



123rd Annual Congress

SCOTTISH TRADES UNION CONGRESS

**General Council
Special Statement**

2020

Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
Response to the Crisis	4
The People’s Recovery	6
A Scotland Fit for the Future	8

General Council Special Statement 2020

INTRODUCTION

THESE are some of the most challenging times that trade unions have ever faced. We are still in the midst of the COVID crisis with all of its health and economic challenges. Work and the workplace have been at the centre of all that has happened over the past months. As detailed in the General Council Report, the STUC has acted to place trade unions at the centre of the debate – driving the immediate response to the crisis and agitating for the right policy responses too. As well as identifying immediate threats and moving to mitigate them, we have identified major opportunities for the Movement to ensure that our values are reflected in future policy and that union voice and union membership grows in strength. Direct policy engagement with Government and other stakeholders has been vital, but so has communication, support for organising, training, and capacity building.

While COVID-19 has dominated our activity over the recent period, we have sought to respond to other major events, including continuing campaigning against race discrimination during the rise of the Black Lives Matter Movement, the latest developments around Brexit and the growing debate about Scotland's constitutional future. By the time we reach Congress we will be less than six months away from the Scottish Parliament elections which will mark a key moment in Scotland's future.

We have undertaken all this with a new leadership team led by our new General Secretary, Rozanne Foyer, and with key additions to our Management Team and wider staff team. Maintaining a sound financial position for the organisation, plotting the path to future occupancy of the STUC centre and supporting and developing our staff are the key foundations which underpin the work we have taken forward. A full report on our operational activity is contained in the General Council Report and the Treasurer's Report.

This strategy paper was shared with affiliated Unions, Trades Union Councils and our Equality Committees, and

a range of amendments and additions were incorporated into this final document.

Even in the period between the writing of this strategy, its amendment by affiliates and the Congress that considers it, much will have happened, and much will have been achieved. That is why this paper should be read in conjunction with the General Council Report which outlines the activities undertaken and policy, campaign and organising interventions which are ongoing.

This paper proposes a strategy for the six months leading up to Congress 2021 and the subsequent Scottish Parliament elections. We describe this strategy in three general themes, broadly aligned with the STUCs strategic objectives. **Response to the Crisis, Economic Recovery, and a Scotland Fit for the Future.** These short titles barely do justice to the breadth and depth of work proposed.

Response to the Crisis: Precarious and unsafe work was all too prevalent before the crisis. Now we know that Bad Work kills. Response proposes a series of political, campaigning, organising and capacity building actions which build on the immediate work undertaken during the crisis to intervene on public health, organise for safe workplaces and build the strength of unions, at every level, to face the challenges ahead. In this, union promotion will be key. An active communication strategy involving media, social media, webinars, video messaging and podcasts will be vital.

Economic Recovery: We are facing the biggest economic crisis in living memory. The immediate cause may have been COVID-19, but the virus drew its strength from a generation of injustices. Coronavirus may not technically discriminate on the lines of class – but its effects are clearly exacerbated by imbalances of income, opportunity wealth and power. Recovery proposes a series of political and campaigning actions to win short-term measures to rebuild our economy, alongside medium and longer-term measures to create a democratic and green economy and a society in which workers and their families have fair work. Economic recovery can only take place alongside a health response that continues to stress

the importance of the health of workers and the wider public.

A Scotland Fit for the Future: Alongside the health and economic challenges we face, equality and democracy are at the heart of a people's recovery. Scotland has a long way to go to create the society in which all its citizens experience equal rights free from discrimination. We have yet to resolve the constitutional impasse in Scotland and in the context of Brexit, our place in the world. A Scotland Fit for the Future outlines a set of political and campaigning actions to ensure that equality is at the heart of our vision for Scotland, and that trade unionists have their say in the constitutional and international issues that lie ahead.

RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS

A continued Emphasis on Public Health and Workplace Safety

In the six months between March and September, the priority of the General Council has been to effect direct, dynamic and regular contact with Government and other key stakeholders to ensure the unions voice has been directly heard and acted upon in responding to the public health, workplace and jobs crisis. None of these challenges have gone away. At the time of writing, the R number in Scotland is again over one, a new 5 tier system of restrictions is in place and a new Scotland-wide lockdown remains a distinct possibility.

The prioritisation of public health (including mental health) and workers safety is an economic as well as a social issue. The General Council will continue to make the case that moving to re-open workplaces and expanding social interaction too quickly will have a more significant and long-term detrimental effect than a slower and more careful return to normality.

To this effect we will continue to argue with Government and other stakeholders, and through media and social media, that health and safety is paramount and that these can best be achieved through union organising and collective bargaining.

Political Engagement

The General Council will maintain regular meetings with key affiliates through the COVID-19 group to supplement meetings of the General Council, to maintain direct and dynamic contact with the Scottish Government and other key stakeholders and to continue to support union capacity to meet the challenge. This will include:

- Regular monitoring of the Fair Work statements agreed with Government during the crisis, political elevation of issues of concern and support for organising on Fair Work.
- Continuing to engage and facilitate affiliates' engagement on the monitoring and updating of all

guidance on workplace safety and specific guidance for sectors of the economy. Maintaining strong relationships with safety enforcement bodies. Ensuring consistency of guidance across the economy and ensuring that sectoral guidance does not needlessly contain punitive provisions or disciplinary threats to workers or students for non-compliance with COVID-19 rules.

- A continued engagement with the UK Government on reserved issues which affect the Scottish response to the crisis.
- Lobbying both Governments for the necessary public spending to ensure that safety measures are effective so that low sick pay and the fear of redundancy does not undermine public health strategy, as well as further impacting the pay of workers.
- Co-operating with political parties and civil society organisations to put pressure on Governments and influencing manifesto commitments.
- Continuing strategic interventions in key Government and stakeholder groups.

Five Red Lines

Six months on from the start of the crisis, the principles behind the STUC's Five Red Lines remain highly relevant. The General Council will lobby Government and campaign for:

- Continual monitoring and expansion of testing and optimum contact tracing.
- No relaxation on the supply of PPE for all workplaces, essential and non-essential, to maintain the highest quality of protection for all workers.
- An ongoing process for monitoring and updating sectoral guidance and dynamic workplace risk assessments to be agreed between unions and employers.
- Additional resource and co-operation to ensure effective enforcement of workplace guidance.
- More financial support for workers and the removal of disincentives to compliance with COVID-19 workplace guidance.

Supporting Union Capacity

Over the next six months, the General Council will build on its strategy of expanding its offer to affiliated unions to meet the challenges we face. Our widened community of health and safety reps and system for triaging workplace issues to affiliates, Scottish Hazards and Better than Zero will be even more vital. The website 'Workers Safety Scotland' will be regularly updated to provide a resource for reps and the support enquiry point safety@stuc.org.uk will continue to be staffed. Online seminars on health and safety will continue and we will develop training for a new and diverse group of health and safety reps. We will



maintain and enhance our roving health and safety rep offer, seek to build this model into future work and explore campaigning activity to seek statutory recognition of the roving rep role. We will also develop additional training to meet these opportunities.

Supporting Affiliate Campaigns and Industrial Action

Whether related to redundancy, pay, safety or other employment conditions, the General Council expects to see industrial unrest increase. Industrial action caused by non-resolution by employers of disputes in any sector of the economy will be vigorously supported. The General Council will promote a strong dialogue with affiliates to ensure it is able to respond early to calls for support and solidarity across the Movement.

Organising and Capacity Building

Despite the challenges of unemployment, many affiliates are reporting an uptick in membership density and activity. Arguably, trade unionism has higher agency than for two generations. Translating this into sustainable membership growth and workplace strength, including in under-unionised sectors, is the key priority. Alongside this, the focus on local economies and communities calls for strategy to support Trades Union Councils. Alongside all other affiliates, Trades Union Councils are being (have been) consulted on this strategy paper. We will hold an online Trades Union Council Conference in early December.

We will:

- Build on and promote **existing tools we have developed to empower workers** to organise on Health and Safety.
- **Expand the role of Scottish Union Learning to include unemployed workers.**
- Work with affiliates to **develop workers' digital skills** and build on the record number of workers learning outcomes achieved last year.
- Deploy the Leadership and Equality Programme aims to develop leadership capacity at all levels of the Trade Union Movement, **with a focus on under-represented groups.**
- **Support the capacity of Trades Union Councils** through campaigning and communications to intervene locally, particularly in local lockdowns and on related economic and social issues, including local threats to jobs. Grow the Trades Union Council movement.
- Promote and test Fair Work. Begin the process of mapping the use of **Fair Work Conditionality** in Government support for business to support affiliates' industrial and organising priorities.
- Develop a **Job Guarantee Scheme Monitoring and Organising Strategy** to ensure the scheme is not

used to replace existing jobs; that young workers are offered decent employment and to empower them.

- Campaign for safe and appropriate home-working and develop a programme designed to support **organising in Homeworking.**
- **Continue to support precarious workers** during the crisis, elevate their campaigns, and develop further tools for their use to challenge health and safety, furlough, and redundancy concerns.
- Continue pre-existing projects designed to support organising **among Cultural, Digital, Gig and Tourism workers.**
- Highlight the particular impacts of COVID on contact centres and support the **Call Centre Collective.**

THE PEOPLE'S RECOVERY

In late September, the General Council published 'The People's Recovery: A New Track for the Scottish Economy'. In her introduction, the General Secretary said:

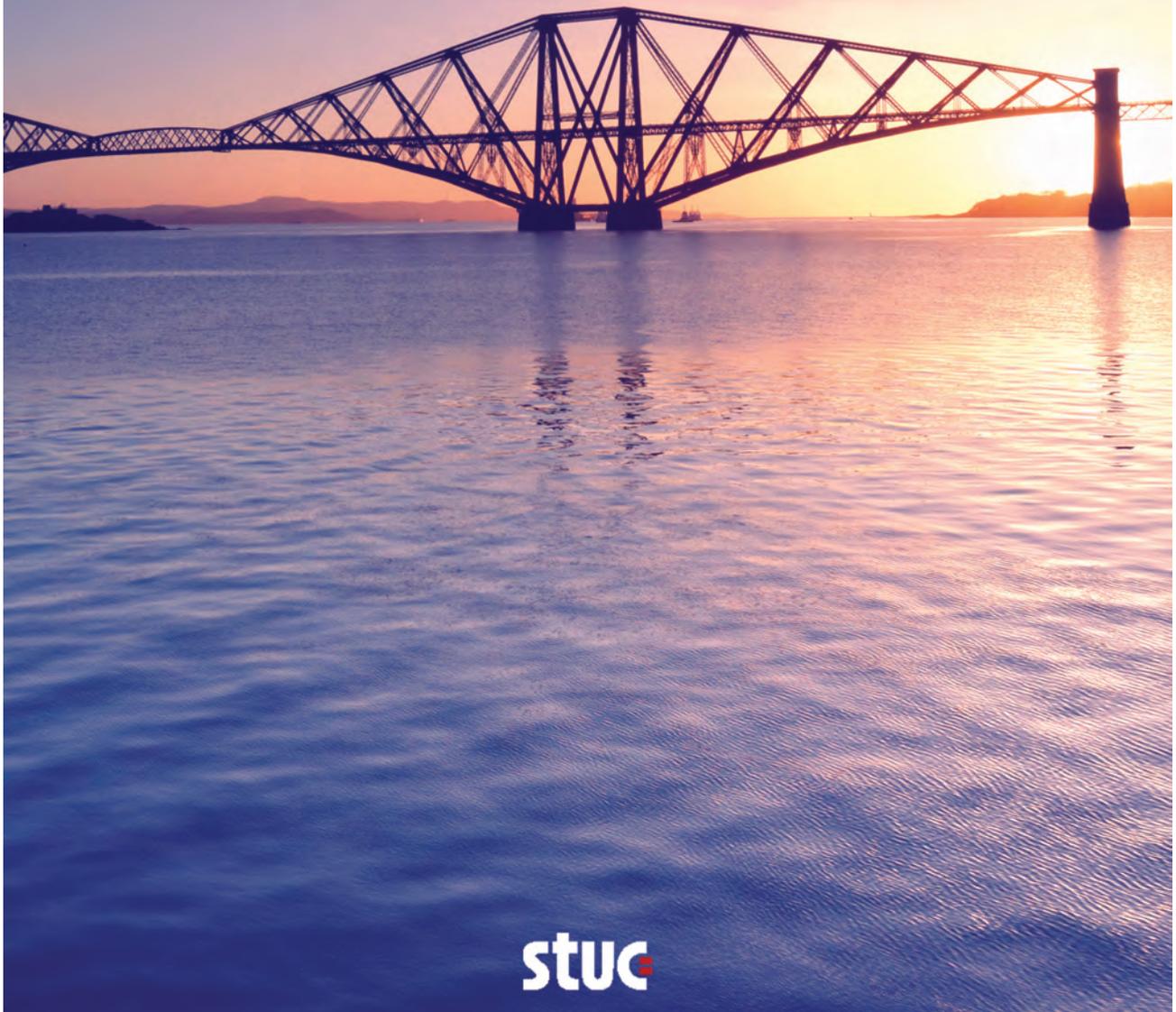
"We are facing the biggest economic crisis in living memory. The immediate cause may have been COVID-19, but the virus drew its strength from a generation of injustices. Coronavirus may not technically discriminate on the lines of class – but its effects are clearly exacerbated by imbalances of income, wealth, and power. When trade unionists speak of recovery, we do not mean reverting to life in 2019. We mean recovering, for working class people, the income, wealth and sense of collective purpose stolen from them by decades of political bias towards the rich and powerful."

Drawn from many of the motions submitted to our postponed Congress earlier this year, from priority issues identified by the General Council and our submission and response to the Higgins Report, the paper outlines a combination of short-term measures to rebuild our economy with medium and longer-term measures to create a democratic and green economy and a society in which workers and their families have fair work, decent housing and a proper safety net. It calls for a fundamental rethink on the purposes of growth and the introduction of urgent measures such as a National Care Service, a green stimulus package, sectoral collective bargaining, and democratic public ownership. This document provides the basis of a programme of political, campaigning, and organising activity for the next six months. As new policy and political challenges emerge it will require addition and prioritisation.

Recovery will only take place in an effective way if the health of workers and the wider public remains the priority. We have consistently warned that the pace of return to workplaces, schools and colleges risked a spike in infections and so it has proved. As well as being better for the health of the nation, a slow and safe return coupled

THE PEOPLE'S RECOVERY:

A DIFFERENT TRACK FOR
SCOTLAND'S ECONOMY



stuc

with financial security for workers will provide a far better foundation for economic recovery.

Industrial Democracy and Fair Work for All

The priority of the General Council will always be to **secure for workers meaningful industrial democracy and fair work**. We will fight to secure Government support for protecting jobs in key industries linked to Fair Work conditionality. At the time of writing, we are campaigning hard for the extension of the workers support schemes, and the campaign to support laid-off workers will surely need to continue. We will continue to press for opportunities for young people and those out of work, paid at the real Living Wage that is free from age wage discrimination, or union bargained rate for the job by augmenting Job Guarantee schemes with local authority led public works programmes.

On the back of some success in arguing for support for precarious workers' pay and conditions in sectors such as hospitality and culture, we will continue to campaign hard to protect workers in creative industry and urge Government at all levels to up their game. We reject attacks on creative workers who face endemic precarity through working across a number of contracts, and we will champion creative work and the need to support workers.

This work takes place in the context of our ongoing campaigning against the prevalence of zero or low hours contracts (under 16 hours per week) and bogus self-employment.

We will publish research into collective bargaining coverage in Scotland, using that as a tool for further Fair Work concessions and to support organising.

Justice for key workers means more than appreciation and applause. Too many key workers are trying to exist on low pay and insecure work while carrying out their essential roles. During the Coronavirus, millions of key workers have stepped up, in the most difficult of circumstances, to keep vital public services and community lifelines going. As we look beyond the pandemic and to recovery, the General Council commits to delivering the message that there must be lasting and fundamental changes for key workers that includes better pay and guaranteed hours.

The £2 for key workers and £10 Minimum Wage campaigns provide the basis for supporting affiliates pay campaigns whether taken forward individually or collectively. Increasingly, noises from Westminster suggests a move towards pay restraint in the public sector and a halting of progress towards a decent Minimum Wage. These moves must be rigorously opposed and an alternative vision of decent pay as a driver of recovery presented. The General Council will deliver high level messages on pay while responding to calls from affiliates for support and co-ordination where required.

A Green Recovery

The need for a worker-led Just Transition and the journey to a zero-carbon future are inextricably linked. A just, green future can only be built on public investment, democratic ownership, and stronger regulation of the domestic supply chain.

At the time of writing, a further betrayal of the workers and communities is taking place at Bifab while key manufacturers such as CS Wind and Alexander Dennis are under threat. We will press both Governments to attend a Renewables and Green Manufacturing Jobs Crisis Summit and to bring forward an emergency plan for jobs.

A rigorous approach to Just Transition would begin from the fundamentals of energy and transport. STUC research shows a £13 billion green stimulus package could create 140,000 jobs in Scotland. We urgently need a plan for jobs and the unfolding economic carnage inflicted by Coronavirus demands that procurement policy is used to create jobs as part of a wider industrial strategy.

The General Council will identify key industries in renewables and clean manufacturing which are at risk despite the imperative to increase the number of decent green jobs. We will continue to elevate the campaigns to support local supply chains and green manufacturing. The COP in Glasgow in 2021 will be a key moment in this campaign. We will continue our longer-term planning for that event, engaging with unions locally, nationally, and internationally to build for that event.

We will continue our support for offshore oil and gas workers as part of a journey to a Just Transition, recognising that even as a diminishing sector, security of supply is fundamental and that tens of thousands of new workers will be required even as output falls. Barriers to training and skills transfer must be removed as a priority as alternative energy production, decommissioning and carbon capture and storage capacity increase over the next five years. Support for Oil and Gas should include taking public stakes in companies and new collective agreements covering offshore energy workers, including those in the maritime supply chain.

In the context of the recent train disaster in Aberdeenshire, it will campaign for additional investment in resilience measures and infrastructure to mitigate the increased risks of climate change. This must also include investment in essential roads, re-charging and other infrastructure required by low and zero emission cars / trucks / buses / ferries across Scotland's transport network and investing in a Scottish extension to HS2 to create jobs and bring freight and passengers off the roads.

We will redouble our campaigns for the public ownership of transport. Government support and continuing training and employment for rail, bus and ferry workers is essential whilst passenger numbers remain depressed by COVID-19 restrictions.

Democratic Public Ownership and Community Wealth Building

We will campaign for a publicly owned energy company with sufficient breadth and scope to make a positive intervention beyond the energy price market. **We will continue to press for a publicly owned construction and infrastructure company** to drive forward green energy and construction projects, while supporting high quality employment and ensuring scandals such as Carillion are never repeated.

Community wealth building has the potential to reimagine and redesign the way that local services are delivered, local supply chains supported and for communities to take control of their local economy. We will build on the positive proposals being developed in North Ayrshire, learn from the Preston model and from the campaign for free bus travel in Glasgow. Fundamentally we will campaign for appropriate powers to be returned to local Councils, for historic UK held Council debt to be written off, the refinancing of PFI projects and a local government settlement that provides the finance Councils need to drive recovery.

Aligned to this, we will campaign for the creation of a Scotland wide Highstreet Taskforce to **regenerate towns, protect jobs and improve shared community space**. The demise of the retail sector across Scotland has been hugely damaging to local communities, town centres and the wider economy. There is a clear correlation between strong local economies, communities, and a vibrant retail sector. The Retail Industry in Scotland directly employs over 240,000 people and supports thousands more jobs in associated sectors such as food manufacturing and distribution. With so many jobs and such a crucial part of Scotland's communities and economy at stake, we will campaign for a retail recovery plan from Government to urgently address the challenges facing the sector.

Public Finance and Investment

Both our immediate and longer-term short policy proposals will require a major shift in levels of public spending and an even greater shift in the balance of who pays. We will campaign for the UK to increase overall borrowing to fund investment and for the **devolution of more borrowing powers to the Scottish Parliament** to allow it to pursue expansionary economic policies and restructure our economy.

The introduction of wealth and progressive income taxes will be required to address economic inequality. We will also press for the enablement of the Scottish National Investment Bank to invest in a more socially just, resilient, and low-carbon economy, via state holding companies and public sector companies such as Lothian Buses.

Driving Recovery through Investing in Universal Public Services

The pandemic has further exposed the impact of a decade of austerity on our public services. It has added extra fuel to our case for an end to outsourcing across public services and for properly funded health, education, emergency services and central and local government, recognising their essential role supporting a wellbeing economy.

The case for massive reform of the adult care service has never been clearer. We will campaign for an immediate move to sectoral and collective bargaining in care and for **the creation of a National Care Service**, rooting out for-profit care provision and levelling up terms and conditions.

Education desperately needs investment during the pandemic to ensure additional properly rewarded and protected education workers are able to deliver the best possible support for pupils and students. We will campaign to sustain and maintain lower class sizes and to value teachers by reducing stress and over-working. As well as being of intrinsic social and educational value, universities and colleges have a key role to play in the recovery. We will press for them to receive a funding package which reflects the true cost of the teaching and research activity, and enhances democratic accountability and Fair Work practices.

Equality for All

The Coronavirus crisis has further exposed inequalities in our society which require to be addressed both through mainstreaming equalities and targeted campaign activity. In the immediate term we will campaign for Government action on pay and employment discrimination. **We will press Government to conduct an equal pay audit across the public sector in Scotland** and for the resolution of all outstanding equal pay claims.

We will continue to push for the introduction of sectoral bargaining arrangements in sectors such as care and hospitality, where women and BAME women are over-represented, and for action to reduce the disability employment pay gap and the ethnic and gender pay gaps. **All Job Guarantee Schemes must be fully equality audited** to ensure 10% of all apprenticeships go to disabled workers, and to ensure that opportunities in the Job Guarantee Scheme are open to a proportionate number of Black and Minority Ethnic People and that opportunities are not gender segregated.

We will continue to push for the **devolution of equality and employment law** and campaign for a day one right to flexible working for all workers.

Social Security and Housing

With millions exposed to poverty pay and inadequate social security, we will campaign for a Minimum Income

Guarantee, support the TUC's call for the weekly level of statutory sick pay up to £320 a week and the removal of the lower earnings limit. The jobs crisis calls for radical action, **we will campaign for the redistribution of working hours across the economy through a 4-day week with no loss of pay.**

The Social Security system needs to be radically redesigned by ending benefit sanctions and the benefit cap, replacing the Work Capability Assessment with NHS medical assessments and abandoning the DWP's target-based culture and the outsourcing of contracts to the private sector. **We will continue to support campaigns against benefit sanctions and press that during a global pandemic no one should be sanctioned.**

The time is right for a massive expansion in the supply of publicly owned housing, **including accessible housing, through municipal housebuilding. We will continue to press the Scottish Government for more action to protect private renters with rent controls, and work with the Living Rent Campaign to support renters.**

A SCOTLAND FIT FOR THE FUTURE

The historic foundations of the STUC is in the culture of Scotland's working class, and the strength of its authority is as Scotland's largest membership organisation. Our agency in Scottish society and with Scotland's institutions is significant, but it cannot be taken for granted. Our institutional strength grew during the 1970s and 1980s when union membership and strength was high, industrial power was significant and the STUC was a major focus of opposition to Thatcherism. From these foundations, the STUC was able to extend its influence to include the promotion of working-class culture and a new vision for Scottish democracy. Despite valid criticisms of unions' slow conversion to support for equalities, the STUC played a leading role in moving that agenda forward, such as in the creation of the St Andrew's Day March and Rally and 50-50 Campaign for the Scottish Parliament.

This year's St Andrew's Day event will be held online, but we intend to build on it in the months after the event to show that Scotland is not innocent and that we need to redouble our efforts to ensure Scotland's own problems of overt and institutional racism, including support for the family of Sheku Bayoh in their ongoing quest for justice, and the degrading treatment of asylum seekers generally and during this crisis, are addressed.

Equality Campaigning

Throughout our response and recovery demands, equality is mainstreamed, there should be nothing we do that does not include an equality perspective. But over and above this we will promote high profile campaigns which challenge institutional inequality. The under

representation in work and wider society, caused by direct and indirect discrimination all too often prevents full participation in public life. Our Equality Committees will drive this work, based on priorities identified at their Conferences and regular meetings.

All Committees reviewed their Work Plans in light of the COVID crisis, focussing their efforts into key campaign areas. Following on from their series of very successful webinar events, a joint Committees' online hustings is planned for early 2021 to challenge candidates in the Scottish Parliament elections on their commitment to these key priorities.

The STUC Equality Committees launched a joint national online survey in September to assess the impact of COVID-19 on workers with protected characteristics. The responses to the survey will shape the STUC's submission to the Scottish Parliament's Equality and Human Rights Committee Enquiry into the Equality and Human Rights Impact of COVID-19, as well as informing our campaigning and communications messaging for the next 6 months and beyond. Initial responses show that mental health will remain a high campaign priority for all our Equality Committees as the impacts of COVID-19, Brexit and austerity on workers' well-being are revealed.

In August, our General Secretary wrote, from personal experience, of the pressing need to challenge sexual harassment in the workplace and in the home. We know that the crisis has exacerbated the serious problem of domestic violence. Led by the Women's Committee, the General Council will continue to campaign for more support for women experiencing gender-based violence in all spheres of life.

The Disabled Workers' Committee will continue to press for equality in employment and accessible transport, even more vital since the onset on COVID-19.

The LGBT+ Workers' Committee will use next year's LGBT+ History Month as a key campaigning tool.

The STUC Black Workers' Committee continues to press the Scottish Government to take action to improve data especially for BAME people. Scotland started on this behind other UK nations, but because of the Committee's pressure, is now ahead of other UK nations.

The Committee will play an active role in the BEMIS Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network, whilst campaigning for more permanent and long-term solutions to the challenges faced by Black and Ethnic Minority Workers in Scotland, such as influencing the Scottish Government's Fair Work Statement on Race Equality and continuing to press their Break the Race Ceiling campaign, which has challenged 141 public sector employers with 41 responses to date. The Committee is also producing an Islamophobia Strategy for the Scottish Trade Union Movement, having conducted a consultation phase earlier in 2020.



The pandemic has impacted people of all ages, but young people, while less susceptible to the worst symptoms (albeit that the effects of long COVID on the population including upon young people are only now beginning to be recognised) have been massively impacted in terms of their education and, from some sections of society, in the attribution of blame. In employment, young people will suffer more than any other age group. Through the work of the Youth Committee and Better than Zero, and with our work around the Young Person's Guarantee we will continue to prioritise young people's work. The Youth Committee will run a specific event aimed at bringing together young people from across Scotland to discuss young people's opportunity and work. We will continue to condemn the continued marketisation of education, and in particular the financial exploitation of students, including by private student accommodation providers.

The effect of the pandemic on the health of older people is well documented. The lockdown has exacerbated other

problems such as loneliness and mental health. We will continue to support the work of the Scottish Pensioners' Forum as the pre-eminent representative of older people in Scotland.

Self-determination

The STUC has always held to the principle of self-determination for the people of Scotland. We cannot pre-ordain the outcome of the necessary democratic processes to give self-determination effect, but the Scottish people are sovereign. Public services desperately require more funding, but the intention of **the UK Government to increase direct spending in Scotland in areas of devolved competency is a clear attempt to weaken the devolution settlement.** We will oppose any moves which reduce the powers of the Parliament as well as campaigning for the extension of devolution in agreed areas such as employment law, equalities, and aspects of immigration. The Single Market Act threatens Scottish devolution through over-riding our Parliament's agency

over state-aid, procurement, environmental protection, and food standards. These are key powers with the potential to change the lives of working-class people for the better. Without these powers, Fair Work and a plan for jobs in transport and renewables will be harder to achieve.

Alongside motions on climate change and industrial democracy, the greatest number of motions submitted to the postponed Congress were on the subject of self-determination. **If, come May 2021, there is evidence of a majority in support of independence and if the new Parliament holds a majority of members in favour of a second Referendum, the case for a further poll will become unanswerable.**

We do not presume that any future Referendum would be conducted on the same terms as the previous one, and are open to future discussion on whether that would be a binary poll or one including additional options.

Whilst it is difficult at this point to imagine the Trade Union Movement in Scotland emerging with a consensus for a particular option in a future Referendum, we will engage actively in the constitutional debate based on the interests of working-class people. The ultimate test for the proponents of all options is their commitment to radical economic and social change.

No-one in Scotland can afford to wait for the outcome of a future Referendum, rebuilding the economy and the people's recovery must begin now. Just as our support for self-determination should not be confused with any future Referendum choice, neither does it in any way endorse the current policies of the Scottish Government, the SNP's Growth Commission, or indeed the prospectus of any individual political party represented in the Parliament.

We will seek to influence the manifestos of all of the political parties contesting the 2021 Scottish Parliament elections and hold all of them to account based upon the economic and social vision they present.

International Trade and Brexit

The majority of the Trade Union Movement opposed Brexit and has looked on in horror as Boris Johnson has careered towards a hard Brexit, even flying on the face of international law. All our key priorities for response and recovery will be impacted by the final 'deal' in December. Yet trade unionists did not primarily oppose Brexit because the EU was a good institution. Many of the positions we promote, from local supply chains and state aid, through to the treatment of migrants are the subject of restrictions and bad policy at the level of the EU too. We will support migrant workers and seek additional powers in Scotland on migration, employment, and equality law. Equally we will campaign for key issues such as state aid, procurement, and environmental standards to be used proactively to create jobs.

Being outside the EU will pose significant economic challenges and threats to some of the rights previously enshrined in EU and UK law. **We will campaign at every turn against a Brexit race to the bottom on employment rights and equality.** The UK Government must not be allowed to negotiate international trade deals with new partners which undermine workers' rights, **especially those covered in the Equality Act 2010; democracy; food, including food safety; medicines, as well as medical care and access to health workers; and environmental standards.**