

CONGRESS 2018

GPC REPORT, COMPOSITE MOTIONS AND GENERAL COUNCIL STATEMENTS

The 150th Annual Trades Union Congress
9–12 September 2018, Manchester

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SECTION 1

GPC REPORT TO CONGRESS

Part 1 Agenda

All motions and amendments stand as in the Agenda unless indicated otherwise below. Where composite motions have been agreed and approved by the GPC by 5 September, they are shown in the list below and the text of the composite motion is given in Section 3 of this report.

Composite motions agreed and approved by the GPC after 5 September will be reported to Congress by the GPC and copies circulated to delegates as quickly as possible.

Where movers of motions have agreed to accept published amendments by 5 September, this is also stated in the list below. The GPC will report to Congress all instances where published amendments are accepted by the movers of motions after 5 September.

The following is the position at 5 September in respect of motions, amendments and composite motions. Motion numbers are those printed in the Agenda.

1. THE ECONOMY	
01 Unite amend ASLEF	Stands accepted
02 Usdaw	Stands
03 Community	Stands
04 Equity	Stands
05 Community	Stands
06 Black Workers Conference	Stands
07 GMB amend Prospect	Stands accepted
08 BFAWU amend UNISON	Stands not accepted
09 Trades Councils Conference	Stands

10 RMT 11 ASLEF 12 TSSA	Office to seek agreement
13 ASLEF	Stands
14 Nautilus International	Stands
15 RMT amend Nautilus International 16 Nautilus International	Composite 01 Seafarers' working conditions and workforce safety in the offshore and maritime industries
2. BREXIT	
17 Unite 18 CWU 19 RCM 20 TSSA	Composite 02 Brexit
3. RESPECT AND A VOICE AT WORK	
21 GMB amend RMT	Stands accepted
22 Usdaw amend Equity	Stands accepted
23 CSP amend RCM	Stands accepted
24 FDA amend College of Podiatry	Stands accepted
25 Prospect amend Usdaw	Stands accepted
26 FBU amend Unite amend UNISON	Composite 03 Grenfell Tower
27 NUJ	Stands
28 College of Podiatry amend GMB amend Community	Composite 04 Healthcare workers and workplace violence in prisons
29 PCS	Stands
30 Disabled Workers Conference	Stands

31 Aegis amend CWU	Stands accepted
32 AEP	Stands
33 AEP	Stands
34 Equity amend Prospect 35 Musicians' Union	Composite 05 Fighting sexual harassment in the creative industries
36 TUC Women's Conference	Stands
37 RCM	Stands
38 NUJ	Stands
39 SoR	Stands
40 AUE	Stands
41 LGBT+ Conference	Stands
42 UNISON amend PCS amend RMT amend CSP amend RCM 43 Accord	Composite 06 Ending the hostile environment immigration policy and justice for the Windrush generation
44 UCU amend Unite	Stands accepted
4. GOOD SERVICES	
45 Unite 46 UNISON 47 POA amend ASLEF	Composite 07 Public service outsourcing - lessons from Carillion
48 NAHT amend NEU amend FDA	Composite 08 Public sector
49 PCS amend FBU 50 POA amend FBU	Composite 15 Public sector pay
51 NEU amend UCU 52 NAHT	Composite 09 Education funding crisis

53 NASUWT amend GMB	Stands accepted
54 NEU amend UNISON 55 UCU	Composite 10 National education service
56 EIS	Stands
57 Musicians' Union 58 PFA 59 AUE amend NASUWT	Office to seek agreement
60 BDA amend CSP amend Community amend College of Podiatry	Composite 11 Health and social care workers
61 College of Podiatry amend FDA	Stands accepted
62 CSP	Stands
63 UNISON amend USDAW amend CWU amend TSSA 64 SoR amend Equity	Composite 12 Mental health
65 FDA	Stands
66 Napo	Stands
67 Napo	Stands
68 FBU amend TSSA	Stands withdrawn
5. STRONG UNIONS	
69 CWU amend NEU amend PCS	Composite 13 A new deal for workers
70 Prospect	Stands
71 NASUWT	Stands

72 BFAWU	Stands
73 BALPA	Stands
74 Young Workers Conference	Stands
75 EIS amend Unite amend UCU	Composite 14 Turkey
76 Accord amend NASUWT	Stands accepted
77 BDA	Stands

Part 2 Introductions and presentations

The GPC has approved the following speeches and presentations by members of the General Council, fraternal delegates and special guests:

Sunday afternoon

- › President's address and vote of thanks
- › Address by Luis Pedraza, President CUT

Monday morning

- › General Secretary's address including General Council Statement on collective bargaining
- › Address by Shakira Martin, President of the National Union of Students

Monday afternoon

- › Special feature on reaching young workers and union organising
- › Address by Andy Kerr, Fraternal Delegate from the Labour Party

Tuesday morning

- › Show Racism the Red Card photo opportunity

Tuesday afternoon

- › Presentation of Congress Awards
- › Address by Rt. Hon. John McDonnell MP, Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer

Wednesday morning

- › Address by His Grace, the Most Reverend Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury

Part 3 Ballots

The ballot for General Council Section D will take place on Tuesday. The candidates in sections A, B, C, E, F, G, H, I and J are elected unopposed.

Ballot papers for Section D, which will only be available to delegates from eligible unions (those with fewer than 200,000 members) may be collected from 9.00 am on Tuesday from the scrutineers by the TUC Information Stand. Ballot papers will only be provided in exchange for the official delegate form.

The ballot closes at noon on Tuesday.

Delegates are reminded that in casting their union's votes, the total number of votes allocated to your union should be written in against the name(s) of the candidate(s) you wish to support. The number of votes allocated to each union is printed on the ballot paper. The result of the ballot will be announced towards the end of the Tuesday afternoon session.

Part 4 Standing orders

Delegates are reminded of Rule 26 governing speaking times during Congress, which permits the following speaking times:

- › movers of motions up to five minutes
- › seconders of motions and all subsequent speakers up to three minutes.

A system of warning lights will be used with a green light showing at the beginning of a speaker's allowed time. This will change to amber one minute from the end of the allowed time and to red at the end of the allowed time. If the speaker continues when the red light is showing, a bell will ring.

Delegates are asked to co-operate fully with the rules on speaking times and to give their names and the names of their unions before they begin their speeches.

Congress sessions will be:

- › **Sunday:** 16:00 to 19:00
- › **Monday:** 09:30 to 12:45 and 14:15 to 17:30
- › **Tuesday:** 09:30 to 12:45 and 14:15 to 17:30
- › **Wednesday:** 09:30 to the close of business

Under rule, Congress must conclude no later than 16:00 on Wednesday.

Part 5 Membership of the General Purposes Committee

Linda McCulloch (Chair)
Chris Tansley
Paddy Lillis
Michelle Rodgers
Bob Crosby

SECTION 2

TELLERS AND SCRUTINEERS

Tellers

Jonathan Belshaw
CWU

Cora Green
Prospect

Marina Gunn
Unite

Colin Gunter
GMB

Paul McKenna
Usdaw

Paul Valentine
Equity

Scrutineers

Kate Baker
CSP

Steve Bird
NUJ

Dave Calfe
ASLEF

Angela Hamilton
UNISON

Jackie Marshall
POA

SECTION 3

COMPOSITE MOTIONS

C01 Seafarers' working conditions and workforce safety in the offshore and maritime industries

Motion 15 and amendment, and 16

Congress expresses sadness and condolences to the families and loved ones of workers killed or injured when working at sea, including the 165 offshore workers and two seafarers who perished in the Piper Alpha disaster thirty years ago, on 6 July 1988.

Congress notes that the Health and Safety Executive regulates compliance with the Offshore Installations Regulations 1989 that cover safety representatives and safety committees and were introduced as a result of the Piper Alpha disaster. Congress is concerned that 26 compliance inspections since 2015 uncovered over 50 non-compliance issues, yet the HSE has not taken enforcement action against any installation owner or manager in the 29 years since these regulations came into effect.

Congress also notes that in the maritime sector safety culture is less developed than many transports sectors, which has contributed to safety incidents in crucial areas such as lifeboat drills.

Congress congratulates the Offshore Coordinating Group comprised of BALPA, GMB, Nautilus International, RMT and Unite for its continuing efforts to improve safety in the North Sea.

Congress records its concern at the continued evidence of substandard shipping and appalling working conditions for many seafarers working on ships around the UK coast. Congress notes the shocking number of cases involving owed wages and poverty pay, as well as the prevalence of problems such as excessive working time, fatigue, stress, little or no ability to communicate with friends and family, and workplace ill health, injury and fatality rates well in excess of any shore-based occupation.

Congress is further concerned that social dumping, as well as resulting in breaches of the Maritime Labour Convention, is also undermining safety standards in the maritime and offshore sectors.

Congress calls for:

- i. the government to enforce compliance with elected offshore safety representatives' standards
- ii. continuous improvement of the safety culture in the maritime and offshore sectors

- iii. a full-scale review of the effectiveness and enforcement of regulations governing worker engagement in safety standards on offshore installations and merchant shipping.

Congress calls on the General Council to:

- a. support the maritime unions in their work to continuously improve the Maritime Labour Convention as an effective global minimum standard to underpin improvements in the lives of seafarers
- b. ensure that the UK has the necessary staffing, resources and political commitment to police and enforce the requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention
- c. resist any attempts to dilute UK maritime regulatory standards or for the UK ship register to move to minimum international standards to compete with flags of convenience
- d. promote the collective voice concept within the maritime industry and to seek to restore the principles of sectoral collective bargaining within the shipping industry.

Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers

Seconder: Nautilus International

C02 Brexit

Motions 17, 18, 19 and 20

Congress believes that more than two years on from the referendum, the Brexit process has now reached a critical juncture. How our movement responds to events in the months to come will be decisive.

Congress recognises that crashing out of the European Union would put at risk many of our hard-won rights at work, and that many thousands of good jobs rely on trade; is concerned that continued inept mishandling of the exit negotiations and bitter divisions on the government benches pose the very real risk of a disastrous no deal Brexit; and fears that if the UK ends up in this position, workers will be the ones who are hit hardest.

The warning from Airbus – which supports 110,000 jobs in the UK – against a hard Brexit which does not achieve either access to the single market or a customs union should be a wake-up call for anyone who believes the government can deliver a Brexit which protects, let alone enhances, workers' interests. Congress is opposed to a no deal Brexit and to the creation of a hard border in Ireland and is deeply concerned that many worker and trade union rights will be under threat post Brexit. Our movement cannot countenance a cliff-edge Brexit. The economic and social shockwaves would echo the financial crisis of 2008, leaving no one in our movement untouched. No measure can be ruled out to avoid this outcome.

Congress strongly condemns the government for its inept handling of the Brexit process. Congress notes the lack of progress in Brexit negotiations, the government's weakness which may lead to further concessions in negotiations with the EU and the division within the Tory government which led to the resignations of David Davis and Boris Johnson prior to the long overdue White Paper outlining the government's vision for the UK's future relations with the EU. Congress doesn't believe that the current government is capable of delivering a Brexit deal that will work for ordinary people. It's now clear that the Brexit originally promised is undeliverable and what we'll get is likely to do damage to our economy.

Congress agrees that the trade union movement has a responsibility to unify all workers whether they voted leave or remain and the best way of achieving this is to directly link the fight for a new deal for workers in the UK with the TUC's work on Brexit. Congress also agrees that we must continue to fight for reform of the EU to promote the interests of workers across Europe.

As set out in the General Council statement agreed at Congress last year, Congress continues to believe that in order to bring together workers, we must respect the referendum result and continue to call for a 'jobs and rights first Brexit.'

Congress reaffirms calls for:

- i. the retention of all the hard-won workers' rights that come from the EU, and making sure that UK workers get the same rights as workers in the EU into the future
- ii. the rejection of a job-destroying "no deal" Brexit, with the priority being a final Brexit deal that offers tariff-free, barrier-free, frictionless trade with the rest of Europe
- iii. the rights of EU citizens working in the UK, and those of UK workers elsewhere in the EU, to be guaranteed.

Any Brexit deal must enshrine and enhance working rights, social and environmental protections; maintain the Good Friday agreement and prevent a hard border in Northern Ireland; secure a customs union with the EU; and protect barrier free access to the single market.

Congress is encouraged to note that Labour's position on Brexit includes a commitment to vote down any deal which doesn't meet its six tests and also doesn't deliver a post-Brexit customs union with the EU. If, despite itself, the government reaches a withdrawal deal that is put to Parliament before March, the prospects that it can meet the tests set by Congress or the Labour Party are remote. When this happens, our movement must be prepared, politically and industrially, to mobilise against it.

Congress calls on the General Council to mobilise our movement politically and industrially to prevent either a cliff-edge Brexit or if the government's withdrawal deal fails to meet the TUC's tests. Congress agrees that the TUC should campaign against any deal that does not meet these tests with the aim of forcing an early general election to secure a Labour government with a mandate for a Brexit deal that puts working people first. Congress believes a defeated deal would be tantamount to a confidence vote in the government, warranting an immediate general election.

Congress, recognising the real risk of a collapse in the talks, or a deal that does not deliver on the TUC's priorities and, whilst respecting the outcome of the 2016 referendum, therefore calls for the option of a public vote to be kept on the table. Congress does not rule out the possibility of a campaign for people to have a final say on the final Brexit deal through a popular vote being held in order to make an informed decision on the deal on offer, break parliamentary deadlock or overcome the Fixed Term Parliament Act.

Mover: Unite

Secunder: Communication Workers Union

Supporters: Transport Salaried Staffs' Association, Royal College of Midwives

C03 Grenfell Tower

Motion 26 and amendments

Congress stands in solidarity with the 72 people who died as a result of the Grenfell Tower fire, and with all those affected by it.

Congress applauds the tremendous work carried out by local organisations to support the community and to fight for justice.

Congress notes that the Grenfell Tower Inquiry has begun taking evidence about the fire.

Congress notes the inquiry's expert reports, which show that the cladding applied to the building led to fire that spread in 12 minutes to the top of the building and then across the rest of the tower.

They show almost every aspect of fire safety - including the walls, compartmentation, windows, doors, ventilation, fire lift and water supply - utterly failed.

Congress notes the impossible situation facing firefighters and emergency control staff on the night and applauds their courage in continuing to help people and carry out rescues in appalling conditions.

Congress acknowledges the widespread anger with the Inquiry and the media for some of the questioning and for unfair criticism of firefighters.

Congress demands that the inquiry focus on those who produced and installed the cladding, and those politicians who established the system which enabled the use of these combustible materials.

Congress also demands that the inquiry considers the de-regulation of building standards and practices, health and safety deregulation, austerity spending cuts and the consequent shortcuts taken when commissioning exterior cladding works, cuts to fire services, and the failure to listen to tenants and tenants' organisations.

Congress notes the Hackitt review, which found the building fire safety regime unfit for purpose.

Congress demands a universal ban on such combustible materials on the external walls of buildings and an overhaul of building regulations to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

Congress calls on the government to reverse the outsourcing of health and safety and building control, which has resulted in many high-rise buildings being unsafe.

Congress recommits to fighting for justice and to holding politicians, contractors and other agencies to account for the Grenfell Tower fire.

Mover: Fire Brigades Union

Seconder: Unite

Supporter: UNISON

C04 Healthcare workers and workplace violence in prisons

Motion 28 and amendments

In 2017 it was reported that the number of assaults on prison staff had risen by 25 per cent since the previous year. Congress notes a recent study looking at large prisons showed that most workplace violence (44 per cent) occurred in adult male prisons. Many of the victims were healthcare workers. Verbal abuse (71 per cent) was more common than physical abuse (29 per cent). Abuse can result in both physical and mental injuries and heightened stress levels following any abusive incident is common.

Congress praises the work of GMB and other unions involved in the successful Protect the Protectors campaign. With the support of Labour MPs Holly Lynch MP and Chris Bryant MP this will result in new legislation and stronger sentencing for those who physically or sexual assault emergency service workers.

Congress agrees that healthcare workers including podiatrists, physiotherapists, nurses and doctors should not have to face the fear of violence and abuse when they go to work each day. College of Podiatry members have reported a lack of training given to staff coming into the prison environment. The prisons themselves are facing disastrous reductions in funding, leading to understaffing, stretching of resources and the support they are able to give to the healthcare workers.

Congress therefore calls on the General Council to highlight and campaign on the issue of workplace violence for prison staff, including healthcare workers.

Congress also calls on the General Council to lobby the government to adopt minimum standards throughout the sector including; adequate staffing levels, effective health and safety measures and more training and development opportunities to encourage staff retention and ensure prison officers have the skills to do their job effectively.

Mover: The College of Podiatry

Seconder: GMB

Supporter: Community

C05 Fighting sexual harassment in the creative industries

Motions 34 and amendment and 35

Congress believes that this is a moment of change. Since November 2017, a raft of high-profile allegations has shone a spotlight on harassment, not only in the creative industries but elsewhere including male dominated sectors. Behaviour that was never acceptable and should never have been tolerated.

Congress notes cases reported to the MU highlight a range of issues including adverts calling for 'attractive' female violinists, inappropriate dress policies, unsuitable changing or bathroom facilities for female performers, unacceptable 'laddish banter', as well as instances of sustained harassment in a place of employment. The MU has also received several reports of sexual assault. In several cases threats to job security have been made when female musicians have tried to challenge the behaviour.

Congress welcomes the General Council's statement on sexual harassment, which demonstrates the movement's clear leadership on this issue. As unions we have always championed the rights of our members. We are the first line of defence against bad behaviour and the go-to-source of advice whenever our members face problems of any kind. We collaborate with good employers on initiatives to tackle sexual harassment, such as the principles commissioned by the British Film Institute in partnership with industry bodies and unions.

The MU is leading the music industry's response to issues of sexual harassment by investigating individual cases, surveying musicians to find out the extent of the problem and challenging all music professionals to promote appropriate behaviour and put in place clear policies to protect musicians from harassment. The Musicians' Union (MU) has created a 'safe space' email address where musicians can report abuse and ask for assistance whilst remaining anonymous.

These problems can exist anywhere and that is why legislative changes are needed to protect and empower workers regardless of their employment status or sector.

Congress therefore agrees to redouble its efforts to bring change to the law including through:

- i. calling for the reinstatement of the statutory equality questionnaire which allowed claimants to ask for information pertinent to a case of harassment or discrimination
- ii. ensuring recognition of third party harassment claims
- iii. investigating the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements by employers
- iv. campaigning for the recognition of self-employed workers in the Equality Act 2010
- v. seeking an extension to the current time limit for lodging a claim of discrimination and/or harassment from three months to at least six months

- vi. highlighting the advice and assistance provided by the MU to all musicians suffering harassment or abuse.

Mover: Equity

Seconder: Musicians' Union

Supporter: Prospect

C06 Ending the hostile environment immigration policy and justice for the Windrush generation

Motion 42, and 43 and amendments

Congress is appalled at the treatment of the 'Windrush generation'. Deported or shamed into leaving the country, refused vital healthcare, separated from families and asked for multiple pieces of documentation, for every year, for decades.

Far from accidental, this is the inevitable outcome of the 'hostile environment', turning public service workers, private landlords and UK banks into immigration officers. Migrant people are being treated as second class citizens by a raft of legislation that impinges on every aspect of their life, a violation of citizens' fundamental rights. Congress notes this 'hostile environment' started under the then Home Secretary, now Prime Minister, Theresa May, who deployed 'go home' vans around London in 2013.

Rather than appease anti-immigrant sentiment, this has led to an emboldened and violent far-right, white nationalist movement. UKIP policies have been mainstreamed and groups such as Britain First, the Football Lads Alliance and 'For Britain' are mobilising in our streets - and are seeking to radicalise young people online. These developments have also seen a targeted attack on RMT members and others in London by supporters of Tommy Robinson, representing an attack on the whole trade union movement.

Congress is deeply concerned that with political and economic turmoil ahead, communities are being divided while trust in public services and institutions is eroded.

Congress recognises, on the 70th anniversary of both the creation of the NHS and the docking of the Empire Windrush, the contribution to the NHS made by the Windrush generation since its inception and throughout its history. Without migration the health and care service could not survive.

Congress notes:

- i. The Home Office administrative hurdles placed in the way of the Windrush generation to have their British citizenship recognised cause hardship, deprivation, denial of public and health services and their right to work and, in some cases, lead to deportation.
- ii. That 120,000 children, many born in the UK, including children who are stateless, are required to register their entitlement to British citizenship, which is their right.

- iii. That to access their citizenship right, children, their parents or guardians are required to pay an exorbitant and prohibitively high registration fee of £1,012, of which £372 is said to constitute the cost of administration and £640 is profit to the Home Office.
- iv. That for those children who are in local authority care, such a fee constitutes a direct transfer of funds from hard-pressed local authorities to the Home Office.

Congress applauds, and resolves to support, the campaign by Amnesty International UK to:

- a. remove any element of the registration fee over and above the actual cost of administration
- b. exempt the entire fee in the case of children in local authority care
- c. introduce a waiver of the fee in the case of any child who is unable to afford the administrative cost of registration
- d. improve awareness so that children exercise their rights to registration before a host of deplorable Windrush-type barriers and additional costs impact them when they reach 18 years of age.

Congress calls on the General Council to campaign:

1. to end the 'hostile environment' for all immigrants and for an independent inquiry into its implementation
2. for a rights-based and humane immigration policy that ensures the dignity of all workers and that tackles labour market exploitation
3. for the restoration of full rights for those affected by the Windrush scandal and full compensation for losses suffered
4. to reject the blame the government have placed on Home Office staff, and work with the Home Office unions to expose Conservative government policy.
5. to raise awareness of, and celebrate, the enormous contribution made by the Windrush generation and other migrant people to the NHS and all public services over many years, and which they will continue to make in the future.
6. to organise within our communities and at work to challenge the rise of the far-right and tackle the politics of hate, wherever they arise.
7. to organise a conference/forum of affiliates to discuss a trade union-based response to the threat of the far right.

Mover: UNISON

Seconder: Accord

Supporters: Public and Commercial Services Union; National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers; Chartered Society of Physiotherapy; Royal College of Midwives

C07 Public service outsourcing – lessons from Carillion

Motions 45, 46, and 47 and amendment

Congress is opposed to the privatisation of public services, PFI and the use of wholly owned subsidiaries by public bodies.

Congress notes the debacle and collapse of Carillion and notes with concern the cost to the taxpayer with further privatisation announced, including new prisons, probation services and some health services.

The recent TUC report 'What lessons can we learn from Carillion?' exposed the extent to which private companies running public services put short-term shareholder interests above the proper stewardship of public services, the wellbeing of workers who provide them, and the needs of communities that depend on them.

After Carillion's liquidation, damning National Audit Office reports and further evidence that profits are created at workers' expense, the need for trade union recognition, collective bargaining and common standards on pay, terms and conditions and pensions is pressing.

A Smith Institute report found that outsourcing has weakened employees' bargaining rights, further fragmented services, cut productivity, clouded accountability and damaged public service. PFI is now recognised as the costliest form of contracting.

Against that background the seven principles of public life (the Nolan principles) must now form part of the statutory requirements placed on those organisations that provide public services, to strengthen the public service ethos and benefit the public.

Congress notes that there has been no independent inquiry on the costs of privatisation and the failed Private Finance Initiative. The lessons of privatisation of our railways, healthcare, energy, Royal Mail, prisons and other services have been ignored by successive governments.

Congress demands a new approach that puts public interest and public service at the heart of decision-making. Congress calls on the General Council to develop policies on in-sourcing that rapidly end outsourcing on PFI and other contracts. In bringing services in-house the minimum standards for pay, terms, conditions and pension arrangements must be those sector-wide arrangements secured through collective bargaining.

Congress welcomes Labour's opposition to the continued use of PFI and privatisation of services.

Congress calls on the General Council to campaign for:

- i. an independent inquiry into the collapse of Carillion and privatisation, where trade unions can give evidence regarding their particular sectors to consider the evidence of poorer services and terms and conditions for workers in the race to the bottom and the long-term benefits of public ownership that has been ignored due to the dogma of privatisation
- ii. all commissioning decisions to be based on a public interest test with clear criteria and in-house provision as the default
- iii. the government to compile a comprehensive record of significant contracts across the public sector and enable central oversight of companies across multiple contracts
- iv. providers of public services to provide details of supply chains, company ownership and governance structures, employment, remuneration and tax policies and practices
- v. reform of directors' duties to require promotion of the long-term success of the company as their primary aim
- vi. the government to extend joint and several liability laws so that workers can bring claims for employment abuses against any contractor in the supply chain
- vii. an end to the use of PFI/PF2 models for the delivery of public infrastructure projects
- viii. the application of the seven principles and Freedom of Information Act requirements to all service providers
- ix. the sector-wide agreements secured through collective bargaining and the relevant public sector pension schemes becoming the minimum basis for the pay, terms, conditions and pension provision applying to all service providers in that sector
- x. trade union recognition in all service providers and the framework for their participation in sector-wide collective bargaining.

Mover: UNISON

Secunder: Unite

Supporters: POA; ASLEF

C08 Public sector

Motion 48 and amendments

The public sector is facing unprecedented challenges after years of austerity and cuts. The ability of public services to deliver the quality provision our citizens deserve is seriously undermined. Leaders and managers in the public sector are in the unenviable position of implementing this government's agenda whilst trying to protect their services and their staff. Effective, ethical leadership relies upon fairness, transparency and collaborative cultures. The blame for job losses, inferior terms and conditions of employment and job insecurity rest with government, not on the shoulders of leaders and managers (many of whom are union members) in public service who face an impossible task. Leaders stand with Congress in actively opposing austerity cuts. We should not allow government to divert attention away from itself by blaming fellow trade unionists or public servants for its policy failure: it must not seek to pressurise leaders into damaging, morally compromising decisions that harm outcomes for service users.

Congress calls on the government to:

- i. recognise the damage to society that has resulted from cuts to public services
- ii. reinvest in our critical public services
- iii. incentivise better training for aspiring leaders, including the principles of ethical leadership.

Congress calls on the General Council to:

- a. lobby government to invest in the public services that this nation needs
- b. recognise that responsibility for austerity measures lies with government
- c. reject any attempts to divide our members as workers and leaders in the public sector
- d. publicly resist attacks designed to undermine the impartiality and professionalism of civil servants and other public sector workers.

Mover: National Association of Headteachers

Seconder: National Education Union

Supporter: FDA

C09 Education funding crisis

Motion 51 and amendment, and 52

Congress condemns the government's continuing failure to take meaningful action to provide higher funding for schools, colleges and early years education.

Schools and colleges continue to suffer staffing losses, curriculum narrowing and cuts to spending on equipment and services. Schools serving the most disadvantaged students are suffering some of the greatest cuts. School teacher numbers fell by more than 5,000 last year, while pupil numbers rose by 66,000. And while 24,000 teaching jobs have gone in further education colleges and staff have seen the value of their pay fall by 25 per cent in the last 10 years.

Congress is dismayed that funding for students with special educational needs has come under particular pressure, affecting the very right to education for some. Congress affirms that funding for special educational needs, post-16 education and early years education must be afforded the same prominence and priority as funding for mainstream schools.

Congress notes that the real-terms cuts to school funding since 2015 are having a devastating impact in schools, with the majority of schools anticipating a deficit budget by 2020 on current funding plans. Schools have already made every efficiency possible and now face cuts to teaching and support staff jobs. This is hurting children, narrowing opportunities and having the greatest impact on the ability to support our most vulnerable pupils with special educational needs and disability. As every area of school expenditure is being cut, school buildings are starting to fall into disrepair and schools are having to ask parents for basic equipment.

Congress reaffirms its support for funding campaigns, including the School Cuts campaign led by GMB, NAHT, NEU, UNISON and Unite, and parent and head teacher campaigns.

Congress praises the campaigning on school funding, undertaken by trade unions representing school leaders, teachers and support staff, as well as parents and school-funding campaigns across the country, but there is more to do. We cannot deliver a world-class education system on the cheap at the very time that a post-Brexit Britain will require investment in our children and young people.

Congress calls on the government to:

- i. recognise that like the NHS, education is critical to underpin our society
- ii. fully fund schools for the 2018 support staff and teacher pay increases
- iii. fully fund a pay increase in colleges that meets the further education unions' 2018/19 claim
- iv. announce an immediate investment in education funding in its Autumn Budget to reverse real terms cuts in education and the process of cuts of £2.8bn per annum since 2015

- v. increase education spending in its comprehensive spending review in order to bring forward fair funding and activity led funding
- vi. work with education unions and parent groups on the deployment of additional funding and a fairer funding system.

Congress calls on the General Council to continue to work with education unions and campaign groups in pursuit of the above priorities.

Congress calls on the General Council to:

- a. lobby the government to address real terms cuts to school budgets
- b. ensure that the needs of all children and young people are addressed to achieve equal access to a good education for all, including those pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Mover: National Education Union

Seconder: National Association of Head Teachers

Supporter: University and College Union

C10 National education service

Motion 54 and amendment, and 55

Congress notes that education is in crisis. Educators, learners and society are losing out.

Congress demands change. Congress welcomes Labour's pledge to create a national education service. This must cover all education provision (from early years to adults, through schools, alternative provision, post-16 and HE), all education workers, and all learners - whatever their needs, means or age.

The education system requires better funding and the recruitment and retention of sufficient staff. Any national education service must end and then reverse privatisation of education. It should be democratically accountable, locally and nationally, with rigorous financial oversight, providing national pay and conditions for all.

Congress calls on government and all political parties to create the social and economic conditions for young people to succeed, establish consensus for a long-term approach to education, and institute an inspirational, aspirational and principled national education service, delivered locally, and accessible universally:

- i. enabling learners to understand and contribute to wider society and the world in which they live and to change it for the better
- ii. ensuring parents are a valued part of the education community, including through school/college governance arrangements

- iii. recognising that every member of staff has a role to play in creating a supportive and stimulating environment in which learners can flourish and achieve their full potential
- iv. seeing education professionals as trusted partners and ethical leaders - redefining their professional identity to guarantee a confident, informed profession of choice with agency and moral purpose, supported throughout their careers and whose work, based on educational research, is valued by society
- v. fostering collaboration, not competition, between education establishments to provide the highest quality education for all, recognising the capacity to learn has no limits.

Congress notes the Fabian Society's *Life Lessons: A national education service that leaves no adult behind*. This publication sets out how a Labour government should deliver on its promise to create a free, universal 'cradle to grave' education system.

Congress endorses the publication's proposals:

- a. accountable - democratically accountable and open at every level
- b. devolved - with local decision-making that delivers coherent, integrated local provision, albeit within a national framework
- c. empowering - ensuring that learners, employees and institutions are all enabled and respected
- d. genuinely lifelong - with opportunities for retraining and chances to re-engage at every stage, and parity for part-time and digital distance learning
- e. coordinated - flexible pathways for learners between providers and strong partnerships involving providers, employers, unions and technology platforms
- f. outcome-focused - designed to meet social and economic needs, with far more adults receiving productivity-enhancing education but also recognising that learning brings wider benefits.

Congress urges all political parties to work towards the principles of a national education service with a clear commitment to support a professional workforce.

Congress also welcomes campaigns to liberate the life choices of students by moving to a system where students apply to university after they receive their results, as happens in other countries.

Congress calls on the General Council to campaign for a system that:

1. rejects marketisation of education
2. makes teaching an attractive career choice
3. ends the use of casualised contracts
4. invests in quality professional development
5. increases engagement with staff and respects their professional autonomy.

Mover: National Education Union

Seconder: University and College Union

Supporter: UNISON

C11 Health and social care workers

Motion 60 and amendments

Health and social care in the UK is facing a funding crisis. According to NHS Improvement 44 per cent of trusts overspent their budgets in 2017/18 and alarmingly, the NHS provider sector as a whole ended 2017/18 with a deficit of £960m. Furthermore, the Health Foundation suggested the social care funding gap is projected to reach £2.1bn by 2019/20.

These funding gaps are leaving dedicated staff in the sector having to pay for resources from their own pockets. The British Dietetic Association has gathered evidence that shows a high percentage of members are forced to pay for stationery, equipment and other resources in order to do their jobs effectively. This ranges from basic stationery to fridges, fans, uniforms, weighing scales and essential reference books. Staff are also conducting home visits to members of the public using their own vehicles but not being paid the nationally agreed mileage rates, thus incurring additional costs for already low paid NHS staff. Congress is appalled that staff are also buying food and other essentials such as baby milk and nappies for vulnerable patients.

Congress condemns the practice of workers paying to do their jobs. And local government budget cuts that have increased financial pressures on the social care system.

Congress is concerned that NHS workers are facing immense difficulties in securing funding and time off to undertake essential professional development training, leaving them to self-fund. This can amount to hundreds of pounds per year for course fees, text books, accommodation and travel along with the loss of annual leave and rest days.

Congress calls for:

- i. continued pressure on the government to spend a higher proportion of the UK's wealth on health and social care in line with other comparable economies and bring an end to reliance on the good will and dedication of already hard-pressed staff to deliver the services so desperately needed

- ii. a long-term funding settlement for health and social care
- iii. adequate funding and time off for essential professional development, including for care workers.
- iv. a campaign to highlight the widespread practice of public sector workers subsidising services
- v. integration of health and social care services to improve the quality of care.

Mover: British Dietetic Association

Seconder: Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Supporters: Community; The College of Podiatry

C12 Mental health

Motions 63 and amendments, and 64 and amendment

Congress believes the government's claim to have brought about "parity of esteem" between mental and physical health in England lies in tatters.

Recent UK polling shows that concern about mental health has doubled in the last year.

The systemic underfunding of mental health services, beds and training provision has had a progressive and continuing detrimental impact on both staff and service users at the same time as austerity generally has contributed to increasing mental ill health.

Congress shares the concerns of MPs that proposals to transform mental health care for young people through maximum waiting times and improved support in schools will take too long to effect real change and fails to address the wider population.

Congress is alarmed that yet again the crucial issue of improved social care funding has been postponed, with the green paper delayed until autumn 2018.

Congress believes the mental health crisis can only be properly addressed by adopting an holistic approach that involves not just the NHS, but also social care, education, youth work, housing and also policing.

Congress welcomes improvements in awareness of mental health with long-held taboos beginning to be overcome. The increase in the level of awareness has led to a spike in those seeking help and put a strain on NHS mental health services.

The lack of any appreciable increase in trained staff or funding for mental health amount to real-terms cuts. Those that cannot afford to pay for private services are waiting for essential help in their time of highest need.

Many GPs suggest that vulnerable people seek help from workplace occupational health departments as an alternative to mainstream services. However, this shifts the burden of responsibility to already stretched services that were never designed to take the overspill or to act as a stopgap for NHS services. Many workers, including freelance and atypical workers, have no access to any workplace occupational health or support services.

Congress asserts that mental health is also a workplace issue and that there is a need to ensure improvements in how employers are tackling the causes of work-related stress, which can cause or exacerbate mental ill health. The rise in insecure work, the fall in real wages and the frequent removal of sick pay provisions are all factors which have contributed significantly to the mental health crisis.

Congress supports a campaign to ensure that there are sufficient staff and facilities to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our society.

Congress calls on the General Council to:

- i. campaign for improved mental health funding across the UK, working with service users and community groups
- ii. lobby for the RIDDOR system to be changed so that work-related stress absence is reportable
- iii. campaign to ensure that government and employers take action to address the mental health implications of poor employment protections
- iv. work with affiliates to organise a concerted trade union response on mental health and wellbeing that expects employers to conduct risk assessments that identify workplace and other risk factors and underlying causes of the condition, before making a commitment to address recommendations
- v. organise a one-day conference in 2019 on mental health in the workplace to bring together unions and organisations specialising in mental health issues
- vi. set up a cross-union working group on mental health to share best practice and co-ordinate campaigning work.

Mover: UNISON

Seconder: Society of Radiographers

Supporters: Usdaw; CWU; Equity; TSSA

C13 A new deal for workers

Motion 69 and amendments

Congress agrees the 12 May New Deal rally is the catalyst for stronger collective action in the biggest trade union campaign for decades to reclaim our purpose as the collective voice of workers and to change the balance of forces in the world of work. Current volatility means now is the time to bring people together around a new deal manifesto with worker and trade union rights at its core.

The General Council must agree, publish and deliver a new deal next steps plan based on the following:

- i. Agree a common bargaining agenda for individual sectors to tackle insecure employment, inequality and in-work poverty and stress.
- ii. Convene a summit to agree a charter, similar to Bridlington, which promotes greater co-operation on how we recruit the millions of unorganised UK workers and bring an end to inter-union competition.
- iii. Agree a trade union new deal manifesto that builds on the Labour Party manifesto and the work of the Institute of Employment Rights.
- iv. Develop links and solidarity with other groups campaigning for social justice to build a better future and stronger society.
- v. Urgently challenge the government to amend the current Trade Union Act in respect of postal balloting for industrial action. The case for modernisation of the balloting laws and the introduction of workplace/e-balloting is clear. The current law restricts unions ability to defend our members.
- vi. Organise a day of action in support of the new deal in the first half of 2019, backed up and preceded by our biggest ever collective communication, social media and workplace meeting strategy. The action will be deliverable by agreeing an innovative menu of options that workers everywhere can participate in on a given date.

Congress recognises that with the structural inequality and imbalance of power in today's economy, the major problems in today's world of work and the challenge of the fourth industrial revolution it has never been more important for unions to come together like never before and deliver a bold new deal for workers and their communities.

Mover: Communication Workers Union

Seconder: National Education Union

Supporter: Public and Commercial Services Union

C14 Turkey

Motion 75 and amendments

Congress is concerned with the Turkish government's continued mis-treatment of workers perceived as being opponents of the state, in particular members of the Kurdish community. It is reported that since the 2016 election, some 60,000 people have lost their freedom and 150,000 have lost their jobs, including some 21,000 teachers, in the on-going purge by the Turkish government.

Congress notes the work of Academics for Peace in mobilising solidarity action from UK based academics in defending their academic colleagues in Turkey. Congress also sends its support to Education International and their work in coordinating international observers at the trials of academics in Turkey.

Congress reaffirms its call for the Turkish government to reinstate the tens of thousands of unfairly dismissed public servants and resolves to support further those Turkish trade unions, such as Egitim-Sen, fighting back against this repression.

Congress demands that the Turkish government immediately stop the war against the Kurdish population, restart the abandoned peace process with the PKK, and releases imprisoned Kurdish political leader Abdullah Ocalan so that he can play a full role in the peace process.

Further, Congress instructs the General Council to seek to persuade the UK government to actively support the reinstatement of dismissed workers and to demand the upholding of academic freedom.

Mover: Educational Institute of Scotland

Seconder: Unite

Supporter: University and College Union

C15 Public sector pay

Motion 49 and amendment, and 50 and amendments

Congress welcomes the pay settlements reached in the public sector during 2018 which have breached the 1 per cent government pay cap, in some instances with extra funding, but notes that inflation (RPI) was running as high as 3.7 per cent in January 2018, and that our members have suffered years of real-terms pay cuts.

Congress notes that following the 2017 general election the issue of the public sector pay cap was at the forefront of political debate and that in September 2017 the chief secretary to the treasury said that the pay cap would be lifted.

Despite this announcement, the government has continued to limit pay increases in the civil service and related areas to between 1 per cent and 1.5 per cent. The pay cap has already had a devastating effect on the value of the incomes of our members. PCS research shows the effect of that policy will mean that average civil service pay will have fallen in value by over 20 per cent by 2020.

Congress notes TUC estimates that show public sector workers such as crown prosecutors, NHS specialist dieticians, prison officers, firefighters, nuclear maintenance engineers, teachers and NHS ancillary staff are out of pocket by between £1,000 and £4,000 in real terms (based on CPI).

Congress notes the pay claim submitted by PCS for 5 per cent or £1,200 and the statutory ballot launched by PCS in June 2018 following the lack of any positive response from the government. Congress pledges to give full support to PCS members in the event of industrial action.

Congress recognises that pay review bodies in the United Kingdom is a government mechanism to replace collective bargaining for certain groups of employees in the public sector, including the prison service pay review body. Different pay review bodies also cover school teachers, nurses, doctors and other health professionals. It is noted by Congress that the review bodies are supposed to be independent of government when making recommendations after taking evidence from employer and trade unions but unfortunately the review bodies are selected, paid, and follow a remit from treasury and government which has led to pay cuts since 2010 with review bodies adhering to the government agenda.

Congress accepts that pay review bodies should be disbanded as they are not independent of government and effectively do as they are told to achieve government objectives on pay.

Congress notes existing models of national collective bargaining, such as the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services and the Middle Managers' Negotiating Body for firefighters across the UK.

Congress calls on the General Council to coordinate a public sector pay campaign for above-inflation pay increases for all public sector workers, to include the coordinating of bargaining timetables and pay demands, campaign activities, ballots and industrial action.

Congress further instructs the General Council to work with the Labour Party and other organisations who support a return to national sectoral collective bargaining.

Mover: Public and Commercial Services Union

Seconder: POA

Supporter: Fire Brigades Union

SECTION 4

GENERAL COUNCIL STATEMENTS

General Council statement on Brexit

With less than eight months to go before the UK is due to leave the EU, the Conservative government has comprehensively failed to negotiate a Brexit that meets its own red lines, let alone one that protects the jobs, rights and livelihoods of working people across the UK.

Since Congress 2017 internal Conservative party politics have taken priority over the interests of working people. Sackings and resignations have made it impossible for the government to agree a negotiating position with itself – never mind with our EU partners. The Chequers agreement took two years to develop yet fell apart within days. The EU Withdrawal Act revealed as a sham the prime minister’s repeated promise to workers that their rights would be protected, while at the same time denied MPs a truly meaningful vote on the Brexit deal. The trade and customs bills have been subject to delays, concessions, and backroom deals to avoid embarrassing parliamentary defeats, with the prime minister barely surviving key votes and her fragile working majority under constant threat.

The government has also failed to address many of the reasons why people voted to leave the EU in the first place. Insecurity at work, employer abuses of open labour markets and bad jobs; a failed industrial strategy; lack of investment in transport and infrastructure and a failure to address a growing housing crisis alongside on-going austerity driven cuts to our schools and hospitals continue to blight people’s lives and devastate communities. The people who are most affected by these issues will not benefit from the sort of hard, right-wing Brexit that is being proposed by the government.

The far-right, bolstered by international support, have taken advantage in our communities, taking their message of hate, fear and despair onto our streets and football terraces. Their opportunistic narratives and new, digital ways of organising do not disguise their true motivations or age-old anti-semitism and attempts to scapegoat Muslims, migrants and other minorities for the government’s decisions to deliver an economy that works only for big business and the rich, abandoning communities and neglecting our public services. EU citizens and other migrants in the UK are feeling less and less welcome, and British citizens abroad face similar uncertainty and worry.

Unions are tackling the issues that matter to our members and workers generally, whether Brexit-related or not. The Brexit that is being proposed, poses threats to our manufacturing and service industries, to the funding and staffing of public services, to further and higher education, science and research institutions, health and social care provision, arts, media and heritage. Some of the impacts of Brexit are already affecting people’s jobs and livelihoods but worse may be to come.

People have seen prices rise and wages stagnate or fall. As the Cabinet's own leaked advice revealed, any Brexit scenario is likely to make the situation worse, but some scenarios will be even worse than others.

While the government flails and the far-right marches, the countdown to Brexit continues - and the risk that the UK will crash out of the EU in 200 days becomes ever more real. There can be no doubt that if that happens, working people our families and communities will pay the price.

The General Council statement 'Making a jobs first rights first Brexit a reality' agreed by Congress in 2017 set out the TUC's objectives for the Brexit negotiations. It highlighted three tests that any withdrawal agreement and final status deal must collectively meet:

- › maintaining workers' existing rights and establishing a level playing field so that British workers' rights do not fall behind those of other European workers
- › preserving tariff-free, barrier-free, frictionless trade with the rest of Europe to protect jobs
- › ensuring that trade and livelihoods in Gibraltar and Ireland are protected.

These three tests continue to guide our work on Brexit.

The Withdrawal Agreement and the risks of crashing out in March 2019

A smooth and orderly Brexit can only happen if the UK and EU approve a withdrawal agreement before the UK leaves the EU on 29 March 2019. This package must include agreement on citizens' rights, Northern Ireland, budget contributions and a transition period. It is likely to be accompanied by a non-binding political declaration on the UK's future relationship with EU.

The TUC is particularly concerned that the transition period must be agreed as this will provide both the additional time necessary for the detailed negotiation of our future trade and political relationship with the EU during which we will benefit from a further (albeit short) period of protection for tariff-free, barrier-free frictionless trade with the EU, as well as protecting workers' existing rights and making sure that UK workers benefit from any further EU rights introduced during this period.

We have also repeatedly called for no hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland, to preserve jobs, livelihoods and peace. However, the prime minister's red lines on no membership of a customs union or single market threaten the Good Friday Agreement and continued peace in Northern Ireland - as well as the economy on both sides of the border - by making a hard border inevitable. The cabinet has looked for a way out of this self-created crisis, proposing a number of customs proposals that have not survived scrutiny and have not been considered serious by EU negotiators.

The lack of progress on agreeing a Withdrawal Agreement means that the UK could crash out of the EU without a deal on 29 March 2019. Even if the UK and the EU somehow agree a deal in time, it is not clear that the prime minister can command a majority for it to pass in parliament.

If the government fails to agree a Withdrawal Agreement with the EU, there would be no smooth transition period giving space to negotiate a final status deal. A disorderly exit would lead to the immediate creation of trade barriers and the imposition of tariffs by the EU under generic World Trade Organisation rules. This will have a profoundly damaging impact on trade and on jobs across the UK. It will mean prices in the shops will go up and there could be shortages of EU sourced products and goods.

A 'no deal' Brexit would expose the vulnerability of workers within the UK economy given our comparatively low levels of social protection and constrained Union rights. It will lead to an immediate hard border on the island of Ireland, jeopardising peace.

A range of key cross border agencies, initiatives and sector level regulatory forums will break down in many areas, including the certification for use of components and manufactured goods, nuclear safety, air travel and medical co-operation. There would be a damaging impact on the recognition of professional qualifications. Britain would lose its access to Euratom, the European Medicines Agency and the European Aviation Safety Agency, as well as the Galileo project. And it would leave EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens in the EU in an uncertain legal position.

The economic and social damage that would be caused by crashing out mean that no responsible government should allow the UK to leave the EU in this way.

With 200 days to go before the UK leaves the EU, there is no sign of a realistic resolution on the table. The TUC calls on the government urgently to rethink their failed negotiating strategy and abandon their self-defeating red lines. We reject the argument put by the government that MPs have no choice but to vote for whatever deal the prime minister can secure, or risk the UK crashing out of the EU without a deal.

If the government cannot conclude a Withdrawal Agreement, or if what it negotiates does not secure Parliament's support, or if the deal would be bad for workers' jobs, rights and livelihoods, we demand an immediate general election to allow parties to put their plans for Brexit to the voters, and the extension of the Article 50 process to avoid crashing out of the EU with no deal, and allow time for the a post-election negotiation of a deal that works for working people.

The UK's future relationship with the EU

As well as the Withdrawal Agreement, the UK and EU need to agree a future relationship before the end of a transition period to avoid a damaging shock to the UK economy, similar to the impact of crashing out without a Withdrawal Agreement.

And as the 2017 General Council statement said, we believe in keeping all options on the table and ruling nothing out. Any deal must be realistic and achievable through positive, constructive but tough negotiations with the EU.

Over the past year we have made the case for a relationship that meets the TUC's three tests set out above on workers' rights, jobs, and Northern Ireland:

- › For workers' rights to be protected and enforceable now and into the future, Britain's final status deal with the EU must include a level playing field for workers' rights to stop unfair competition and ensure good employers are not undercut by the bad.
- › A prosperous UK needs tariff-free, barrier-free, frictionless trade in goods and services with the rest of Europe. EU trade accounts for about half of all British exports; is vital to the employment of over three million workers either directly or indirectly; and provides good jobs with higher wages, training opportunities and skill levels than average.
- › There must be no hard border between Ireland and Northern Ireland, or more restrictions on the border between Gibraltar and Spain.

As we agreed in 2017 General Council statement, we are willing to consider any proposals that would meet those tests, including negotiating a new single market relationship, or working up from a bespoke trade deal. At present we should not rule out unrestricted access to the single market through continued membership outside the EU as this meets our tests.

Several other countries are outside the EU but inside the single market and if the outcome of negotiations with the EU was for the UK to stay in the single market in the longer-term, the TUC would continue to push, especially through the ETUC, for reforms so that the single market better serves working people's needs including reforming competition rules. And the UK should look at other EU countries' models of free movement, and should use all the domestic powers at its disposal to manage the impact of migration. Membership of a customs union with the rest of the EU is vital to ensure that tariffs are not imposed between the UK and the rest of Europe.

As we stated in 2017, we are opposed to any deal for a long-term relationship with the EU that focuses narrowly on trade, without a strong social dimension. All trade deals that cover the UK must provide for enhanced labour rights and protection for public services. We reject a vision of free trade that does not include fair trade, deregulates employment, food, consumer and environmental standards; offers up public services like the NHS to rapacious multinational companies; and undermines UK sovereignty by giving foreign investors privileged rights to sue democratically elected governments for acting in the interests of working people. We reject corporate focused trade deals such as those being proposed by the government with Australia, New Zealand, the USA and the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership, and together with trade unions in the relevant countries we will oppose such deals.

In the face of so much instability and mistrust in the ability of politicians to deliver, it comes as no surprise that polls show a growing number of people want a say on the Brexit deal. Whether that's through a meaningful vote in parliament, an early general election or a popular vote on the terms of Brexit, it is essential that the Brexit deal secures the confidence and support of the country. Given the real risk of a collapse in the talks, or a deal that does not deliver on the TUC's priorities, whilst respecting the result of the 2016 referendum to leave the European Union, we do not rule out the possibility of campaigning for people to have a final say on the Brexit deal through a popular vote.

A better future for working people

The TUC's ambitions for a more equal, more prosperous country do not stop with a Brexit deal that protects jobs, rights at work and peace in Northern Ireland. Working people need a new deal.

Many people voted for Brexit to hit back at a political elite that has inflicted austerity on communities all over the UK and has created an economy where good jobs are being stripped out of too many places and apprenticeships alongside other opportunities for good secure jobs for young people have nosedived. We share these concerns. The trade union movement has a responsibility to unify all workers whether they voted leave or remain and the best way of achieving this is to directly link the fight for a new deal for workers in the UK.

Getting the best possible Brexit deal must be accompanied by a national recovery plan to bring more good jobs to communities across the country. That means funding our public services properly, political intervention in the economy, growing investment and restoring public ownership of key industries. It means getting wages rising again - and cracking down on the disastrous spread of insecure work that leaves people trapped in poverty and vulnerable to exploitation. It means banning zero-hours and other exploitative contracts. It means building the infrastructure we need for the twenty-first century - and stopping rampant profiteering by bringing public services and utilities back into public ownership. Above all, it means tackling the inequalities within and between regions and nations after decades of unregulated globalization and de-industrialisation.

We need a government with a plan to put working people first. And that starts with getting the right Brexit deal - one that protects workers' rights and helps create more good jobs - as we start to rebuild the UK in the interests of working people and their communities.

General Council statement on collective bargaining

The TUC and our affiliated unions are united in our belief that effective union organisation, collective bargaining and collective voice and action at work are the best way of protecting working people's interests, regardless of where or how you work. The freedom to organise, join and participate collectively in trade unions, and negotiate pay and conditions in the defence and promotion of workers' interests are fundamental rights. And we demand these rights to support workers in their fight back against the tide of sky high inequality, low pay, and working conditions that hark back to the Victorian age. Collective bargaining is a key way to tackle inequality, improve working lives and ensure that decent employers are not undercut by the bad. Guaranteeing workers a voice at work can help tackle Britain's poor productivity record, deliver fairer rewards, and prevent unfair competition.

The balance of power in the workplace has been shifting against working people for too long. In the face of ideological austerity, attacks on trade union rights and undermining of collective bargaining, workers have faced the worst wage squeeze for 200 years, and the rise of business models that have resulted in an epidemic of insecurity at work. Working poverty is rising while boardroom greed has seen CEO pay rocket. Bad employers are taking the opportunity to avoid their responsibilities, to both workers and society: cancelling shifts at the drop of a hat, pushing people into bogus self-employment, and exploiting every loophole to get out of paying their workforce a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, or their fair share of taxes.

The past forty years have seen repeated attacks on unions' rights to organise and represent workers collectively. The Thatcher governments of the 1980s deregulated employment rights, restricted the right to strike and dismantled support for collective bargaining, in a deliberate attempt to weaken the power of workers. And the Conservative government of 2015 further developed this attack, imposing a new draconian and undemocratic Trade Union Act that placed restrictions on unions' ability to organise, campaign and take industrial action.

Despite all these attacks, many decent employers already recognise and bargain with us. And unions are still a powerful force winning every day for workers across the public and private sectors, including in areas where traditionally membership density has been low - with bold new organising campaigns in sectors like retail, parcel delivery, telecoms and hospitality. We need to protect the victories we have won, including existing recognition and bargaining arrangements.

But despite this work, over this period, the fall in collective bargaining coverage in the UK has been one of the fastest in the developed world. The situation is urgent; if we do nothing, we risk seeing the number of workers who benefit from trade union representation reduced still further - the US, for example, has just over one in ten workers benefiting from collective bargaining. But we also have the best opportunity for some time to turn this trend around; an increasingly widespread recognition of the fact that the decline in trade unions' influence is a problem for anyone who cares about a fairer economy, and a Labour party committed to roll out sectoral collective bargaining.

The TUC is committed to extending collective bargaining in the UK. That starts with unions' organising efforts - and we congratulate our member unions on the gains they have won this year - taking on employers and winning for working people from the gig economy to major corporate giants.

We need a positive policy framework that helps workers get the strong, confident voice and representation they need to win better pay and conditions and to make the economy fairer. We don't believe there is one measure to address the issues we face; forty years of sustained attacks on trade unionism, and an increasingly diverse and fragmented labour market mean that we need a framework of measures to begin to turn the tide. And we know that with real reform we can deliver a better future for workers.

That starts with re-establishing sectoral collective bargaining – essential to deliver greater equality across the economy. Establishing joint industrial councils, bringing together unions and business to agree minimum standards across an industry, ensuring that there's a level playing field and that no employer can compete on a race to the bottom. The TUC and unions will have a critical role in making these institutions work for workers. And where the public sector is a purchaser of services from the private sector, stronger procurement rules are essential to deliver better employment for all those whose employment is funded directly or indirectly by the public purse. Contractors – many of whom have repeatedly sought to reduce workers' rights – should be required to respect public sector collective agreements, ensuring outsourced workers receive the rate for the job, and agreed terms and conditions, alongside trade union recognition and collective rights to organise.

We need to make sure that workers have a strong collective voice at enterprise level, and in every workplace, whether they are working in a restaurant, warehouse, public space, factory, office, or freelance. Too many employers are hostile to unions or won't come to the table to negotiate in good faith – unwilling to respect workers' right to have a say in the decisions that affect them at work – and unable to recognise the benefits that a strong workplace presence can deliver in terms of engagement, productivity and better business decisions. The decline in collective voice at work is a missing part of the story in the UK's productivity puzzle.

Employers should be under a duty to bargain with TUC unions within the framework of the TUC's principles and procedures. This should include all issues important to workers, including pay and conditions, equality, family friendly rights, pensions, workplace procedures, work organisation and the strategic direction for the organisation, putting anti-democratic employers on notice that talking to your workers and their unions is no longer optional. Detailed work on strengthening the tools that give independent unions the right to negotiate with their employer will be a key focus of TUC work over the next year. The TUC supports the commitment by Labour for a new Ministry of Labour to ensure that workers' voices are heard in the heart of government, and employers are forced where necessary to respect that voice in the workplace. That principle extends to the boardroom, which must include elected worker directors.

The law should also assist unions to organise workers so that workers can exercise their right to join a union. Unions must have the right to access workplaces during working hours to tell people about the benefits of joining a union. The right to be accompanied should be expanded to ensure all workers have the right to collective union representation when seeking to improve their pay and conditions. Rights to paid time off for union duties should be extended to all workers, not limited to employees.

Collective bargaining is the best way to ensure that new technology, including artificial intelligence and automation, helps us deliver a future that works for working people – so we need to update our framework of legislation to make sure that unions can deliver and that workers share in the collective wealth we create. Union activists should be able to use social media as an organising tool, without the risk of victimisation or dismissal. And we need government to put working people front and centre in shaping the future of work, with a clear role for unions in delivering new learning entitlements, and seats at the table for unions in a new future of work commission.

The attacks on unions have weakened workers' power, and led to increased insecurity, rising income inequality and working people missing out on their fair share of growth. But we have the best opportunity in a generation to turn that around. In its 150th year, the TUC is fully committed to this goal, delivering the new deal that workers need.

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