress nominee on one of the most important N/S bodies, InterTradelreland is Patricia McKeown.

The May 2013 meeting of the N/S committee received a presentation from InterTradelreland entitled: *Recession and Recovery: An All-island Perspective*.

InterTradelreland is the only organisation which has been tasked by both governments to boost cross-border trade and business development for the mutual benefit of both Northern Ireland and the Republic.

It has been successful in the creation of 3,000 jobs across the island which represents a high return on public investment, on a 12-to-1 ratio.

Crucial to the work of the N/S committee is the pursuance of the Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and the Charter of Rights for the Republic, as set out in the Good Friday Agreement (GFA).

It is most disappointing that these elements of the agreement have not been introduced in both jurisdictions despite being components of an international treaty. N/S committee members had a meeting with the Joint Oireachtas Working Group on the Implementation of the GFA, which has members from the Oireachtas, Stormont and Westminster. A copy of the proceedings is available on www.ictuni.org.

The N/S Committee, through the offices of the Congress General Secretary has sought a meeting with the Tanaiste, Eamonn Gilmore, to impress upon the Irish Government that they have a duty to fulfill the commitment made in the GFA. The failure to implement the full terms of the GFA, particularly those centered on rights issues, poses a threat to a lasting peaceful and just Northern Ireland.

The N/S committee is of the view than an all-island public procurement task force, which was part of the *Towards 2016* negotiations is another issue which remains unfulfilled. An all-island public procurement strategy, which utilised the social clauses of the EU 2011 Directive, is a vehicle for creating a stimulus for the economy throughout the island, assisting the marginalised into employment and protecting employment rights for workers involved.



NI Youth Committee at BDC

Strand Three: Council of the Isles

2012 Meeting: Dublin

The Council of the Isles is an annual meeting of the trade union Centres on these islands. It comprises the Trade Union Congress (TUC) of England, the Scottish TUC, the Wales TUC and Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

The Council of the Isles originated from the Good Friday Agreement (Strand III, East-West) relations and discusses issues of mutual concern and examines areas of potential cooperation.

The 2012 meeting was held in January 2012 Dublin and issues discussed were:

- » Organising;
- » Economic issues in an Age of Austerity;
- » Facility Time;
- » Union Learning Representatives;
- » Palestine.

It became quite obvious in the course of the discussions on these issues that workers throughout the islands were under attack by administrations in all jurisdictions. There was an agreement for continuation of collaboration by the Celtic-devolved administrations on pressuring the Westminster Government to change path from its austerity economic strategy.

While it was agreed that each confederation would continue their specific anti-austerity campaign a consensus emerged on the necessity for outreach to the Voluntary and Community Sector to build alliances and generate broader-based campaigns.

Further discussion on the importance of organising took place with the emphasis on sharing the strategies and approaches, particularly those focused on attracting young people into the union movement.

The attack on Facility Time for public servants was another subject of concern to those in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The attack was spearheaded by the Taxpayers' Alliance and received widespread media and political support, most notably from Tory government Minister, Francis Maude.

It was agreed that papers outlining the financial benefit to taxpayers would be produced and used by all the confederations, in defence of Facility Time.

The lack of progress on the Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions (BDS) campaign was another issue of mutual concern to the Council of the Isles, with differing opinions emerging as to how to progress

the issue. However important developments to note were that Veolia has moved out of Israel and G4S has agreed not to seek any further contracts there. The different opinions referenced here relate purely to a boycott of Israeli goods from illegal settlements or a boycott of all Israeli goods.

The biggest success in recent years for the trade union movement was the TUC's Union Learning Fund and the benefits accruing to workers, as well as the establishment of a huge cohort of Union Learning Representatives.

2013 Meeting: CARDIFF

Overview from Confederations

TUC

The TUC reported how it was positioning itself in election mode, with specific emphasis on influencing the design of British Labour Party policies for the next General Election.

There was now a significant shift of public opinion, from pro to anti austerity. The TUC reported that the greatest impact of austerity was being felt by workers in low paid employment.

The TUC has adopted new strategies as follows:

- » Growth and Jobs in a Sustainable Economy;
- » State cannot take all the strain;
- » Financial and Banking Section reform;
- » Producers and Services joint endeavour with workers to become drivers of innovation;
- » Launch of the *Living Wage* initiative as a vehicle for fair wages;
- » Combat attacks on Public Sector by moving to offensive on Childcare and Care for Elderly, the founding principles of the modern welfare state;
- » Promote Economic democracy in boardrooms
- » Communications has to become sharper and reach further.

STUC

While the campaign in Scotland - There is a Better, Fairer Way - continues, resources have decreased, despite the fact that the Scottish Parliament requires additional resources for efficient engagement.

For the STUC, the key issues are the development of a growth strategy, the enhancement of skills, new progressive policies, the problems arising from organising in the private sector and the need to address how the labour market will look post-recession. This includes the role of part-time work, the demand for a more 'flexible' workforce and the rise of precarious employment.

In addition, new problems such as the growth in 'pay day loans' is an issue the STUC is dealing with through a campaign in the Scottish Parliament.

As launching major public demonstrations is resource intensive, the STUC is concentrating on major May Day rallies, organised around themes relating to the role of trade unions and their ongoing relevance.

The Scottish independence referendum – scheduled for September 18, 2014 - is obviously of critical importance to the STUC. They have published a paper on the issue - *A Just Scotland* - which can be viewed on the STUC website <http://www.stuc.org.uk/>

This addresses key questions arising from the referendum, such as what an independent Scotland might look like. The STUC is consulting with other civil society bodies – including those promoting a yes campaign – although the organisation will remain neutral on the question.

The STUC has established a working group designed to support an organising campaign with an emphasis on collaboration between trade unions. They have initiated a Schools Programme which is supported by the Scottish Parliament.

WALES TUC

The Wales TUC recently achieved greater devolved responsibility from the overall TUC, which has created greater opportunities and a wider agenda for them, although this is circumscribed somewhat by the Westminster government's austerity policies.

The Wales TUC has a good working relationship with the Labour government in the Welsh Assembly, with the Assembly forming a Council for Economic Renewal with a workforce partnership.

The Welsh Assembly has retained the two-tier workforce code in which employers must encourage non-members to join trade unions.

Other economic issues include:

- » Re-nationalisation of Cardiff Airport;
- » NHS Changes;
- » No Educational Academies;
- » Upskilling of staff rather than redundancies;
- » Facility Time protected by Devolved Government.

Procurement has been used as a major tool by the Welsh Government to ensure Welsh producers and companies benefit from public contracts.

On a recent major infrastructural project worth some £107m, only 20% of weighting in the tendering process was allocated to the lowest bid. The remaining 80% was allocated on the basis of employing local people who were long term unemployed, the hiring of apprentices and other social and environmental matters.

Other issues raised at the Cardiff gathering, included:

- » Revising Wage Trends;
- » Living Wage Campaigns;
- » Welfare Reform.

Participants also observed a minute silence for the late Inez McCormack.





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**SECTION
FOUR**

**CONGRESS
ORGANISATION**

SECTION FOUR

CONGRESS ORGANISATION

Part I: Membership & Density



Congress Assistant General Secretary, Sally Anne Kinahan

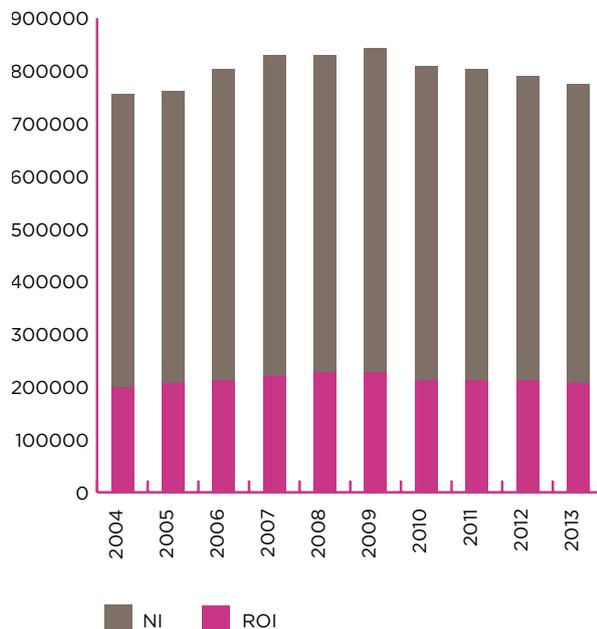
The number of union members affiliated to Congress at the beginning of 2013 stood at 778,136 compared to 787,295 members in 2012; a net reduction in affiliated membership year-on-year of -9,159, representing a decrease of 1.2% in the twelve month period. The figures include a gain of 3,756 members registered across twelve unions and a reduction of just over 12,000 members across 21 unions. One union, the Society of Radiographers (SOR), organised in Northern Ireland, took a decision to leave Congress at the beginning of the year citing cost as the reason. The drop in membership occurred in a number of sectors, both public and private, reflecting the challenging economic environment on the Island.

Summary Membership Changes 2012/2013

| | 2013 | 2012 | Difference |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| NI | 211,800 | 218,350 | -6,550 (-3%) |
| RoI | 566,336 | 568,945 | -2,609 (-.05%) |
| TOTAL | 778,136 | 787,295 | -9,159 (-1.2%) |

A 10 year overview indicates that membership has eased back to the pre-peak, 2005/2006 levels and that the reduction in membership was not impacted as severely as the overall reduction of employment in the labour market.

Fig 5: 10 Year Membership Overview



Female Membership

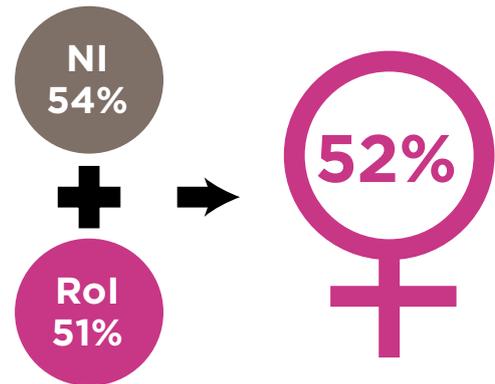
The total number of female members in 2013 is 407,868 compared to 414,131 in 2012; a difference of -6,264, or a decline of just over 2%. The net reduction in female members represents 67% of the overall reduction in affiliated numbers. The most significant drop in female members occurred as a result of the change in Unite's membership (-5,242 less women registered for 2013). Other significant changes are the INMO, down 903 female members, NIPSA down 504, NASUWT less 369, ASTI down 243 and MANDATE down 200. The disaffiliation of SOR resulted in a loss of 778 female members.

The proportion of female members stands at 52%, down from 53% in 2011. Female membership had climbed as high as 57% of total membership in Northern Ireland in 2009 whilst fluctuating between 50-51% in the Republic over the last number of years. The most recent membership reductions have been predominantly female, compared to losses three to four years ago which were almost entirely male from the construction sector.

Female Membership 2013/12 Differences

| | 2013 | 2012 | Difference |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| NI | 121,754 | 124,663 | -2,909 |
| RoI | 286,114 | 289,469 | -3,555 |
| TOTAL (NET) | 407,868 | 414,132 | -6,264 |

Proportion Female Membership



Resolution from Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress City Hall, Cork, 12-14 May, 1913

Female Factory Inspectors, The Truck Acts and Factory Acts Amendment

“That we urge upon the Government the necessity for additional female inspectors of factories whose whole time would be devoted to the work of inspection in Ireland, as we believe such appointment essential for the protection of the women workers of the country”.

“That owing to the number of accidents of a serious character occurring in linen-weaving factories through the escape of shuttles from looms inefficiently fenced, and the unwillingness of many employers to adopt the latest improvements in shuttle guards, this Congress is of the opinion that the Factory Act should be amended so as to empower the Factory Inspectors to compel the adoption of any improvements in fencing approved of by the Home Office”.

Proposed by: Miss Mary Galway, seconded by Mrs. McCaughey (Belfast).

Adopted, Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress, Cork, 1913

Affiliated Unions

There were 48 unions affiliated to Congress for 2013, a reduction of just one union: the UK-based Society of Radiographers. The number of affiliated unions ten years ago, in 2004, stood at fifty-six. The reduced number is due mainly to amalgamations along with a couple of very small unions choosing not to affiliate following changes to the structure of the affiliation fees.

| | | | |
|----------|--------|----------|-----------------|
| ACCORD | Equity | MANDATE | SIPTU |
| AHCPS | ESBOA | MLSA | TEEU |
| AITM | FBU | NASUWT | TSSA |
| ASTI | FDA | NIPSA | TUI |
| ATL | GMB | NUJ | UCATT |
| BECTU | GSU | NURMTW | UCU |
| BATU | IBOA | OPATSI | UNISON |
| BFAWU | IFUT | PCS | UNITE THE UNION |
| CPSU | IMO | POA | USDAW |
| CSP | INMO | POA NI | UTU |
| CWU | IMPACT | PROSPECT | VI |
| CWU (UK) | INTO | PSEU | VOA |

Density

The total number of employees in ROI at the end of 2012 was 1,543,100 (QNHS Q4 2012). Unions affiliated to Congress recorded membership of 566,366 in ROI at the beginning of 2013. Based on these figures the density rate for Congress affiliated membership is 37% (38% 2011). When the membership for non-affiliated unions is taken into consideration, overall union density is 38%.

Problems with CSO Data on Union Membership

CSO Quarterly National Household Survey Q2 2012

There has been a consistent variance in the measurement of union density between the analysis published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO), in their Module on Union Membership, and the administrative data on membership collected and verified by Congress.

Congress has made the case that the measurement of union density shown in the Central Statistics Office (CSO) module consistently understates union density. It is our position that the CSO fails to take into account a number of factors that impact on the statistics, including the key fact that the CSO data does not consider 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 total numbers has the effect of aligning the CSO total for union membership much more closely to the actual membership figures of Congress and to those submitted officially by unions to the Registrar of Friendly Societies. The CSO QNHS Module on Trade Union Membership now includes a comprehensive note which explains that there are differences, the specific effect of which cannot be quantified, but advises that they should be borne in mind when making comparisons.

Commission on the Union

Delegates to BDC 2009 approved the establishment of a Commission to undertake a review of the structure of the Irish trade union movement and make recommendations on how it might be adapted to meet the new challenges it faced.

At BDC 2011 the Commission presented an interim report to Conference - *A Call to Action*. This report was unanimously endorsed by BDC, through the adoption of an enabling motion.

In this report the Commission suggested that given the unique situation of the Irish trade union movement an approach to change based on a number of incremental steps was most likely to succeed. They further suggested that a number of work streams should be advanced which would allow the Commission to present a further report to the BDC 2013.



Philip Bowyer, Commission on the Union

Following BDC 2011 Congress established a Strategic Organising Committee to oversee the work streams identified by the Commission. The committee decided to prioritise a number of the work streams, including:

- » the establishment of sectoral/industrial Committees North and South;
- » the development of a communications strategy for the Union Movement;
- » a review of the resources available to unions and their expenditure; and
- » an examination of the proposal to develop a Workers' College.

The proposal to establish sectoral committees was based on a proposition that if a number of unions organising and representing members in the same sector of the economy approached their work in a more collaborative manner, the outcome for workers and members in that sector would be better. Eight sectoral groups were formed in the Republic of Ireland, as follows: Education, Public Services, Health, Services and Commerce, Transport,

Construction, Manufacturing and Community. There were seven groups formed in Northern Ireland, as follows: Education, Public Services, Health, Community, Services and Construction, Manufacturing and Transport.

Each group was asked to produce a report based on template which was provided to them in advance. In the reports supplied to Congress, each group identified the organisation of workers as key priority but that this activity was under resourced in their sector. All of the groups expressed the view that a more co-operative and co-ordinated approach to collective bargaining would be beneficial and that the most common threat to union organisation was the use of outsourcing by employers.

The Congress Communications Strategy Group was asked to finalise a strategic communications' policy to address the scale of activity required to connect with union members, unorganised workers and civil society generally. In seeking to develop a comprehensive proposal the group recognised that there were a number of constraining factors that required resolution in advance of the development of an overall strategy. As an interim step, it was agreed that work would commence on developing a better resourced central communications function under the auspices of Congress, on putting in place a formalised structure for the coordination and management of communications across the movement and the development of agreed principles and protocols to support more effective message management and the establishment of a Framework Agreement.

Congress approached the review of the resources available to unions and their expenditure in the first instance by developing a detailed questionnaire. The questionnaire sought information on the financial and other resources available to unions and how these resources were deployed. It was clear from the analysis of the information received by Congress that there was and is considerable scope for savings, by adopting a shared services approach across the movement. Congress identified four initial areas where such an approach could be piloted.

These were:

- » Developing a common asset investment strategy;
- » Seeking a single pension services provider;
- » Making union premises available to all unions for meetings and;
- » Developing common membership administration database software.

A small ad-hoc group was asked to begin work on a proposal to develop a Workers' College and a group of specialists drawn from affiliated unions and Congress examined the proposal.

In an interim report the group stated that a viable Workers' College could be established. Its establishment would require a transition period, during which unions would be encouraged to co-operate through joint training courses. The transition period would be used to resolve other issues leading to the establishment of a Workers' College, including learning recognition and certification, the financial costs and sources of revenue, the staffing requirements and premises.

All of the above work has been taken on board by the Commission in the development of their second report which will be published separately and debated at BDC 2013.

Nevin Economic Research Institute

Progress on the establishment of a union-supported economic research institute was reported to Biennial Conference in 2011. Following the Killarney Conference, both the Dublin and Belfast offices of the Institute were established and the Director and staff were in position by Autumn 2011.

The organisation was officially launched on March 27th, 2012, as the Nevin Economic Research Institute (NERI), in tribute to Donal Nevin, the researcher, author and former General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

NERI's mission is to help shape and influence *'policy outcomes that have the greatest effect on the achievement of equity and fairness in the political economy on the island of Ireland through the provision of world-class research and analysis'*. The objects of the Institute are to:

- » advance knowledge and understanding of economics and the social sciences, with particular reference to the economic and social conditions in or affecting the island of Ireland;
- » undertake, to the benefit of the public, research and analysis on the impact of economic policy development and its effects towards the attainment of a more equitable and just society;
- » publish and promote research findings in order to advance awareness and comprehension of economic theory;
- » undertake activities to ensure a broad dissemination of the research and analysis;
- » provide education, training and capacity building programmes to increase understanding of economic and social science policy among the general public.

NERI's research programme includes a *Quarterly Economic Observer* and *Quarterly Economic Facts*, a general research series along with a working paper series and regular research seminars.

The Institute is led by Director, Dr Tom Healy. The research team is Dr Micheál Collins, Senior Research Officer; Dr Rory O'Farrell, Research Officer; and Paul Mac Flynn, Research Officer (based in Belfast).



The staff of the Nevin Economic Research Institute at the formal launch on March 27, 2012. From L-R: Dr Rory O'Farrell; Dr Tom Healy; Dr Micheal Collins and Paul MacFlynn

NERI Publications

All publications are available on the NERI's website: www.NERIInstitute.net

Quarterly Economic Observer

- » *Quarterly Economic Observer Summer 2013*
- » *Quarterly Economic Observer Spring 2013*
- » *Quarterly Economic Observer January 2013*
- » *Quarterly Economic Observer Autumn 2012*
- » *Quarterly Economic Observer Summer 2012*
- » *Quarterly Economic Observer Spring 2012*

Quarterly Economic Facts

- » *Quarterly Economic Facts Summer 2013*
- » *Quarterly Economic Facts Spring 2013*
- » *Quarterly Economic Facts January 2013*
- » *Quarterly Economic Facts Autumn 2012*
- » *Quarterly Economic Facts Summer 2012*
- » *Quarterly Economic Facts Spring 2012*

Working Paper Series

- » Healy, Tom *'Private Banking Debt and Public Finances: Some Options for Ireland'*, NERI Working Paper 2013 No 1. Dublin, NERI.
- » Collins, Micheál (2012) *'Responding to the Unemployment Crisis: What Role for Active Labour Market Policies'* NERI Working Paper 2012 No 5. Dublin, NERI.
- » O'Farrell, Rory, (2012) *'An Examination of the Effects of an Investment Stimulus'* NERI Working Paper 2012 No 4. Dublin, NERI.

- » Collins, Micheál, B. Mac Mahon, G. Weld and R. Thornton (2012) *'The Cost of Work – Insights from Minimum Income Standards Research for Ireland'* NERI Working Paper 2012 No 3. Dublin, NERI.
- » Healy, Tom (2012) *'Why we need an economic plan B'*, Working Paper 2012 No2. Dublin, NERI
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President Higgins delivers the Inaugural Donal Nevin Lecture, May 2013.



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Part II: Work Of Congress Committees

Retired Workers' Committee

At the September, 2011 meeting of the Retired Workers' Committee the following were nominated as members:

Paddy Donegan (SIPTU) was elected Chairperson, Carmel Kerrigan (UNITE) was elected Vice Chairperson, Michael O'Halloran (SIPTU) was elected as Secretary/Co-ordinator.

The committee very much regrets the death of their Chairperson Paddy Donegan, who was a founder member and a great advocate for the rights of older people.

The committee held 14 meetings in the period under review. The following issues were dealt with:

Travel Pass; European Year of Active Ageing & Solidarity between the Generations (the Co-ordinator represented Congress of the National Steering Committee); Meeting with the Assistant Director, Health Service Executive, responsible for the service plan for older people's health care; the Home Care Package; Fair Deal; Changes on eligibility rules for medical cards; Senior Citizens Parliament; Household Benefits Package and grants for home insulation.

Older & Bolder organised a training workshop on lobbying which proved very beneficial to the members of the committee. They also assisted the committee in identifying the key issues for the development of a comprehensive health system for older people.

The Congress Education & Training Service organised a computer training course for the committee.

Meetings were held with the Northern Ireland Retired Workers' Committee in Dublin and in Belfast.

The two committees agreed a joint declaration on the status of retired members in the trade union movement and forwarded this to the Commission on the Union and urged them to ensure that retired workers would have an effective voice in the trade union movement and access to the services required to deal with their issues.

Budget Submissions were prepared for Budgets 2012 and 2013 and the committee was represented at the Pre-Budget Forums. No progress was made by older people on the outcomes of the Budget. While core payments for pensioners have not been reduced the standard of living, particularly

of low income pensioners, has been affected by changes to the Household Benefits Package and the Fuel Allowance. The committee was fully supportive of Congress position on austerity and fully participated in Congress' *Jobs Not Debt* demonstrations on February 9, 2013.

The committee also participated in a seminar organised by the Department of Social Protection on a Review of Pension Policy in Ireland. This Review was being conducted by the OECD. The committee is considering the proposals made by the OECD and have expressed concern about a number of these proposals which they will convey to the Department of Social Protection.

FERPA

The Retired Workers' Committee is affiliated to FERPA, which is associated with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). The Retired Workers' Committee is represented on the Executive of FERPA. Since our last report the issues which have dominated the work of FERPA is the austerity programme being imposed across the EU with particular emphasis on the problems that are being created for pensioners in Greece and Spain. FERPA have had a number of campaigns lobbying the European Commission and the European Parliament.

Strategic Implementation Committee

The Strategic Implementation Committee, chaired by Annette Dolan, seeks to coordinate the work of other equality related Committees in Congress. During the period, the Committee coordinated the input from other equality committees based in the Republic, in relation to the Commission on the Union. The submission made the case for continued and enhanced engagement with equality issues by the trade union movement and proposed the adoption of a commitment to equality mainstreaming, along with enhanced ways of working to further profile the union movement's commitment to equality and campaigning.

Other issues addressed by the Committee included:

- » The proposed merger of Equality Authority and the Irish Human Rights Commission;
- » Marriage Equality and a submission to the Constitutional Convention;
- » Parental Leave developments;
- » Seeking changes/abolition of Section 37.1 of Employment Equality Act;
- » Planning the second Equality Audit of affiliate trade unions;
- » Planning production of a tool to assist unions in equality proofing their Collective Bargaining activities.



Delegates at Women's Seminar March 2013

Women's Committee

The Women's Committee is one of the longest standing formal committees of Congress and it continues to provide an opportunity for women in the movement to meet and discuss issues through a gender lens. The committee was reconstituted in 2012 and the following were elected Officers:

- » Maire Mulcahy (ASTI), Chair;
- » Ann Louise Gilligan (IFUT), Vice Chair;
- » Margaret Browne (IBOA), Secretary;

The major initiatives during the period were the organisation of a national conference in 2012 and a seminar in 2013.

Under the theme *Bearing the Brunt, Leading the Response: Women & the Economic Crisis*, Congress was delighted and honoured to host President Michael D Higgins as a guest speaker at the 2012 Conference. Introduced by Congress Vice President, Patricia King, President Higgins' stated:

"We are at a crucial point of transition from one economic model that failed us all to another that has yet to be fully realised. We need to debate the nature and shape of that economy so that sustainability and social cohesion are given as much priority as efficiency and competitiveness. The perspective of women as citizens, in every sense of that term, must be allowed to inform that alternative version of economy and its connection with society."

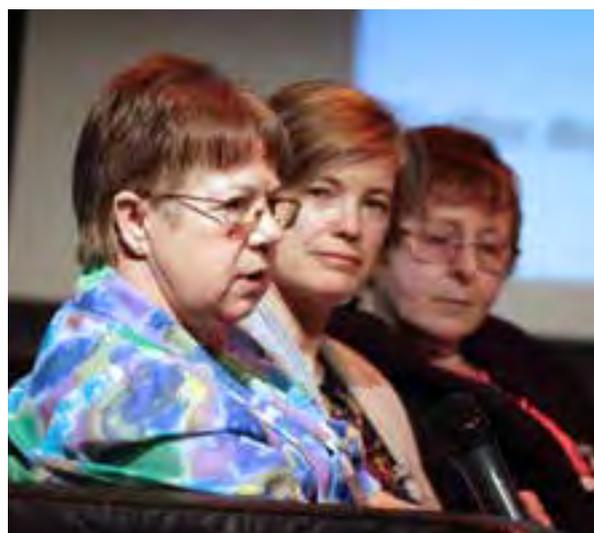
He added:

"It has been my experience that the style of leadership usually pursued by women makes them particularly effective in getting the job done. There is accumulating evidence that women bring a set of communication and interpersonal skills to the workplace which, while often ignored in the past, are better suited to the team-oriented leadership of the 21st Century".



Congress Vice President Patricia King with President Higgins and his wife, Sabina. Patricia King welcomed President Higgins to Congress 2012 Women's Conference, stating: *"Last November many of us present looked on with great joy and pride as Michael D Higgins was elected Uachtaran na HEireann. That pride was rooted in a deep sense of vindication that a man who for such a long time had championed so many women's causes and stood alongside us in our many campaigns for equality and fairness had become President of Ireland"*.

Congress General Secretary David Begg warmly welcomed President Higgins' presence and at the conference. His visit attracted considerable media attention, North and South. The March 2013 seminar in Liberty Hall reflected on the on the legacy of the 1913 Lockout and modern challenges. We were honoured to be addressed by Magdalene Laundry survivors who thanked the Women's Committee for their solidarity and requested on-going cooperation as they seek to ensure that the forthcoming reparations process is independent, transparent, accessible and that it fully acknowledges to the extent of the human rights violations they suffered.



Tribute to Magdalene Survivors at Women's Seminar March 2013

Members of the Committee participated in the Women's Council of the Isles (see below for full Council of the Isles report) meetings in 2011 and 2012. Committee Secretary, Margaret Browne, addressed the meeting in Cardiff in November 2012 on the legacy of 1913. The Committee is looking forward to hosting the Council of the Isles in Dublin in 2013.

Other areas of activity included:

- » Feeding a gender perspective into a trade union commission submission on equality issues agreed by equality related committees North and South; the submission makes the case for continued and enhanced engagement with equality issues by the trade union movement; proposing the adoption of commitment to equality mainstreaming; proposing enhanced ways of working to further profile the movement's commitment to equality and campaigning on issues of concern to the movement;
- » Expressing sympathy to the Halappanavar family following the tragic death of Savita Halappanavar in a Galway hospital in October 2012 and pointing out how this desperately sad case illustrates the need to bring legal clarity' to the abortion issue and also a need for clarity for medical professionals;
- » Continued support and liaison with the Turn Off the Red light Campaign, including a submission to the review of prostitution law in the Republic of Ireland;
- » Meeting with Mikael Gustafsson MEP and Chair of Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality at the European Parliament;
- » Completion of ETUC survey on the Equal Treatment Directive (Completion of annual ETUC survey on gender mainstreaming within trade unions;
- » Supporting the NWCI campaign on the taxation of maternity benefit;
- » Engagement with the Equality audit of affiliates.

We made a submission to the review of the national women's strategy, which highlighted the absence of any gender analysis in the memorandum of understanding between the European Commission and Ireland, despite the EU's commitments to gender equality.

We also highlighted the need for the introduction of an Equality Budgeting approach to economic policy-making and planning, that places equality at the centre of decisions concerning public expenditure and income.

Congress participated in the National Women's Strategy sub-Committee to advance the key objective of increasing "the number of women in decision-making positions in Ireland".

A series of recommendations on how to increase the representation of women was submitted to government in Spring 2012.

Conference reports and more information on our work is available at <http://www.ictu.ie/equality/gender.html>

Disability Committee

The Congress Disability Committee, chaired by Deirdre O'Connor and Vice Chair Dermot Gallagher, continues to meet on a regular basis.

The importance of our work is illustrated by the fact that people with a disability are substantially less likely to be active in the labour market and are more likely to experience discrimination.

In 2010, working age people with a disability were less than half as likely to be active in the labour market (36% compared to 77% of other adults) and had a considerably higher unemployment rate (22% compared to 16% of other adults) than those without a disability, according to a report published in January 2013 by the ESRI and the Equality Authority.

The Committee also notes the results of the NDA 2012 survey of people's attitudes to disability, which shows a marked hardening of views about people with disabilities which means we must redouble our efforts to ensure that the still significant barriers to the full participation of people with disabilities are removed from our unions, workplaces and wider society.

It is our continuing view that the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the best mechanism to eliminate discrimination and exclusion and we urge the Irish Government to speed up the process of ratification.

Unfortunately, in the period under review, we lost FAS funding for our Disability Champions Project and, as a result, project worker Jane Clare subsequently left Congress. The committee would like to acknowledge Jane's contribution during her time on the project. The Disability Champions trained over the years are a great resource for disability issues within trade unions and many workplaces. Congress is seeking to deliver on-going disability training through its general education and training provision.

The National Disability Authority in its latest report (2011) reported that for the first time ever the 3% target for employment of people with disabilities in the public service had been achieved. While this marks an important milestone, the Committee

continues to promote the support for staff who acquire a disability to stay in work, and creating a disability-friendly working environment.

Many people with disabilities, recruited when the 3% target was first introduced in 1977, are now coming up to retirement. It is very important that public bodies plan ahead and build in the 3% obligation into future workforce planning to ensure the target is not only reached but that the level is maintained.

The major events and initiatives during the period included the holding of a seminar in October 2012 where 50 trade union delegates, along with representatives from disability groups (including the Leader's Alliance), gathered in Dublin's Clarion Hotel to consider the impact of the economic crisis on people with disabilities and how they can build alliances to fight back.

Delegates heard from a wide range of speakers including Congress General Secretary, David Begg who said that a threshold of decency was needed to guide us through the economic crisis.



Congress Disability Seminar October 2012

Equality is about creating the conditions where everyone can lead a fulfilling life. People with disabilities face threats to this basic right with services, by virtue of the current austerity agenda.

There was broad agreement that unions and people with disabilities and their organisations should work together to ensure respect for the rights of people with disabilities and to ensure that the services delivered by union members are of high quality. Unions present pledged to work to ensure that the voice of union members with disabilities is heard within their unions.

Other initiatives included:

- » Launch of *Code of Practice* for trade unions on disability issues in October 2011;
- » Disability Forum held in partnership with the NDA Disability Forum, April 2012;
- » Support for Leaders Alliance protest outside the Department of the Taoiseach regarding proposed cuts to personal assistants;
- » Our input to the Commission on the Union making the case for continued and enhanced engagement with equality issues by the trade union movement, proposing the adoption of commitment to equality mainstreaming;
- » Our input to Congress submissions on changes to our Equality infrastructure including reforms of the employment rights bodies and the merger of the Equality Authority and the Human Rights Commission;
- » Support for the November 2012 Disability Rights march;

The Committee also bade a sad farewell to Frank Warwick, IBOA, who retired in 2012.

And finally, the Committee was greatly saddened by the death in 2011 of Brendan Conway, former Chair of the Congress Disability Committee. Brendan represented the CPSU on the Committee for many years.

The Committee was saddened to hear of the passing, in April 2013, of our TUI colleague Ben Bishop. Ben was a regular contributor at meetings and his inputs were always made with the best interests of people with disabilities in mind. May he rest in peace.

Health & Safety Committee

The Congress Health & Safety Committee meets every two months to discuss and identify ways in which unions can work together to promote healthy and safety concerns in the workplace and, thereby, help create safer workplaces.



Launch of national IConnect Card, Stephen's Green, Dublin

There were a number of issues arising for the committee during the period under review including: the transposition of the 'SHARPS' Directive; the Regulatory Impact Assessment for the introduction of Corporate Manslaughter legislation; driving safely for work; the on-going attempts to undermine decent health and safety regulation that presents under the guise of removing rid of 'red tape' or lessening the 'burdens' on business.

Underpinning the work of the committee is the understanding that union organisation is the most effective tool for ensuring good health and safety at work. It is a verifiable fact that *organised workplaces are safer workplaces*.

One key initiative undertaken during 2012 was the production of both *body mapping* and *workplace mapping* tools.

This initiative was commented favourably on by Dr Christa Sedlatschek, Director of the European Agency for Safety & Health at Work (EU-OSHA), during her meeting with the committee in the latter half of 2012. <https://osha.europa.eu/en/about>



Dr Christa Dedlatschek, Director of the EU Agency for Health & Safety at Work (EU-OSHA) meets with the Congress Health & Safety Committee, October 2012

The Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act came into force in 2005 and it recognised the centrality of worker involvement in workplace safety. It stated that employers have a legal duty to consult, set up safety committees and support the election of safety representatives.

Despite this legal imperative - along with the established fact that consultation saves lives and prevents injuries - many employers still do not consult with their workforce and many workplaces do not even have safety representatives.

In 2012, on foot of the recommendation from the Commission on the Union, we developed a dedicated health and safety section on the existing Congress website which is to serve as a tool to help build union support for Safety Representatives and as a platform to aid their on-going work. <http://www.ictu.ie/healthandsafety/>

Another issue being addressed by the Committee is the fact that representatives can raise any safety matter they wish with their employer, while there is no corresponding legal duty on the employer to respond. Thus, an employer can legally ignore any question a safety representative raises.

The committee is considering whether the Australian system - whereby the safety representatives can issue a form of Improvement Notice, known as a PINS - would lead to increased compliance.

In recent years, a good degree of work has been put into ensuring that Workers Memorial Day (April 28) was established as a significant event in the annual Congress, trade union and health and safety calendar.



Eamon Devoy, TEEU and Esther Lynch, Congress at Workers Memorial Day, Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin, April 2013

To this end, Congress organised events in 2012 and 2013 under the theme of *remember the dead, but fight like hell for the living*. The membership of the Congress Health & Safety Committee is:

Billy Barrett (IBOA); Frank Barry (UNITE); Eugene Brady (MANDATE); Bobby Carty (IMPACT); Sylvester Cronin (SIPTU); Tom Delaney (POA); Eamon Devoy (TEEU); Michael Dowling (SIPTU); Denis Farrell (BATU); James Geoghegan (INMO); Rosena Jordan (INTO); John Kane (MSLA); Pat Kenny (CWU); Martin Malone (BATU); George Maybury (PSEU); Colette Mullin (INMO); Deirdre O'Connor (INTO); Desmond O'Toole (ASTI); Anthony Owens (IMO); Michelle Quinn (SIPTU); Dessie Robinson (IMPACT); Geraldine Talty (INMO); Agnes Tully (IFUT); Kate Varley (IBOA); Esther Lynch (Congress Secretariat).

Model Drug & Alcohol Policy

Congress produced a guide for union negotiators to equip them with information necessary to negotiate safe, legal and ethical workplace drug and alcohol policies. The need for the guide arose in part from affiliates concerns about increased marketing campaigns by a number of legal, human Resource and drugs-testing companies who are promoting a problematic type of 'zero tolerance' drug and alcohol testing to employers. On some occasions the issue arose as the enterprise had a practice of drug and alcohol testing in their head office or other jurisdictions and they wished to implement a similar policy in their Irish operations.

At other times it arose in response to real, identified safety critical risks. The guide produced by Congress in September 2012 seeks to help union representatives to respond to any such proposals and negotiate for safe, ethical, legal policies that respect the rights of workers.

Trades Councils (Republic of Ireland)

There are 20 Trades Councils affiliated to Congress in the Republic of Ireland. Trades Councils are voluntary bodies. All Trades Council activity takes place outside working hours and at weekends.

Delegates and officers give of their spare time for no reward. Councils have little or no secretarial support or precious little in the way of financial resources. Nevertheless they endeavour to be the voice and the presence of trade unions at the local level. Most Trades Councils have a track record of hard work on behalf of the communities.

Many Trades Councils are involved in running Congress Centres. The activities of the Congress Centres Network (CCN) are documented elsewhere in this report. Trades Councils nominate representatives to Partnership and Development Boards.

Dublin Council of Trades Unions organised a well-attended pre-budget, anti-austerity demonstration on November 24, 2012.

Whenever called upon, the Trades Councils have demonstrated the capacity to mobilise large numbers of workers in support of Congress demands. The most recent example of this was on February 9, 2013. With very little notice Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Galway and Sligo Trades Councils organised massive turnouts as part of the national *Lift the Burden* series of demonstrations.

Fergus Whelan, the Congress liaison officer attended the AGM of the Castlebar Trades Council in May 2012. He addressed the Dublin Council of Trade Unions on October 23, 2012. He attended

a special meeting of Waterford Trades Council in February 2013 and at the instruction of that meeting organised a special AGM to reconstitute the Council, in March 2013.

Construction Safety Representative Facilitation Project (SRFP)

This project has been managed by Fergus Whelan on behalf of Congress, since 2000.

Pat O'Neill worked and oversaw the project in the period under review.

Background

The SRFP has been working to improve safety in the construction industry for more than a decade. Its genesis lies in the Construction Safety Partnership (CSP) of 2000. Worker engagement through Site Safety Representative Facilitation has been a priority initiative which the CSP has endorsed and supported since its establishment.

The CSP was the Construction Industry's response to the health and safety crisis which rocked the industry in the late 1990s. Congress argued at the time that a properly resourced project aimed at encouraging the industry to optimise the use of Safety Representatives on construction sites would make a major contribution to improving safety in construction. So it proved.

The project's mission is to promote cooperation between employers and workers and spread the message that consultation with workers Safety Representatives (SRs) is not only a legal requirement but can be used to advantage by site managers who are trying to encourage employee engagement with safe working practices.

The project has been successful from the beginning and in spite of the economic meltdown the Construction Industry now leads the field in the number of trained and active SRs in Irish industry. The Construction industry has been transformed from being a relatively poor performer in safety terms to one that is now being regarded as an example for others to follow.

Project Achievements

- » Nearly 1,900 trained and qualified Safety Representatives;
- » Recognition by all stakeholders that workers have a key role in planning, implementing and monitoring their own safety;
- » Three day training course with FETAC certification;
- » Increased awareness and commitment of safety managers to the objectives of the project;

- » Production and distribution of high quality materials and information across the industry;
- » The Coordinator and the Facilitator have built up an invaluable network of contacts at site level which has helped to institutionalise the role of the safety Representative;
- » For most of the lifetime of the project a relatively small amount of funding was made available albeit in reducing amounts, particularly since the onset of the downturn;

Project Update

The Construction Industry has undergone the worst crisis in its history. The collapse of investment and employment, the oversupply of houses, coupled with falling tender prices and wage rates has meant companies have been forced to re-assess their business plans in order to survive.

With HSA Inspectors reporting some slippage in standards, the CSP will give more attention to the role and influence of the Site Safety Reps. Tender prices are said to be down up to 30% over recent years and this will put further pressure on the management and control of safety standards. The CSP is very conscious of the unique statutory requirements relating to the Site Safety Representative on construction sites.

There is a danger that the great strides made by the industry in the area of health and safety will not be maintained or could go into reverse.

We understand the current dire state of the public finances which casts a shadow over the future. However the government has announced a major investment package in construction which might help the industry turn the corner. The SRFP is well placed to ensure that the projects which result should have the highest standards of safety built in, from day one.

Activities in 2012

- » The Project carried out 350 site visits;
- » Each visit is recorded in a log book, which includes the name and contact details of the Safety Manager, the Safety Representative, the estimated peak workforce and the timescale for completion of the project;
- » On many sites the facilitator performed on-site 'toolbox talks' to encourage volunteers for the role;
- » The project distributed Health & Safety information and material for other organisations, such as the Construction Workers Health Trust (CWHT) and Construction Industry Federation;
- » The facilitator ran a helpline for safety reps and safety managers to give assistance or advice when necessary;

- » The project provides FETAC level 5 safety rep training on demand. This year, due to the collapse in demand, only 20 new Safety Reps were trained.

Congress Youth Committee

The Youth Committee has been reconstituted for the 2013-2015 period and the inaugural meeting – combined with training workshops – was scheduled (at the time of writing) for May.

The National Youth Committee is the national policy and campaigning group for young members and is the primary forum for the engagement of all young union members within the workplace.

The Committee assists in the development of Congress youth policy, highlighting key areas of concern and importance to all young people. It is working to establish solid relationships with student bodies, youth organisations and the school community. It works closely with the YouthConnect programme and assists in creating a supportive and collaborative structure for young people.

The Committee will work on a broad range of areas of relevance to young people in the workplace.

Key priorities include;

- » the establishment of a dedicated support campaign for 15-18 year olds to ensure they can access their rights and are free from exploitation in the workplace;
- » a policy position on youth in Ireland with particular reference to education, transition to the workplace, job opportunities and the Youth guarantee;
- » establishing a set of solid working relationships with student unions, youth organisations and other relevant youth bodies.

Belfast is packed with history, culture, exciting events, great food, super shopping - you might even spot a ship or two. You'll also find some of the friendliest people you'll ever meet.

To help you make the most of your trip to Belfast we have picked out our top ten things to do when you are in the city for your conference.

Titanic Belfast

The world's largest Titanic visitor experience is a 'must see' for any tour of Belfast and Northern Ireland. It's located in the heart of the city, beside the historic site of this world-famous ship's construction.

Crumlin Road Gaol

This nineteenth century listed building is opening its doors, but this time to the public, as a friendly place to explore the gaol's colourful past.

Sample local produce at the lively St George's Market

Open Friday, Saturday and Sunday, you can sample the local specialist food and products or simply relax with a coffee and newspaper against a backdrop of live jazz or flamenco music.

Take a Tour of Belfast

Our city centre is compact and can be easily explored on foot. We have a range of tours that allow you to explore the unique history, culture and heritage of Belfast and Northern Ireland.

Ready, Steady, Cook!

Awaken your passion for cooking with leading local chefs at one of our cookery schools. Where you'll be given a step-by-step lesson in creating a culinary masterpiece.

Guinness, Oysters & Irish music in a traditional Belfast pub

Sample a local brew in one of Belfast's historic hostelrys, join in a live Irish music session, or check out the hip and trendy bar and club scene!

The Cathedral Quarter

The historic heart of Belfast is now the city's up and coming cultural hotspot. The cobbled streets are dotted with gems of all kinds from restaurants, pubs, art, photographic galleries and even a circus!

The Murals

View the famous political and cultural murals in the west and east of the city - either on a taxi tour or on an open top bus. Remember to add your personal message to the peace wall before you leave.

City Hall Tour

Uncover the history of Belfast City Hall. Explore its splendour and grandeur, proudly created by the craftsmen of Belfast who also worked on the Titanic.

Ulster Museum

Come face to face with dinosaurs, meet an Ancient Egyptian Mummy and see modern masterpieces all under one roof.

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Part III: Congress Finances



Joe O'Flynn, Congress Treasurer

A stabilisation of the Congress finances has been achieved since BDC 2011. This has come about as a result of the implementation of a major organisational restructuring and the introduction of cost saving measures to achieve financial stability. An outcome of these measures is that Congress now has a reduced staff base and significantly less capacity.

An important aspect in stabilising the financial position was the securing of the core funding received from government through the Department of Enterprise, Jobs & Innovation (DEJI), to support Congress Education, Training & Advisory Services (ETAS). This had been cut dramatically over three consecutive years but has now been maintained; reducing the uncertainty about future delivery of important areas of Congress' work and services to affiliated unions. In contrast, funding received from the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) in Northern Ireland, has halved as a result of a change in the way the grant is allocated.

Important Congress projects such as Global Solidarity, the Construction Safety Partnership and the Congress Centres Network (unemployed centres) have continued to receive grant support, albeit at lower levels. However, the central coordination services for the Congress Centres for the Unemployed lost its funding with effect from the end of 2012, at a time when the nationwide community employment schemes most needed support to deal with the effects of increased demand and reduced resources. A new project was awarded to Congress by the Department of Social Protection/POBAL, to deliver training and activation support for people with disabilities in the Border, Midlands and West (BMW) Regions, through the Congress Centres Network.

On a positive note, the collaboration of a number of unions with Congress facilitated the retention of Skillnet funding for a joint union initiative to deliver training for union officials, activists and members. This programme continues in 2013.

It should be noted that the Congress staff superannuation schemes in Dublin and Belfast are carrying a combined deficit of €1,151,000. There has been a marked improvement in the position of the Dublin-based scheme where there has been a reduction in the deficit from over €4,000,000 to less than €1,000,000 following a Section 50 restructuring. The opposite has been the case with the Belfast scheme where the deficit has trebled. A funding arrangement was agreed by the Trustees and Congress and is now in place.

Year-End Consolidated Position

| | 2011 | 2012 |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| No 1: | 510,6223 | 544,209 |
| No 2: | (569,357) | (459,006) |
| TOTAL | 85,203 | (58,734) |

Congress Staffing

The organisational adjustment required by the need to address the reduced income of Congress was largely concluded by the end of 2011. The total number of staff in post between the Dublin and Belfast Offices is now 25, compared to 47 people in the period prior to the reorganisation. The reduction in posts came about as a result of a number of factors including project completion, retirement, planned departures and a voluntary redundancy programme.

From the outset of the restructuring there were two main objectives: to reduce costs and secondly, to reassign roles and responsibilities to reflect the changed priorities of Congress, post partnership, in an operating environment drastically altered by the impacts of the economic, social and fiscal crises.

This imperative was accelerated as a result of the work of the Commission on the Union (CotU). From commencement, it was intended that the findings of the Commission would inform the work of Congress, its organisation, structure and staffing as well as that of its affiliates.

The General Secretary set out what needed to be done in pragmatic and structural terms in relation to the mission of the Congress Secretariat, in a paper that was agreed by the Executive Council in 2011: *'Trade Union Commission - Congress Secretariat.'*

An appropriate programme for Congress is defined in the document as being 'the pursuit of public policy which supports the notion of the economy being embedded in society and not the other way around.' The document gives priority to the need for the organisation to conduct advocacy

and campaigning, rooted in rigorous, evidence-based research and analysis, to have the capability to communicate our message widely and with maximum impact and to also fulfil traditional obligations in mediating of relationships and in industrial relations. Based on this, the following functions and priority tasks were defined:

Economic Policy; Industrial Policy; Social Policy; Relations between Union; Communications; Campaigning and Organising; International Relations and Influence; External Relations (RoI/NI); Legislation; Education & Training, Internal Support Services.

Immediately following on from the BDC 2011, an internal review was undertaken to realign the staff structure and work towards the redefined priorities.

Report on Biennial Delegate Conference 2011

The Irish Congress of Trade Union's 2011 Biennial Delegate Conference (BDC) took place from July 4-6, 2011 in the Convention Centre, Killarney, Co Kerry. Mr J O'Connor, President, presided. The members of the Standing Orders Committee were: Ms A Donnelly, Mr P Guilfoyle, Mr J Kelly, Ms M Maher and Mr M Sharp.

The following Tellers were elected: Ms A Dolan (TUI) Mr P McSweeney (CPSU) Mr P Bolger, (IMPACT), Mr R Rafferty, (UNISON) and Mr S de Paor (ASTI). There were also five Scrutineers elected: Mr J Whelan, (Unite), Mr J Kelleher (AHCPs), Ms K Farrelly (IBOA), Mr B Hannigan, (PSEU) and Mr K J McGinley (SIPTU).

A total of 546 delegates and 74 observers attended the Conference. A total of 41 Motions and four Emergency Motions were submitted to BDC, of which 41 were adopted, and four remitted. A report on the Actions on Motions to BDC2011 is contained in the appendices to this report.

The keynote and fraternal speakers at BDC were: An Taoiseach, Mr E Kenny, TD, Mr M McGuinness, Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, Mr E Gilmore, Tánaiste/Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms B Ségol, General Secretary of ETUC, Ms S Burrows, General Secretary of ITUC, Sr S Kennedy, Immigrant Council of Ireland, Ms M H André, Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidariedade Social, Mr N O'Connor, TASC. The Mayor of Killarney Town Council (and Trades Council Rep), Mr S Counihane welcomed delegates on the opening day. Conference was also addressed by Mr J Matthews, Congress Centres Network, Mr M O'Halloran and Ms M Galloway, Congress Retired Workers Committee, Ms B McCrea, Congress Disability Committee and Ms L Mulligan, Congress Youth Committee.

The following Officers were elected: Mr E McGlone (Unite), President; Ms P King (SIPTU) and Mr J Douglas (Mandate) Vice-Presidents; Mr J O'Flynn (SIPTU), Treasurer.

The following were elected to the Ordinary Panel of the Executive Council: Mr L Broderick (IBOA); Mr K Callinan (Impact); Mr B Campfield (NIPSA); Mr S Cody (Impact); Mr E Coy (GMB); Mr E Devoy (TEEU); Mr W Cullen (Unite) Ms P Dooley (Unison); Mr S Dooley (NUJ); Mr L Doran (INMO); Mr S Fitzpatrick (CWU); Mr T Geraghty (PSEU); Mr A Hall (TEEU); Ms A Hall-Callaghan (UTU); Mr L Huston (CWU UK); Mr M Jennings (IFUT) Mr J Kelly (Unite) Mr P King (ASTI); Mr P MacMenamin (TUI); Ms P McKeown (Unison) Mr J Moore (UCATT); Ms M Morgan (NIPSA); Ms P Ní Sheaghda (INMO); Ms S Nunan (INTO); Mr J O'Connor (SIPTU); Ms L O'Donnell (Impact); Mr E Ronayne (CPSU); Ms M Sherlock (SIPTU); Mr D Thomas (AHCPs); Mr N Ward (INTO); Mr E Fleming (DCTU) was elected on the Local Reserve Panel.

Congress held the following Fringe Meetings at BDC 2011: Tuesday, July 5 on Palestine and also on the threatened extradition of Mr S Garland, and Wednesday July 6, on Combatting Extreme Exploitation.

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 2011.



BDC, Killarney, 2011.

Part IV: Education & Training

Trade unions in Ireland have a long tradition and proactive role in the provision of education and training for union representatives. Approximately 2,000 activists and workplace representatives attend education and training events each year, which are organised by their trade union. Much of the work during the period under review was focussed on ensuring the continuation of this high level of trade union training. This was characterised by a number of joint-union project-based initiatives (such as Skillnets; HETAC business studies; safety representatives training; train the trainer; union learning representative; Benefit 3 IT training etc.) whereby unions and their members have benefited from working together and sharing their expertise and resources. Work was also done on looking to the future with analysis done of training needs, the preparation of recommendations on a Workers' College, planning initiated for online learning options and preparations made for new accreditation and certification structures.

Training Needs Analysis

The Training Needs Analysis (TNA) conducted in 2012 generated a considerably amount of data which is of significant value in planning not only course provision but also training methodologies. A total of 905 survey responses were received, of which 755 were fully complete. Overall, the most requested training is indicated below, but the TNA gave an important insight into the particular and varied training needs of representatives, officials, organisers and office-holders of trade unions.

**Excerpt from Mr. J. Larkin,
President's Address,
Twenty first Annual Irish Trades Union
Congress, 1914**

“I submit that the working class have as much right as any section or class in the community to enjoy all the advantages of science, art and literature. No field of knowledge, no outlook in life, and no book should be closed against the workers. They should demand their share in the effulgence of life and all that was created for the enjoyment of mankind. And here do I appeal to those who cannot see eye to eye with us – who feel they cannot come all the way – to come with us as far as their knowledge will permit. Come at least to the bottom of the boreen, and then if we must part, the pioneers will continue on and up the mountain to meet the dawning of the new tomorrow.

The working class must be free, not only economically, but intellectually”.

| Content Module | Learning Unit | |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Workplace | Employment Law | 428 |
| Workplace | Conflict Management | 422 |
| Organising Skills | Organising Skills | 417 |
| Union Learning | Communication Skills | 389 |
| Workplace | Grievance Handling | 382 |
| General TU Training | Running Effective Meetings | 359 |
| Workplace | Communications and Media Skills | 343 |
| General TU Training | Effective Team Work | 342 |
| Understanding Finance | Basic Economics for Trade Unions | 340 |
| Workplace | Workplace Negotiation/Collective Bargaining | 335 |
| Other Courses | Managing Stress & Personal Wellbeing | 332 |

Trade Union Skillnet

The sectorally-based training support offered by Skillnets remains one of the few sources of funding available for workplace training. Training provided by both the Union Learning and the Women at Work Skillnets continued until the end of 2011.

Following consultation with all of the unions involved, there was agreement that there would be benefits in having a joint approach, in keeping with the move towards greater collaboration which has been a feature of trade union educational and training work over recent years.

Accordingly, a proposal for a new Skillnet was supported by Congress, CWU, IBOA, INMO, MANDATE, SIPTU and TEEU. The new skillnet – Trade Union Skillnet (TUS) – was successful in its application and awarded contracts in both the main Training Networks Programme and the Job Seekers Support Programme.

While TUS encountered some difficulties in getting its programme up and running, it accomplished a significant amount of training by the end of 2012. A variety of trade union-related training courses together with broader training and technical skills programmes was delivered. In all 1,824 unique employed participants were trained along with 253 unemployed participants. This represented training days achieved of 4,200 and 585 respectively.

A new programme of training has been agreed for 2013 and a contract renewed with Skillnets for both the main programme and the JSSP, which supports training for the unemployed.

Trade Union Studies Major Award

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) was established on 6 November 2012 under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. The new Authority was created by an amalgamation of four bodies that have both awarding and quality assurance responsibilities: the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC), the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) and the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB).

During this time of transition, there was little scope for the development of new qualifications. However, a considerable amount of work took place on the validation of new programmes designed to deliver previous courses that had been migrated into the Common Awards System.

Many of the courses delivered by the Congress Centres at FETAC Level 3 and 4 were affected by this. We continued to work with FETAC/QQI on the

development of the new Common Award for Trade Union Studies. This was finalised and published in February 2013. This is a major award at Level 5 and may be achieved by completing a combination of minor awards, including Trade Union representation, Union Organising Skills, Industrial Relations, Employment Law, Health and Safer Representation and a number of other relevant modules.

A Working Group from the Education and Training Committee on Accreditation & Certification is working on a process to validate programmes for the qualification on a shared basis.

Informia Project

Congress participated in an EU-funded project – Informia II, concerning worker participation – in 2011/12. The project was led by CITUB, the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria and also included the participation of the Bulgarian Industrial Association, Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia, Institute for Economic and Social Research, Italy, Royal Holloway University of London and SEK, the Cyprus Workers' Confederation.

The project organised a workshop in November 2011, held at the TEEU headquarters, focussing on the training needs of European Works Council members. The report from the project, available on <http://informiaproject-2.org/>, has a number of recommendations that have relevance for educational and training provision for representatives.

Board-Level Representatives Training

A Working Group of the Education & Training Committee was set up in 2013 to make recommendations on the provision of training for Worker Directors. In the course of their deliberations, it became clear that there is a need to also address the needs of trade union representatives on European Works Councils, nominees to various national bodies and organisations, and trade union representatives on Institutes of Technology and other educational bodies. There is a considerable overlap in terms of relevant subject matter between these various groups. The working group is continuing its work with the objective of formulating a recognised qualification that will meet the needs of these representatives.

ETUI Courses

The European Trade Union Institute continued to conduct European-level training in a variety of subject areas. Congress actively supported the programme and nominated participants to training courses which included EU Decision-Making, Project Management, Trade Union Renewal, Lifelong Learning, Health and Safety at Work and Leadership for Women.

Project Work

Congress was one of a number of European confederations that supported the development of a new initiative seeking to make available project management training specifically designed for the needs of trade unions.

Led by the Education Department of ETUI an innovative suite of short training courses designed to equip trade union officers with appropriate skills in project work and project management has now been developed. This was done because it is recognised that projects have become increasingly important to trade unions.

At both national and European level, many of the areas of concern to trade unions – such as labour market activation, equality in all of its dimensions, social dialogue, education & training, the environment, civil society and promoting the engagement of young people – are supported by various programmes which provide funding for projects. Apart from programme funding, learning how to design and deliver projects can lead to more effective and efficient achievement of trade union work more generally, in planning, communication, and teamwork and task delivery.

Two Congress-nominated tutors have now been trained to deliver the introductory course in this programme (designed to be delivered at national level). The first course was run in Dublin in December 2012 and further courses are planned during 2013.



Participants at Congress first Project Management Course run in conjunction with ETUI Dec 2012

A Workers' College

As part of the overall work of the Commission on the Union, a working group was set up to explore how a Workers College might be established on the island of Ireland, with the focus on educating and building the capacity of union activists.

The report of the Working Group outlined how the trade union movement could provide an efficient, cost-effective high quality education and training service to all Congress affiliated unions and to workers in wider society.

The working group conducted a considerable amount of desk research as to how unions internationally approached this area. In addition, a number of meetings or telephone interviews were conducted with a variety of organisations and individuals. These included: the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Austrian OGB, the European Trade Union Institute, Unite (in Britain) and Dr. Jeff Bridgford, former Director of the European Trade Union College. Liz Rees, the National Education Manager with the TUC, and her colleagues were especially generous with their time and advice. Discussions were also held with a number of unions who are currently involved in delivering representative training.

Current provision of education and training varies across unions. Those individual unions that have the membership density and resources to do so have a greater presence in this area. Investment by some unions in the establishment of purpose-built training centres/colleges, national certification systems and in the employment of tutors has enabled them to achieve significant results in terms of both organisation and the effectiveness of union representatives.

However, the working group noted that with a number of exceptions unions provide courses exclusively for their own activists and representatives. Congress does not have a leading role in the provision of education and training for union members, unlike the situation that pertains in many other countries.

However, through a number of joint union project-based initiatives (Skillnet; HETAC business studies; Safety Representatives Training; Train the Trainer; Union Learning Representative; Benefit 3 IT training etc) unions and their members have benefited from working together and sharing expertise and resources.

Trade Union Values

One of the key success factors in the various models reviewed was the necessity of implementing and maintaining a Quality Assurance system that sustained core trade union values, in the delivery of education and training programmes.

Essentially, this was achieved through a two-tier approach which focused on:

- » **Course Content** *a centralised system which developed both curricula and syllabi that could then be delivered by a variety of trainers, to a common standard*
- » **Identification, Training & Development of Tutors** *a tutors' personal characteristics and professional competence are critical success factors. It is through tutors that the values inherent in trade union training must be communicated.*

All-Island College

The establishment of an all-island workers college, which would centralise the provision of trade union education and training may present challenges for some individual unions. However, the working group concluded that those challenges would be more than offset by the opportunities for individual unions and the movement in general to achieve cost-effective economies of scale, provide the highest standards in curriculum development and participative teaching/learning for union members, and the realisation of learning outcomes that would reflect the values of the movement and the needs of the membership.

The challenges fall primarily within the following areas:

- » Financial and physical investment and staffing
- » The development of standardised training materials and resources
- » Centralisation of the provision of post-basic (induction) courses
- » Certification/qualifications and relevance
- » Selection, training and approval of tutors

The governance, management and structure of the college would enable the provision of courses in economics, politics and aspects of civil society and would take full account of the policy aspirations of the trade union movement in respect of the requirements for equality, social justice, economic development and the work environment.

Courses would address alternatives to the current dominant economic orthodoxy and present analyses and strategies that would enhance the capacity for democratic participation by working people in the economic, political and social development of the island of Ireland.

Course topics would be determined by reference to what knowledge and skills are necessary for trade unions to operate effectively and to progress their objectives. Typically, the following would be included in the core topics:

- » Advocacy Skills
- » Collective Bargaining – Trade Union Organisation
- » Communications & Campaigning
- » Economics micro, macro and labour
- » Employment Law
- » Equality
- » Health & Safety
- » Finance & accounting
- » Industrial relations, national and international
- » Solidarity and the developing world
- » Organising, leadership and workplace representative skills
- » Pensions and taxation
- » Policy Framework – education, health, environment, housing, social welfare, transport, utilities, taxation etc.
- » Political economy (how political institutions, the political environment and the economic systems influence each other
- » Politics and the trade union movement
- » Role and function of trade unions
- » Social Science

Other course areas would be identified and defined as the need arises.

The College and Individual Unions

The College would be the centralised body for the provision of education and training to Congress affiliated unions and for working people generally.

The working group, conscious of different traditions and priorities of individual unions, does not see the College as replacing the role of individual unions in providing basic introductory and induction courses in respect of their own structures and processes. However, the College would be available, if requested, to provide support to individual unions for education and training purposes.

The establishment of the College would gather the human and material resources of the movement into a single centralised resource, with the aim of providing an affordable high-quality education and training service for trade unions.

The resulting economies of scale would create additional opportunities for recognition and certification in respect of an expanded range of courses for all unions.

Education and training could be delivered through existing trade union centres and other organisations/institutions with suitable facilities. Teaching methods, materials, ethos and trade union

values would be uniform across all venues. The continuing development and use of information technology as a medium of delivery of education and training by the College would provide the trade union movement with an affordable cost-effective support to the provision of courses across the island.

The Transition Project Team

The report made recommendations on a number of relevant areas, including recruitment and professional development of tutors, curriculum development, training methodologies, governance structure and proposed relationships with other educational providers.

The report also identified a number of areas which require more detailed proposals, including learning recognition and certification, financial costs and sources of revenue, staff requirements and availability and premises and other resources.

This will necessitate substantial consultations, particularly with those unions that currently have purpose built-premises, tutors and other resources and who provide courses for their members.

Pending elaboration of these reports and further discussion on the best way forward, it is envisaged that the provision of education and training in a number of areas could be delivered within a short time-scale on a joint or multi-union basis. It is recommended that the following subjects, by their nature, would be suitable for delivery to unions on a centralised basis in line with that envisioned for the College.

- » Campaigning & Lobbying
- » Economics and Politics
- » Employment Law
- » Financial Information
- » Health and Safety
- » Pensions Bargaining
- » Union Organising

Literacy Policy

Following contact with the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) a sub-group of the Education & Training Committee worked on developing a policy statement in relation on literacy. The Policy Statement, as set out below, was adopted by the Executive Council in March 2012. Guidelines have now been developed to give effect to the policy in a number of areas including trade union communications and education and training.

Policy Statement

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions recognises that there is a significant number of workers in Ireland with literacy and numeracy difficulties.

All affiliated unions and organisations of Congress commit to, where possible, removing literacy-related barriers to accessing and participating in our organisations.

We will strive to be literacy-friendly and seek to raise awareness of literacy issues that may affect the way we do our work. We include and respect our staff, our members and the wider community we engage with in this regard.

We endorse state policies and actions that advance the objective of improving literacy and numeracy skills for all workers in Ireland.

Equality Online Module

In line with our commitment to explore online learning options, an e-learning module in equality was developed with the support of funding from the Equality Authority. The module was designed as an introductory session for those who might be attending classroom-based training on related issues. The module, which was developed in collaboration with Maria Hegarty of Equality Strategies, was made available on the INTO's Moodle Learning platform.

Benefit 3

Benefit3 was a programme run under the auspices of the Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources which sought to deliver training in basic IT skills to those who might have been excluded. This included unemployed people, immigrants, older people and early school-leavers.

Congress, with the active support of a number of unions including CWU, IBOA, MANDATE, POA, PSEU, TEEU and UNITE, submitted a successful application for delivery of a number of modules to address these needs. Training courses were run in a number of the CCN centres and by individual unions and were very successful. A total of 1,631 trainees had completed their registration by the time the programme ended in October 2012.

IT Training Room

A new IT training facility has been developed in Congress House. Equipped with 14 work-stations, the room will enable the provision of a range of IT-related courses in 2013 and beyond.

Congress/SIPTU Certificate in Business Studies (Trade Union Studies)

This joint Congress/SIPTU course consists of six modules and is delivered on a two-year cycle. This is an advanced course and is accredited at Level 6 by HETAC with a value of sixty (60) credits. Successful completion of the course earns the award of a Certificate in Business Studies (Trade Union Studies) and will be eligible to progress to the Honours Bachelor Degree in Industrial Relations & Human Resource Management in the National College of Ireland (NCI), to the Diploma in Business Studies and to the Honours Bachelor in Business Studies in University College Dublin (UCD) and to a range of other cognate degrees at levels 7 and 8.

This course has been developed in partnership with the National College of Ireland and is designed for learners who are trade union members and activists. The course has proved very popular and two separate streams are running in 2012/13 with 45 participants from unions which include SIPTU, POA, BATU, Impact, CWU, Mandate, TUI, UNITE and CPSU.

Peoples' College

The most significant event for the College since BDC 2011 was the death of our long-serving President, Sheila Conroy; although she had not been involved actively in the work of the College for some time, her passing cast a shadow and marked the end of an era.

In addition, the current economic situation creates new challenges to maintaining our position as a key provider of opportunities for life-long learning for our members – trade unionists, their families and the general public. We continue to provide the courses, at very reasonable rates, which the students seek.

An average of 45 courses was offered in each of the years under review. They covered areas such as Languages; Arts, Music & Creativity; Social, Cultural & Environmental Studies, Personal Development & Social Skills.

Enrolments have declined slightly in the last two years. Interest in some originally popular courses has declined – in particular, English as a foreign language. However, courses in Politics & Current & European Affairs have been much sought after. Environmental courses such as Bird Watching, Wildlife and Hill Walking are also popular, while Art and Music remain perennial favourites. Some day-time classes were tried in autumn 2012 with mixed results.

All of the classes take place in the evening, except the 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 in spring 2013 which provided useful information. While many of our students return to the College year after year, one-third of last year's intake was new. Another third had been with the College for between two and 10 years and the remaining third for longer – a few for at least 20 years.

The age pattern section showed that 50% are between 40–65 years of age; while 20% are under 40 and the rest over 60. The vast majority of the respondents were Irish with only six per cent classified as non-Irish. This represents a decline from previous years, largely due to the fall off in enrolments in English as a Foreign Language.

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 particularly in establishing the Syllabus each year. It also organises social and cultural events each year.

The Choir continues to flourish, participating in choral festivals at both national and international level; it also performs at social events for the College and at community events around the city.

The Debating Society also plays a major role in College life organising debates and training sessions for its members.

A recent innovation has been the development of a College Drama Group.

We have maintained our links with the Wexford Peoples College Project and are exploring ways of closer cooperation.

The College maintained its involvement in the work of Foras Eireann/the Shaw Trust and AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Organisation; it is affiliated to NALA (National Adult Literacy Association) and ILHS (Irish Labour History Society).

Future Priorities

Our priority for the next two years will be to effectively face the challenges of the future, while continuing to promote the principles on which the College was founded 65 years ago, in terms of providing its students with the learning opportunities they require in an increasingly difficult and changing world.

The Skills Challenge

Congress is represented on the expert group on future skill needs. The committee conducts regular surveys on aspects of the skill needs of the Irish Labour market. It is based in Forfás, and its publications are available on the Forfás website.

Among the research published in the period under review were the annual vacancy surveys, which track the vacancy pattern in the Irish labour market on a sectoral basis, and studies on the skill needs of the food sector and the manufacturing sector. Congress continued to advocate the broadening of the apprenticeship system and has pointed out that countries with a broad based apprenticeship system such as Austria and the Netherlands have had consistently lower rates of youth unemployment. The ETUC is sponsoring a research project on the apprenticeship structure in a number of member states. Ireland is one of the countries selected to participate in this review. Congress is represented on the steering group by Eamon Devoy.



MRCI on 9 Feb Rally 2013

Part V: Congress Centres' Network

The Congress Centres act as a one stop shop for the unemployed and those in training.

The Centres provide assistance in the areas of career change training, retraining and job search and enterprise opportunities.

This has been a primary focus of our work since mid-1980s and in the current economic climate, with unemployment figures at an unprecedented 14.6%, that work is critical.

A Central Coordination Team was established in 2004 to ensure standards and professionalism would become a feature of our training and service provision.

Today, there are 23 Congress Centres throughout Ireland, both North and South. We currently have a record number of 500,000 client users which reflects the economic downturn. There are approximately 700 participants on Community Employment Schemes, 110 participants on Job Initiative Schemes and 100 young people attending Local Training Initiatives. These Labour Activation Schemes are sponsored by the Congress Centres.

In 2006 FETAC Status was achieved by head office and an additional eighteen centres.

All education provided by Congress Centres is certified and mapped to the National Qualifications Framework. AONTAS Star Awards have been won by many Centres for their exceptional adult education programmes.

Building the Network

The Network currently has 23 constituent centres in Athlone, Athy, Ballina, Belfast, Bray, Caherciveen, Castlebar, Drogheda, Dublin 12, Dundalk, Ennis, Fingal, Galway, Killarney, Kilkenny, Leixlip, Letterkenny, Limerick, Longford, Manorhamilton, Mullingar, Newbridge, and Tralee.

The Network was served by two full-time staff based in Dublin: a Programme Manager and a Training and Development Coordinator. Sylvia Ryan serves as Programme Manager currently and Fiona Elward assists with training provision for the Congress Centres Network.

Meetings of the Centre Coordinators and the Network staff were held on a frequent basis over the last two years. Centre Coordinators meet on a quarterly basis to discuss operational and service conditions issues 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 a context of a contracting domestic labour market and a national and global economic crisis of unprecedented proportions.

Factors such as rapidly rising unemployment levels, high levels of personal debt, the global nature of the downturn, persistent social exclusion and the increased 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 to support vulnerable groups and help those already distant from the labour market from becoming even further excluded, during this current downturn. Copies of the Strategic Plan are available from the Network Office or from Congress Centres.



Delegates from the Kildare Congress Centre meet with Minister Joan Burton, May 2012

Governance

There are nine members on the Interim Board, with three representatives each from Congress, Centre Boards of Management and Centre Coordinators. Representing the Coordinators are Margaret Cullinane (Galway), John Matthews (Dundalk), and Patricia Shortt (Wicklow). Patrick Cronin (Killarney), Michael Mc Grail (Kildare), and Frank O'Brien (Dundalk) are representing the Boards of Management. The Congress representatives are Sally Anne Kinahan, Frank Vaughan and Fergus Whelan.

Information & Advocacy

The CCN 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 2011-2014 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 reports from Centres from late 2008 on, of the marked increase in numbers 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. CCN Information officers have been invited to attend Social Welfare training provided by Congress.

In 2012 the Congress Centres participated in a number of Job Fairs around the country.

Policy & External Relations

Funding from the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs has been cut by 50% and one direct consequence has been the loss of a CCN Policy Officer.

The CCN plays an active role in the Community and Voluntary sector, but due to funding cuts our engagement is likely to be curtailed.

In 2012 the Minister for Social Protection established the Labour Schemes Advisory Committee and this group meets on a monthly basis. The CCN continued to build strong relationships with a

variety of organisations in the sector, including the INOU, the National Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, Age Action, One Family, OPEN, the European Anti-Poverty Network, the Community Platform, the National Women's Council, Combat Poverty, ICTU Communities Committee and the New Communities Partnership.

The Congress Centres Network also made a number of contributions and submissions to government, covering areas such as social welfare, medical cards, activation, lone parents and the Congress pre-Budget Submission.

Funding & Restructuring

As funding is under pressure, the CCN is exploring funding opportunities from other streams. Currently some Congress Unemployed 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 trade unions that offer training to their members and CCN facilitate training and services necessary for these training programmes. Congress Centres Network has successfully won contracts with the DSP to deliver training within the Centres.

Education & Training

Activity around education and training continues to be geared towards building capacity by providing a range of education and training courses to people vulnerable to redundancy and unemployed workers.

The Dublin 12 Congress Centre successfully achieved FETAC status in January 2011. Two Centres are in the process of submitting their Quality Assurance applications to FETAC. Over 200 tutors have achieved the Level 6 Train the Trainer qualification and continue to work within the network.

Training Projects

The CCN worked in collaboration with NALA, '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.

Trade Union Skillnet Project

This training covered a broad range of subjects and offers the opportunity of free certified training courses. Learners obtained valuable work experience and over 45% progress into work and further education. Congress Centres offer training

venues and certified training courses to all Trade Unions that offer education programmes to their members nationwide.

The Job Seeker Support Programme was added to the objectives and targets set by Department of Education & Skills, for Skillnet projects, from 2011.

In 2012 CCN assisted six Skillnet projects and trained over 500 learners. Many of these obtained work experience and FETAC-certified courses that are mapped to the National Qualifications Framework. The training provided to the unemployed is free and their learning is supported by staff in the Congress Centres, including access to the facilities of the Centres i.e. computers, photocopying, telephone, CV preparation etc.

Unemployed service users have also accessed training through the Congress Centres' links to 'Positive 2 Work Skillnet.' The CCN also supported the research called 'Ask U' conducted by Positive 2 Work Skillnet, to gain a greater understanding of the needs of unemployed learners.



Dr. Stevens Resource Centre Athlone Skillnets Training November 2011

Disability Activation Fund 2012-2015

The Disability Activation Project (DACT) aims to increase the capacity and potential of people on disability/illness welfare payments to participate in the labour market. Over €7m euro has been committed to 14 projects, with Congress as the single largest project among them.

Some 390 learners will complete three modules of learning at various levels on the National Framework of Qualifications. These modules include Personal Development, Computer Literacy and Preparation for Work. 10 days work experience will be included in the programme. A mentor will be assigned to assist learners with their individual progression plans and provide support over the duration of the course on a one to one basis.

Congress will secure employment on a part-time basis for up to 80 learners. 40 will act as Disability Champions in the Border Midland Regions and be a sustainable resource in the community.

The Disability Activation Project is jointly funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and is targeted at the Border, Midlands and Western region (BMW). The target group for this funding is people with a disability, 16 to 65 years of age, in receipt of disability/illness welfare payments who reside in BMW region.

EURES Advisers

The trade union adviser - the only one in the UK and Ireland - is Barrie McLatchie from the Belfast Centre. His role is to:

- » Provide an Information and Advice Service on cross-border employment issues, social security entitlements and employment rights;
- » Identify obstacles to the free movement of workers across the border, especially regarding social security and fiscal matters and to propose solutions;
- » Represent the partnership within the union constituency and other sectors;
- » Market the EURES Cross-border Partnership;

Activities undertaken in the period under review:

- » Cross-border Redundancy - A Systematic Approach;
- » Delivered through the design, production and distribution of information packs
- » EURES Awareness Seminars;
- » The North / South Forum - bringing together key trade union, community and voluntary sector workers to focus on EURES advice, information provision and discuss issues to improve cross-border mobility.

Leonardo Mobility Project 2011-2012

In February 2011 an application was made to Léargas by CCN, under the Vocational Education and Training Professionals (VETPRO) category, to travel to Denmark and visit similar unemployed centres.

In September 2011 the funding was secured to take coordinators and tutors to visit the University of Copenhagen UCC (Professionshøjskolen UCC Center for vejledning Institut for didaktik og læring).

Lene Poulsen of UCC kindly offered to be a partner and facilitate our visit. One objective was to exchange ideas and experiences in relation to vocational education and training provision.

The aim of the project was to identify possible innovations in the area of service provision and delivery in the community services relevant to unemployed people in Ireland. Five days of the programme comprised visits to the community based unemployment centres and a childcare facility, along with workshops on topics including the European Qualification Framework and the Danish social security system for supporting unemployed people returning to education.

There was also a visit to Danish Trade Union HQ to discuss vocational education & training for the unemployed. This trip took place in August 2012 and all participants completed the FETAC Level 5 Working in Groups and Community Development Practice modules and also received a Europass document issued by the Irish National Europass Centre, within the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland.

Leonardo Transfer of Innovation Project 2012-2014

Congress is the Irish partner in the new Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation project 'IN-TOOL'.

In November 2012 collaboration between nine partners in eight countries was initiated. It is a project supported by the European Union with the purpose of creating a toolbox for start-ups in the social economy. The main target group are younger people who are or risk being unemployed. The actual toolbox will be a webpage with examples, tips and ideas, contacts, regulations etc. in each participating country.

The first challenge is to find a functional definition of the social economy. Some features are clear.

One is that the goal of the enterprise should have a social element rather than being purely or exclusively economic. It should also be a membership organisation with voluntary and open membership. Further the enterprise should be democratically controlled by the members. The biggest point may be that any surplus generated is used to create sustainable development and/or services for the members or the public.

The Intool toolbox will concentrate on smaller businesses in local communities rather than large cooperative conglomerates.

The project is the initiative of a network of unions throughout Europe, consisting of national and regional Trade Unions from Ireland, Italy, Hungary, Portugal, Serbia, Spain and Sweden, together with the European Confederation of Trade Unions and the regional government of West Sweden.

The project is initiated and led by the Trade Union Confederation of West Sweden. In Ireland Congress is the partner and will provide the project with local examples as well as marketing of the toolbox to the union members. It is hoped that the Congress Centres will get involved in various aspects of the project, including piloting some aspects of the tool.

The Congress Centres are involved in many Social Enterprise projects and will participate and assist with this European Project over the next two years.



Leonardo Project Visit to Copenhagen Aug 2012







**SECTION
FIVE**

**CAMPAIGNS,
COMMUNICATIONS
& PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT**

CAMPAIGNS, COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Part I: Developing a Strategic Communications' Approach

Following the adoption at BDC 2011 of the interim report from the Commission on the Union, *A Call to Action*, the Executive Council tasked the Communications Strategy Group with developing a strategic communications' policy *'to address the scale of activity required to connect with union members, unorganised workers and civil society generally, without regard to resource limitation.'* The group was asked to report back to Commission by July 2012.

The Communications' Group viewed this task as a continuum of work already underway and which included the analysis and recommendations on *Trade Union Communications & Strategic Priorities* submitted to the Commission in May 2011, and reported on and endorsed at BDC 2011 in Killarney.

A review of the assumptions made and priorities identified in its 2011 strategy document was conducted by the Communications' Strategy Group. This process confirmed that the analysis remained valid and that the objectives and actions developed were still the desirable and appropriate course for Congress and the wider movement. This was detailed in the Executive Council report to BDC 2011. The core objectives from that process state what needs to be done. In summary:

- » **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.
- » **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.

- » **Speak with greater unity** Recognising the challenge of our dependency on the mainstream media to communicate with 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.
- » **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.
- » **Create the momentum for change** Restate the requirements for a fair recovery and 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 and exert influence to protect the interests of working people and towards the achievement of our vision of a fairer, more equitable society.
- » **Increase the efficiency and impact of our activity** Agree a basis on which the majority of unions can collaborate in planning and evaluation of systems and services to enhance what we can achieve and obtain greater value for the resources we use.

Being handed a 'no limits' opportunity to strategise and plan in order to comprehensively address the communications' challenges facing the movement proved inspiring for the Communications' Group. It facilitated the development of ideas and concepts around the possibilities of building meaningful relationships and engagement with our membership; informing and influencing



perspectives; challenging the dominant narrative and shaping the foundations of a new political economy.

The group scoped out how resources could be optimally organised in a 'no-limits' context taking into consideration the formation of the Sectoral Groups and the possibility of a more federalist TU Movement.

In the course of the deliberations a number of issues surfaced repeatedly and ultimately impacted on the development of the proposition and the recommendations the group made to the Commission. These recurring issues were seen as 'constraining' factors and fall into three main themes:

- 1. Funding:** The task was originally set on the basis of finances/resources not being a limiting factor. However, it became evident that in reality funding is a limiting factor. At a point when many unions are retrenching and the costs are under scrutiny, it was not seen as the right time to present a proposal that required major investment or reallocation of resources;
- 2. Structure:** The 'model' proposition envisaged a centralised and sectoral structure. However, a more federal TU Movement is likely to emerge slowly and we are some distance from a point where individual unions are in a position to cede responsibility for their internal and external communications, to a more centralised structure;
- 3. Unified Positioning:** The ultimate objective is the presentation of a unified movement speaking with 'one voice'. This is also the ultimate challenge - how we manage the communication

of our differences, which is a political challenge that cannot be resolved through a technical solution.

Whilst there is a strong, shared ownership of the vision and mission of the union movement there are also significant differences. The group reiterated that this complex issue has to be resolved at Executive Council level in order for it to be 'managed' in our communications work.

Whilst there are constraining factors, the group arrived at a shared view of a structure and ways of working that could significantly enhance and improve the impact of trade union communications. The group recommended the following:

1. A better resourced central communications function under the auspices of Congress. The main activities to include:

- » Strategy, Message Management and Message Brokerage: Engagement with unions (through the Communications' Strategy Group) in planning, implementation and coordination of communications including message management;
- » Media Relations: Management of media/public relations on macro/national matters;
- » News Bureau: Establishment of a TU news portal and the generation of news source for unions generally and to inform, influence and contribute to setting the news agenda on issues of concern to working people;
- » Shared Content: Generating shared content for syndication in union media and communications;
- » Capacity Building: Developing skills and competence through the provision of training and capacity building for officials and activists;
- » Resources: Establishment of systems within and across unions to source information, data and images and the production of resources and publications for the Movement;

- » Campaign Coordination: Development of campaigning strategy, planning and management of national campaigns;
- » Research & Evaluation: Co-ordinating analysis and evaluation of the impact of communications activity and on-going research and analysis on member/public attitudes.

The group envisaged that the Communications' Unit would be comprised of about four to six staff members. An immediate priority is to identify areas where savings can be made through effective collaboration in order to release resources to finance the unit.

2. A formalised structure for the coordination and management of communications across the Movement:

- » Establishment of the existing Communications' Group as a constitutional sub-committee of, or expert advisory group to, the Congress Executive Council, comprised of the communications experts within unions with a clear purpose to advise the Executive Council on strategic communications;
- » Through the group, provide a forum to deal with problems that arise from time to time from union messaging and to constructively address them with the union or unions concerned;
- » Ensure that all unions are aware of key issues and concerns of each other unions with a view to minimising insensitive or damaging public positioning;
- » Formalise efforts to share content publicise issues of concern to other unions/sectors in the internal union communications of unions that are not directly affected.

3. The development of agreed principles and protocols to support more effective message management and THE establishment of a Framework Agreement (developed and moderated by the Communications' Group with endorsement by the Executive Council) to deal with:

- » Messaging on issues where affiliates have different policies, priorities or emphasis at a sectoral level as well as on Congress-wide issues so as to focus on effectively managing any differences.
- » Management of core messages on issues of concern to more than one union, including in areas where different unions have different policy emphasis (e.g. specific fiscal policy; stimulus measures; public service increments, allowances and premium payments; social welfare/insurance benefits etc.).
- » Media and message handling around potentially divisive media issues, facilitating meetings between unions with different policies, perspectives and priorities before stories break with the aim of maximising common ground and to minimise damaging union division in

public positions. Where it is not possible to broker agreed positions, the outcomes should acknowledge and respect areas of difference in public discourse.

- » Conducting a communications audit to determine impact and effectiveness and to inform the focus of the collaborative strategic initiatives.

Communications Group Membership

Bernard Harbor (IMPACT); Brian Forbes (Mandate) David Gibney (MANDATE); Fionnuala Ní Bhrogán, (CWU); Frank Connolly (SIPTU); Gemma Tuffy (ASTI); Niall Shanahan (IMPACT); Peter Mullan, (INTO); Roisin Farrelly (TUI); Seamus Dooley (NUJ); Rob Hartnett, (UNITE); Pat Montague (for MANDATE); Sally Anne Kinahan (Congress Secretariat); Macdara Doyle, (Congress Secretariat); Deirdre Mannion (Congress Secretariat).

The focus of the communications approach for the future is dependent upon the outcome of the Commission process. In addition to the strategic review, the Communications' Group collaborated on a number of key projects. These included:

Consideration of Motion Three (BDC 2011) on the publication of a weekly commercial newspaper, which was remitted to the Executive Council. Members of the Communications' Group undertook research on media production, consumption trends, the potential and viability of a range of media covering existing union publications, radio and television broadcast, various digital methods including broadcasting, a newspaper print and online options, as well as the establishment of a central union news service. This work coincided with the task set by the Commission on the Union and was included in the report back to the Executive Council.



Karen Nussbaum CEO Working America

Development of the Campaign for Decent Work

It was agreed to set our communications, public engagement and campaigning activity within a five-year framework to facilitate greater coherence across the movement on core campaign issues,

realistic goal setting, more effective engagement and improved impact. The *Decent Work* agenda was identified as the overarching theme with just recovery, decent work and the creation of an equitable economy/ decent society identified as the thematic strands. The campaign sub themes have been identified as:

A Just Resolution

- » The impact of austerity, structural adjustment, the competitiveness agenda and the banking crisis ;
- » A just resolution to the protracted crises (economic, social, banking and fiscal);
- » The economic and social conditions required to achieve decent work.

Achieving Full Employment and Decent Jobs

- » A strategy for decent jobs and growth including industrial policy;
- » Access to productive employment and activation measures;
- » Youth employment;
- » The skills' challenge;
- » Work security and ending precarious employment.

Decent Incomes

- » Pay gaps and the achievement of equal pay between men and women;
- » Occupational pensions including recent legislative developments;
- » Decent jobs and pay as a driver of economic recovery;

Progressing Workplace Rights

- » Achieving equality – equal opportunities;
- » Leaves' agenda;
- » Working hours;
- » Forced labour;
- » Dismissals and redundancies;
- » Posted workers;
- » Health & safety - safe working environment;
- » Collective bargaining/the right to organise;
- » Social dialogue.

Social Protection

- » Social insurance benefits;
- » Social welfare;
- » Impact of austerity on public services and privatisation of services;
- » Childcare;
- » Education;
- » Health;
- » Housing

Further work is underway to construct an annual and multi-annual plan of actions to form the basis for the on-going campaign.

Part II: Congress Campaigns

A number of campaigns and significant events were organised in pursuit of policy objectives during the period since the last Conference including:

European Trade Union Day of Action

As part of European Trade Union Day of Action – organised by the ETUC – Congress organised a protest picket of the European Commission offices in Dublin, on February 29, 2012.

The theme of the protest was *Austerity is Not Working*, a conscious echo of the infamous billboard advertisement run by the Tories in the 1979 UK elections, which claimed: Labour Isn't Working.

Several thousand leaflets outlining the case for the protest were printed and distributed on the day. In addition, large, colourful cardboard cut outs of the words 'Jobs & Growth' were positioned at the entrance to the Commission offices.

The picket took place between 1-2pm, to maximise both participation and public attention.

Along with the leaflets, picketers were given specially-made placards and hi-vis jackets, bearing the legend: *Austerity is Not Working!*

A press release issued on the day said there was "an urgent need for a growth plan that will focus on boosting domestic demand. If we want to boost job creation we will have to boost domestic demand."

The news release said unions had advanced several proposals to government on how investment could be secured to create jobs.

Unions in 27 countries across Europe staged events to mark the European Trade Union Day of Action.

May Day Festival

A second May Day Festival was held in Dublin in 2012, following the success of the 2011 inaugural event. It featured lectures, debates, music, poetry readings and a public demonstration.

As with 2011, the Festival was jointly organised by Congress, the Dublin Council of Trade Unions and the Larkin Hedge School and opened with Workers' Memorial Day on April 28.

Among other events, the 2012 Festival featured a public talk on *Insecure Work, Insecure Lives* by Dr Guy Standing, author of *The Precariat*, a rally

on May Day and a special showing of the classic Swedish labour film, *Adalen '31* in the Irish Film Institute, in Dublin.

Once again, culture was to the fore in the latter half of the festival, with the Larkin Hedge School bringing proceedings to a rousing close over May 10, 11 and 12.

The Northern Ireland Committee also organised May Day Festivals in Belfast, in 2011 and 2012.

Domestic Workers

Following the historical adoption of the Domestic Workers Convention in June 2011, Congress called on the government to take a global lead on workers' rights by becoming the first to ratify a new landmark treaty that gives protection to domestic workers. The treaty has been widely welcomed around the world and is a benchmark to ensure that workers in informal and precarious jobs enjoy better protection at work.

The Convention gives the millions of domestic workers around the world the same rights as other workers. Until now, most domestic workers belonged to what is called the 'informal economy'. Once ratified, this Convention has the potential to take millions of workers out of the shadow economy and formalise their employment. The Convention, first and foremost, recognises the right of domestic workers to organise in unions, which is still forbidden in many countries. This change should allow them to negotiate and improve their working conditions.

Congress participated in international trade union seminar on Decent Work for Domestic Workers 25/26 June 2012 in Dublin. We continue to liaise with the Domestic Workers Action Group of the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland and have also created a page on our website, where further information is available: <http://www.ictu.ie/equality/domesticworkers1.html>

Congress was part of a national campaign urging the Irish Government to ratify the Convention, culminating in the handing in of a petition to Minister for Jobs Enterprise & Innovation, Richard Bruton, in December 2012. After some delay, the Irish Government finally indicated that it intended to ratify the Convention. In April 2013, Minister Joan Burton told delegates at the International Labour Organisation's 9th European and Central Regional meeting in Oslo that the Government would move to formally ratify the ILO's Convention on Decent Work and try to ensure ratification across the European Union.

The Case for Decent Work

More than hundred union activists and officials and representatives from the community sector packed out the new CWU Conference Centre (Dublin) on January 24, 2103 for a seminar on *Making the Case for Decent Work*.

This was the first major public event held in the CWU Conference Centre and the excellent facilities helped make the day a great success.

The rationale behind the seminar was to grow awareness of the Decent Work agenda among unions and activists, whilst also looking at successful campaign models at home and abroad.

Participants heard from a board range of speakers - national and international - on all aspects of the Decent Work agenda.



Making the Case for Decent Work, January 2013

The seminar was chaired by Congress Assistant General Secretary, Sallyanne Kinahan.

It was opened by Wellington Chibebe, Assistant General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, who outlined the history and content of the ILO framework for Decent Work.

Paraphrasing Joe Hill, Wellington gently admonished the audience with the call: "Don't Moan, Organise!"

Economist Michelle O'Sullivan, from the University of Limerick, dealt with the key issue of low pay and the important role played by wage-setting mechanisms, such as JLCs.

Micheál Collins from the Nevin Economic Research Institute (NERI) looked at the issue of income distribution and the Living Wage.

The morning session concluded with a presentation from Kevin Callinan, Deputy General Secretary of IMPACT, on the key issue of internships and the growth of unpaid work.

In the afternoon, the seminar took a closer look at the issue of campaigning and examined models from home and abroad. Karen Nussbaum, of Working America, discussed the new models of organising that unions and activists in the US have pursued with great success in recent years.

This was followed with a presentation from Brian Forbes of MANDATE, who outlined the ethos and rationale behind the Fair Shops campaign.

SIPTU's Lucia Fay outlined the origins of the Fair Deal for Cleaners' campaign and detailed its successes to date. Ethel Buckley then took delegates through SIPTU's Fair Hotel campaign and looked at how union campaigns might be better aligned and coordinated. Closing remarks were from Congress General Secretary David Begg.



Speakers at the Decent Work Seminar, from L-R: Impact's Kevin Callinan; Wellington Chibebe of the ITUC; Karen Nussbaum, Working America; Michelle O'Sullivan, UL and Dr Micheal Collins, NERI

Lift the Burden, Jobs Not Debt Campaign



Scene from February 9 rally

The campaign was coordinated by the Communications' Strategy Group which was extended to include lead campaign organisers. Targeting the European Commission and European Central Bank, the campaign set out to build member and public understanding of the socialisation of the bank debt burden and to seek a more just outcome for Irish citizens. Focussing on the European Council agreement to separate

sovereign and banking debt - which was later reneged on by a number of key credit countries - the campaign dealt with the unfairness of Irish people having to repay a bank debt of €64 billion, the estimated cost of which is 50 times higher than the average bank debt facing Europe's citizens.

Analysis provided by the Nevin Economic Research Institute helped to frame and shift the debate towards a more balanced positioning at a critical juncture in the campaign. Separately, research done by Michael Taft of Unite on the per capita size of the bailout proved extremely valuable.

The campaign was both impactful and successful, with some 120,000 people marching in six locations across the country on the February 9 Day of Action. An important dimension of the campaign success was the fact that of personal 'advocates' fronted the campaign nationally and in the local media ; individuals with strong personal stories to tell of the effects of the debt crisis and austerity on their lives and that of their families.

European decision makers and citizens were an important target for the campaign, particularly in the countries that opposed a resolution of the bank debt crisis for Ireland. Online advertising, press notices and releases were translated and targeted at the main news media in Finland, the Netherlands, Germany, France and the UK, to highlight the campaign objectives. Press materials were also targeted at international media and news organisations based in Dublin.

The scale of the coverage achieved was a reflection on the success of the activity. It was also consistent with the manner in which the print coverage built towards the day of the demonstrations, driven by Congress' media activity and aided by the timing of the deal on the Promissory Notes.

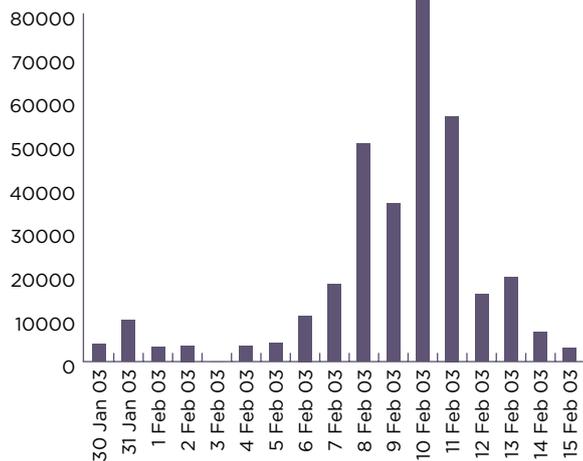


Participants gather for the start of the rally

Mass Media Campaign An effective mass and targeted media campaign was rolled out at short notice including an extensive outdoor, ambient, print and social media advertising campaign augmented by extensive press and public relations activity aimed at the local, national and international media. The campaign achieved high visibility nationally and in the regional centres where rallies took place.

Media Coverage The campaign achieved strong coverage in the national and local news print media. In excess of 90 articles/ stories were featured in the print media. The Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) of the print coverage (a standard industry metric for gauging the 'value' of press coverage, it measures the space devoted to all print coverage and estimates the cost of purchasing equivalent space for advertising). On this tally, the cumulative value of the print coverage was just over €300,000.

Figure 6: Media Coverage, Feb 9



Broadcast Strong broadcast coverage was achieved across TV and radio platforms including 24 separate mentions of the February 9 protests - either news bulletins or in more general news and talk shows. The bulk of the national coverage occurred on February 9, with the protests dominating RTE radio and TV news coverage from early morning until late evening. It was the story of the day. Regional broadcast coverage was clustered on either side of the day, in the lead up to or in the aftermath of the demonstrations and was heard primarily on Shannonside, Highland, Ocean FM, Galway Bay FM and LMFM.

Website The Congress website - driven by splash screens' on affiliate sites linked to a dedicated Jobs Not Debt section of the main website - experienced a significant surge in traffic in the days leading up to the Day of Action, with visits to the site increasing fourfold at peak - just under 5,000 visits on February 8 alone. From February 2-9, the site received a total of 20,454 visits, of which 17,742 were unique visitors and 80% of that number were new, first time visitors.

Film Clip A promotional film clip - *Why I am Marching on February 9* - featuring the campaign 'advocates' telling their personal story of the effects of bank debt crisis and the impact of austerity, was released on February 1 on Vimeo and YouTube and promoted across social media. It performed remarkably well and was viewed approximately 7,000 times in the single week leading up to February 9. The film was also used around the

country in the run up to the day of action and on the rallies as well. Several of the advocates also spoke at the demonstrations, in Dublin and around the country, on February 9. The advocate's stories also continued to attract media attention after the campaign, including on RTE Radio.

<https://vimeo.com/58711943>



The February 9 rally message was translated into several European languages

International High levels of international coverage were achieved for the rallies which were covered by outlets such as the BBC, Reuters and Associated Press, which in turn transmitted the reports worldwide, with stories turning as far afield as Pakistan, India, China and Russia and in several outlets in the United States.



Sending the message to Europe, Feb 9

Social Media The campaign generated a 100% increase in 'likes' for the Congress Facebook page with 140,000 plus people reached at its high point. The Congress Twitter page was also very active in the lead up to the demonstrations, with the hashtag #feb9demo utilised for all demonstration-related tweets.

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Union Consumer Campaigns

Spending Our Money Where Workers Count

The Fair Shop Initiative



Launch of Fair Shop Campaign with Mandate's John Douglas



Fair Shop is an initiative supported and led by unionised retail workers employed in Fair Shops throughout the Republic of Ireland.

A Fair Shop is an employer that recognises a trade union for collective bargaining purposes in the retail sector.

A key objective of Fair Shop is to support and promote quality employment in the retail sector by encouraging over 800,000 trade unionists, their families and all supporting organisations to make an informed choice and use all *Fair Shop* designated outlets.

Fair Shop is a modern ethical consumerism campaign, much like its sister initiative Fair Hotels, built on the principle of putting workers first.

Fair Shops respect the fundamental human right of workers to have a voice at work through collective bargaining. Fair Shops understand that success in retail is dependent on quality service and the retention of a skilled and committed workforce with staff respected and their work valued.

Fair Shops realise that retail workers and consumers value quality jobs that are worth protecting. In doing so, Fair Shops realise the importance of collective bargaining towards achieving decent work and an environment of mutual respect.

The campaign was launched in December 2012 on Henry Street, Dublin, by a range of retail workers from Fair Shops. To date 10 of the country's leading retailers have supported the campaign, with many others expressing an interest in the concept. At the time of writing, this represents a total of over 400 retail outlets across the country. A range of other civil society and community groups have also lent their support to the campaign.

The Fair Shop campaign has garnered quite a degree of interest from international trade unions and organisations, some of whom are examining the possibility of implementing similar campaigns abroad.

A presentation on the campaign was made to the Congress Executive Council in October 2012 by Mandate National Coordinator, Brian Forbes and the initiative received unanimous support. Many unions now actively promote the Fair Shop concept across a range of communications platforms, to their membership.

Fair Shop also launched a campaign website - www.fairshop.ie - which includes a Fair Shop location finder with accompanying lists of Fair Shops and supporters of the initiative. Added to the website is an active social networking dimension with Facebook and Twitter promoting many exciting new aspects of the campaign.

The *Fair Shop* initiative is about informed consumer choice and putting workers and responsible employers first - for a change!

Fair Hotels



Fair Hotels is an initiative of unionised hotel workers employed in the sector, across the island.

Hotels listed on the campaign 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. Currently there are more than 50 hotels participating in this campaign.

Our objective is to support and promote quality employment in the hotel industry in Ireland.

Fair Hotels are hotels that treat their staff fairly. Fair Hotels understand that the hospitality industry is a people industry and that in order to attract and retain a skilled and committed workforce, staff must know that their work is valued. Fair Hotels pay a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. They accept that hotel workers deserve to be paid a fair wage on which to support themselves and their families. Fair Hotels take their responsibilities as employers seriously. They respect the fundamental human right of workers to a voice at work. They engage in collective bargaining with staff.

The 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 know that client satisfaction depends on excellent customer service. They know that workers who are treated right will go the extra mile to ensure that customers are treated well.

Fair Hotels realise that hotel workers value quality 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.

The Fair Hotels initiative was first presented to the Congress Executive Council in July 2009 by the then President of Congress, Mr. Jack O'Connor.

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, Connacht Hotel (formerly Carlton Hotel, Galway City) 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, 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, Wynns Hotel, Dublin, The Portlaoise Heritage Hotel, Portlaoise and Westgrove Hotel, Clane.

Munster: Ard na Sidhe Country House, Killorgan, Co Kerry, Best Western Pery's Hotel, Limerick, Brandon Hotel, Tralee, 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, 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.

Congress Website

The main Congress website last underwent a major redevelopment and upgrade in 2008, with the new model launched in April of that year. The intervening five years have seen a literal paradigm shift in web-related and digital technology, with social media now assuming a central and commanding presence in all such communication.

For example, Facebook now has over one billion users and some 350 million tweets are sent daily, via Twitter. While social media platforms will change over the coming years, the trend is towards greater integration of social media in all communications, public and private. While Congress now has a more active social media presence - which was regenerated and revitalised over the course of 2012 and used to good effect during the 2013 *Jobs Not Debt* demonstrations - the website needs to be upgraded to take account of this new reality.

Equally, video is now far more accessible both in terms of production and distribution and should play a more central role in Congress communications. For example, Congress produced a short, partially-animated film clip as part of our 2012 pre-Budget submission which outlined the key themes and proposals contained in the main document.

Growth, Hope & Jobs was viewed 1400 times and served to expand our message reach beyond a more traditional audience.

Equally, in the run-up to the *Jobs not Debt* February 9 demonstrations, we produced film clip - *Why I am Marching on Feb 9* - that attracted almost 7000 viewers over the course of just seven days.

A working group of key web users has been established within Congress in order to draw up a clear brief for the upgrade and to manage the

process. It is expected the new site, with added functionality will be developed over the summer months and be ready in September 2013.

Publications 2011-2013

All publications listed below are available online at <http://www.ictu.ie/publications/>

Policy

- » Shifting to Growth & Jobs - Pre-Budget 2013 Submission
- » The Case for the Financial Transaction Tax
- » The Baltic Fallacy
- » Delivering Growth & Jobs (revised and updated June 2012)
- » Congress Briefing on Fiscal Compact Treaty
- » The Future of the Irish Water Sector
- » An Analysis of the Dutch Healthcare System
- » Impact of Austerity on Ireland (EESC Paper)
- » Growth is the Key. Pre Budget 2012 Submission
- » Proceedings of BDC 2011, July 4-7
- » NIC Biennial Conference Report 2012

Submissions

- » Submission on Joint Labour Committees
- » Submission on Excluded Debts in Insolvency Briefing
- » Observations on Posting Directive
- » Health & Safety Body Map; Health & Safety Risk Map
- » Submission on Corporate Manslaughter
- » Observations on Whistleblower Proposals
- » Observations & Recommendations on Monti II
- » Submission on Data Regulation
- » Congress Submission to the Universal Periodic Review
- » Congress Submission on Lobbying
- » Submission on Industrial Relations Bill, Feb 2012
- » Submission on Agency Workers Bill

Guidelines

- » Trade Unions and Migrant workers
- » Disability Code of Practice
- » Taking an Equality Case
- » Gender Identity in the Workplace (Guide, Congress with TENI)
- » LGBT Guide (Congress with GLEN)

Union Post

A total of 14 editions of the Union Post were published at regular intervals in the period under review, including a special edition for the February 9 2012 Jobs Not Debt national demonstrations.



A selection of Congress publications

Resolution from Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress City Hall, Cork, 12-14 May, 1913

Trades Union Shops

“That we call on all Trades Unionists and their families to make inquiries when purchasing goods, not only in regard to the conditions under which those goods were produced, but also in regard to the conditions in the particular distributive shop in which they are purchasing, and to ascertain from the assistant on all occasions whether he or she is a Trades Unionist”.

Mr. T. Johnson proposed, seconded by Mr. A. Doran (Belfast)

Adopted, Twentieth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress, Cork, 1913

Part III: Special Initiatives

Union Connect

Between May 1, 2011 and April 30, 2013, the Union Connect site had 177,926 unique visitors (a user visiting the site more than once is counted as one visitor). A full 82 % of visitors were directed to the site via search engines such as Google. The 'conversion rate' - those seeking a union application form - was 0.4%.

By the standards of e-commerce and online trading this is considered a relatively good conversion rate. To date, 708 people have sought union application forms. In addition, a number of applications have been received from UK residents, which have been passed on to the TUC or STUC, as appropriate.

The industrial pattern of applications (%) is as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Agriculture | 1.4 |
| Energy | 1.4 |
| Transport | 1.4 |
| Banking insurance finance | 4.3 |
| ICT | 5.7 |
| Manufacturing | 5.7 |
| Education | 10 |
| Health | 17.1 |
| Wholesale / retail | 21.4 |
| Arts entertainment/ tourism | 24.3 |

Many of the education applications are from the childcare sector, while many of the health sector applications are from the private healthcare or not for profit sector. In a significant minority of cases, union applications come from enterprises with established collective bargaining arrangements. This reflects a growing preference for doing business online. Approximately 58% of applicants are male, and 42% female.

The query service of Union Connect provides basic information on workers' rights. Union members or those working in unionised companies are referred to the relevant union.



Lord Mayor, Andrew Montague, helps launch YouthConnect in Dublin's Mansion House, with students from Nagle Rice School Cork

YouthConnect

Launch of *Youth Connect*

Operational since September 2011, the *YouthConnect* programme was officially launched on February 8, 2012 in the Oak Room of the Mansion House, Dublin and kindly hosted by the then Lord Mayor, Andrew Montague.

The launch brought together all those who were instrumental in making the programme a reality: the original funders Impact, including members of the tax officials' branch, representatives from all three teaching unions who had been part of the steering committee and provided much needed support and advice, teachers and educators without whose support the programme wouldn't have met a single student and members of the Irish Second-level Students' Union (ISSU), with whom we have a partnership at second-level to ensure students' voices are heard.

Teachers and students from schools who had received a *YouthConnect* visit were formally invited to the launch to share their experiences and students from both Nagle-Rice in Doneraile in and St. James' CBS in Dublin 8 attended and participated in the event.

Niamh Noonan, a student from Doneraile, spoke about the benefits of such a programme for students, the necessity for them to know about their entitlements before they ever enter the workplace and the support that is available from trade unions.

YouthConnect continues to visit schools across the country where it is hoped to build on and strengthen the relationship between the union movement and the school community and become a core element in students' all-round education.

YouthConnect Programme

Congress' school and education programme, YouthConnect, has been operational in the since late August 2011.

The programme has identified the fact that students generally know very little about the realities of the workplace, regardless of whether they have worked before.

The response from the teaching community has been fantastic and the programme has been warmly welcomed by every school contacted. However to ensure that students continue to be educated about workers' rights it is imperative that our presence in the school environment continues and becomes a regular part of the life of the school and youth community.

Our Champions

In April 2011 the programme began to advertise for positions as champions within the teacher training colleges and followed up with an invite to an open day in May. A short training course was then delivered to successful applicants in mid-August 2011 based on the *Working World* teaching manual and resources.

The champions come from a teaching background which means that they have experience dealing with students. It has also been agreed with the Teaching Council that 100 hours of classes - delivered as part of the YouthConnect programme - will be included in the 300 practical hours requirement to attain the full teaching qualification.

Between September 2011 and May 2012, six champions [3 FTEs] were recruited for the Dublin [Rathfarnham], SouthEast [Kilkenny] and Midlands [Longford Town] areas.

From September 2012 to May 2013 7 champions [2.5 FTEs] were recruited for the Dublin [Rathfarnham], South West [Kilfinane, Limerick & Rochestown,], West [Ardrahan, Galway] and North East [Cootehill & Cavan Town] & Midlands [Lanesboro, Longford] regions.

The School Visits

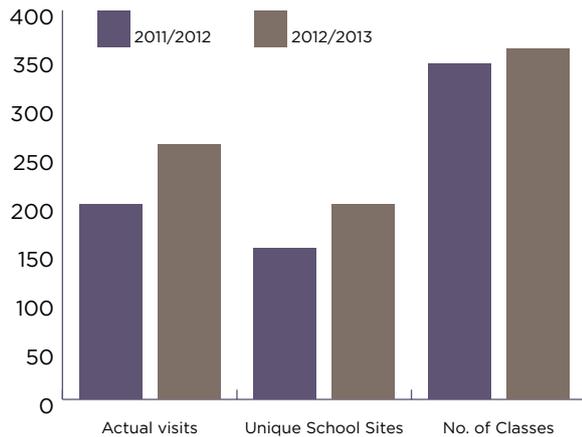
YouthConnect began operational visits to schools in September 2011 and since then the team have been in schools up and down the country, from Dundrum to Doneraile, Monaghan to Mullingar, and Kilkenny to Killaloe.

Both teachers and students have found the programme beneficial, informative and crucial for those making the transition into the world of work. We have visited second-level schools, community and comprehensives, community colleges, Youthreach centres, further Education colleges and youth groups.

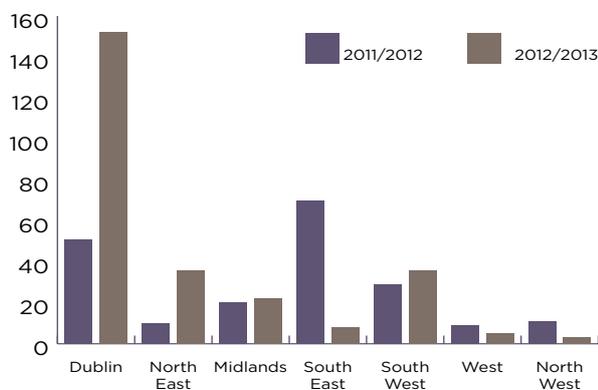
The programme delivers an introductory lesson which highlights peoples' rights and responsibilities in the workplace, the advancement of workers' conditions through trade unions, the value and benefits of collective action/bargaining and how to handle problems in the workplace.

It also encourages participation within the school community, particularly on student councils, which hopefully will lead students to develop their own voice and participate in the decision making processes that affect them. It is hoped this will encourage students to become active in their workplaces and unions in later life.

Breakdown of School Visits year-on-year

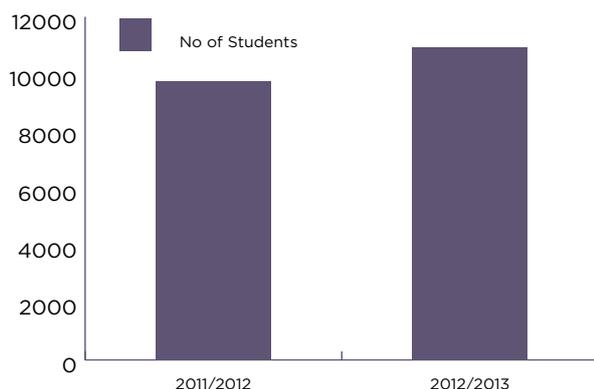


Regional Breakdown of School visits



Numbers vary between regions. This is dependent on length of time a champion remains with the project, level of experience, areas of responsibility and distances between schools.

Direct Contact with Students



The issues for students

The classes have also provided us with an opportunity to speak directly to students about their experiences, expectations and difficulties within the workplace and to gain a small insight into the world of the young worker.

In a time of deep recession it has been surprising to discover how many students are working, some for more than 2 years. The Retail, Hotel and Catering sectors appear among those most favoured, although we have had queries from students working in farming, childcare and the bloodstock industry.

The queries range from: hourly pay rates, entitlement to a payslip, holiday leave, how to join a union, how much it costs etc.

But there are many other questions which are more worrying for students and young workers, key workplace issues on which they will need advice and support.

Many are fearful that by demanding their rights or by joining a union, they may be put their jobs at risk.

We know students are working longer and later than the law allows and for less than they are entitled to and feel under constant pressure from employers to be 'flexible'.

While we advertise the benefits of joining a union, it is difficult to motivate these young people to join a movement which they believe is not relevant or inclusive towards them, particularly if most feel their jobs are only temporary.

In this context, it is vital that we continue to provide students with information on their rights, encourage them to join, welcome them into the trade union movement and support them when they experience difficulties at work.

LOCKOUT 1913-2013 Centenary Commemoration

The Executive Council committed to an ambitious programme for the trade union movement to mark the centenary of the 1913 Lockout. Congress and a number of unions put in place funding to support a range of events, most of which will take place between July 2013 and February 2014 - the Biennial Delegate Conference in Belfast acting as a natural launch for the commemorative year.

Projects which have been developed over the last twelve months include:

Tenement Experience, Henrietta Street, from July 2013

Depicting the social and economic conditions in early 20th century Dublin, when tens of thousands of people lived in cramped, insanitary and hazardous conditions; their circumstances dictated entirely by the extent to which they had access to continuous, decent employment. This

project, featuring theatre group Anu, is being run in partnership with Dublin City Council and the Irish Heritage Trust.

National Tapestry Project



A collaborative project involving union and community groups, artists, the National College of Art and Design and the Embroidery Guild in the production of one of the world's largest tapestry. The tapestry will tell the story of 1913 through 50 richly embroidered panels and will be accompanied by a film and a documentary for television. The project was launched by President, Michael D Higgins and will be exhibited from July 2013 in Dublin and across the country.

The Living Past, Oral History Project

A capacity building and resource development project facilitating unions, trades councils and other civil society bodies to retrieve the history of the union movement from activists, past and present, to create material for publication and heritage purposes including the planned Dublin Tenement Exhibition and Museum.

1913 Dublin Lockout Centenary Exhibition, from August 2013

The National Library, Kildare Street Dublin is the venue for an important commemorative exhibition using archive material, much of which will be exhibited for the first time. An on-line study resource is being prepared to enhance access to the material, which will also be used for the special 1913 schools' programme. This project is a partnership venture between Congress and the National Library.

National Commemoration

An important national event is planned to mark the centenary of the Great Lockout in O'Connell Street, Dublin, at the end of August to mark Bloody Sunday. It is anticipated that this will be a major showcase event attracting the political leadership in Ireland and the trade union movement internationally. An extensive schedule of events, seminars and media activity is in planning for the weeks leading up to and following on from the national Commemoration.

The Food Ship Re-enactment, October 2013

The 100th anniversary of the first food shipment from the British TUC to support striking workers and their families will be re-enacted with the participation of present day TUC leaders. A ship will be 'off-loaded' in Dublin city centre and a commemorative event planned for early October will acknowledge the role of the aid in supporting struggling workers - the value of which equates to over €20,000,000 in today's terms - *with support from the International Transport Federation.*

The Dublin Port Company is facilitating an exhibition and events at the Ferry Terminal during the summer and autumn of 2013, to include the Dublin Port Photographic Exhibition, by the Dockers Preservation Society.

Trade Unions Banners & Badges, from August 2013



An important historic exhibition of trade union banners and badges in conjunction with the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks, Dublin and the Port Company. The exhibition will help to inform the public of economic conditions, working life and the origins and organisation of trade unions in the 19th and 20th centuries, to the present day. Installations are being provided from many sources

including from the Irish national archives, trade unions, historic organisations and the People's History Museum in the UK.

Literature

Dublin City Council chose James Plunkett's *Strumpet City* as the One City, One Book novel for 2013, with a range of literary and public information activity taking place from April onwards. The launch in Liberty Hall was highly successful, garnering the most media interest and achieving the greatest level of participation and engagement from the public at the hundreds of organised events.

James Plunkett Short Story Competition

A major short story competition was launched and received a superb response from writers across the country. Coordinated by the Irish Writers' Union and the Writers' Centre and supported by Dublin UNESCO City of Literature and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, the winning entries will be announced and publicised in the autumn.

Lockout: Dublin 1913 by Pádraig Yeates' was reprinted for the commemorative year and other publications including a series of academic essays edited by labour historian, Francie Devine

Schools' Programme

A special module on the Lockout and the ongoing quest for decent work has been developed for incorporation into the *YouthConnect* programme for schools. This will be rolled out to some 400 schools from the end of August and will be promoted along with a competition to engage young people in researching and exploring the significance of the Lockout to world of work today.

The 1913-2013 Commemorative Programme is co-ordinated by Joe O'Flynn, Treasurer of Congress and SIPTU General Secretary; Sally Anne Kinahan, Assistant General Secretary, Congress; Pádraig Yeates, historian. Charlotte Wray was seconded by SIPTU in April to assist with the coordination and promotion of the programme.

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SECTION
SIX

INTERNATIONAL

Our work during the period included support for human and trade union rights campaigns, lobbying at national, EU and international level along with development cooperation projects, with a particular focus on countries that experienced severe violations of trade union and workers' rights.



Bernadette Ségol, ETUC General Secretary

Global Solidarity Development Education Programme

The Global Solidarity Development Education programme continues to mainstream development education within the union movement, primarily by engaging members and key decision-makers in activities focussing on the achievement of the Decent Work agenda. National and international trade union networks provide excellent platforms for co-operation, exchange and campaigning activity with affiliates and others.

Active communications channels and a well-developed training infrastructure add to the effectiveness of union development education activities.

Irish Aid funding has changed from multi-annual to annual and applications must now be made and reported on, every 12 months. The programme has received funding for the periods 2012/2013 and 2013/2014. However, there were reductions in both years, of some 8% and 16.7% respectively.

The four key objectives of the programme are to:

- » Establish global learning as a key element of trade union education and training and integrate it into all union education and training programmes;
- » Enhance engagement of affiliates & members with development education and global learning;
- » Build strategic management capacity and campaign skills among activists, officials and trade union tutors, including champions and key personnel in affiliates;
- » Strengthen affiliates' capacity to develop effective development education work programmes and activities.

Global Solidarity Champions Training

In the period 2011–2013, there were four training workshops that saw 60 participants trained as Global Solidarity champions, representing 14 union organisations and one Trades' Council. A number of these participants are now active within their own union organisation and on the Global Solidarity Committee.

In order for this programme to grow and develop it is also necessary to provide a progression path for Development Education. To this end, new and innovative opportunities are being developed, for participants at all levels and all sectors within the trade union movement. A scoping exercise was commissioned in the 2012/13 programme which identified where development education and global issues can be embedded into existing courses and certification routes. This work will be further developed and continued in the 2013/2014 period.

An introductory online module is in development, which will enable participants to achieve a greater knowledge of the global agenda before attending the workshops. This will also provide for a greater level of discussion and debate on a range of key policy topics. It is envisaged a pilot will be delivered and evaluated before the end of Summer, 2013.



Global Solidarity Summer School 2013 with Minister Joe Costello

Global Solidarity Summer School

Two Summer Schools took place in the period 2011-2013 with a third Summer School scheduled to take place on August 23-24, 2013.

The September 2011 summer school - *Combining Climate Change with the Decent Work Agenda* - was opened by Congress President Eugene McGlone and attended by approximately 50 delegates.

Panel discussions dealt with the issues of Climate Change, Green Jobs and Decent work. IT was chaired by Jimmy Brown, President of NUIG and speakers included Professor Terry McDonough, NUIG, Liam Berney, Congress, Neil Walker IBEC, Gavin Harte, Stop Climate Chaos Coalition and Loraine Mulligan, SIPTU.

In August 2012, the 4th Annual Global Solidarity Summer School took place in Wexford and was opened by Minister for Trade & Development, Joe Costello with the keynote address provided by Professor Ronaldo Munck of Dublin City University, on *Trade Unions, Globalisation & Internationalism*.

A very broad panel discussion was facilitated by NUJ General Secretary, Michelle Stanistreet. Speakers included David Joyce, International Development Officer, Congress; Judith Kirton-Darling, ETUC; Prof. Edward Lahiff, Int. Development, Dept. of Food Business & Dev., UCC; Jeffrey Vogt, Legal Advisor, Dept. of Human & Trade

Union Rights, ITUC; Owen Tudor, Head of EU and International Relations Dept., TUC; Ronaldo Munck, Head of Civic & Global Engagement, DCU.

Global Solidarity Committee

The Committee meet on a bi-monthly basis to oversee the work of the Global Solidarity programme. Among the issues that arose in the period under review:

- » Irish Aid White Paper Review
- » Fair Trade & Trade Union rights
- » BRAVO Bahrain Campaign
- » Burma
- » Impact of austerity on workers' rights and labour in EU
- » Campaigns of TUC International Dept.
- » Food Security

Moira Leyden (ASTI) was the Chairperson for the Committee's term to May 2012 and the Committee was very appreciative and thankful of her skill and dedication during her time in that role. In May 2012 John O'Brien (INTO) was elected as the new Chairperson.

Global Solidarity Working Groups

The Committee is active across a range of social justice and development issues with decent work at the core of this agenda. We also work in conjunction with national and international networks to maximise the impact of solidarity activity. The Committee is involved in a host of working groups, from the Irish Coalition for the Global Campaign for Education to the anti-human trafficking working groups and campaigning on behalf of Bahraini teachers.

Some of the longer established working groups are:

Clean Clothes Campaign

The Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) is a global coalition of NGOs and trade unions that work together to push for better working conditions in the garment industry and for the empowerment of garment workers - a campaign made all the more urgent and vital following the dreadful loss of life in Bangladesh, in April 2013.

In the context of this work, the CCC is committed to carrying out direct solidarity action to support garment workers in their struggle. The Irish CCC (Congress, MANDATE, Trocaire, Comhlámh & Redress) was set up in October 2010 and funding was secured by Re-dress (CCC Ireland's Secretariat) in September 2012 to develop the Urgent Appeals (UA) campaign.

The system is a means of supporting workers in their struggle to improve conditions and forge international solidarity links with labour rights organisations.

The CCC frequently receives appeals from workers in the sector, which generally come in through the CCC International Secretariat in Amsterdam. There is a CCC Urgent Appeals Working Group with members from each of the European Clean Clothes Campaigns and requests that the CCC become involved in a case can be sent to any of them to follow up.

The Urgent Appeals Working Group takes these requests, verifies them and adds to the initial information regarding the case, using our local contacts in the country where the rights violation has occurred. A wide appeal for action is then posted to the CCC international network (via email). Using this system, members of the Clean Clothes Campaigns are effectively mobilised to react quickly to requests for action when workers' rights are violated.

The CCC has also launched their *Deadly Denim* campaign to raise awareness of the sometimes lethal working practices prevalent in the textile industry.

For example, sandblasting jeans to create a worn and faded effect, involves firing high pressure sand at the garment. This creates a fine silica dust that gathers in the lungs, eventually causing fatal lung disease. Symptoms can appear within a few weeks of working with these materials.

This practice originated in the mining and building industries and was banned by the UK in 1950 and the EEC in 1966. As strict EU regulations are imposed within European countries, the clothing industry has outsourced this practice to less developed countries including Turkey, Syria, Bangladesh, Mexico, India and Indonesia. Approximately 15,000 workers are involved in sandblasting techniques in Turkey alone.

The campaign continues to lobby and work with TDs and MEPs to examine this practice in the global garment industry in more detail, with a view to introducing proper regulations and a comprehensive system of testing to ensure that workers' health is being protected. Ultimately, such practices must be outlawed.

Disability Aid Abroad

Congress is working in partnership with Disability Aid Abroad on an *International Employment Support Programme for Workers with Disabilities in Uganda*, very similar to a successful project which was rolled-out in Tanzania over the previous 2 years.

The project aims to:

- » strengthen the participation of Ugandan workers with disabilities in employment;
- » improve access to disability employment information and experience by creating a disability specific employment support programme by trade unions in the workplace,
- » develop a disability and equality programme for the public and private sector so as to create a climate of opinion favourable to the employment of people with a disability;
- » support the employment of 20 people with disabilities in a one-year pilot employment support programme;
- » develop advocacy skills among workers with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, aimed at influencing government, local authorities and decision makers on disability related legislation and issues.



Ugandan Employment Support Programme

The project has been funded by a number of unions and organisations, including: ASTI, CSTWF, CWU, Electric Aid, ESU [formerly ESBOA], IMPACT, INTO, PSEU, TUC, UNITE.

Their support has made an enormous difference to the lives of workers with a disability in both Tanzania and Uganda.

Indeed, the Congress of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) has since requested similar assistance, which includes developing guidelines to include disability issues in collective bargaining and create awareness on the rights of people with disabilities. It is envisaged this project will be a joint collaboration between Disability Aid Abroad, Congress and the ILO with CETU.

The project began in September 2012 when over 60 members of the National Organisation of Trade Unions of Uganda attended a 3-day training course in disability equality awareness in the workplace.

A member of Congress Global Solidarity Committee Joan McCrohan, along with John Coghlan founder of *Disability Aid Abroad*, attended the training and witnessed the solidarity of trade unions in dealing with the issue of disability, which has already resulted in a number of Ugandan trade unions including disability as an issue in collective bargaining agreements.

Based on the success of work placements during the Tanzanian project, the project worker for the Ugandan programme, Baligasima Yazidi, visited Tanzania to meet with the recruitment agency and other key players.

The visit resulted in a number of observations which will need to be incorporated into the programme and key issues required to ensure success include:

- » Training employers on disability issues
- » Survey those with a disability currently in employment to ascertain their educational levels and union membership;
- » Create a partnership/relationship with other disability organisations to promote employment for people with a disability;
- » Specific additional funds are required to continue this work

Disability Champions courses for trade union activists and employers' disability awareness training took place in February 2013 and again in April, with more than 40 champions trained and up to 20 employers participating in the awareness workshops. All training was been conducted by Ugandan and Tanzanian trade union trainers.

Justice for Colombia

The main activity of the network is to raise awareness of the situation in Colombia, to provide opportunities for trade union activists to learn more about how they can support our union colleagues in Colombia and to campaign on key issues. Justice for Colombia (JFC) provides an information and Q&A session on all Champions' training sets up stands at union conferences and organises workshops at the Annual Global Solidarity Summer School.

The Committee has decided to focus its energies on a number of key topics, which includes:

- » Campaign for the release of Political Prisoners
- » EU-Colombia & Peru Free Trade Agreement
- » Support for a just and inclusive Peace Process



Colombian delegation meet with SIPTU's Jack O'Connor

Campaign for the Release of Political Prisoners

The committee actively supports the JFC political prisoner campaigns and has decided to focus their efforts on one prisoner at a time to raise awareness of each specific situation.

In December 2011 Rosalba Gaviria Toro, a former political prisoner, came to Ireland to meet with those who campaigned for her release, including a class of second-level students in Kenmare, County Kerry.

She travelled to Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine, where she was welcomed by Dermot Healy, the school principal and Anne Piggott (ASTI) the teacher who had encouraged her students to get involved in the prisoner release campaign. Her meeting with the students featured on the RTE Six One news.

She then travelled to Dublin where she met with the Congress GPC, the President and Vice-President of Congress and officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs.

JFC is currently campaigning on behalf of Omar Alfonso Combito, a teacher active in his union FECODE and a director of the Santana Ramos Education Centre. He has been held in La Modelo Prison, Bogota since October 2011 and consistently denied medical treatment for Parkinson's disease and met with continual postponements of his trial.

JFC ran a Christmas card appeal in December 2012 which was very well supported, particularly by primary and second-level students, and which were very gratefully received by Omar. There are also two online campaigns, one through the Congress Global Solidarity webpage which sends a letter directly to the Colombian Ambassador and the other, which is an online petition addressed to President Santos seeking his release.

EU -Colombia & Peru FTA

JFC focussed a lot of their lobby work on the issue of trade agreements between the EU and Colombia and continued to oppose such an agreement, targeting both MEPs and TDs right up until the vote was taken in December 2012. Unfortunately there was a strong belief amongst MEPs that sufficient progress had been made in Colombia for the agreement to go ahead and it was signed in Santiago, Chile in January 2013 under the Irish Presidency of the EU.

However, as a result of the intensive lobbying throughout Europe by ITUC, ETUC, Congress and JFC, the Socialist & Democrats group in the European Parliament pressed to ensure that the trade deal entails some real improvements for people in Colombia.

This resulted in three new initiatives: a Roadmap on Human, Environmental and Labour Rights; a commitment to give special consideration to social and environmental standards in implementing legislation which accompanies the trade agreement and the establishment of a monitoring group by the European Parliament.

Although both Peru and Colombia committed to taking concrete measures to improve labour, human and environmental standards, the killings, disappearances and illegal imprisonments continue. It is imperative that Congress and JFC continue to draw attention to this situation and seek to ensure the monitoring group provides regular and comprehensive reports on the roadmap and commitments made

Colombians for Peace

Two visits by leading Colombian activists were hosted by the JFC network in May 2012 and April 2013.

Colombians for Peace is an organisation of high-profile Colombian figures, including former presidents, journalists, politicians, and academics, which is supported by human rights organisations and the trade union movement. It had secured the successful release of several FARC hostages and has played an important role in advancing prospects for negotiations as well as managing to engage the international community - particularly in Latin America. They also worked closely with ASFAMIPAZ - the organisation representing relatives of soldiers and police in FARC captivity- to secure the safe release of the last remaining 10 hostages before the beginning of the peace talks.

Colombians for Peace has asked for support from Europe to increase pressure on all parties to engage in dialogue and to place the need for a just peace process in Colombia higher up the international agenda.

In April 2013 another delegation visited both Belfast and Dublin with similar itineraries as previously. The delegation consisted of Gloria Cuartas a former Senator, David Florez a former General Secretary of the Colombian Federation of University Students and Nidia Quintero Executive member of FENSUAGRO, the Colombian agricultural workers' union.

Israel/Palestine

During 2012, it was agreed to convene a meeting of the original **2007 delegation** to Israel and Palestine, to discuss how best to progress Congress policies on Palestine.

A report was subsequently agreed by the Executive Council and it was noted that the actions proposed are required at different levels of the trade union movement, including the Executive and Congress Secretariat, through affiliates and in the collective bargaining processes, by activists and support organisations.

The importance of Congress maintaining its lobbying and advocacy work, in support of a solution based on respect for the human rights of the Palestinian people and opposition to apartheid, cannot be underestimated

There are two key elements to the boycott dimension of the BDS campaign.

The first relates to Israeli goods and the second to settlement goods. Neither element of the campaign is mutually exclusive and Congress aims to build on both. Among our actions were:

- » We joined with Trócaire, Irish Palestine Solidarity Campaign and others to call on Minister Gilmore to ban the importation of settlement goods to Ireland and participated in an international seminar in Paris in 2013 which resulted in an agreed trade union statement on settlement goods from the TUC, CGIL and the CGT in France.
- » Continued liaison with the TUC and ETUC re a 'model letter' for ETUC affiliates seeking government implementation of an EU regulation re labelling of settlement goods, which has since been sent to Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore.
- » Noting that the European Parliament Trade Committee - INTA - now has the power to conduct a 'human rights impact assessment'

of its trade policies with a given country, we requested the Committee to use those powers, at a November 2012 meeting in Dublin. We also sought to influence the INTA committee vote on the EU-Israel ACAA protocol, calling on them to vote for a suspension of the assent procedure to this protocol, until Israel complies with several fundamental international humanitarian law and human rights law standards.

- » Congress also urged the Irish government to use any influence it can bring to bear on these matters during the Irish EU Presidency in the first half of 2013. We have also worked to exert influence on politicians in the Northern Ireland Assembly. Following the November 2012 attacks on Gaza, Congress wrote to Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore to seek an 'immediate and effective' intervention by the Irish Government. Congress called on the government to condemn Israel's latest assault on the Gaza Strip, particularly the attacks on civilian targets and its breaches of both international human rights law and the Geneva Convention.

In response to calls for the BDS campaign to target corporations profiting directly from the situation, Congress continues to consult with the relevant trade union representing the sector or companies to determine the appropriate course of action to take. In this regard we facilitated a meeting between Trócaire and MANDATE, re settlement goods and supermarkets.

Congress, in cooperation with other groups, also ran briefings for the trade union nominated BDS campaign representatives. This was carried out in order to assist them in identifying how their unions can contribute towards the Palestine campaign and feed back to Congress.

We plan to provide training for affiliates interested in exploring the option of acting in solidarity with Palestine in order to encourage individuals, financial institutions and companies to shed their investments in Israel.

We appreciate ongoing cooperation with other groups, including:

- » Irish solidarity groups (IPSC and SADAKA);
- » Trócaire, Christian Aid and the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme for Palestine and Israel (EAPPI)

We also ensure there is ongoing and regular liaison with TUIF, north and south.

Burma/Myanmar

Congress continued its work in solidarity with the people of Burma both through lobbying, advocacy and development cooperation projects.

We participated in international discussions (with ITUC and at the ETUC Trade and Globalisation meetings) on EU-Burma trade relations and promoted the ITUC Binding Framework on business and human rights.

Congress wrote to Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore TD and all MEPs, pointing out that Burma is only now at the beginning of a long path towards the establishment of democracy and human rights. Forced labour remains a serious problem, despite recent legal reforms and few of those responsible for exacting forced labour have faced criminal sanction. The letter pointed to our strongly held belief that the reinstatement of EU Generalised System of Trade Preferences is not warranted at this time. The letter also urged the EU to require those doing business in Burma to uphold human rights standards and includes a list of trade union proposals on Business and Human Rights in Burma.

The Federation of Trade Unions - Burma (FTUB) has ceased operating in exile as of September 2012, when its General Secretary was allowed to return to the country.

To mark this significant event, the ITUC, along with several affiliates (including Congress) expressed support for the return of democracy and trade union activity within Burma.

Congress met with Joe Costello, Minister of State for Trade & Development, regarding the possibility of support for trade unions in the context of the emerging 'civil space' in Burma.

In conjunction with the ITUC, Congress lodged an application to the civil society fund regarding work with trade unions in Burma. This was approved and an initial grant of €40,000 was confirmed by Minister Joe Costello at our Global Solidarity summer school in Wexford in 2012. We also facilitated a meeting of ITUC with Irish Aid Civil Society section in Limerick to discuss the project.

The objective is to develop an independent, democratic and free trade union movement in Myanmar, which evidences workers' power and is capable of ensuring the respect of workers' rights and fighting for social justice.

This involves supporting the Federation of Trade Unions of Myanmar in organising and providing services to workers.

Congress welcomed the release of Burmese opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi.

In a landmark address to the ILO in June 2012, she called for international aid and investment to help build a better future for Myanmar and highlighted the problems of youth unemployment.

Ms Suu Kyi gave heartfelt thanks to the ILO and its constituents for the campaigning on Burma initiated by the 1997 Commission of Inquiry on Forced Labour and noted the commitments now given by the Burmese government to fulfil its action plan on total elimination of same, by 2015.

She also met with the ILO Workers Group (including Esther Lynch from Congress) to thank us for the unstinting support over the last decades and to call for an increase of support to Burmese workers and independent trade unions. She subsequently visited Ireland and Congress was invited to attend the concert held in her honour.

Development Cooperation

Congress continued to engage with Irish Aid regarding decent work and development cooperation - including a November 2011 meeting with Jan O'Sullivan, Minister of State for Trade & Development - to make the case that aid effectiveness needs decent work and private sector regulation.

At the time, governments were preparing to gather in Busan, South Korea, to discuss aid effectiveness and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) was pressing for a conclusion that promoted pro-poor growth and favoured working people.

We met with Minister for Development Cooperation, Joe Costello, on a number of occasions and participated in the public consultation phase on the Irish Aid white paper and prepared briefings for trade unions to assist their participation.

Congress attended the Irish Aid annual report launch and continued to make the case for decent work in development cooperation. Our submission drew generous praise from the Minister at our 2012 GS Summer School.

The submission to the review of the Irish Aid white paper makes the case for decent work and the importance of trade unions. People don't usually think of unions when they think about international development, but our campaign for living wages, workplaces free of child and forced labour, decent public services and the promotion of equality and justice can make a big contribution to the elimination of poverty.

Congress also joined with trade unions around the world to make the case for the inclusion of a specific decent work goal, as part of any international development framework to replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) after 2015.

Fiji

Congress cooperated with the TUC and the Fiji Council of Trade Unions on the development of a Fiji rugby campaign, on the visit of the Fiji rugby team to these islands - including Thomond Park in Limerick - in November 2012. The campaign sought to raise awareness about the gross violations of human and trade union rights in that country and attracted much attention on social media and in the local press.

UN International Arms Trade Treaty

Congress wrote to the Tánaiste, Eamon Gilmore, TD, regarding negotiations on an International Arms Trade Treaty in light of the July 2012 UN Conference held to negotiate just such a treaty. The aim would be to control the illicit global arms trade and monitor the flow of small arms and conventional weapons across borders. As part of a global union campaign, Congress urged the Irish Government to press for a strong, legally binding agreement to tackle the suffering caused by irresponsible transfers of conventional weapons and munitions. Trade unions across the globe welcomed the April 2, 2013 adoption of an historic United Nations Arms Trade Treaty.

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**Excerpt from Mr. J. Larkin,
President's Address,
Twenty first Annual Irish Trades Union
Congress, 1914**

“Looking back over the immediate past – more particularly the long months of 1913 and the early months of 1914 – we saw there the attempt of an organised, unscrupulous capitalist class composed of men of different political parties and holding different sectarian views who had combined together for the purpose of destroying organised labour in Ireland. The lock-out in 1913 was a deliberate attempt to starve them into submission, and met with well-deserved failure. The workers emerged from the struggle purified and strengthened with a fierce determination and a fixed purpose. The employers’ attitude was a direct attack upon the essential principles of trades unionism. The outcome of the attack had been the initiating of a new principle of solidarity inside the unions, and for the first time in the history of the world of labour, the beautiful and more human principle had received universal recognition, viz, ‘an injury to one is the concern of all’.

That motto would be emblazoned on the banner of labour the world over in the future. We have established a great human principle. Once again the Dublin workers stood as pioneers in the upward and onward march of Labour. The men and women engaged in the struggle had shown magnificent courage, loyalty, and endurance. The history of their bitter sufferings and fortitude had rung like a clarion call throughout all the countries of the world”.









PUBLIC BATHS

AND

WASH HOUSES

APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE

Accounts

Irish Congress of Trade Unions No. 1 Income & Expenditure Account 2010 - 2012

| | 2012 € | 2011 (As restated*) € | 2010 (As restated*) € |
|---|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Income | | | |
| Affiliation Fees | 2,592,352 | 2,568,883 | 2,622,429 |
| Conference Income | 31,641 | 49,474 | 17,433 |
| Grant and Project Income | 5,000 | 530 | 43,040 |
| Other Income | 19,680 | (15,250) | 91,030 |
| Total Income | 2,648,673 | 2,603,637 | 2,773,932 |
| Expenditure | | | |
| Administrative Expenses | | | |
| Staff Costs | 1,201,303 | 1,245,282 | 1,266,320 |
| Ex-gratia Pensions | 94,361 | 101,174 | 112,685 |
| Motor and Travelling Expenses | 47,384 | 54,728 | 52,190 |
| Light and Heat | 8,784 | 10,230 | 11,910 |
| Telephone | 24,886 | 28,146 | 28,794 |
| Postage | 13,133 | 15,010 | 14,340 |
| Rent & Rates | 13,718 | 14,931 | 27,003 |
| Repairs and Renewals | 54,848 | 21,997 | 47,607 |
| Insurance | 5,056 | 5,379 | 11,262 |
| Legal and Professional Fees | 3,609 | 590 | 51,159 |
| Event Costs | 23,323 | 28,632 | 58,054 |
| Activity Costs | 258,465 | 102,081 | 259,371 |
| Audit Fees | 8,000 | 8,000 | 8,000 |
| Grants and Subscriptions | 2,275 | 2,418 | 2,851 |
| Books, Papers and Periodicals | 7,085 | 6,284 | 6,997 |
| Leasing of Office Equipment | 26,305 | 30,431 | 31,760 |
| Bank Charges and Interest | 18,167 | 24,456 | 26,588 |
| Cleaning | 24,601 | 29,556 | 24,076 |
| Sundry Expenses | 8,672 | 50,544 | (14,698) |
| Loss on disposal of fixed assets | - | - | 6,338 |
| Total Administrative Expenditure | 1,843,975 | 1,779,869 | 2,032,607 |

| | 2012 € | 2011 (As restated*) € | 2010 (As restated*) € |
|--|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Publication & Stationery | | | |
| Publications | 136 | 167 | 175 |
| Stationery | 14,923 | 16,675 | 17,495 |
| Total Publications & Stationery Expenditure | 15,059 | 16,842 | 17,670 |
| Meeting Expenses | | | |
| Biennial Delegates Conference | 23,323 | 90,619 | 933 |
| Committees & Conferences | 19,930 | 6,742 | 9,498 |
| Total Meeting Expenses | 43,253 | 97,361 | 10,431 |
| Other Expenditure | | | |
| International Affiliation Fees | 171,722 | 162,941 | 189,078 |
| Loss on Foreign Exchange | 6,078 | 24,443 | (17,897) |
| Depreciation | 76,149 | 69,833 | 58,721 |
| Amortisation | (33,255) | (33,255) | (33,255) |
| Total Other Expenditure | 220,694 | 223,962 | 196,647 |
| Income & Expenditure Account 2010 - 2012 | | | |
| Total Expenditure | 2,122,981 | 2,118,034 | 2,257,355 |
| Operating surplus for year | 525,692 | 485,603 | 516,577 |
| Deposit interest (net of DIRT tax) | 18,517 | 25,020 | 26,198 |
| Taxation | - | - | - |
| Surplus for year | 544,209 | 510,623 | 542,775 |

*Congress carried out a review of the accounting policies during 2012. As a result of this review it was considered that it would be more appropriate to depreciate the premises of Congress and to amortise the funding provided for the premises acquisition. This change in accounting policy has been accounted for in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 18 and comparative amounts have been restated in accordance with this policy.

Irish Congress of Trade Unions No. 2
Income & Expenditure Account 2010 - 2012

| | 2012 € | 2011 € | 2010 € |
|---|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Income | | | |
| Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment | 944,000 | 874,000 | 1,073,000 |
| Less Provision | - | - | (268,250) |
| Participants' Fees | 2,600 | (184) | (38,239) |
| Grant and Project Income | 618,404 | 563,519 | 729,043 |
| Other Income | 36,798 | 39,614 | 40,595 |
| | 1,601,802 | 1,476,949 | 1,536,149 |
| Expenditure | | | |
| Staff costs | 1,369,200 | 1,563,392 | 1,852,874 |
| Education Division - SIPTU | 137,339 | 127,166 | 156,147 |
| Education Division - UNITE | 23,843 | 22,077 | 27,109 |
| Motor, Travelling and Subsistence | 66,092 | 53,095 | 47,696 |
| Research and Consulting | 12,229 | 15,415 | 37,950 |
| Training courses and Seminars | 151,164 | 5,590 | 31,078 |
| People's College Grant | 20,000 | 15,000 | 25,000 |
| Activity costs | 73,456 | 110,871 | 258,602 |
| Printing and Publications | 13,895 | 1,806 | 10,141 |
| Legal and professional fees | 2,091 | 932 | 1,350 |
| Stationery | 323 | 310 | 62 |
| Insurance | 10,114 | 10,759 | 10,543 |
| Audit Fees | 8,000 | 8,000 | 8,000 |
| Light and Heat | 17,568 | 20,460 | 11,911 |
| Postage and Telephone | 17,799 | 18,965 | 20,663 |
| Rent, Rates and Service Charges | 27,435 | 29,860 | 27,004 |
| Repairs and Renewals | 91,419 | 28,085 | 29,608 |
| Bank Interest and Charges | 31 | 153 | 17 |
| Cleaning and Sundry Items | 17,856 | 11,986 | (12,754) |
| Depreciation | 954 | 2,384 | 3,855 |
| | 2,060,808 | 2,046,306 | 2,546,856 |
| Deficit for the year | (459,006) | (569,357) | (1,010,707) |

Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Balance Sheet 2010 - 2012

| | 2012 € | 2011 (As restated*) € | 2010 (As restated*) € |
|--|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Fixed Assets | 2,563,891 | 2,593,877 | 2,622,952 |
| Current Assets | | | |
| Bank and cash | 1,115,318 | 1,533,863 | 1,725,461 |
| Debtors and prepayments | 171,793 | 704,625 | 1,011,780 |
| Stock of stationery | 5,035 | 5,035 | 5,034 |
| | 1,292,146 | 2,243,523 | 2,742,275 |
| Less Current Liabilities | | | |
| Bank loans and overdrafts | (253,165) | (1,042,194) | (893,112) |
| Creditors and accrued expenses | (1,523,749) | (1,681,335) | (2,187,209) |
| | (1,776,914) | (2,723,529) | (3,080,321) |
| Net Current Liabilities | (484,768) | (480,006) | (338,046) |
| Creditors: Amounts due after more than one year | | | |
| Bank loans | (382,053) | (468,749) | (547,796) |
| | 1,697,070 | 1,645,122 | 1,737,110 |
| Represented by: | | | |
| Accumulated fund | (66,859) | (152,062) | (93,328) |
| Other reserves | 600,000 | 600,000 | 600,000 |
| | 533,141 | 447,938 | 506,672 |
| Deferred premises funding | 1,163,929 | 1,197,184 | 1,230,438 |
| | 1,697,070 | 1,645,122 | 1,737,110 |

*Congress carried out a review of the accounting policies during 2012. As a result of this review it was considered that it would be more appropriate to depreciate the premises of Congress and to amortise the funding provided for the premises acquisition. This change in accounting policy has been accounted for in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 18 and comparative amounts have been restated in accordance with this policy.

Congress Northern Ireland Committee Training & Advisory Services Account 2008-2010

| | 2012 £ | 2011 £ | 2010 £ |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Income | | | |
| Government Grant Funding | 110,595 | 148,727 | 180,000 |
| Contributions from TUC & Similar Bodies | 2,975 | 25,591 | 31,554 |
| Contributions from Congress | 1,048 | 17,913 | 361 |
| Other Income | - | 1,400 | 659 |
| | 114,618 | 193,631 | 212,574 |
| Expenditure | | | |
| Salaries & National Insurance Training Service | 54,050 | 65,005 | 68,505 |
| Salaries & National Insurance Advisory Service | 43,283 | 39,871 | 39,856 |
| Pension Fund Contributions Training Service | - | 34,138 | 34,818 |
| Shop Steward, Health, Safety & Equality Training | 4,365 | 26,566 | 33,207 |
| Accreditation Fees | - | 12,709 | 16,831 |
| Publications, Papers & Magazines | - | 1,420 | 1,490 |
| Rent & Rates | 9,161 | 6,088 | 8,281 |
| Insurance | - | 565 | 462 |
| Heat & Light | - | 690 | 1,272 |
| Cleaning | - | 592 | 875 |
| Stationery | - | 1,037 | 1,426 |
| Postage | - | 581 | 523 |
| Telephone | - | 235 | 943 |
| Travelling & Subsistence Expenses | 1,653 | 2,052 | 2,064 |
| Audit & Accountancy | 2,040 | 2,010 | 1,939 |
| Bank Charges & Interest | 66 | 72 | 82 |
| | 114,618 | 193,631 | 212,574 |
| Surplus (Deficit) for Year | - | - | - |

Congress Northern Ireland Committee Training & Advisory Services Account 2008-2010 Balance Sheet

| | 2012 £ | 2011 £ | 2010 £ |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Current Assets | | | |
| Debtors | 72,995 | 108,505 | 31,708 |
| Cash at Bank | 10,011 | - | 44,855 |
| | 83,006 | 108,505 | 76,563 |
| Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year | (83,006) | (108,505) | (76,563) |
| Net Assets | - | - | - |

BELFAST UNEMPLOYED RESOURCE CENTRE



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APPENDIX TWO

Executive Council General Purposes Committee Northern Ireland Committee

The Executive Council held 21 ordinary meetings and 2 Special meetings (23 in total) between July 2011 and May 2013.

The attendances at these meetings were as follows:

Executive Council:

| Name | Ordinary | Special | Total |
|--------------------------------------|----------|---------|-------|
| E McGlone (President) (UNITE) | 19 | 2 | 21 |
| J Douglas (Vice President) (MANDATE) | 21 | 2 | 23 |
| P King (Vice President) (SIPTU) | 18 | 2 | 20 |
| J O'Flynn (Treasurer) (SIPTU) | 18 | 2 | 20 |
| L Broderick (IBOA) | 15 | 1 | 16 |
| K Callinan (IMPACT) | 19 | 2 | 21 |
| B Campfield (NIPSA) | 21 | 1 | 22 |
| S Cody (IMPACT) | 19 | 2 | 21 |
| E Coy (GMB) | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| W Cullen (UNITE) | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| E Devoy (TEEU) | 17 | 2 | 19 |
| P Dooley (UNISON) | 17 | 1 | 18 |
| S Dooley (NUJ) | 19 | 2 | 21 |
| L Doran (INO) | 15 | 2 | 17 |
| S Fitzpatrick (CWU) | 18 | 2 | 20 |
| E Fleming (LRP) | 18 | 2 | 20 |
| T Geraghty (PSEU) | 20 | 1 | 21 |
| A Hall (TEEU) | 11 | 1 | 12 |
| A Hall-Callaghan (UTU) | 10 | 1 | 11 |
| L Huston (CWU UK) | 14 | 1 | 15 |
| M Jennings (IFUT) | 16 | 2 | 18 |
| J Kelly (UNITE) | 15 | 1 | 16 |
| P King (ASTI) | 16 | 2 | 18 |
| P MacMenamin (TUI) | 18 | 2 | 20 |
| P McKeown (UNISON) | 13 | 1 | 14 |
| J Moore (UCATT) | 19 | 0 | 19 |
| M Morgan (NIPSA) | 14 | 0 | 14 |
| P Ní Sheaghda (INMO) | 18 | 2 | 20 |
| S Nunan (INTO) | 20 | 2 | 22 |
| J O'Connor (SIPTU) | 18 | 2 | 20 |
| L O'Donnell (IMPACT) | 15 | 2 | 17 |
| E Ronayne (CPSU) | 19 | 2 | 21 |
| M Sherlock (SIPTU) | 11 | 2 | 21 |
| D Thomas (AHCPS) | 18 | 1 | 19 |
| N Ward (INTO) | 21 | 2 | 23 |

General Purposes Committee:

The General Purposes Committee held 19 Ordinary meetings between July 2011 and May 2013.

| Name | Ordinary |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| E McGlone (President) (UNITE) | 13 |
| J Douglas (Vice President) (MANDATE) | 8 |
| P King (Vice President) (SIPTU) | 14 |
| J O'Flynn (Treasurer) (SIPTU) | 11 |
| S Cody (IMPACT) | 16 |
| E Devoy (TEEU) | 14 |
| J Kelly (UNITE) | 4 |
| J O'Connor (SIPTU) | 16 |
| S Nunan (INTO) | 15 |

Northern Ireland Committee

The Northern Ireland Committee's Biennial Delegate Conference was held in the City Hotel, Derry on 17 and 18 April 2012 and the following were elected as members of the Committee for 2012-2014:

K Smyth (USDAW), P McKeown and P Dooley (UNISON), M O'Rourke (SIPTU), E McGlone, J Pollock and T Trainor (UNITE), M Morgan, and B Campfield (NIPSA), S Searson (NASUWT), G Murphy (INTO), A Hall-Callaghan (UTU), L Huston (CWU), G Hanna (IBOA), B Lawn (PCS), E Coy (GMB), P Collins (UCU), P Bunting (ICTU) C Murchan (Newry Trades Council).

At its inaugural meeting in April 2012, Pamela Dooley was elected Chair and Brian Campfield as Vice-Chair.

Obituaries

A number of close colleagues of the trade union movement died since BDC 2007, including:

Anne Gould, who died in July 2011. Anne was a former staff member who worked in the Office of the General Secretary.

Frank Bunting, who died in August, 2011. Frank was a former staff member who worked in the Northern Ireland Office.

Sheila Conroy, who died in May, 2012. Sheila was a former President of the People's College.



Sheila Conroy

Seamus de Paor, who died in August, 2012. Seamus was a former General Secretary of CWU.

Donal Nevin, who died December, 2012. Donal was a former General Secretary of Congress. Donal had a long and distinguished career with Congress culminating in the role of General Secretary. When he retired in the mid-1980s he produced a number of books on Connolly and Larkin marking him out as a fine academic. He was a public figure of some standing serving on many bodies connected with economic and social policy. A man of deep personal conviction but quite demeanour, he was a tireless champion of social justice and a great servant of the trade union movement.



Donal Nevin

Bob Gourley, who died in January, 2012. Bob was a former Regional Secretary of USDAW and member of the Executive Council of Congress.

Sean Redmond, who died in December, 2012. Sean was a former General Secretary of the Irish Municipal Employees Trade Union prior to its merger with IMPACT.

Jim Cosgrave, who died in August, 2012. Jim was a former President of the Cork Operatives Butchers Society and President of Cork Council of Trade Unions.

Inez McCormack, former President of Congress and Regional Secretary of Unison died on 21 January, 2013. Inez was deeply committed to social justice and human rights. Like Donal Nevin, she enjoyed a high public standing, even at international level. As Regional Secretary of Unison she was best known within the trade union movement for her advocacy on behalf of low paid workers who were mainly women. She served as President of Congress from 1999 to 2001.



Inez McCormack

Paddy Donnegan, Chair, Congress Retired Workers' Committee died on 28 February, 2013. Paddy was for many years a delegate to the ICTU and he also served on the Committee that considered the reorganisation of the Trade Union Movement. He served with the ITGWU and was a former Organising Secretary for Jim Larkin. He was awarded Honorary Doctorates by the Dublin Institute of Technology and the National Council for Education Awards. He was the first President of the Senior Citizens Parliament.

Jack Cagney, former General Secretary of INUVG & ATA, who died on 29 March, 2013.

Ben Kearney, former ATGWU/UNITE Republic of Ireland Secretary, who died on 21 April, 2013.

Felix McCrossan, GMB Official and late President of Strabane of Trades Council.

On behalf of the Executive Council, Congress wishes to extend its deepest sympathies to the families of those deceased.

APPENDIX THREE

Unions Affiliated to Congress

Unions affiliated to Congress 2013

(Membership figures in respect of 31 December 2012)

| | |
|--|--|
| 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 | | Number of Members | | General Secretary/Address |
|--|-----------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| ACCORD | R NI Total | 0 1420 1420 | GS RO | 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 Jim Fielding Simmons House, 46 Old Bath Road, Charvil, Reading, Berkshire RG109QR, United Kingdom Telephone: 00447786664119 Jim.Fielding@AccordHQ.org |
| | WR WNI | 0 855 | | |
| Association of Higher Civil and Public Servants | R NI Total | 3450 0 3450 | GS | Dave Thomas Flemings Hall, 12 Flemings Place, Dublin 4 Telephone: 01-6686077 / 6686064 Fax: 01 - 668 6380 dthomas@ahcps.ie info@ahcps.ie |
| | W R | 1057 | | |
| Association of Irish Traditional Musicians | R NI Total W | 165 1 166 62 | GS | Pádraig O Ceallaigh 32 Cearnóg Belgrave Square, Monkstown, Co. Dublin Telephone: 01-2800295 Fax: 01 -2803759 eolas@comhaltas.ie |

| Name of Union | | Number of Members | | General Secretary/Address |
|--|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|
| Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland | R NI Total | 16,815 0 16,815 | 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 | 11,703 | | |
| Association of Teachers and Lecturers | R NI Total | 0 2,446 2,446 | GS IR | Mary Bousted, 7 Northumberland St., London WC2N 5RD Telephone: 0044 2079306441 info@atl.org.uk Mark Langhammer: Unit C2 16 Westbank Drive Business Park Westbank Drive Belfast BT3 9LA Telephone: 0044 289078 2020 mlanghammer@atl.org.uk |
| | W NI | 1,736 | | |
| Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union | R NI Total | 0 500 500 | GS NI | Ronnie Draper Stanborough House, Great North Road, Stanborough, Welwyn Gardens City, Hertfordshire AL8 7TA Telephone: 0044 1707 260 150 Fax: 0044 1707 261 570 Ronnie.draper@bfawu.org Billie Gallagher, 1st & 2nd floor, 157 Bloomfield Avenue, Belfast BT5 5AB Telephone: 048 90454242 Fax: 048 90451554 Billie.gallagher@bfawu.org |
| | W R W NI | 0 220 | | |
| Broadcasting Entertainment Cinematography and Theatre Union | R NI Total | 37 458 495 | GS NO | Gerry Morrissey 373-377 Clapham Road, London SW9 9BT Telephone: 0044 2073460900 Fax: 0044 2073460901 gmorrissey@bectu.org.uk Dan Cooke 373-377 Clapham Road, London SW9 9BT Telephone: 0044 2073460900 dcooke@bectu.org.uk |
| | W R W NI | 8 159 | | |
| Building and Allied Trades Union | R NI Total W R W NI | 1,600 0 1,600 0 0 | GS | Brendan O'Sullivan Arus Hibernia, 13 Blessington Street Dublin 7 Telephone: 01- 8301911 / 8301280 b.osullivan@batu.ie union@batu.ie |

| Name of Union | | Number of Members | | General Secretary/Address |
|---|------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Civil and Public Service Union | R NI Total | 13,775 0 13,775 | GS | Eoin Ronayne CPSU, 19/20 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-6765394/661 Fax: 01 - 676 2918 eronayne@cpsu.ie headoffice@cpsu.ie |
| | W R | 9,896 | | |
| Chartered Society of Physiotherapy | R NI Total | 0 965 965 | SNO PO | Claire Ronald Arthur House, 41 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GB Telephone: 0044 2890 446 247 Fax: 0044 2890 447 110 ronaldc@csp.org.uk mcerleyanh@cpsu.org.uk Tom Sullivan (CSP Policy Officer for NI) Arthur House, 41 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GB Telephone: 0044 2890 446 249 sullivant@csp.org.uk |
| | WR WNI | 0 932 | | |
| Communications Workers' Union | R NI Total | 19,550 0 19,550 | GS | Stephen Fitzpatrick William Norton House, 575 North Circular Road, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-8663000 Fax: 01: 8663099 stevie@cwu.ie sarah@cwu.ie |
| | W R | 3,920 | | |
| Communication Workers Union (UK) | R NI Total | 0 4,794 4,794 | GS RS | Billy Hayes CWU, 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1RX Telephone: 0044 2089717200 bhayes@cwu.org Lawrence C Huston, c/o CWU UK, 27 Knockeen Crescent, Ballymena, Co. Antrim, BT42 4DQ Telephone: 0044 28 256 40679 l.huston@btinternet.com northernirelandregion@cwu.org |
| | W NI | 851 | | |
| EQUITY | R NI Total | 0 365 365 | GS NO | Christine Payne Guild House, Upper St. Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9EG Telephone: 0044 2073796000 Fax: 0044 207 379 7001 info@equity.org.uk Drew McFarlane 114 Union Street, Glasgow, G13QQ Telephone: 00441412482472 Fax: 0044 141 248 2473 dmcfarlane@equity.org.uk northernireland@equity.org.uk Scotland@equity.org.uk |
| | W R WNI | 0 185 | | |

| Name of Union | | Number of Members | | General Secretary/Address |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| Energy Services Union (of Ireland) | R NI Total W R | 1,306 0 1,306 812 | GS | Fran O' Neill 43 East James's Place, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-6767444 fran@esu.ie |
| Fire Brigades' Union | R NI Total WNI | 0 1,699 1,699 74 | GS RS | 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 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 WNI | 0 297 297 145 | GS SS | Dave Penman 8 Leake Street, London SE1 7NN Telephone 0044 845 470 1111 dave@fda.org.uk info@fda.org.uk Jim Caldwell 104a Titchfield Street Kilmarnock KA1 1PH Scotland Mobile: 00447967126778 jim@fda.org.uk |
| GMB | R NI Total WR WNI | 177 12,174 12,351 52 5,628 | GS IR | 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 Eamonn Coy Victoria House, 1a Victoria Road, Holywood BT18 9BA Telephone: 028 9039 3340 Fax: 028 9042 7360 eamonn.coy@gmb.org.uk |
| Guinness Staff Union | R NI Total W R | 1,012 0 1,012 545 | GS | Sean Mackell 107 James's Street, Dublin 8 Telephone: 01- 643 5484 Fax: 01 - 677 0019 sean.mackell@diageo.com |

| Name of Union | | Number of Members | | General Secretary/Address |
|---|------------------|---------------------------|----|---|
| Irish Bank Officials' Association | R NI Total | 15,512 5,253 20,765 | 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 | 11,353 3,763 | | |
| Irish Federation of University Teachers | R NI Total | 2,146 0 2,146 | GS | Mike Jennings 11 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01- 661 0910 Fax: 01 - 6610909 generalsecretary@ifut.ie admin@ifut.ie |
| | W R | 978 | | |
| Irish Medical Organisation | R NI Total | 4,235 0 4,235 | GS | Acting Secretary 10 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01- 676 7273 Fax: 01- 6612758 jhaugh@imo.ie imo@imo.ie |
| | W R W NI | 1,744 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 | 32,518 7,000 39,518 | GS | Sheila Nunan 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 Telephone: 872 2533 Fax: 01 8722462 snunan@into.ie |
| | W R W NI | 27,924 5,345 | | |
| Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation | R NI Total | 39,127 0 39,127 | 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 | 37,853 | | |
| 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 | 30,000 | | |
| Medical Laboratory Scientists Association | R NI Total | 1,617 0 1,617 | GS | Terry Casey 4th Floor, Liberty Hall, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01 - 8586472 Fax: 01- 8780085 tcasey@siptu.ie mlsa@siptu.ie |
| | W R | 1,277 | | |

| Name of Union | | Number of Members | | General Secretary/Address |
|--|------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers | R NI Total | 0 12,886 12,886 | GS IR | 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 Seamus Searson Ben Madigan House, Edgewater Office Park, Edgewater Road, Belfast BT 3 9JQ Telephone: 0044 289 0784480 rc-nireland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk |
| | W R W NI | 0 9,157 | | |
| National Union of Journalists | R NI Total | 3,083 850 3,933 | GS IS | Michelle Stanistreet 308 - 312 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP Telephone: 0044 207 843 3746 michelles@nuj.org.uk 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 |
| | W R W NI | 1,130 301 | | |
| National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) | R NI Total | 76 105 181 | GS RO | 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 Ian McIntyre 180 Hope Street, Glasgow Lanarkshire, G2 2UE, Scotland Telephone: 0044 141 332 1117 i.macintyre@rmt.org.uk |
| | W R W NI | 9 10 | | |
| Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance | R NI Total | 0 46,610 46,610 | GS | Brian Campfield Harkin House, 54 Wellington Park, Belfast BT9 6DP Telephone: 048 - 9066 1831 Fax: 048 - 9066 5847 Brian.campfield@nipisa.org.uk info@nipisa.org.uk |
| | W NI | 31,016 | | |
| Operative Plasterers and Allied Trades Society of Ireland | R NI Total | 762 0 762 | GS | Billy Wall 72 Shantalla Road, Beaumont, Dublin 9 Telephone: 01- 8625185/8625188 Fax: 01- 8625199 bwall@plasterersunion.com |
| | W R | 0 | | |

| Name of Union | | Number of Members | | General Secretary/Address | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|--|
| Prison Officers' Association | R NI Total | 3191 0 3191 | GS | John Clinton 18 Merrion Square Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-6625495/6768501 Fax: 01 - 6678563 shirleysullivan@poa.ie admin@poa.ie | |
| | W R | 671 | | | |
| Prison Officers' Association Northern Ireland | NI Total | 1,303 1,303 | GS AS | Steve Gillan Cronin House, 245 Church Street, Edmonton, London N9 9HW Telephone: 0044 20 8803 0255 gs@opauk.org.uk general@poauk.org.uk June Robinson Castelle House, 116 Ballywalter Road, Millisle, Co Down BT22 2HS Telephone: 048 91861928 adminni@poauk.org.uk | |
| | WNI | 350 | | | |
| Prospect | R NI Total | 23 1,698 1,721 | GS | Mike Clancy 8 Leake Street London SE1 7NN Telephone: 0044 20 7902 6600 Fax: 0044 2079 026667 Mike.clancy@prospect.org.uk amy.hong@prospect.org.uk | |
| | W R W NI | 6 485 | | | |
| Public Service Executive Union | R NI Total | 12,000 0 12,000 | GS | Tom Geraghty 30 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 Telephone: 01-676 7271 Fax: 01 - 6615777 tgeraghty@pseu.ie info@pseu.ie | |
| | W R | 6,500 | | | |
| Public and Commercial Services | R NI Total | 0 2,109 2,109 | GS IR | Mark Serwotka 160 Falcon Road, London SW11 2LN Telephone: 0044 2079242727 Fax: 0044 2079241847 mark@pcs.org.uk Lynn Henderson - Scottish Secretary 145 West Regent Street, Glasgow G2 2SG Telephone: 0141 225 5150 Fax: 0141 221 4065 LYNNH@pcs.org.uk | |
| | WR WNI | 0 1,238 | | | |
| Services Industrial Professional Technical Union | R NI Total | 199,881 7,000 206,881 | GS | Joe O'Flynn Liberty Hall, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01- 8586300 Fax: 01 - 8749466 gensec@siptu.ie | |
| | W R W NI | 77,580 3,000 | | | |
| Teachers' Union of Ireland | R NI Total | 15,800 0 15,800 | GS | John MacGabhann 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6 Telephone: 01 - 4922588 Fax: 01 - 4922953 jmacgabhann@tui.ie | |
| | W R | 6,320 | | | |

| Name of Union | | Number of Members | | General Secretary/Address |
|--|------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| Technical, Engineering and Electrical Union | R NI Total | 39,000 0 39,000 | GS | Eamon Devoy 6 Gardiner Row, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-8747047 Fax: 01-8747048 eamon_d@teeu.ie info@teeu.ie |
| | W R | 142 | | |
| Transport Salaried Staffs' Association | R NI Total | 849 372 1,221 | GS IR | Manuel Cortes TSSA Walken House, 10 Melton Street Euston, London NW1 2EJ Telephone: 0044 2073872101 Fax: 0044 141 332 9879 enquiries@tssa.org.uk Patrick McCusker, Senior Irish Organiser TSSA, Nerney's Court, Off Temple Street, Dublin 1 Telephone: 0876503658 mccuskerp@tssa.org.uk |
| | W R W NI | 380 150 | | |
| UNITE | R NI Total | 23,851 35,670 59,521 | GS RS | Len McCluskey 128 Theobald's Road Holborn London WC1X 8TN Telephone: 020 7611 2500 Fax: 020 7611 2555 Len.Mccluskey@unitetheunion.org Jimmy Kelly 26-34 Antrim Road, Belfast BT15 2AA Telephone: 048 90232381 Jimmy.kelly@unitetheunion.org Unite offices in Dublin : UNITE the Union 15 Merrion Square Dublin 2 Telephone: 01 661 1063 |
| | W R W NI | 8,763 8,035 | | |
| University & College Union | R NI Total | 0 3,746 3,746 | GS IR | Sally Hunt Carlow Street, London NW1 7LH Telephone: 0044 207 756 2500 Fax: 0044 207756 2501 shunt@ucu.org.uk Jim McKeown 94 Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5HP Telephone: 048 90665501 Fax: 048 90669225 jmckeown@ucu.org.uk Belfast@ucu.org.uk |
| | W NI | 1,987 | | |

| Name of Union | | Number of Members | | General Secretary/Address |
|---|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| Ulster Teachers' Union | R NI Total | 69 6,001 6,070 | GS | Avril Hall-Callaghan 94 Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5HP Telephone: 048 90662216 Fax: 048 289068 3296 office@utu.edu |
| | W R W NI | 55 5,140 | | |
| Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians | R NI Total | 8,750 1,300 10,050 | GS NS | Steve Murphy 177 Abbeville Road, Clapham London SW4 9RL Telephone: 0044 207 622 2442 Fax: 0044 207 720 4081 info@ucatt.org.uk Jim Moore 56 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1 Telephone: 01-873 1599 Fax: 01 - 873 1403 info@ucatt.ie |
| | W R W NI | 5 150 | | |
| Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers | R NI Total | 0 16,042 16,042 | GS IR | John Hannett 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ Telephone: 0044 161 224 2804/249 2400 Fax : 0044 161 257 2566 enquiries@usdaw.org.uk Kieran Smyth First Floor, Unit 2, 41 Stockmans Way Belfast BT9 7ET Telephone: 048 90663773 Fax: 048 9066 2133 belfast@usdaw.org.uk |
| | W NI | 9,014 | | |
| UNISON | R NI Total W R W NI | 524 38,676 39,200 465 31,685 | GS IR | Dave Prentis Unison Centre 130 Euston Road London NW1 2AY Telephone: 0044 207 1215301 Fax: 0044 207 1215184 d.prentis@unison.co.uk Patricia McKeown Galway House 165 York Street Belfast BT15 1AL Telephone: 048 90270190 Fax: 048 903 27929 p.mckeown@unison.co.uk |
| | | | | |
| Veterinary Ireland | R NI Total W R | 1,315 0 1,315 342 | CEO | Finbarr Murphy 13 The Court Yard, Kilcarbery Park, Nangor Road, Dublin 22 Telephone: 01-4577976 Fax: 01- 457 7998 hq@vetireland.ie |

| Name of Union | | Number of Members | | General Secretary/Address |
|---|-------|-------------------|------------------|---|
| Veterinary Officers' Association | R | 268 | President | Diarmuid Lynch Fleming's Hall 12 Fleming's Place Dublin 4 Telephone: 01-668 6077/ 668 6064 Mobile: 0868317817 Email: Diarmuid.Lynch@agriculture.gov.ie |
| | NI | 0 | | |
| | Total | 268 | | |
| | W | 66 | | |

Unions with Associate Status affiliated to Congress 2013

(Membership figures in respect of 31 December 2012)

| Name of Union | | Number of Members | | Contact/Address |
|---|-------|-------------------|-----|---|
| Community | R | 0 | HO | Michael J Leahy, OBE General Secretary Community 67-68 Long Acre London WC2E 9FA Telephone: 0044 2074204000 Email: mleahy@community-tu.org |
| | NI | 150 | | |
| | Total | 150 | | |
| | W R | 0 | | |
| | WNI | 75 | | |
| National Association of Head Teachers N1 (NAHT) | R | 0 | HO | Fern Turner Director of Union Services & Regional Officer NAHT Carnmoney House Edgewater office Park Belfast BT3 9JQ Telephone: 0044 2890776633 Email: fren.turner@naht.org.uk |
| | NI | 692 | | |
| | Total | 692 | | |
| | WR | 0 | | |
| | WNI | 396 | | |
| The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists | R | 126 | CEO | Ms Joanna Brown Chief Executive 1 Fellmongers Path Tower Bridge Road London SE1 3LY Telephone: 0044 8454503720 Email: enq@scpod.org |
| | NI | 411 | | |
| | Total | 537 | | |
| | WR | 0 | | |
| | WNI | 0 | | |

Local Councils Of Trade Unions Affiliated To Congress 2013

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: mattfarrell@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
Email: kconnelly@siptu.ie

Castlebar and District Trades Council

Cathy Blake
Secretary
13 Cherrington Place
Castlebar
Co. Mayo
Mobile: 0879315289
Email: ctucastlebar@gmail.com

Causeway Trade Union Council

Rodger Doherty
Secretary
45 Laurel Mount Road
Coleraine

Co Londonderry
Northern Ireland BT51 3BA
Mobile: 00447772191936
Email: rodger.doherty@orange.net

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 61 77 010 / 052 61 21900
No email

Cork Council of Trade Unions

Sharon Cregan
Hon Secretary/ organiser
c/o SIPTU
Connolly Hall
Lapps Quay
Cork
Telephone: 021 4277466
Mobile: 087 0511219
Email: scregan@siptu.ie

Craigavon Trades Council

Susan McDonald
Secretary
12 Derry Park Lane
Lough Road
Lurgan BT66 6TA
Mobile: 07789250353
Email: mel@trademarkbelfast.com

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
Mobile: 0872856554
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 Stewart
Secretary
114 Windmill Heights
Enniskillen
Co. Fermanagh
Telephone: 0044 28 - 66323938
Email: k.stewart01@btinternet.com

Galway Council of Trade Unions

Helen Cousins
Secretary
268 Tirellan
Headford Road
Galway
Mobile: 085 1624938
Emails: helene.cousins@hotmail.com

Kildare Council of Trade Unions

Miriam Hamilton
Secretary
c/o SIPTU
Liberty Hall
Dublin 1
Mobile: 087 6290336
Email: mhamilton@siptu.ie

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

Lisburn Trades Council

Mr Paul Wolfe
Secretary
34 Trench Road
Hillsborough
BT26 6JL
Northern Ireland
Mobile: 0044 7810691836
Email: lisburntradescouncil@gmail.com

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 BT358SB
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
Secretary
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: 0879564328/0872441270
Email: hughmacconville@gmail.com

Strabane Trades Council

Brian Forbes
Secretary
15 Ballycolman Avenue
Strabane
BT82 9AF
Mobile: 07715887153

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

Kathleen Moore Walsh
Secretary
Rathinure
Glenmore
Co. Kilkenny
Telephone: 051-302272/ 051-880298
Email: KMOORE-WALSH@wit.ie

Wexford Council of Trade Unions

Michael Wall
Secretary
SIPTU Town Parks
Coolcotts Wexford
Telephone: 053 9146774
Email wexcountu@gmail.com

Congress Centres Network 2013

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,
e-mails: coordinator.mayo@congresscentres.net
cfuballina@eircom.net

Belfast Resource Centre, 45-47 Donegal 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, Tucker Street,
Castlebar, Co. Mayo
Co-ordinators Lucy Cunningham and Deirdre
Carroll, phone: 094 902 7684,
fax: 094 902 7684
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

Dr. Steven's Resource Centre, 1st Floor, Block A,
Irishtown Central, Athlone, Co Westmeath.
Co-ordinator: Bernie Mannion, phone: 090 647
3001, fax: 090 647 8291
e-mail: drstevensresourcecentre@eircom.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: bernadettedowd@yahoo.ie

Dublin 12 Congress Centre, 104 Sundrive Road,
Kimage, 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 Marie McCann 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: Margaret.cullinane@gprc.ie

Noreside Resource Centre, 22 Vicar Street, Kilkenny
Co-ordinator Yvonne Moriarty, phone: 056 776 2146, fax: 056 776 1580
e-mail: noresideresourcecentre@gmail.com

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 Theresa Whelan phone: 01 624 2511, fax: 01 624 6492,
Pamela Fleming (Assist Manager)
e-mail: coordinator.leixlip@congresscentres.net

Congress Resource Centre Letterkenny, Celtic Apartments, 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 Road, 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, Friars 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: 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

Affiliations to Congress

Currently there are 48 unions affiliated to Congress and 2 Associate Members.

Disaffiliations

The Society of Radiographers disaffiliated from Congress in 2013.

Amalgamations

ASPECT (Associate Member) merged with PROSPECT trade union in June 2012.

APPENDIX FOUR

Congress Secretariat

Staff at Congress (as of May 2013)

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 BT12FN
(Telephone: 048 90247940)

Congress Head Office

General Secretary - David Begg
Assistant General Secretary - Sally Anne Kinahan
Assistant General Secretary - Peter Bunting
(Northern Ireland Office)
Programme Manager General Secretary's Office -
Eileen Sweeney
Industrial Officer - Public Sector - Liam Berney
Industrial/ Social Affairs Officer - Peter Rigney
Industrial Officer - Private Sector - Fergus Whelan
Legislative/Legal Affairs Officer - Esther Lynch
Communications Officer - Macdara Doyle
Programme Manager AGS Office, HR &
Communications - Deirdre Mannion
Equality Officer/ Development Education -
David Joyce
Project Manager - Union Connect/Youth Connect/
Global Solidarity - Fiona Dunne
Director of Union Learning - Frank Vaughan
Programme Manager DACT/Coordinator Congress
Centres Network - Sylvia Ryan
Finance Officer - Pat Quinn
Construction Safety Partnership Project Coordinator
- Pat O'Neill (to June 2013)

Administrative Staff

Fiona Elward (CCN/DACT)
Natalie Fox
Louisa Gavin
Catherine McLoughlin
Pauline Corr (Temporary)
Athena Kelly (DACT Project Administrator
- Temporary)

Northern Ireland Office

Equality & Social Affairs Officer - Clare Moore
Communications Officer - John O'Farrell
Education & Training Officer - Kevin Doherty
Migrant Worker Field Officer - Kasia Garbal
Programme Officer - Gillian Belch
Administration - Eileen Gorman

Nevin Economic Research Institute (NERI)

Director - Tom Healy
Senior Research Officer- Micheál Collins
Researcher - Rory O'Farrell
Researcher (Belfast Office) - Paul MacFlynn

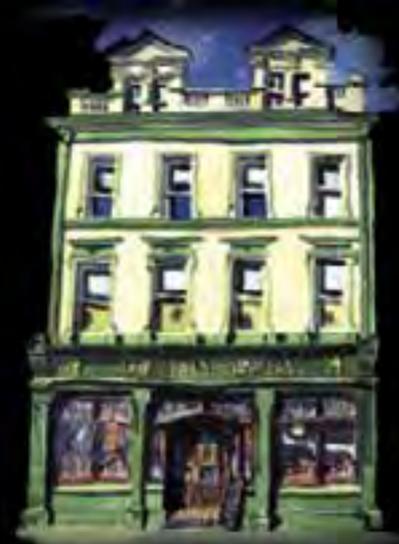
Congress Secretariat Changes

A number of staff changes took place during the
period 2011-2013 as follows:

| Left Congress | Date |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Jane Clare | July 2011 |
| Jacqueline McGonagle | August 2011 |
| Laura Neill | August 2011 |
| Pauline Buchanan | January 2013 |
| Paul Sweeney (Retired) | March 2013 |
| Pat O'Neill (CSP Project) | June 2013 |

On behalf of the Executive Council, Congress
wishes to extend best wishes to those who have left
or joined Congress since BDC 2011.

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CAMRA N.I. (Real Ale) Pub of the Year

Fairtrade Pub of the Year

Most Innovative Pub of the Year

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Tel: 02890 233768.

www.thejohnhewitt.com

Email: info@thejohnhewitt.com

APPENDIX FIVE

Membership of Congress Committees and External Bodies

Appeals Board

A Dolan (TUI), A Hall (Sub) (TEEU) D Keatings (UNISON), B Lawn (Sub) G Light (MANDATE), C Martin (UNITE), L Polin (Sub) (FDA), P Ward (SIPTU),

Communications Strategy Group

Bernard Harbor (IMPACT); Brian Forbes (MANDATE) David Gibney (MANDATE); Fionnuala Ní Bhrogán, (CWU); Frank Connolly (SIPTU); Gemma Tuffy (ASTI); Niall Shanahan (IMPACT); Peter Mullan, (INTO); Roisin Farrelly (TUI); Seamus Dooley (NUJ); Rob Hartnett, (UNITE); Pat Montague (for MANDATE); Sally Anne Kinahan (Congress Secretariat); Macdara Doyle, (Congress Secretariat); Deirdre Mannion (Congress Secretariat).

Community Sector Committee

K Callinan (IMPACT, A Connolly (IMPACT), D Connolly (SIPTU), S Curran (IMPACT), C Darley (UNITE), D Doolan (UNITE), T Erbsloh (UNITE), Sue Griffin, (SIPTU), E Harvey, (SIPTU), C Keane (UNITE), C Martin (UNITE), J McCarthy (IMPACT), H McNeill (SIPTU), P Moran (SIPTU), E Mullins (SIPTU), Ger O'Brien (IMPACT), D O'Connor (SIPTU), P O'Connor (IMPACT), P O'Connor (SIPTU), D O'Leary (SIPTU), E Penrose (IMPACT), P Quinn (IMPACT), T Quinn (SIPTU), E Ryan (IMPACT), S Ryan (Congress), L Scully (SIPTU)

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, M Dummigan and E Captain (NIPSA), A Madden, (INTO), B Rushton, N Boyle (UCU), B McCrea and A Smyth (UNITE), M Trimble and P McCormick (UNISON), S McKee, S McCord and M Holmes (UTU), J Coghlan (NUJ), F Brown

(NASUWT), F Warwick and M Cotton (IBOA), S Foster and H McGowan (Belfast & District Trades Council), G Matthews and S Larkin (PCS).

Disability Committee (Republic of Ireland)

A Hanratty (ESBOA), I Breen (IBOA), B McCrea (UNITE), C Scheffer (CWU), D O'Connor (INTO), S Dooley (NUJ), D Gallagher (UNITE), E McElligott (TUI), F Jones (SIPTU), G Monaghan (IMPACT), I Firth (UNITE), J McCrohan (IMPACT), J McDonald (UCATT), J Roe (CPSU), J Thomas (Wexford CTU), J Kelleher (AHCPS), K Gaughran (CPSU), M Masterson (INTO), M Mulcahy (ASTI), M Barry (SIPTU), M Naughton (DFI), M Branigan (UNITE), M Gogarty (SIPTU), M Lavin, M Gaynor, P Fallon (IMPACT), P Kenny (CWU), P Loftus (Wexford CTU), B Hannigan (PSEU), R Donaghey (SIPTU), S O'Murchu (ASTI), S Curran (IMPACT), N Watt (INMO), C McNamara (CPSU), J O'Sullivan (UNITE).

Education & Training Committee (RoI)

Aidan Kenny (TUI) Aileen Morrissey (Mandate) Bernie Judge (TUI) Carol Scheffer (CWU) Denis Farrell (BATU) Desmond O'Toole (ASTI) Elizabeth Adams (INMO) Ide Ní Fhaoláin (TUI) Jim Moore (UCATT) Kevin Callinan (Impact) Mags O'Brien (SIPTU) Marian Geoghegan (IBOA) Mark Wilkinson (TSSA) Mary Lally (INTO) Mike Jennings (IFUT) Moira Leydon (ASTI) Phyllis Behan (PSEU) Richie Browne (Unite) Ron Kelly (IDEAS) Seamus Buggle (SIPTU) Seamus Dooley (NUJ) Sean Heading (ETOS) Sylvester Cronin (SIPTU).

Education Trade Union Group

K McAdam (UNITE), P McMurray (GMB), A Donaghy (ATL), P Mackel (NIPSA), H McKinstry (NIPSA), A Carr (UCU), A Speed (UNISON), K Smyth (USDAW), J McKeown (UCU), A Hall-Callaghan (UTU), D Nugent (UTU), F Turner (NAHT), G Kelly (UNITE), G Murphy (INTO), J Devlin (NASUWT), K Simms (NASUWT), S Searson (NASUWT), S Maguire (ASPECT), J Pollock (ATL).

Equality & Human Rights Committee

A Miller (NIPSA), A Campbell (UNISON), A Hall-Callaghan (UTU), B Lawn (PCS), B McCreagh (UNITE), B Callaghan (SIPTU), B Campfield (NIPSA), D Joyce (ICTU), E Coy (GMB), E McGlone (UNITE), F Carolan (UNISON), G Alexander (NIPSA), G Hanna (IBOA), J Pollock (UNITE), J Corey (NIPSA), K Simms (NASUWT), K Smyth (USDAW), L Huston (CWU), L Gallagher (NWRC), M Galloway (PCS), M Morgan (NIPSA), M Langhammer (ATL), M Kiddle (UCATT), M Graves (UTU), P Mackel (NIPSA), P Dooley (UNISON), P McKeown (UNISON), P Bunting (ICTU), S Searson (NASUWT), T Trainor (UNITE), T Devenney (ATL), V Holding.

Global Solidarity Committee

A Morrissey (MANDATE), G Alexander (NIPSA), B Archbold (UNITE), M Barry (SIPTU), D Bonass (DCTU), T Boucher (TEEU), J Bowen (Cork CTU), J Coghlan (Disability Action), M Cortes (TSSA), S Curran (IMPACT), J Devlin (NASUWT), A Dolan (TUI), M Dowling, L Dunne (AHCPS), T Erbsloh, P Foley (Wexford CTU), D Gibney (MANDATE), B Forbes (MANDATE), W Hamilton (Kildare CTU), K Gaughran (CPSU), B Harbor (IMPACT), P Hardiman (Galway CTU), P Healy (TUI), M Hegarty (TUI), P Hennessy (ESBOA), A Kane (Kildare CTU), E Kelly (INMO), G Kennedy (TSSA), M Killeavy (IFUT), C Kinsella (UNITE), H Laird (UCC), M Leydon (ASTI), L Robinson (UNISON), P McCreagh (PSEU), J McCrohan (IMPACT), P McCusker (TSSA), N McGuirk (Dept of Taoiseach), M McKee (UNISON), C McNamara (CPSU), C Melinn (CWU), R Moore (UNITE), D Moran (MANDATE), J Murphy (UNITE), D Murray (UNISON), J O'Brien (INTO), M O'Brien (SIPTU), P O'Connor (Dublin PACT), T O'Connor (TUI), F O'Neill (ESBOA), P Burns (UNITE), A Piggot (ASTI), E Quinn (PSEU), C Ronald (CSP), S Searson (NASUWT), A Smith (BATU), A Stewart (UTU), P Wall (IFUT) N Watts (INMO).

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)

B Barrett (IBOA), F Barry (UNITE), E Brady (MANDATE), B Carty (IMPACT), S Cronin (SIPTU College), E Devoy (TEEU); M Dowling (SIPTU), D Farrell (BATU), J Geoghegan (INMO), R Jordan (INTO), J Kane (MLSA), P Kenny (CWU), M Malone (BATU), G Maybury (PSEU), C Mullin (INMO), D

O'Connor (INTO), D O'Toole (ASTI), A Owens (IMO), M Quinn (SIPTU), D Robinson (IMPACT), G Talty (INMO), A Tully (IFUT), K Varley (IBOA).

Health Services Committee (Northern Ireland)

A Speed (UNISON), M McKenna (UNISON), D Keatings (UNISON), J McCusker (UNISON), P McKeown (UNISON), A Millar (NIPSA), K McCabe (NIPSA), E McGlone (UNITE), K McAdam (UNITE), K McKinney (SIPTU), M Scullion (GMB), D Irvine (GMB), T Sullivan (CSP), C Ronald (CSP), C Pullar (MIP), B Armstrong (MIP).

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), S Cumper, D Stewart.

North South Committee

D Begg (GS Congress), P Bunting (AGS NICTU), E McGlone (UNITE), P Dooley (UNISON), P McKeown (UNISON), Jack O'Connor (SIPTU), J Douglas (MANDATE), A Hall-Callaghan (UTU), S Cody (IMPACT), L Broderick (IBOA), L Huston (CWU), B Campfield (NIPSA), G Murphy (INTO), E Devoy (TEEU), J Kelly (UNITE), J Moore (UCATT).

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), O Reidy (SIPTU), C Rowland (SIPTU), M Staunton (IMPACT).

Public Services Committee

T Casey (MLSA), J Clinton (POA), S Cody (IMPACT), W Cullen (UNITE), L Doran (INMO), T Geraghty (PSEU), M Jennings (IFUT), P Kavanagh (TEEU), P King (ASTI), D Lynch (VOA), J MacGabhann (TUI), G Macken (BATU), G Mealy (SIPTU), J Moore (UCATT), S Nunan (INTO), E Ronayne (CPSU), D Thomas (AHCPS), S Tweed (IMO), B Wall (OPATSI).

Retired Workers Committee (Northern Ireland)

M Galloway (PCS), R Gray (NASUWT), E Harvey, H Rafferty, G Cassidy and J Matthews (UNITE), J Hanna (GMB), J Hughes (FBU), S Dodds and M McColgan (NIPSA), R Atkinson (UTU), M Holmes (GMB), F Hughes (PCS), J Martin (CWU), J Ley (NUJ), S Caul (CSPA), M Ferris and P Houlahan (UNISON).

Retired Workers Committee (Republic of Ireland)

JJ Higgins (CWU), J Roche (UNITE the Union), J McCarthy (TUI), D Sheridan (IBOA), B Keelty (IBOA), D Desmond (INTO), E MacCurtain Pearce (NUJ), C McNamara (CPSU)
C Percival (NUJ), A Gilligan (SIPTU), P Moran (SIPTU), C Kerrigan (UNITE), D Griffin (UNITE), B Burke (IMPACT), B Clarke (IMPACT), M Duffy (IMPACT), J Nealon (IMPACT), G Walsh (IMPACT), C O'Clearigh (IFUT), B Ó'Cochláin (IFUT), Maureen Killeavy (IFUT), Maresa Gilligan (INMO), H Kirkpatrick (INMO), H Buckley (INMO), L O'Flaherty (ASTI), M Doyle (ASTI), T Dowling (TEEU), C Ryan (AHCPS), B Fitzpatrick (AHCPS), M O'Halloran (SIPTU), J Swords (OPATSI), C Conville (TUI), R Hattan (TUI), C Hammond (CPSU).

Strategic Implementation Committee

A Hanratty (ESBOA), A Dolan (TUI), M Mulcahy (ASTI), C Scheffer (CWU), C Bond (BECTU), C Rohan (AHCPS), C Treacy (INMO), D O'Connor (INTO), E Healy (INMO), E Buckley (SIPTU), G Alexander (NIPSA), J Reid (UTU), J Quinn (FBU), J Boushell (SIPTU), J Caldwell (FDA), K McCorry (UNITE), L Huston (CWU UK), C Mahon (INMO), K McCorry (UNITE), M Geoghegan (IBOA), M Malone (BATU), D O'Brien (INMO), P Dooley (UNISON), P Keating (IMPACT), B Hannigan (PSEU), R Donaghey (SIPTU), R Higgins (SIPTU), S McKee (UTU), S Searson (NASUWT), T Trainor (UNITE), T Dwyer (CPSU), E Ronayne (CPSU).

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), S Rock (UNISON), G Alexander (NIPSA), A Rea (NIPSA), A Mills (ATL), T Graham (NASUWT), N Connor (Belfast & District Trades Council), T Devenney (ATL), T Trainor (UNITE), G Partridge (UNITE), M McKee (UNISON), K Simms (NASUWT), J Reid (UTU), K Taylor (UTU), G McGowan (INTO), J Williams-Nash (NUJ), A Stewart (UTU), F Doherty (SIPTU), M Morton (UCU), L McPolin (UCU), K Thompson (GMB), M Gregg (GMB), D Bruno (GMB), P Breen (CWU), G Kelly (UNITE), P Collins (UCU), K Burch (PCS), G Matthews (PCS).

Women's Committee (Republic of Ireland)

Aileen Atcheson (Clonmel CTU), M Barrett (INMO), M Branigan (UNITE), M Brennan (PSEU), M Browne (IBOA), J Byrne (CPSU), A Carroll (ESBOA), M Coughlan (IMPACT), S Dickson (INMO), A Dolan (TUI), R Donaghey (Bray CTU), T Dwyer (CPSU), E Ni Chloscaidh (INTO), J Gaffney (MANDATE), M Geoghegan (IBOA), P Geraghty (DCTU), AL Gilligan (IFUT), S Griffffin (SIPTU), A Hanratty (ESBOA), C Heneghan (Galway CTU), M Kane (MANDATE), R Malone (IFUT), R McEleney (PSEU), M Mulcahy (ASTI), H Murphy (SIPTU), C O'Brien (UNITE), D O'Connor (INTO), M Ohle (ASTI), T Robertson (IMPACT), A Ryan (GSU), C Scheffer (CWU), B Tyrrell (Dublin CTU), K Wall (MANDATE).

Youth Committee (Northern Ireland)

M Hamilton (NIPSA), R Wilson (NIPSA), S Harvey (Lisburn TC), K Fleck (B&DTUC), C Murphy (UCATT), D Liathian (NUJ), R Creaney (Craigavon TC), K McCann (IBOA), M Johnston (IBOA), L Nelson (SIPTU), P Mackel (CWU), D Nugent (UTU), J Orr (UTU), P Lynn (Unison), J Fitzgerald (NASUWT), J McAteer (UNITE).

Bodies on which Congress is Represented

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Industrial Relations

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
Harbour Boards
Hidden Economy Working Group
Local Government Strategic Policy Committees
Monitoring Committees for Community Employment Programme
National Competitiveness Council
National Economic & Social Council
National Statistics Board
Pobal

Education & Training

Expert Group on Future Skills

Governing Authority of National University of Ireland
Governing Bodies of Institutes of Technology
Governing Bodies of Universities
Irish University Quality Board
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
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

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
Strategy for people with Disabilities
National Childcare Coordinating Committee
Equality Tribunal Users Forum
Fairtrade Mark Ireland
Universal Periodic Review Stakeholders Group

Other Bodies

Company Law Review Group
Construction Workers Benevolent Fund & Construction Workers Health Trust
Dublin City Council Fire Brigade
Development Board
For Diversity Against Discrimination
Forest Certification Stakeholder Consultation Group
Irish Auditing & Accounting Supervisory Authority
Law Society's Complaints and Client Relations Committee
National Roads Authority
Personal Injuries Assessment Board

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
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
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

(A) = Adopted, (R) = Remitted

1. Communication with Trades Councils (Castlebar & District Trades Council) (A):

The Congress secretariat maintains on-going contact with Trades Councils who are encouraged to map the potential to grow local affiliations. Most Trades Councils are reasonably successful in this. However, on request Congress Head Office makes specific interventions. The affiliation fee is amenable to such intervention. However, identifying activists to become involved is best done locally.

2. Role of Retired Members in Trade Unions (Fermanagh Trades Council) (A):

A number of unions have or are in the process of reviewing and restructuring their retired workers' organisation, structures and services since BDC2011. However, the organisation of retired workers needs to be addressed in a more concerted way across the movement both at the level of individual unions and at Congress, to facilitate and develop more impactful coordination around policy development, advocacy and ultimately better promotion of the interests of older people. The Retired Workers Committee has developed a comprehensive outline of the action required to fulfil this ambition. A motion is being submitted to BDC2013 by the Executive Council detailing the next steps.

3. Publication of Weekly Commercial Newspaper (ASTI) (R):

The Executive Council requested the Communications' Group to consider and report back on the potential of proposition to establish and publish a weekly newspaper. Members of the Communications Group undertook research on media production, consumption trends, the potential and viability of a range of media covering existing union publications, radio and television broadcast, various digital methods including broadcasting, a newspaper –print and online options, as well as the establishment of a central union news service. This work coincided with the task set by the Commission of the Union and was included in the report back to the Executive Council. A fuller report on this work is detailed in Section 8 on the work of Congress.

4. Payment for Trades Council Members Acting in Voluntary Capacity (Galway Co of Trade Unions); Amendment (Dundalk Trades Council) (R):

In 2011 training was made available to all Boards of Management individually in their location and during the Autumn School held in October 2012. Resources are available on PowerPoint and have been forwarded to all centres for their board of Management which clearly outlines responsibilities and liabilities. We will print these governance resources in January 2013 and disseminate.

While ICTU is not in a position financially to indemnify boards of management of CCN the following actions have been taken to improve the cash flow of centres:

- » Funds of €200,000 euro have been made available to centres willing to deliver training during 2012.
- » ICTU continually lobbies DSP to pay towards the rents and overheads of CCN and a meeting is being held on January 18th 2013 to pursue this. The overdraft facilities are a necessary evil due to DSP delaying payments and this will also be addressed.
- » ICTU has been accepted as a training provider for CE Schemes nationally and within CCN which will allow ICTU to generate additional funds to support CCN.

5. The Economy (Executive Council) (A) :

Congress has forcefully pursued its alternative "Better Fairer Way" economic strategy in every forum it can, by publications especially its Pre Budget submission compiled by its Tax Strategy Committee, in its seminars, attending meetings organised by others to give our view, by organising demonstrations, in the ETUC, the ITUC, in discussions with the Troika, OECD, EU Commission etc. Congress has been unremitting in its criticism of the causes of the crisis, which was ultra-free market economics of de-regulation and crony Irish capitalism. It was a private sector generated public sector crisis and the key governance

issue – the dominance of shareholder value in the private sector remains unreformed in spite of our strong representations.

6. Growth, Jobs & Hope (SIPTU) (A):

Congress produced a very detailed Jobs Plan in July 2012, setting out in detail where jobs should be created and how our €3bn a year, three year plan could be financed. While we welcomed the government jobs initiative, it was too far too unambitious. It was mainly more subsidies to private business and neglected the core problem, the lack of demand, which had collapsed by 27% from peak by end 2012. We have crossed Europe meeting with trade unionists in our campaign against austerity. We pointed out that our projections, the most realistic of all bodies, of no sufficient growth to lift unemployment were borne out by early 2013. Congress undertook many actions against austerity.

7. Economic & Fiscal Policy (NIPSA) (A):

Congress has led the campaign against austerity, against privatisation of public services against bailing out the bankers and in favour of job creation in Northern Ireland and in the Republic. It has worked closely with the ETUC, the ITUC and many others in promoting our detailed vision of the alternative, which is on the website in many documents, form (from) our detailed and comprehensive Pre-Budget Submission to many other papers, articles and press releases against austerity. Congress in both jurisdictions has organised a number of public demonstrations which attracted thousands of workers and community activists in protest against austerity and welfare cuts.

8. Campaign Against Austerity Measures (Belfast District Trades Council) (A):

Congress has worked with progressives like TASC, FEPS, Rosa Luxemborg, Social Europe, ETUC in Europe and in Ireland in our campaigns against austerity, liberal economics, de-regulation and privatisation. We have published many detailed alternative strategy which has had some resonance with our members and citizens North and South. Courses given by our constituent unions' have always set out our alternative vision for our citizens and members. Congress has distributed widely publications e.g. 'Cuts myths Debunked' and utilised NERI in promoting alternative economic policies across all media platforms.

9. Economic Policy (UNITE) (A):

Congress set out its programme for a substantial investment plan to create employment, promote growth and raise economic productivity. We resisting (resisted) pay cuts in both the private and public sector with gains in parts of the private sector, especially the exports sector. Congress campaigned strongly for an end to fiscal austerity and was strong in our opposition to any further cuts in the overall level of current public expenditure.

Our Budget submissions sought and were partly successful in achieving new and increased tax measures on the income and wealth holdings of the highest income earners, with increased taxes on capital gains savings and inheritances. However, we have had no success in including the corporate sector to contribute to getting us out of the crisis and to get top earners taxed. Congress has built links with many community organisations and worked in collaboration with these groups in opposition to the neo-liberal agenda.

10. Crisis and the Economy (NURMT) (A):

Conference has argued long and hard that the terms of the 'bailout' package negotiated with the IMF/EU and ECB were not in the interests of the people of Ireland, and that it would curb growth and leave a nasty legacy for generations. We have campaigned against privatisation and austerity see motions 8-10 above in every quarter.

11. Government Policies (Dundalk Trades Council) (A):

Congress proposed a new investment strategy to promote job creation, economic growth and fiscal stabilisation as advocated, in our July 2012 Plan and set out the details including financing. As articulated in our many policy papers we have sought to resist the growth of the financial sector which came to dominate at great cost and to protect public services, including the retention of one bank in public ownership.

12. Vote on Bank Bailout (Waterford Co of Trade Unions) (R):

Congress campaigned against the bank bailout culminating in the Demonstrations of 9th February 2013.

13. Corporation Tax Rate (AHCPs) (R):

This motion was remitted to the Executive Council. The EC continues to monitor the European crisis as it is in the context of a fiscal union that the issue of corporation tax rates are most likely to crystallise.

14. Site Valuation & Resource Tax (TEEU) (A):

Congress sought both a site valuation tax and a market based property tax in differing Budget submissions, but as the government itself decided on the latter, we took the pragmatic position and argued that it should be as fair and equitable as possible when introduced.

15. Creative Industries (Equity) (A):

While unrelenting in its opposition to the myriad of tax subsidies to the private sector, especially to the property sector during the boom, Congress successfully sought the retention of tax subsidies for investors in the Film industry.

16. Unions – A Voice for Social Change and Fairness (MANDATE) (A):

Congress has long campaigned for a better health service and especially for a (one) single tier system, with equal access for all. In the current cutback environment our work was to protect the integrity of the system (for) which we have had a fair measure of success, considering the circumstances.

17. Collective Bargaining (IMPACT) (A):

Congress welcomed the invitation (December 2012) from the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation to set out our observations and recommendations on how effect can be given to the Government's commitment to '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'.

Congress cautioned against a lengthy review and urged the Minister to bring forward legislation for a fair and balanced framework to protect and promote trade union rights, in particular the right to organise and collective bargaining during the first half of 2013. The proposals were built on the principle that when workers want a union to represent them for collective bargaining purposes there should be a duty on the employer to recognise that right.

Congress recommended that the 2001-2004 Acts should be amended to place a duty on employers to have in place 'adequate and suitable' arrangements for 'collective bargaining'. Further that the definition of 'adequate and suitable' arrangements must establish the facilities to be afforded to workers so that they can organise in a trade union for collective bargaining purposes along with the right to be represented by the trade union for the purpose of collective bargaining and vastly improved protections to protect workers from all forms of employer retaliation.

18. Employment Rights (NUJ) (A):

Congress organised for a delegation from the NUJ to meet with the Irish Ambassador to the United Nations, his Excellency Mr Gerard Corr, to explain how the Competition Authority restriction on the right to organise and collective bargaining for freelancers and certain other workers employed on a contract for service is contrary to ILO Conventions, the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and the UN Declaration on Human Rights. Additional meetings were held with the ITUC in Geneva to ensure their support for a Complaint to the International Labour Organisation.

Congress continued to press the Minister to introduce the changes that had been previously agreed. In response, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation replied outlining that the 'TROIKA' had ruled out changes to Ireland's Competition Law to allow these workers to collectively bargain.

Congress raised this with the representatives of the EU, the ECB and the IMF during a workshop on social dialogue organised and chaired by the ILO in Dublin on the 9th December 2012. All three of the 'TROIKA' representatives disputed that the intention or purpose of the clause on competition law in the MOU was to justify a continuing breach of ILO Conventions and human rights standards.

At the time of writing no change has been secured and the TROIKA ban remains in place. Congress is currently preparing a complaint to the International Labour Organisation to be presented in June 2013 that Ireland is failing to secure respect for Freedom of Association, The Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining.

19. Precarious & Vulnerable Forms of Employment (CWU) (A):

Precarious and vulnerable forms of employment has been an important dimension of the work of Congress over the last two years. A significant amount of policy and advocacy work has been done in relation to employment rights, notwithstanding the fact that the High Court ruling on the JLCs/EROs in July 2012 had a potential major impact on the conditions of employment of tens of thousands of workers. In addition to advocacy activity, the agenda for Decent Work has been developed as the core campaign framework for Congress and will remain so for the next three to five years; placing the concerns about precarious employment, low pay and exploitation at the centre of Congress' work.

Consideration has also been given as to how the Union Connect project can be further developed in conjunction with the Congress Centres for the Unemployed, to provide more effective engagement with and supports for both unemployed and vulnerable workers, with a view to establishing a form of union membership/association. Discussion have taken place with the Congress Centres Network representatives in relation to service provision and they are completely committed to work with Congress to set this up.

A more comprehensive report on the various aspects of the work related to this motion is covered in Section Two, Decent Work – Better Lives, and in Section 5, Campaigning and Public Engagement

20. Pay (CPSU) (A):

This motion referred to the recent practice of Congress to give priority to lower paid workers in pay negotiations conducted by Congress Committees. The motion called for the continuation of this practice. In deciding on the approach to pay negotiations Congress Committees have continued to give priority to the position of lower paid workers.

21. Public Sector Agreement (PSEU) (A):

This motion called for the Congress Executive Council to campaign to protect the terms of the Public Sector Agreement. Congress issued numerous statements and public comments supporting the terms of the agreement.

22. Attacks on Public Servants (CPSU) (A):

This motion called for Congress to promote efficient public service provision as the best means to meet the needs of all citizens. Congress continues to argue and campaign for efficient and universal access to high quality public services for all citizens.

23. Care of the Elderly (GMB) (A):

Congress has endeavoured to protect public services currently providing care for the elderly and other vulnerable people by constant campaigning for a single-tier workplace which is in the best interests for users and staff. Congress is fighting against out-sourcing of these services.

24. Banking Sector (IBOA) (A):

The position in respect of the banking sector continues to evolve and Congress has supported the work of unions in the sector as requested.

25. Northern Ireland (Executive Council) (A):

Congress continues its work for the development of a strong civil society rooted in a Bill of Rights incorporating social and economic rights as fundamental to the establishment of a fair and just society. Congress continues its endeavours in building cross-community engagement and facilitating all marginalised groups.

26. Equality (Executive Council) (A):

Equality related committees continue to work on promotion of equality within our unions; includes special events on promotion of women; Plans for further audit being discussed; Congress made submissions on the planned merger of the Equality Authority and Human Rights Commission and continued its work on the Bill of Rights.

27. Protecting Welfare Systems, Public Services & Human Rights (UNISON) (A):

Congress is an active participant in 'Your Rights Now' campaign in relation to Ireland's first examination under the UN's Universal Periodic Review; Congress/Impact complaint re collective bargaining rights to ILO.

28. Campaign Against Economic Inequality (PCSU) (A):

Congress continues its campaign for a fairer tax system, and has led to date the successful opposition to the drastic and unnecessary lowering of Corporation Tax in Northern Ireland. Furthermore Congress has been to the forefront in promoting the issue of enforcement of tax laws and legislation in tackling tax avoidance.

29. Investment in Health (IMO) (A):

This matter was raised with the Department of Health and with the Minister. In addition some aspects of the motion were examined in the Congress research document on the Dutch Healthcare system.

30. Funding for People with Asperger's Syndrome (GSU) (A):

This matter was raised with the Department of Health.

31. Under-Age Sales (USDAW) (A):

Congress supports our colleagues in the Retail Trade in their campaign for respect for shop workers and agrees that the onus for under-age sales is the primary responsibility for the purchaser.

32. Broad based Workers' Campaign (INMO) Amendment (NUJ) (A):

Congress has maintained a strong advocacy campaign against austerity including, in particular, the impact of falling domestic demand on employment. A significant factor in this regard is that an exceptionally high savings rate of 14 per cent is partially due to high levels of private debt. Nationwide protests were held on 9th February, 2013 focussed on the debt burden. Discussions were held with IMF representatives about this in March, 2013. In terms of implementing that aspect of the resolution calling for a mortgage strike practical impediments were identified in discussions with interested unions which have not been resolved yet.

33. Standard of Living for Pensioners (Executive Council) (A):

Congress continues its support and servicing of the Retired Workers Committees and has supported their active campaigning with the Aged Sector Platform on the State Pension, Public Services for older people and the calculation of the rate of inflation. Congress encourages all affiliated Trade Unions to maintain and facilitate their Retired Workers sections thus benefitting from experience of this intellectual capital.

34. Education Funding (INTO) (A):

This matter was raised with the Department of Education, in conjunction with Motion 35 Investment in Education (TUI) and Motion 37 Financing of Higher Education (IFUT).

35. Investment in Education (TUI) (A):

This matter was raised with the Department of Education, in conjunction with Motion 34 Education Funding (INTO) and Motion 37 Financing of Higher Education (IFUT).

36. Investment in our Future (NASUWT) (A):

Congress through the education Trade Union Group has campaigned vigorously to protect levels of funding across all education sectors. The ETUG has established a broad campaign to address educational disadvantage comprising of affiliates and community organisations.

37. Financing Higher Education (IFUT) (A):

This matter was raised with the Department of Education, in conjunction with Motion 34 Education Funding (INTO) and Motion 36 Investment in Education (TUI).

38. Wikileaks (Belfast & District Trades Council) (A):

Congress welcomed the publication of the draft Heads of the Protected Disclosures in the Public Interest Bill 2012 as a major step forward in protecting workers who come forward to blow the whistle on wrongdoing. When enacted the legislation will be a huge advancement on the previous piecemeal patchwork of protections that left many workers at risk of falling between the gaps in protection. The draft Heads incorporate many of the recommendations previously made by Congress and are generally in line with international best practice. However Congress made a number of recommendations for improvement, particularly in the area of protections for workers and others who blow the whistle.

Congress has been very involved in the legislative process and has proposed amendments, given evidence to Oireachtas committees and spoken at Seminars organised by the Department on this topic.

39. Palestine (Derry Trades Council) (A):

Congress has been working in coalition with a range of solidarity, developments, church and human rights groups to promote BDS in Ireland. Focus has been on urging Irish Government to follow up on its positive words re supporting EU ban on settlement goods. Sessions for BDS reps nominated by unions also held.

Congress continued to register our concern re attacks on Gaza and supported the Free Gaza campaign.

40. Solidarity with the Palestinian People (Derry Trades Council) (A):

Congress has written and sought meeting with Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore in relation to Irish Government action within the EU.

41. Columbia (Kildare Co of Trade Unions) Amendment (TEEU) (A):

Congress has continued to support Justice for Colombia in Ireland and encouraged affiliate engagement. Our work on the EU Colombia Free Trade agreement and freeing of political prisoners continued throughout the period.

Emergency Motion 1: Commission on the Trade Union Movement (Executive Council) (A):

This adoption of this motion in turn adopted the interim recommendations of the Report of the Commission which was presented to Conference. Congress has continued to work to implement the recommendations of the Commission and in particular has established a strategic organising committee and a number of sectoral committees in both the Republic and in Northern Ireland. Congress has also carried out a detailed analysis of the resources available to unions and continues to work on developing a communications strategy for the movement. A progress report will be presented to the 2013 BDC.

Emergency Motion 2: Whistleblowing (SIPTU) (A):

Congress lobbied Government to introduce legislation to protect whistleblowers in the public and private sectors. A series of meetings were held with the Department of Justice & Equality and the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform and Congress recommendations fed into the Protected Disclosure in the Public Interest Bill published in 2012. When enacted, the legislation will allow anyone working in business, Government and the non-profit sectors safeguards when disclosing information to their employers, the authorities, TDs or the press. Congress continues to lobby for improvements to the legislation.

Emergency Motion 3: Saving the Assets of the Irish People (TEEU) (A):

Congress has strongly resisted the privatisation of state assets and indeed in our New Governance Structure for Public Enterprise we envisaged developing these companies internationally as major wealth and job creators. It is incredible that because the leading private sector enterprises viz AIB, BOI, Anglo and Quinn Group all collapsed, the best remaining indigenous firms of size and stature, the semi states like ESB, BGE and Coillte should be privatised in part or full, to repay some of their vast debts. Ireland needs more indigenous firms of scale and these firms have the potential in public ownership to play a real role in our recovery.

Emergency Motion 4: Ship to Gaza (TEEU) (A):

Congress has had continued engagement with the Irish Government and the EU Parliament Trade Committee in relation to its interference in the Ship to Gaza, its membership of the OECD and preferential EU trade agreements.

Report 2011 to 2013

The following cases came before the board between March 2011 and March 2013.

Members in Debenhams and Mandate

A complaint was submitted concerning lack of service to a group of workers in the conclusion of a restructuring deal. The union advised that the principal complainants had resigned from the union, thus rendering the matter beyond the competence of the Appeals Board. The complainants were advised accordingly.

Mc Grath and others and TUI

The members concerned brought a complaint that they were inadequately represented by their union in a circumstance where their employer, and Institute of Technology, sought to dismiss them. The board heard the parties at two hearings and, at the time of going to press was drafting its findings.

Quinn and others and OPATSI

A complaint was submitted regarding the operation of the union as it applied to a provincial branch. A meeting was held between the parties which clarified matters and established a conciliation procedure which is currently under way.

Members in Cork and OPATSI

A meeting was held with a group of the members concerned. No further action was taken by the members in the pursuit of their complaint which was therefore deemed to be inactive.

A member and POA

Complaint regarding expulsion of an individual. Discussions are under way in this matter.

Members in Limerick region and ESBOA

This dispute concerned the terms of secondment to a third party provider, and joined the secretariat of the group of unions in its complaint. However, after submitting the complaint, the complainants resigned, thus rendering the matter outside the competence of the Appeals Board.

O'Neill and others and ASTI/INTO

A complaint was submitted regarding the negotiations on the visiting teacher service. A board heading is being scheduled at the time of writing.

Laughlin and others and CWU

This complaint centred on the operation of a branch, and on the annual report presented to the branch AGM. Following a meeting and the exchange of correspondence, the complainants decided not to proceed.

Members in Bord Bia and IMPACT

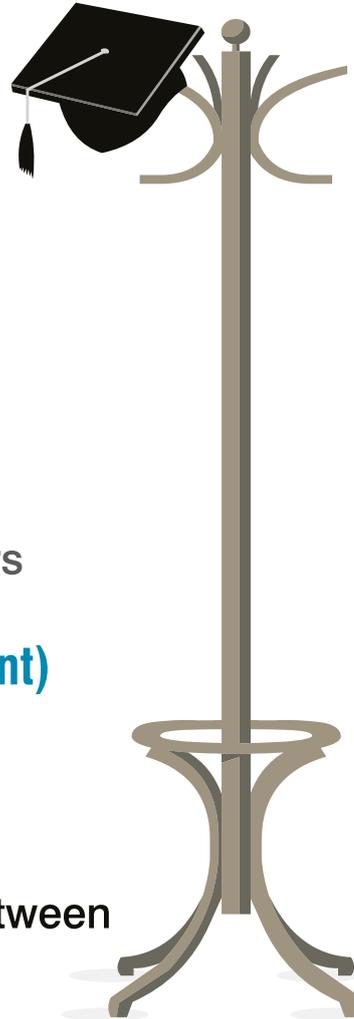
This complaint centred on lack of effective service during a restructuring. Following a series of meetings, the matter was resolved by correspondence.

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