



TUC
YOUNG WORKERS CONFERENCE

MARCH 22 & 23, 2014

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Saturday March 22nd

(Registration opens at 10.30am)

11.00am - Welcome reception for women delegates and visitors

1.30pm - Opening session of conference and guest speakers

3.00pm - Workshops

5.00pm - Formal session of Conference Part

7.00pm - Evening Social

Sunday March 23rd

10.00am to close (no later than 4.00pm) – Formal Session of Conference Part

TUC Young Workers Forum Delegates Age Qualification

Amend the final sentence of Paragraph 1 of the TUC Young Workers Forum and Conference Constitution and Conference Rules and Standing Orders to read;

“Those representatives must qualify as young workers/members under the rules of the union that they will be representing.”

Add the following sentence to Paragraph 1;

“Where there is no definition of a young worker/member under the rules of a nominating union then delegates to the Forum nominated by any such unions must be aged 27 and under.”

TUC YOUNG WORKERS FORUM

TUC Young Workers Conference Delegates Age Qualification

Amend the second sentence of paragraph 11 of the TUC Young Workers Forum and Conference Constitution and Conference Rules and Standing Orders to read;

“Delegates to the Conference must qualify as young workers/members under the rules of the union that they will be representing.”

Add the following sentence to Paragraph 11 after sentence two;

“Where there is no definition of a young worker/member under the rules of a nominating union, then delegates to the Conference nominated by any such unions must be aged 27 and under.”

TUC YOUNG WORKERS FORUM

Public finances supporting living wage employment

Conference congratulates trade union, community and student organisations that have won living wage campaigns across the UK. However, conference notes that the number of people paid less than the living wage is estimated to have risen to 4.8 million people, among which young workers will be disproportionately represented as 79 per cent of 16-20 year olds are low paid, compared to 28 per cent of 21-30 year olds and 14 per cent of those aged 31 to 40. Conference further notes a recent Resolution Foundation report, which found the average hourly pay for workers aged between 22 and 29 fell 11.7% in the three years after the financial crash.

The support of the trade union movement has been a key element in the promotion but more must be done to extend the living wage to more workers, particularly young workers.

Conference acknowledges that central, local and devolved governments are key promoters and deliverers of living wage policies. Therefore conference calls for the TUC Young Workers Forum to work with trade unions, community organisations and student groups and campaign for policy changes in procurement, subsidies or grant-making, which ensure that any employer benefitting from a public sector contract or direct public funding is obliged to pay a living wage.

COMMUNITY

Pensions

Conference believes the subject of pensions is often misunderstood as being the concern of older members only. However, the consequences of low pay, burdening living costs, increased student fees and rising housing prices could have severe impact on today's young workers when they retire.

The Office for National Statistics reports that the number of young people under 30 in part-time work is more than 2.1 million, many of which will be excluded from auto enrolment into a workplace pension due to shifting income tax thresholds.

According to the Government Actuary's Department if current trends continue the basic state pension will be worth less than 10% of average earnings by 2050. Anyone relying on just the state pension in 2050 will officially be living in poverty.

Building upon the TUC report 'Life expectancy inequalities and state pension outcomes'. This conference believes that more has to be done to ensure that personal provision is made if workers wish to have some flexibility in older life.

Conference therefore calls on the TUC Young Workers' Conference to:

- work with affiliates to highlight the implications of poor pension provision to young workers;
- raise awareness amongst young workers of the shifting of State Pension Age and what it means;
- support continued pressure on government over the auto enrolment link with income tax thresholds for all workers on low income (full and part time)

COMMUNICATION WORKERS UNION

Creating Without Conflict

On 19th November 2013 the Federation of Entertainment Unions launched the *Creating Without Conflict* report. This followed a survey of over 4,000 workers in the creative and entertainment sectors into bullying and harassment in the workplace. A key finding was that 56% of respondents had been bullied, harassed or discriminated against at work.

There is a preconception that the creative industries are full of glamorous and exciting places to work. The reality is that most workers are freelance, or on short-term contracts, with few statutory rights and little job security. In an environment where fewer than 1/3 of people experiencing ill treatment report it, freelancers were 14% less likely still to report issues. Common reasons cited for not speaking out were job insecurity, and fear of gaining a reputation as a 'trouble maker'. Worryingly, those who reported bullying were slightly more likely (11%) than those who did not to feel that their experiences impacted negatively on their careers.

Happily, 45% of respondents who involved their union were happy with the outcome.

We need to secure a cross union culture of workplace respect, and stamp out bullying in all our industries.

We call on Conference to ensure that the information and advice unions give to members on how to tackle workplace bullying in all its forms includes clear, practical guidance for workers whose employment is more precarious, such as freelancers and zero hours contract workers.

We ask that this is done by 2015.

EQUITY

Young Carers

Conference notes that:-

Britain is an aging society and there are hundreds of thousands of young people aged under 25 providing unpaid care every week the UK. Young carers are essential to the maintenance of the social solidarity across the generations. Policy makers have not recognised the importance of young carers and the need for support mechanisms to enable young carers to fulfil their own needs and ambitions.

Young people have borne the brunt of the recession which has been compounded by the Coalition Government's austerity measures. For example, as well as enduring the denial of education maintenance grants, young people have faced a tripling of tuition fees, rising house prices and a lack of affordable housing. Where they have been able to find work they face low wages, zero hour contracts and abusive employers.

There are nearly a million young people unemployed with little hope for the future

Conference mandates the TUC Young Workers Forum:

- To publish a report, no later than November 2014, on young carers in the UK, looking into the impact of relying on young carers, and how being a young carer affects young people both in a short and long term basis.
- To hold an event on the issues affecting young carers, as part of TUC Young Workers Month this year.
- To report back to the next TUC Young Workers Forum with recommendations for how the TUC can improve the situation young carers find themselves in.

GMB

Rights and Professional Respect of Young Teachers

Conference asserts that young teachers are committed and dedicated professionals who strive to provide excellence for all pupils.

Conference deplores the attack on the professional status of teachers and the removal of the requirement for schools to employ qualified teachers.

Conference further asserts that the attack on teaching profession and need to access to pay, conditions of service and support which enable them to have the very best start in their chosen career.

Conference further deplores the damaging impact of the Coalition Government's programme of deregulation and increased school autonomy which in too many cases is resulting in young teachers being deprived of their entitlement to high quality induction into the teaching profession, leaving them vulnerable to poor employment practice, discrimination and exploitation.

Conference calls on the TUC to support affiliates campaigns to publicise and challenge the damaging effect of the Coalition Government's policies on the recruitment and career progression of young teachers.

NASUWT

Resisting Deskilling and Promoting the Skills of Young Workers

Conference is deeply concerned that the disease of generalisation is spreading throughout the public and private sectors, leading to the exploitation and deskilling of young workers. Conference is alarmed by the increasing prevalence of 'generic skills' being prioritised above specific knowledge and skill.

Conference notes that many young workers have reduced access to training and opportunities for progression. This is having a detrimental effect on job satisfaction.

Conference notes that there is now a plethora of routes into the teaching profession. Many of these do not provide young teachers with the support and knowledge they need to succeed, due to a 'sink or swim' approach. Adequate time for study and reflection has been removed. Changes include:

- Expectation to teach and excel in subjects without relevant training
- Isolation
- Unachievable targets
- The need for unions to fill the gaps in professional development
- Increased drop out due to stress
- Detriment to work/life balance

Conference believes that routes into teaching need to offer a balance of academic education and work based training.

Proper training should improve the skills of young people to enable them to secure an economic future whereas deskilling threatens their long term earning and employment prospects.

Conference calls on the TUC to organise an event to consider the issues relating to deskilling across different sectors focusing on improving the skills of young workers.

NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS

Fighting Austerity

Young people are facing the brunt of austerity and are under attack on every front.

Young people remain amongst the lowest paid, often on temporary or zero hour contracts and in non-unionised workplaces.

Outside of work, education is being privatised en-masse and tuition fees sold off to the highest bidder, all happening alongside the Government's attempt to destroy the teaching profession.

Welfare "reform" continues, with Workfare, vicious sanctions regimes and the Bedroom Tax; now discussions are under way to remove benefits from all under 25s.

Even though this onslaught continues, there is no joint youth campaign to combat it.

Young Members can play a key role in fighting austerity and the TUC should be at the forefront of organising young workers, students and the unemployed.

Consistently it's been shown that when trade unions campaign and take action, young people not only offer support but get active. With the average age of trade union members rising, inaction is not an option.

TUC Young Members' Forum calls for:

- The TUC to run a national youth campaign, organised through the TUC Young Members Forum, working with the NUS, Youth Fight for Jobs, DPAC and others to link up youth struggles;
- Linking the action in with the TUC Young Workers Month, including a day of action to highlight youth issues and an open national forum to launch the campaign
- The TUC to support further coordinated industrial action and the call for a general strike.

PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES UNION

Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

Conference approves of efforts by trade unions to maintain access to defined benefit pension schemes for young workers in the private sector. However Conference notes that the majority of these schemes are now closed to new entrants and are unlikely to be re-opened.

The reality of pension provision for most young workers in the private sector is either no access to a pension scheme or access only to a defined contribution scheme. Conference accepts that the most practical way of improving pension provision for young workers in the private sector is to widen access to private sector pension schemes and to improve the defined contribution schemes that are open to new entrants.

Conference instructs the TUC with the support of the Young Workers' Forum to:

- Campaign to lower the earnings trigger for people to be automatically enrolled into workplace pension schemes.
- Campaign to make employer contributions payable on all earnings under automatic enrolment.
- Campaign to increase the employer contribution payable under automatic enrolment.
- Train young trade union representatives on how to campaign to improve defined contribution pension schemes in their workplaces.
- Support young trade union representatives to become more involved in the governance arrangements of workplace pension schemes.

PROSPECT

Referendum on Membership of the European Union

Congress notes the last referendum on Britain's place in Europe was in 1975 in respect of membership of the Common Market.

Since then there have been five further treaties meaning the European Union now has a clear political as well as economic structure.

The vote on the Common Market was thirty nine years ago meaning no-one in Britain under the age of 57 has had the opportunity to vote on the EU, despite the EU gaining substantial, legislative, political and economic powers.

Congress also notes there has been no vote on Britain's membership of the EU despite the fact that the three main British political parties have all promised referendums in recent years and that polls are overwhelmingly in favour of a referendum.

Congress accepts there are divergent views on what should be the nature of Britain's relationship with Europe, with some for example supporting withdrawal from the EU while others support continued membership.

Congress believes there is now, however, a growing consensus for a referendum, and it is fundamentally undemocratic to deny the people a vote on this issue.

Congress therefore supports a referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union.

Congress also agrees to campaign for a referendum and also considers that while there may be strong arguments for the referendum to take place as soon as possible, the General Council should conduct an urgent consultation to establish views on the timing of the referendum.

RAIL, MARITIME AND TRANSPORT WORKERS

16-25 Railcard

This Conference notes:

1. The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) sells discounted railcards which allow 34% off certain single and return tickets
2. One example of this railcard is the 16-25 railcard, formally called Young Persons
3. Railcards do not discount season tickets which for young people mean having to pay extra for the privilege to attend work, education or training.
4. Britain's season ticket costs are some of the highest in Europe.
5. The cost of the 16-25 railcard has doubled over the past 20 years

This Conference resolves

1. The cost of these railcards should be reduced
2. The discount should be raised to 40%
3. The minimum fare for journeys starting between 4:30am and 10:00am should be scrapped
4. The cut off age for the card should be at 27 to account for the increasing number of people between the ages of 16-30 on Zero Hour contracts and being paid minimum wage

TRANSPORT SALARIED STAFFS' ASSOCIATION

Give us the vote

This Conference notes a significant number of local and national elections are to take place shortly, including European Parliamentary elections (22 May 2014) and a General Election (before 6 May 2015).

This Conference welcomes the British Youth Council's decision to prioritise Votes@16 as its main campaign this year, and that 16 and 17 year olds have been enfranchised for the Scottish independence referendum (18 September 2014).

This Conference believe that the franchise in all national and local elections should be extended to 16 and 17 year olds, and that the case is now so well established, that of the mainstream political parties only the Conservatives are actively opposed to it.

This Conference is concerned that too many young people are not registered to vote, especially young Black people, and welcomes the work of Operation Black Vote to encourage Black voter registration.

This Conference also believes that appropriate political education should be used as part of our work to encourage registration and voting.

This Conference agrees to:

- (i) support the Votes@16 campaign and encourage unions to affiliate to it;
- (ii) call for all mainstream political parties to include in their manifestos an explicit commitment to extend the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds;
- (iii) promote a young voter registration drive, and consider joint work with Operation Black Vote to encourage young Black people to register and vote;
- (iv) seek and/or develop appropriate political education to promote in the context of this work.

UNISON

Equal Pay for Young Workers

Conference strongly objects to the myth put forward by the Coalition that paying young people the same rate as older workers would be detrimental to young people's employment prospects.

Conference believes it is wrong that young workers are only entitled to National Minimum Wage rates that are lower than the full adult rate for workers aged 21 and over.

Young workers are facing a young people's cost of living crisis. Recent research conducted by Usdaw has shown that 78% of young people struggle with housing costs while 53% have no money left after paying bills and essential costs.

Conference welcomes the success that trade unions have had in recent years in persuading many employers to abolish their youth rates and pay a single rate for the job regardless of the employee's age. The full adult rate for young workers has not had a detrimental impact on the employment of young people in these businesses.

Conference believes that the work that young people do is of equal value to that of their older colleagues and they should have a right to the full adult rate for the job.

Conference calls on the TUC to lobby for the youth rates of the National Minimum Wage to be abolished and for young workers to be entitled to the full adult rate.

Conference calls on the TUC to campaign for equal pay for young workers both in company pay rates and the National Minimum Wage.

UNION OF SHOP DISTRIBUTIVE AND ALLIED WORKERS

Young Workers Organising Strategy

This conference notes:

Trade unions are finding it difficult to organise in sectors of the economy where young workers are far more likely to work, e.g. in retail, catering and hospitality where there is a high-turnover of staff, casualisation, poor employment contracts and a prevalence of small workplaces.

Additionally, as young people often see their engagement with the workplace to be temporary or transient, unions are finding it a challenge to represent young workers.

Furthermore, trade unions lack a clear strategic vision about how these young workers can be recruited and organised.

The trade union movement needs young workers if it is to continue standing up for working people of the future.

This conference further notes:

Leading young members in the TUC have already been involved in successful campaigns to recruit and organise young workers from un-unionised workplaces, one of the most successful of which was the SERTUC young workers' committee campaign around 'Save HMV Workers.'

This conference resolves to:

- Call on the General Council to support the creation of a TUC young workers organising strategy that will be developed by the young members, alongside the Organising Department, which seeks to recruit and organise young workers, specifically in the casualised workplaces referenced above.
- Call for a review of how the TUC can more effectively deploy and train its lay companions to establish what more they can do to support individual members in un-unionised workplaces and promote the union to young workers.

UNITE