



Action on Motions to Fórsa Conference 2020

Report to National Conference 2022

Updated 26th April 2022

Introduction

Motions 1 to 158 for the deferred May 2020 Conference were deemed to be in order by the Standing Orders Committee (SOC).

This report sets out progress on the implementation of those motions.

Pay: National agreements and related

General note: Since these motions were submitted the bargaining climate became much less favourable as a result of Covid-19 and its effects. The Building Momentum agreement was negotiated and overwhelmingly accepted in a national ballot of Fórsa members in the period November 2020-February 2021. This was a time when inflation was very low, and there were no economic projections of significant or sustained inflation. This period was also well in advance of the economic fallout from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, including the impact on energy and other prices. The actions on motions should be read in this context.

Motion 1 - National Executive Committee

Conference notes:

- That the Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA) expires at the end of 2020 and that, while the agreement has partially restored pay cuts imposed during the financial crisis, it has not kept pace with higher-than-expected economic growth, exchequer returns, or pay movements in a recovering private sector
- That remaining 'two-tier' crisis measures remain in place in the public service. These include increased working hours introduced for low and middle-earners as an alternative to further pay cuts in 2013, despite the full restoration of higher earners' pay cuts introduced at the same time
- That a small number of public service grades have been awarded significant pay enhancements on top of the basic provisions of the PSSA – on foot of reports by the Public Service Pay Commission, a process now closed to other grades and professions – and that Fórsa sought a process for dealing with sectoral issues for other groups in advance of talks on a possible successor to the PSSA
- That pay restoration in the community and voluntary sector, including 'section 39' organisations, lags behind the mainstream public service.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Committee and senior union staff to seek to negotiate a possible successor the PSSA, which can be put to a ballot of Fórsa members, and which:

- Includes real pay increases that reflect the increased cost of living and the country's strong economic performance in recent years
- Addresses the additional working hours introduced in the public service in 2013, along with other remaining 'two-tier' issues
- Provides a mechanism to progress issues relevant to specific grades or sectors, including recruitment and retention
- Takes steps towards a funding model that can bring pay and conditions in the community and voluntary sector, including 'section 39' organisations, in line with the mainstream public service.

The terms of the motion informed the union's approach to the negotiation of Building Momentum, which delivered significant pay increases in the context of prevailing inflation projections, including a significantly enhanced outcome for lower paid workers. The officers of ICTU's Public Services Committee (PSC) had an initial meeting with senior Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) officials in mid-April 2022 after public expenditure minister Michael McGrath agreed to engage with unions on pay and inflation. This came after Fórsa and other unions triggered a review clause in the Building Momentum agreement in March 2022. Fórsa had proposed this to the PSC, arguing that sustained high inflation, which was not expected when Building Momentum was negotiated in December 2020, was grounds for a review of the agreement's pay terms. In April 2022, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform said he would raise the issue of public service pay and inflation with the Cabinet and that he expected talks with unions to get underway.

Building Momentum also addressed the issue of the Haddington Road hours, leading to a recommendation, from an Independent Body, that they should be completely abolished for most by July 2022. This was subsequently accepted by the Government. Other outstanding HRA issues including overtime, premium and twilight payments were also addressed.

The agreement also included a sectoral bargaining clause, worth 1%, which allowed the parties to address outstanding adjudications, recommendations, awards and claims relevant to specific grades, groups or categories. Large groups of Fórsa grades opted for the straight 1% increase available under this clause, while a small number took the opportunity to address outstanding issues. The agreement allowed for outstanding elements of these issues to be addressed in a future sectoral bargaining fund as part of a future agreement.

It was not possible to achieve an acceptable funding model for the community and voluntary sector in the Building Momentum talks. Fórsa's 2021 'Harvey' report, which updated the union's earlier 'Caring At What Cost' report, set out the case for multi-annual funding for the sector, and Fórsa led in the ICTU Group of Unions joint industrial and political campaign, which has been intensified in this regard. Preparations for further industrial action and a day of action were underway as this report was being finalised.

Motion 2 - Probation Officers Branch

That this Conference recognises that national negotiations around pay and conditions such as those for the Croke Park Agreement and PSSA result in generalised and national conditions applicable to large groups of workers. Individual groups of workers in specific agencies can find themselves faced with anomalies that prove difficult to rectify in discussion with management after a national agreement has been reached. This can particularly be the case around salary and such issues as starting pay. Conference calls upon Fórsa negotiators to ensure that all groups of workers are fully represented in terms of improvements around pay and conditions, including such factors as incremental credit and starting pay. Furthermore when problematic anomalies arise that the mechanisms exist for quick resolution.

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Motion 3 - EASP Clerical Navan Road/Finglas/Ballymun/Blanchardstown Branch

Conference notes the significant increase in the cost of living of recent years leaving many if not most of our members struggling with accommodation, childcare, insurance, and other necessary expenditures. Conference further notes that on its own terms the PSSA was proposed to members as a means of partial pay restoration as distinct from a cost of living pay rise. Conference therefore directs the incoming central executive committee and the union officers to lodge an ambitious pay claim that both seeks to reverse the remaining impositions of the austerity years as well as recognising the accelerating rise in the cost of living. Conference therefore views that the pay element of such a claim should be in the order of 10% over the next year, the ending of two-tier new entrants pay and the hours returned. Conference calls on the central executive committee and union officers to develop an action programme that mobilises members, and builds for industrial action including through confidence building measures in all work places, lunch time actions etc. building up to effective industrial action including strike action.

See the report on action on motion 1 above. Note that The Building Momentum agreement was negotiated and overwhelmingly accepted in a national ballot of Fórsa members in the period November 2020-February 2021. This was a time when inflation was very low, and there were no economic projections of significant or sustained inflation. This period was also well in advance of the economic fallout from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, including the impact on energy and other prices.

The officers of ICTU's Public Services Committee (PSC) had an initial meeting with senior Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) officials in mid-April 2022 after public expenditure minister Michael McGrath agreed to engage with unions on pay and inflation. This came after Fórsa and other unions triggered a review clause in the Building Momentum agreement in March 2022. Fórsa had proposed this to the PSC, arguing that sustained high inflation, which was not expected when Building Momentum was negotiated in December 2020, was grounds for a review of the agreement's pay terms.

Motion 4 - Education & Skills Clerical Dublin Branch

This Conference asks the incoming National Executive Committee to listen to all their members and take their worries, concerns and comments on board going into the next round of pay talks. It's vital that all members are heard and feel Fórsa is working for them and getting the best deal possible.

The motions submitted by branches guide the approach to negotiations on the Building Momentum agreement, which was accepted by a majority of 96%-4% in a national ballot of Fórsa members.

Motion 5 - PSO Sligo Clerical Branch

This Conference instructs that all votes regarding national pay agreements at the NEC and all Divisional Executive meetings are to be recorded and forwarded to all branches of Fórsa as a matter of future record.

The results of votes at NEC meetings are recorded in the minutes.

Motion 6 - Dublin Science and Arts Attendants Branch

This branch instructs the NEC to review all allowances and shift prima paid for overnight and 24/7 working patterns across all the divisions of Fórsa in advance of the forthcoming national pay negotiations and to take advantage of those talks to ensure all such allowances and payments are fully pensionable.

The General Secretary wrote to the Heads of Division requesting that they consider this matter and provide the details to assist the process of discussion with other public service unions, so as to assess the support for raising the issue in the pay talks. See also the report on action on Motion 1 above.

Motion 7 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls Fórsa to seek a fixed monetary increase in the upcoming new pay talks to succeed current PSSA e.g. €1000, €1500 or €2000 (or whatever figure may be reasonable) rather than a % rise across the board for all grades of staff.

Fórsa achieved the support of other unions for this approach. As a result, the two general round increases in Building Momentum were worth 1% of gross pay or €500 a year, whichever is the greater. The €500 a year floor means those on lower incomes receive significantly larger percentage increases than higher paid staff. For example, the percentage increases are significantly higher for staff on any point of the clerical officer, SNA or general operative scales.

Motion 8 - Letterkenny CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming Executive in the interest of fairness and equity to have flat rate pay increases rather than percentage rate increases part of the union's policy going forward in any and all negotiations and pay discussions on future national pay deals and agreements.

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Motion 9 - Letterkenny CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference requests that if a future pay agreement is secured with percentage rate pay increases then these percentage rate increases are graduated so that the highest percentage is awarded to those on the lowest pay range with incrementally lower percentages awarded to those as you go up the higher pay range bands. The net effect should not result in an excessive difference in the actual cash amount of the pay increase among members.

While it was not possible to adopt this specific approach, Fórsa ensured that general increases in the Building Momentum agreement were most beneficial to lower-paid workers. The €500 a year in the general round increases floor means those on lower incomes receive significantly larger percentage increases than higher paid staff. For example, the percentage increases are significantly higher for staff on any point of the clerical officer, SNA or general operative scales.

Motion 10 - FGE Branch

This Conference demands that in any future pay talks the reality of exceptionally low paid, full time employees, in the public service, be addressed and that any general percentage pay increase be augmented, for this group by a meaningful flat rate increase.

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Motion 11 - Education & Skills Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs Fórsa to seek to remove the existing conditions requiring any officer to work without pay for the first hour of overtime.

Fórsa ensured that, under the Building Momentum agreement, overtime and premium payments reduced or abolished under the HRA were fully restored on 1st July 2021 and that the hour of unpaid overtime introduced under the HRA would be abolished as pre-Haddington roads overtime rates resumed.

Pay: New entrants**Motion 12 - Justice Executive Branch**

Noting that many of our members fail to make ends meet, this conference instructs the National Executive Committee to address the issue of low pay for new entrants in future pay negotiations. Further, the NEC should seek to commission and publish in depth research to ascertain the impact of low pay on different public sector workers across Fórsa.

Amendment to Motion 12 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

To include "and to remove the pay disparity between new entrants and existing staff" at the end of first sentence.

The flat rate approach to pay increases achieved in Building Momentum is beneficial to low paid workers including new entrants. Fórsa has also been supporting the ICTU campaign for a 'living wage,' as a means of tackling low pay, including in some parts of the civil and public service. The General Secretary wrote to Head of Communications requesting consideration and advice as to how such research might be conducted.

Pay: Living wage

Motion 13 - Dublin Central CS Clerical Branch

This branch calls on the incoming NEC to ensure to prioritise the introduction of the standard living wage for all Dublin based public servants with immediate effect. A CO living in Dublin has to work eight years on the pay scale to reach the standard living wage for Dublin of €30,908 per annum and 17 years to reach the standard industrial wage of €39,000 per annum.

This fact has thousands of Dublin based CO's and equivalent/lower paid public servants living below the poverty line and struggling with the day to day cost of living.

Amendment to Motion 13 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

Have all but one reference to Dublin removed to read: This branch calls on the incoming NEC to ensure to prioritise the introduction of the standard living wage for all public servants with immediate effect. A C.O. has to work eight years on the pay scale to reach the standard living wage for Dublin of €30,908 per annum and 17 years to reach the standard industrial wage of €39,000 per annum. This fact has thousands of CO's and equivalent/lower paid public servants living below the poverty line and struggling with the day to day cost of living.

The union is continuing to press the idea of a standard living wage via the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and will pursue a pay strategy for Fórsa members mindful that the living wage for Ireland is currently understood to be €12.90 per hour. The Government's budget announcement of its intention to set up a Living Wage Commission is welcome.

Motion 14 - School Secretaries Branch

School secretaries working in 90% of our schools are paid through ancillary grant funding. Unlike their colleague secretaries paid directly by the Department of Education and Skills and those employed by Education and Training Board Schools, they do not have public service status. There are approximately 3000 school secretaries in the country. The vast majority are paid €13 per hour some with up to 25/30 years' service, on casual contracts, with no pay scale, no paid holidays, no sick pay and no pension entitlement. When the school closes for holidays the secretary is forced to sign-on for job seekers benefit, when the school shuts they are not paid and there is no money coming into the house.

The School Secretaries branch asks this Conference to continue to support the campaign to end this two-tier pay system. It is not by accident that successive governments have allowed this disgraceful situation to continue. School secretaries are isolated, usually only one is employed in each school. This is an overwhelmingly female workforce who has been expected to keep quiet and be compliant for decades as the discrimination and unfairness became more entrenched.

In January 2019 we got ourselves organised and started campaigning. We have lobbied, we have cajoled and we have debated with TDs, Ministers and all the political parties. We have petitioned, we have marched and we have demonstrated. For the first time we have taken industrial action through a work to rule and two national strikes.

We ask that Fórsa continues to support our fight for fair pay and conditions. We find common cause with other branches such as the CE scheme supervisors and school completion service who are also expected to undertake public service work without public service status.

School secretaries deserve no more than equal pay with their colleagues who are paid directly by the Department of Education and Skills and those employed by the ETB. We ask that Fórsa continues to support our campaign for fair pay, fair conditions and a fair pension.

Fórsa raised this issue in the talks on the Building Momentum agreement. The union's 'Support Our Secretaries' campaign, and the efforts of the School Secretaries' Branch and Education Division, led to a Labour Court recommendation for the regularisation of school secretaries' pay, which was accepted by a large margin in a national ballot of school secretaries.

Motion 15 - Letterkenny CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference supports fully the actions of our colleagues, the school secretary members, in seeking improved terms and conditions of employment from the Department of Education and Skills. This is another example of an unfair two-tier pay system in existence in the civil and public sector. We call on the incoming executive to do all in its power to oppose this injustice and fight for these members, including if need be, escalating and/or threatening to escalate industrial action to other areas/divisions of Fórsa to support our school secretary members.

Fórsa raised this issue in the talks on the Building Momentum agreement. The union's 'Support Our Secretaries' campaign, and the efforts of the School Secretaries' Branch and Education Division, led to a Labour Court recommendation for the regularisation of school secretaries' pay, which was accepted by a large majority in a national ballot of school secretaries.

Motion 16 - SNA Connacht Ulster Branch

This Conference congratulates the School Secretary branch on their ongoing campaign for fair pay and conditions for grant funded secretaries. There are other groups who carry out public service work often alongside colleagues with public service designation who are also denied fair pay and conditions. Conference supports our CE supervisors, school completion staff and other groups and demands that they are all treated fairly and given public service status with full access to the public sector pension schemes.

The actions of our school secretaries have shone a spotlight on the discrimination and unfair practices endured by members for decades. It is a scandal that successive Ministers have allowed this to continue. It was only by members taking the courageous step for the first time to take industrial action that the issues were brought to national attention. Every school secretary regardless of which school they work in must now be treated as a public servant. For years governments have exploited them by demanding they carry out public service work it's now high time this Government paid them accordingly and recognised them as public servants.

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Pay: Section 39 agencies

Motion 17 - Cavan Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to act to support, consult and represent members seeking the restoration of pay parity across the public service, with a particular emphasis on supporting the most vulnerable in society, such as Section 39 workers.

This is already Health and Welfare Division policy. Pay has been restored in some Section 39 organisations and the remainder remains under active discussion. The union raised the issue as a trade union priority in the context of public service pay talks. It was not possible to achieve an acceptable funding model for the community and voluntary sector in the Building Momentum talks. Fórsa's 2021 'Harvey' report, which updated the union's earlier 'Caring At What Cost' report, set out the case for multi-annual funding for the sector, and Fórsa led in the ICTU Group of Unions joint industrial and political campaign, which has been intensified in this regard. Preparations for further industrial action and a day of action were underway as this report was being finalised.

Pay: Increments

Motion 18 - Defence Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to review the gap in pay at the top of the scales between public service pay grades at higher and ordinary level and to address any anomalies found.

The General Secretary wrote to the National Secretary/Head of Division asking the CSDEC to consider the motion and to take action as appropriate. It is understood that clarification will first be sought from the branch regarding its intent.

Motion 19 - Higher Education Branch

The Higher Education branch calls on Conference seek an end to the two and/or three year wait for a long service increment entitlement and incorporate the increment into the currently agreed scale as an annual increment entitlement.

It was decided to review the possibility for a claim in the light of the outcome to the public service pay talks.

Pay: Other issues

Motion 20 - Defence Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to enter negotiations with the official side to introduce a standardised public service wide on-call allowance for personnel who a required to carry a mobile phone for work purposes outside of normal working hours.

It was decided to review the possibility for a claim and/or refusal to remain on-call in the light of the outcome to the public service pay talks.

Motion 21 - Defence Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to enter negotiations with the official side to introduce a specialised post allowance for personnel who carry out specialised roles within the public sector e.g. IR personnel, IT personnel etc.

It was decided to review the possibility for a claim in the light of the outcome to the public service pay talks.

Motion 22 - Defence Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to seek a standardised qualification allowance across the public sector in congruence with our public service colleagues.

Following receipt of further information from the proposing branch in response to a letter from the General Secretary, the NEC considered that these posts would have to be dealt with on a case- by-case basis via allowance or grading claims.

Motion 23 – Higher Education Branch

The Higher Education branch calls on Conference to pursue an agreement whereby grade 3 staff will have an automatic professional progression to the grade 4 scale.

It was decided to review the possibility for a claim in the light of the outcome to the public service pay talks.

Public policy: General

Motion 24 – National Executive Committee

This conference commits Fórsa to champion affordable and accountable high-quality public services, to be a vocal advocate for those who use and deliver our public services, and to work with overseas unions and other stakeholders to campaign in EU and other international fora for the protection and extension of public provision.

To this end, conference calls on the National Executive Committee and senior staff to:

- Continue to campaign for a large-scale public home-building programme to address the housing and homelessness crisis
- Continue to campaign for a referendum to ensure that Ireland’s water services remain in public ownership and control
- Extend its campaign for the remunicipalisation of Dublin’s waste services to develop the case for the reestablishment of state provision of essential services in other areas
- Work to support the full introduction of Sláintecare, with substantially increased investment in community health services as well as hospitals and health promotion
- Actively oppose the outsourcing of essential civil service functions, including IT, and campaign for adequate investment to preserve and develop specialist roles in archiving and elsewhere, and
- Campaign for publicly-provided and publicly-funded affordable childcare.

Amendment to Motion 24 – Cork Health & Local Government Branch

Replace in bullet point 3 “Dublin’s waste services” with the following “all local authority waste services”

These issues remain the priorities for the union in our campaigning and industrial work nationally and within the divisions. Fórsa continues to actively support ICTU’s housing and homelessness campaigns including the union-led ‘Raise The Roof’ campaign. The union also has had a lead role in the joint-union IR and political campaign on water services (including continued state provision) which has led to a Government commitment to a referendum on the issue. The current official position, as communicated to the unions, is that the Government is preparing for such a referendum in 2022. The union’s Health & Welfare division continues to be a leading voice in the campaign for the implementation of Sláintecare, and the General Secretary had an opinion piece on the issue published in the Irish Times in late 2021. On outsourcing, Fórsa ensured that essential protections against outsourcing carried over into Building Momentum, and the union continues to work on the issue at divisional level, nationally, through ICTU campaigns and activities, and through international trade union federations. The union has included affordable childcare as a priority in its campaign for an extended post-Covid role for the State in the provision of public services, and continues to actively support related ICTU campaigns.

Motion 25 - Buncrana Clerical Branch

That this Conference calls on the NEC to seek assurances from the government that any telecommunications mast placed on a public building will be subject to radiation testing in advance of commission and to continue to the current practice of testing after commission so that the differential is available to be scrutinised.

The General Secretary wrote to Eamon Ryan TD, Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, asking if he would provide the necessary reassurance and if he would liaise with his government colleagues to ensure that the practice is uniformly operated across the public sector.

Motion 26 - An Post Branch

This Conference condemns the growing rise of the far right in Ireland, its dangers and threats to trade unionists and its attempts to divide workers. We call on this Conference to work in conjunction with other unions to support mobilisations and protests against the far right.

Fórsa has participated fully in the ICTU initiative to address this development. Deputy General Secretary Eoin Ronayne was nominated to the sub-committee of the ICTU Executive Council set up for this purpose. The ICTU group has agreed an initial work agenda, which includes the development of a union activist education programme, exploring the potential for social media monitoring in conjunction with the Far Right Observatory, staging public relations events like the 'pro-mask is pro-worker' response to the far-right Covid denial campaign.

Motion 27 - Laois Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to treat our older population with the dignity and respect that they rightly deserve, and work with the incoming government to address the deficits in support to carers, by restoring the budgets for Home Help, Home Care Package, Respite Care supports to carers, or else increase significantly the Carer Support Grant to allow families to pay for private care so that older people can remain in their home for as long as possible rather than prematurely entering nursing homes.

The General Secretary wrote to the Minister for Health, stating Fórsa believes that these principles should inform future health policy and the union is available to meet with him or his officials to discuss the matter. The minister's office responded by saying that his department is working to determine the optimal approach to the development of the new home-support scheme within the broader context of the on-going reform of Ireland's health and social care system, as envisaged in the Sláintecare Report. Work is also ongoing with SIPTU in this regard and will continue to be led by the union's Health & Welfare Division.

Motion 28 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to campaign for the establishment of a State owned insurance company by the Government, in order to lower the costs of insurance and provide insurance cover at a reasonable rate to members of the General Public, as was previously the case.

The General Secretary wrote to Minister of State Sean Fleming, asking him to take note of the sentiments expressed and consider meeting with the union to discuss the issue. The minister replied by setting out the Government's general approach, and said he would be happy to meet subject to diary commitments.

Motion 29 - NETB Branch

That this Conference actively supports the granting of a banking licence to overseas community-based banks with a proven track record in other jurisdictions. EU citizens in some other countries currently enjoy very favourable lending rates of 1.1% on fixed rate mortgages and 3% on personal loans courtesy of this banking model.

The General Secretary wrote to the Minister for Finance to ask him to consider the proposal. The minister replied saying that the Central Bank is responsible for assessing applications for banking licenses, and that the independence of the Central Bank is enshrined in the treaties of the European Union and in the Statute of the European System of Central Banks.

Motion 30 - NETB Branch

That this Conference is resolute in its condemnation of the continuing unsavoury practice of fraudulent and exaggerated insurance claims that deprive essential services in health, our hospitals, childcare, education and local authority services of significant financial and staff resources, required in the providing of vital and necessary services to the citizens of this country.

The General Secretary wrote to Minister of State Sean Fleming, asking him to note the sentiments of expressed in the motion and consider meeting to discuss the issue. The minister replied by setting out the Government's general approach, and said he would be happy to meet subject to diary commitments.

Motion 31 - SNA Munster Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to engage with the Government to increase access to SEN school placements by increasing investments in staffing, training and infrastructure to ensure all our children have access to education in their local community. School places for SEN students must be available in every local community as a right. This issue impacts significantly on many families across Ireland, bringing great distress to people who must fight for every right for their vulnerable children.

The General Secretary wrote to Minister of State Josepha Madigan, who has responsibility for special education, requesting an opportunity to discuss these issues with her and departmental officials. The General Secretary also wrote to the National Secretary/Head of Division stating that the NEC wished the Education DEC to address these concerns in the course of its work.

Motion 32 - SNA Connacht Ulster Branch

Conference notes the continuing problems for children with special educational needs and their parents who cannot access a school placement. This is a breach of Ireland's obligations under the UN Convention for the Rights of the Disabled which guarantees disabled children the right to receive an inclusive education. Fórsa calls on the Government to increase access to SEN school placements by increasing investments in staffing, training and infrastructure to ensure all our children have access to education in their local community. School places for SEN students must be available in every local community as a right.

The General Secretary wrote to Minister of State Josepha Madigan, who has responsibility for special education, requesting an opportunity to discuss these issues with her and departmental officials. The General Secretary also wrote to the National Secretary/Head of Division stating that the NEC wished the Education DEC to address these concerns in the course of its work.

Motion 33 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

This Conference calls on the NEC to ensure that the communications strategy of Fórsa place a stronger emphasis on highlighting the impact of the lack of investment in public services. The nursing and teaching unions have successfully highlighted the impact of the lack of hospital beds and school places. Fórsa also need to more forcefully highlight the impact of the lack of investment in the sectors where our members work. Our members on a daily basis have to deal with the results of this lack of investment. The suffering imposed on the public due to the lack of speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists is just one example of the ongoing impact of the failure of this Government to respect the rights of all citizens to a health care service. Our members who work in the clerical and administration sectors in the areas of housing, education and health also see at first hand the impact of this failure to adequately resource public services.

Fórsa has a role in ending this policy, which blights the life chances of so many of our fellow citizens. The role can begin by passing this motion, which calls on the NEC to develop a communications strategy that has as its key objective the highlighting of the ongoing impact of the lack of investment in public services. Consideration should be given to framing the core message of the strategy around meeting the goals that were set out in No Child 2020 - a title that echoes the text of the Democratic Programme of the first Dáil. There are five principles, set 100 years ago, which remain of concern today:

- Food - no child should be hungry
- Shelter - no child should be homeless
- Health - no child should be without timely, affordable healthcare
- Education - no child should be blocked from having an education
- Participation - no child should be excluded from society.

Our union is committed to social justice. We need to have a stronger, more public voice and message that we want to see the principles that were stated 100 years ago finally made a reality. Our experiences matter as workers on the front line. Let's use those experiences to shape a message that public services must be protected and resourced.

The General Secretary wrote to the Head of Communications requesting the Communications Unit to draw up a report for the NEC on how the terms of the motion could be given effect. The Communications Unit has since promoted Fórsa and other campaigns aimed at achieving increased funding for a range of public services, including through the union's campaign for an expanded post-Covid role for the State in public service provision. The Communications Unit has also worked with the Health & Welfare Division on the specific issue of investment in services provided by health and social care professionals, and several public/media statements have been issued on the subject. The head of the Health and Welfare division has also consistently highlighted this specific issue in the media and in IR fora, resulting in a provision for the recruitment a further 1,500 HSCPs in the HSE. The Communications Officer is working with senior Health and Welfare Division officials in the further development of communications aspects of its HSCP strategy. An audit of current degree of media engagement on HSCPs is planned, with a view to developing Fórsa as an authoritative voice on service delivery. A series of meetings between HSCP branch PROs and the Fórsa Communications Officer will lead to the establishment and implementation of an ongoing communications strategy, helping to maximise coverage and situate Fórsa as a trusted voice on public health.

Motion 34 – EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference of Fórsa instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to campaign for zonal agreements and a comprehensive social dialogue to resolve social concerns such as:

- Mortgages,
- Rent,
- The cost of raising a family,
- Healthcare, Motor Neuron Disease, Sight Loss (Glaucoma),
- Mental Health Services,
- Schools and Education,
- Anti-Social Behaviour,
- Public Transport and Transport,
- Refugees.

The General Secretary wrote to the branch seeking clarification on what it meant by zonal agreements. The General Secretary strongly pressed the case for social dialogue at a meeting with An Taoiseach in September 2020. The branch confirmed that zonal agreements are another term for sectoral agreements. The union continues to press the case.

Motion 35 – Cavan Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to seek provision for support services for members that make protected disclosures.

Amendment to Motion 35 – Cork Health & Local Government Branch

Replace “to seek provision for support services for members that make protected disclosures” with “to ensure that members who make protected disclosures are fully protected by Fórsa and to demand that all employers make their employees aware of their rights to make a protected disclosure and of their legal rights to protection in such cases”

It was decided to advise officials and branches of need to support members and ask heads of divisions to raise the matter with employer bodies. The General Secretary wrote to heads of division asking if this could be raised with the employer bodies within their divisional area of responsibility and to advise officials and branches of the need to support members who make protected disclosures.

Motion 36 – Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive to outline a Fórsa union position on the use of personal data by staff employers.

Where personal staff information is being used it is important that the staff members is first asked if they wish their information to be used, published or disseminated within the organisation or external to the organisation.

The General Secretary wrote to the Fórsa Data Protection Officer requesting that she prepare a draft position for consideration with a view to issuing it to branches and members. The report was circulated to all branches, NEC and staff in November 2020.

Public policy: Housing and homelessness

Motion 37 – Probation Officers Branch

That this Conference notes that despite the prosperity that currently exists in Ireland, services for homeless people, people with mental health issues and displaced people are completely inadequate.

Given the recent tragic events on the 15th of January 2020, whereby a homeless person suffered life altering injuries, Fórsa will be more forceful and pro-active in securing the rights, statutory and otherwise, of homeless people which are currently being ignored. Government policies and rights drawn up to protect the most vulnerable are being ignored. Fórsa therefore strongly commits to exposing such negligence and to demanding a high level of care for the most vulnerable in society.

The General Secretary wrote to the Director of Campaigning requesting consideration and advice on appropriate action or possible measures that could be taken. The Director of Campaigning replied stating: “Fórsa strongly believes that one of the foremost measures by which we should judge our society is how we protect the most vulnerable. We are a steering group member of ‘Home for Good’, the campaign for a constitutional right to housing in Ireland. We will also continue to advocate for funding to be prioritised for the provision of homelessness services.” Fórsa continues to actively support ICTU’s housing and homelessness campaigns including the union-led ‘Raise The Roof’ campaign.

Motion 38 – Laois Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference

- Introduce a constitutional or statutory right to housing as applies to other European countries,
- Build 25,000 new homes each year in line with Rebuilding Ireland and for Local Authorities to take the lead on this.
- Introduce legislation to ensure security of tenure and rent certainty as rents continue to spiral out of control, and develop a comprehensive strategy for the rental sector
- Commit to end the overreliance on the private rental sector, end the practice of using hotels and B and B’s and put a target date in place in relation to this.
- Give the Residential Tenancies Board adequate powers to protect Tenants.
- Introduce a national affordable rental scheme to support households who do not qualify for a mortgage and who are struggling to pay private rents.

Amendment to Motion 38 – Cork Health & Local Government Branch

Replace in 2nd bullet point the following “25,000 new homes” with “a minimum of 25,000 new social housing units”

It was decided to continue to pursue the aims of the motion in conjunction with the ICTU and to refer to Director of Campaigning for advice on possible measures. The General Secretary wrote to the Director of Campaigning requesting consideration of the matter. The Director of Campaigning replied stating: “The objectives detailed in this motion correlate very closely with the objectives of the Raise the Roof campaign. Fórsa and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions have played a leading role in this campaign since its inception, and we contributed to the development of the recent policy paper from the campaign ‘Remaking Ireland – A New Deal for Housing.’ Fórsa continues to actively support ICTU’s housing and homelessness campaigns including the union-led ‘Raise The Roof’ campaign.

Motion 39 – Taoiseach Executive Grades Branch

This conference

- recognises that homelessness is at a crisis point in society
- notes that the numbers of people in emergency accommodation is at an unacceptable level
- endorses Fórsa’s involvement in the Raise the Roof Campaign
- thanks those both inside and outside Fórsa who are doing remarkable work ensuring people have a roof over their head and a bed to sleep in at night

As workers join the public service they are finding it difficult to find reasonable accommodation. Some positive work around the alleviation of homelessness lies in the Co-Operative Housing Model.

This Conference calls on the NEC to investigate ways which Fórsa can promote and endorse the Co-Operative Housing Model up to and including the building or contributing to the building of cooperative housing for members.

This investigation will be complete by the end of November 2020 with the findings being disseminated to members by the end of December 2020.

The matter was referred to the Local Government DEC and to the Director of Campaigning to jointly investigate the issue and to report back to the NEC. The General Secretary wrote to the Director of Campaigning and to the National Secretary/Head of Division stating that the NEC asked them to liaise in relation to an investigation of the matter. The Director of Campaigning replied stating: “An information event with expert speakers on the co-operative model of housing will be organised and held by the end of the year, with representatives from the Local Government and Local Services and Municipal divisional executives. A report on the findings from this event will be distributed to members.” The head of the union’s Local Government and Local Services Division wrote to the housing minister in March 2021 requesting that his department give active consideration to the direct provision of public housing by local authorities, and that recipients of the housing assistance payment would maintain their position on local authority housing lists. Fórsa continues to actively support ICTU’s housing and homelessness campaigns including the union-led ‘Raise The Roof’ campaign.

Public policy: Taxation and related

Motion 40 – Tipperary South Health & Community Branch

That Fórsa seek that the clothing tax allowance be available at realistic rates.

The General Secretary wrote to the branch seeking clarification and the branch confirmed that the motion sought to update, and correct anomalies in, the current flat rate expenses. It is important to note that Revenue has indicated its intention to review flat rate allowances with a view to the elimination of many of them. Any review of anomalies will have to bear this in mind. During 2019 the Revenue Commissioners proposed abolishing flat rate expense allowances unless they could be justified. After intervention from ICTU, Revenue deferred a decision to abolish all the allowances, and said there would be a general review.

Motion 41 – Tipperary South Health & Community Branch

That Fórsa seek immediate introduction of tax credits for children to offset the cost of childcare.

It was decided that this was in conflict with the union’s policy on childcare provision, which is to seek investment in high quality, affordable childcare rather than taxation measures.

Motion 42 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference of Fórsa instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to oppose the establishment of a costly child maintenance agency which would facilitate stealth taxes, incur additional suffering on families while imposing financial penalties on parents: and, instead, campaign for an approach that is in line with reducing discrimination, enforcement and the burden on families.

The General Secretary wrote to heads of division stating that the NEC decided to ask divisions to nominate interested parties to an ad-hoc sub-group to consider the matter and to advise the NEC. Eamonn Donnelly has been requested to convene this ad-hoc group when it is formed.

Motion 43 - Cavan Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference mandates Fórsa to negotiate with government to seek the abolition of USC contribution to include employees and retired.

As the USC is a more equitable form of taxation (insofar as it is levied on all income) the NEC decided that this conflicted with the union's wider policy on taxation.

Public policy: Palestine and other international matters

Motion 44 - SNA Connacht Ulster Branch

That the arbitrary arrest of Palestinian children as young as 12 is a breach of human rights, children are arrested and tried by a military court and are given long prison terms for trivial offences often with scant evidence against them and little access to legal representation. We could do more to pressure the Irish Government to raise these issues and highlight and support the work of the Defence of Children in Palestine organisation.

Fórsa continues to support the work of Trade Union Friends of Palestine (TUFPP) and sought a meeting with the Minister for Foreign Affairs to discuss our concerns. The minister replied in March 2021, saying that he had raised Ireland's concerns about the detention of minors, including on the practices of night-time arrests and blindfolding, directly with the Israeli authorities. He said he had urged the Israeli authorities to use detention only as a last resort, in the case of minors, and for the shortest possible period. Fórsa continues its active participation in TUFPP, the European Trade Union Network for Justice in Palestine, and related ICTU initiatives including calls for boycott, divestment, and sanctions against Israel.

Motion 45 - SNA Connacht Ulster Branch

The recent TUFPP delegation visit highlighted the astonishing work carried out by staff and volunteers across the occupied territories in providing education to Palestinian children. Many community-based initiatives are underfunded and struggle to survive. Fórsa's developing world fund should prioritise specific educational projects aimed at increasing training for staff and volunteers and contribute to viable proposals on improving school infrastructure. Fórsa could use contracts and TUFPP to request applications for funding.

It was decided to refer specific applications to the Developing World Fund Committee.

Motion 46 – SNA Connacht Ulster Branch

To further our support for the BDS campaign Fórsa should fund a delegation visit from Palestinian schools for a speaking tour of union branches also involving other contact and engagement with the wider trade union movement north and south.

The General Secretary wrote to the unions representatives on Trade Union Friends of Palestine asking them to advise on the practicalities of the proposal. The response was that, while welcome in principle, the proposal was impractical at this time because of the impact of the pandemic in both Palestine and Ireland. Fórsa continues its active participation in Trade Union Friends of Palestine (TUFPP), the European Trade Union Network for Justice in Palestine, and related ICTU initiatives including calls for boycott, divestment, and sanctions against Israel.

Motion 47 – Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Branch

That this Conference reiterates this union’s opposition to the illegal occupation of Palestine, and commits to continuing to campaign with Palestinian campaign groups and through the International Solidarity Committee. This union also reiterates its support for boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel, and agrees that this union will support any members who observe this boycott in the course of their work.

Fórsa continues its active participation in Trade Union Friends of Palestine (TUFPP), the European Trade Union Network for Justice in Palestine, and related ICTU initiatives including calls for boycott, divestment, and sanctions against Israel.

Motion 48 – Boards and Voluntary Agencies Branch

That this Conference condemns the US government’s attempts to escalate the Middle East conflict.

The terms of the motion have been noted.

Motion 49 – Laois Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference abhors the illegal actions of the Chinese Government in their treatment of the Uighir population and their blatant disregard for fundamental human rights. Despite huge Chinese investment in Ireland when it comes to regimes that offend our moral sensibilities we as citizens of this country have an obligation to ask that regimes such as this are called to account. AGM calls on Fórsa to actively lobby our government in this regard.

The General Secretary wrote to Simon Coveney TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs, requesting an update on the efforts that he and the Department are making to raise the issue and to hold the Chinese authorities to account. A detailed response was received.

Mental health and wellbeing

Motion 50 - Dublin City Branch

That this Conference call on Fórsa to engage with employers across the divisions to devise a programme for mental wellbeing and thereby working to remove the stigma in many workplaces around mental health.

The NEC decided to ask divisions to nominate suitable representatives to an ad-hoc sub-group for the purpose of advising on the content and the scope of such a programme in advance of meetings between Fórsa and employers across the range of workplaces organised by the union. The General Secretary wrote to heads of division seeking nominations. The Head of Health & Welfare Division reported that this is under discussion in the health sector.

Motion 51 - Cabin Crew Branch

We call on the incoming NEC to engage with the relevant employer and government agencies to seek the establishment of a policy that offers assistance to victims of domestic abuse.

The NEC decided to ask divisions to nominate suitable representatives to an ad-hoc sub-group for the purpose of advising on the content and the scope of such a policy prior to meetings between the union and the various employer bodies. The General Secretary wrote to heads of division seeking nominations.

Motion 52 - Cabin Crew Branch

We call on the incoming NEC to engage at the appropriate level regarding the need for recognising the changes to the working life as experience has taught us that many issues happen outside 9.00-5.00. The need for a resource to be available to our members outside of core hours should be explored and that the NEC would keep branches updated on this issue.

The General Secretary wrote to the DGS with responsibility for HR/staff matters requesting him to examine the proposal and to prepare a report for the NEC on the matter. It was difficult to make progress on this issue during the lengthy pandemic. Now that we are returning to normality this additional service is being examined and options considered.

Privatisation and related

Motion 53 - FGE Branch

That this Conference oppose the creeping privatisation of work proper to grades represented by Fórsa and instructs the National Executive to act on this, where this has occurred this Conference instructs the NEC to seek the immediate reversal of this.

Fórsa ensured that essential protections against outsourcing carried over into Building Momentum, and the union continues to work on the issue at divisional level, nationally, through ICTU campaigns and activities, and through international trade union federations. The General Secretary wrote to the heads of division stating that the NEC has asked that divisions maintain vigilance in relation to privatisation of work and take action where this is happening in breach of agreement.

Motion 54 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to pursue the formulation and implementation of a policy programme of Nationalisation in conjunction with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) and other societal stakeholders given the reduction that has been suffered in human well-being, the environment and society, since the late 1970s as a result of imposing piratical socio-economic policies, on the Irish people.

It was decided to pursue this as appropriate in the context of the ICTU socio-economic policy in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. Fórsa ensured that essential protections against outsourcing carried over into Building Momentum, and the union continues to work on the issue at divisional level, nationally, through ICTU campaigns and activities, and through international trade union federations.

Climate change and environmental issues

Motion 55 - Justice Executive Branch

This conference instructs the National Executive to campaign for a green new deal that ensures that workers are not going to pay the brunt of climate catastrophe. To build a coalition, link up with community groups, and campaign for:

- Zero carbon emissions by 2030. Phase out fossil fuels.
- Investment in green renewable energy for sustainable communities.
- Investment in green and sustainable agriculture.
- Just transition for workers. Support all workers in Ireland and abroad fighting for a just transition.
- Free public transport. Investment in green public transport that is expanded and publicly owned.
- International solidarity and support for indigenous groups and people in the global south suffering the consequences of the climate crisis.

It was decided to pursue opportunities to ensure that the commitments made at European level are implemented and to highlight the issue in our campaigning work.

Motion 56 - Defence Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to seek a special arrangement with the National Transport Authority to allow public servants living outside of short hop-zones to avail of discounts (similar to that of short hop-zones) on public transport to: reduce the cost of commuting to work, entice staff to use public transport and reduce climate change emissions from cars.

The General Secretary wrote to Eamon Ryan TD, Minister for Transport stating that, prior to writing to the National Transport Authority, it would be useful to have a discussion in relation to the policy issues involved. The General Secretary sought his consideration of this request and for observations on the terms of the motion.

Motion 57 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference of Fórsa calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to pursue the implementation of a State programme of Hydro-Electric, Wave, and Tidal Energy Generation that would be cheap, clean and stave off ecological collapse, while generating income to fund Government Services.

The General Secretary wrote to Eamon Ryan TD, Minister for Communications, Climate Action and the Environment, outlining the terms of the motion and stating that we are available to discuss the issue should he wish to do so.

Motion 58 - PSO Sligo Clerical Branch

This Conference agrees that Fórsa should support the call for climate change action. But it should not come as a taxation which pushes citizens of this country, including our members, into further poverty. The changes should come through the education of our citizens, not taxation.

Amendment to Motion 58 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

Insert in last sentence after "citizens" the following "and massive state investment"

The NEC decided to keep an open mind on incentives to lower carbon emissions and not to adopt a policy of opposition to climate-related charges at this point in time. The union highlighted the need for investment in renewable energy in the 2022 policy paper, The Irish State Post-Pandemic, which was commissioned by Fórsa and produced by the TASC social action think tank. The union continues to campaign on this and other issues raised in the policy paper.

Motion 59 - Taoiseach Executive Grades Branch

Conference recognises that Fórsa is a member of Coalition 2030 - the alliance of over 60 civil society organisations working together to ensure Ireland keeps its promise to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SDG's were agreed amongst 193 countries in the United Nations in September 2015.

As we come to the five year anniversary of these goals, with the aspiration to have met them by 2030, we call on the NEC to promote the goals in all its work. This includes engaging in an information awareness raising programme with the membership of the Sustainable Development Goals starting before the end of 2020.

The National Executive Committee asked the Communication's Unit to advise. The Unit continues to highlight these issues in its publications, and the union continues to work through the ICTU Global Solidarity Committee.

Motion 60 - CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to call on the government to again declare a climate emergency and to prioritise working with unions to develop plans to swiftly address the largest areas in which Ireland negatively impacts climate. Such issues would necessarily include decarbonising Ireland's energy, incentivising the use of public transport through subsidising its use and developing a viable integrated transport network and encouraging all means of reducing daily commuting such as the introduction of a four-day week and working from home.

The General Secretary wrote to An Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD stating we believe that the terms of the motion are particularly suited to social dialogue should it be possible to agree such a process. The letter was copied to the leader of the Green Party Eamon Ryan TD. The union continues to call for strengthened social dialogue on the issue of climate change, including at the Labour Employer Economic Forum (LEEF) and through the union-led Just Transition Alliance.

Motion 61 - Fingal Branch

That this conference seeks that staff wishing to transfer within each divisional sector of Fórsa have access to a staff transfer facility within their division. This would reduce carbon emissions; government bodies should be key drivers of climate change by facilitating staff to work close to home. This will also enable employees to bring work and life closer to a balance.

The General Secretary wrote to the heads of division requesting that the divisions consider lodging claims with the relevant employer bodies.

Motion 62 - CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to mobilise its national membership (80,000 members) on a regular basis (half yearly/quarterly), albeit at weekends, in a real effort to lead in demanding more by way of climate action by Government and by business and within keeping of the Paris Agreement's goal in pursuing efforts to limit global average temperature increases to 1.5° C by 2030.

It was decided to participate as appropriate in suitable events to highlight the issue and Fórsa's support and to review this when the pandemic has relented. The union continues to be active on climate action issues, including through the union-led Just Transition Alliance.

Collective bargaining rights

Motion 63 - Oireachtas Ushers Branch

That this Conference directs Fórsa that in the event of a breakdown between the employer/management and the trade union regarding industrial relations, the services and assistance of the Workplace Relations Commission should be called upon to provide a conciliation officer or an industrial relations officer to facilitate/mediate between the parties concerning the dispute.

This would be helpful in allaying any perception that the members might have in relation to a perceived bias with the services provided by another third party outside of the WRC. More importantly the WRC is recognised as the state's foremost dispute resolution machinery and also independent.

The NEC decided that this process should be accelerated. The General Secretary wrote to the head of division who confirmed that a letter to the Minister from the General Secretary would be helpful. The head of division reported that access to the WRC/Labour Court for civil servants is being pursued at General Council and he will write to the minister.

Motion 64 - Foreign Affairs Clerical Branch

Conference notes that the fundamental right of workers to withdraw labour has come under sustained attack by Thatcherite "reforms" to trade union law in different jurisdictions in recent decades - in Ireland, by the Industrial Relations Act 1990, which inter alia:

- Limits lawful industrial action to the narrow confines of a "trade dispute", effectively preventing, for example, unions from using their industrial leverage to force action on the climate emergency;
- Places onerous obligations on unions even in the context of a "trade dispute", with disastrous results for unions if they are not adhered to, as soon in the recent Ryanair dispute;
- Compels workers to cross the picket line if there is an industrial dispute that does not directly affect them, even if it is in the same workplace which sows division among workers.

Conference demands that this reactionary legislation is repealed and replaced by a new law that respects workers' rights and in particular collective-bargaining rights of all workers.

The NEC continues to support ICTU efforts in seeking reform of the industrial relations legislation and securing a right to union recognition, collective bargaining and a real voice for workers. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting an update. ICTU has produced a comprehensive policy document on collective bargaining rights in Ireland, which calls for a Trade Union Rights Act to provide for trade union recognition, the right of access, the right to organise and a worker's right to be heard. The ICTU General Secretary met with the leaders of all political parties prior to the most recent general election. Since then, an employer challenge to construction sector Sectoral Employment Order was upheld in the High Court. The State has appealed this to the Supreme Court. The ICTU Executive Council has developed a coordinated strategy between affiliated unions aimed at achieving a satisfactory outcome.

Motion 65 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee of Fórsa to campaign for a rescinding of the 1990 Industrial Relations Act.

The NEC continues to support ICTU efforts in seeking reform of the industrial relations legislation and securing a right to union recognition, collective bargaining and a real voice for workers. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting an update. ICTU has produced a comprehensive policy document on collective bargaining rights in Ireland, which calls for a Trade Union Rights Act to provide for trade union recognition, the right of access, the right to organise and a worker's right to be heard. The ICTU General Secretary met with the leaders of all political parties prior to the most recent general election. Since then, an employer challenge to construction sector Sectoral Employment Order was upheld in the High Court. The State has appealed this to the Supreme Court. The ICTU Executive Council has developed a coordinated strategy between affiliated unions aimed at achieving a satisfactory outcome.

Motion 66 - Higher Education Branch

The Higher Education branch calls on Conference to press for the repeal of the Industrial Relations Act 1990, which imposes draconian and disproportionate restrictions on the rights of workers to take lawful strike action, which is recognised internationally, including in the ILO principles concerning the right to strike. The 1990 Act should instead be replaced by new legislation that is fair to workers and guarantees fundamental labour rights.

The NEC continues to support ICTU efforts in seeking reform of the industrial relations legislation and securing a right to union recognition, collective bargaining and a real voice for workers. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting an update. ICTU has produced a comprehensive policy document on collective bargaining rights in Ireland, which calls for a Trade Union Rights Act to provide for trade union recognition, the right of access, the right to organise and a worker's right to be heard. The ICTU General Secretary met with the leaders of all political parties prior to the most recent general election. Since then, an employer challenge to construction sector Sectoral Employment Order was upheld in the High Court. The State has appealed this to the Supreme Court. The ICTU Executive Council has developed a coordinated strategy between affiliated unions aimed at achieving a satisfactory outcome.

Motion 67 – An Post Branch

This Conference calls for an active TU campaign to repeal and abolish the 1990 Industrial Relations Act. This is regressive legislation that is designed to undermine workers and prevent trade unions from effective action and representation of their members. Furthermore, this Conference calls on the incoming executive to initiate a campaign within ICTU and the wider TU membership to campaign for this and replacement with a pro worker and TU legislation.

The NEC continues to support ICTU efforts in seeking reform of the industrial relations legislation and securing a right to union recognition, collective bargaining and a real voice for workers. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting an update. ICTU has produced a comprehensive policy document on collective bargaining rights in Ireland, which calls for a Trade Union Rights Act to provide for trade union recognition, the right of access, the right to organise and a worker's right to be heard. The ICTU General Secretary met with the leaders of all political parties prior to the most recent general election. Since then, an employer challenge to construction sector Sectoral Employment Order was upheld in the High Court. The State has appealed this to the Supreme Court. The ICTU Executive Council has developed a coordinated strategy between affiliated unions aimed at achieving a satisfactory outcome.

Motion 68 – Children & Youth Affairs Executive Grades Branch

Conference applauds the stance taken by the Fórsa Civil Service Division and other campaigning unions in calling for the abolition of the Industrial Relations Act 1990 and its replacement by legislation intended to better protect working people and assist them to organise in trade unions.

Conference therefore instructs the incoming Executive Committee to initiate and adequately fund a national campaign, with other like-minded campaigning unions, to secure strengthened employment law through the establishment of a Fair Work Act in Ireland. This Fair Work Act should include the right to join a union; the right to access workplaces; the right to representation; effective union recognition and collective bargaining rights; the unalienable right to strike; the right to decent and fair work and conditions and any additional legislative provisions deemed necessary to defend workers in Ireland.

Conference further instructs the incoming Executive Committee to actively campaign for the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to campaign to abolish the 1990 Industrial Relations Act in its entirety and to join in the fight to secure robust and effective workers' rights legislation as a matter of immediate priority, including the proposal of a motion to this effect at its biennial delegate conference.

The NEC continues to support ICTU efforts in seeking reform of the industrial relations legislation and securing a right to union recognition, collective bargaining and a real voice for workers. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting an update. ICTU has produced a comprehensive policy document on collective bargaining rights in Ireland, which calls for a Trade Union Rights Act to provide for trade union recognition, the right of access, the right to organise and a worker's right to be heard. The ICTU General Secretary met with the leaders of all political parties prior to the most recent general election. Since then, an employer challenge to construction sector Sectoral Employment Order was upheld in the High Court. The State has appealed this to the Supreme Court. The ICTU Executive Council has developed a coordinated strategy between affiliated unions aimed at achieving a satisfactory outcome.

Automation

Motion 69 - National Executive Committee

This conference believes that the range of tasks that can be substituted or disrupted by new technologies has expanded and will continue to grow, and that this is likely to have a significant impact on the jobs of many Fórsa members and the services they deliver to the public. Conference calls on the union to work to protect staff and services from potential adverse effects of automation, and to develop strategies to ensure that the benefits of new technologies are shared with and their communities.

To this end, conference endorses the report 'Acting on automation: A scoping report on how new technologies could impact Fórsa and its members,' and its recommendations that:

- Fórsa should take a lead role in the automation debate in Ireland
- Our response to automation should be integrated into core union business
- The union should produce a guide to bargaining over automation, and be proactive in seeking workplace and sectoral agreements on automation and digitalisation
- Working with ICTU and European and international union federations, Fórsa should develop a policy and political campaign aimed at ensuring that automation benefits everyone.

The General Secretary wrote to Head of Communications to ask how the terms of the motion might be advanced in the context of policy changes at national and European level in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, and to bring forward a brief policy paper and suggest thoughts on a possible campaign if appropriate. The Head of Communications advised that Fórsa's Communications Unit published 'Acting on automation: A scoping report on how new technologies could impact on Fórsa and its members' in 2019. The union's focus in the area of work organisation had to shift to remote and blended working in the context of the pandemic and subsequent opportunities to advance this issue through industrial relations and legislation, and that proposals for further policy and political interventions regarding automation were now being developed for consideration.

Staffing and related

Motion 70 - Housing, Planning Community & Local Government Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference calls on the union to ensure that there is full consultation and agreement on staffing issues prior to any new or existing shared service agreements across the civil and public service.

The General Secretary wrote to the heads of divisions asking that they note and implement. The heads of divisions were asked to advise when their division had considered and actioned the motion.

Motion 71 - Ballinasloe Branch

We call on Fórsa to ensure that in future the public sector will not allow vacancies created as a result of non-replacement of maternity leaves to arise. That this be made a gender issue that unfairly and disproportionately adversely affects female dominated roles or professions. This crude instrument will no longer be accepted as a measure to reduce costs. At a minimum a vacancy created by a maternity leave absence must be filled with 0.5 wte replacements.

The divisions were asked to note and to action. The divisions were asked to advise when their division had considered and actioned the motion. In the health sector, It is policy to provide cover for maternity absences. In education, all SNA vacancies are filled with substitute staff, while maternity leave vacancies are filled in clerical and administrative roles.

Pensions and related

Motion 72 - Dublin South Health & Welfare Branch

That this Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to push for all employees, including sessional employees, to have access to the superannuation scheme.

The NEC referred this motion to the Health and Welfare Division where it was placed on the DEC agenda.

Motion 73 - Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Branch

That this Conference notes the growing trade union-led opposition in Ireland and across Europe to pension reforms that will impact negatively both on income in retirement and pension age.

This Conference calls on the NEC to initiate a campaign of protest and industrial action, up to and including strike action, to oppose the increase in the Irish state pension age to 67 in 2021, and to reverse reductions in entitlements and prevent any further diminution of benefits.

This Conference also directs the NEC to propose that the ICTU convene a major national forum to address the issues surrounding pensions and to embark on a campaign to ensure access to schemes that will provide an adequate pension in retirement for all workers, in the public and private sectors.

The NEC decided that the best course of action lay in supporting the efforts of Congress to oppose the proposed increases in the State pension age and any diminution of benefits and entitlements. It was also agreed that we would support Congress efforts to persuade the Government to increase the rate of employer PRSI to European norms. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting that the ICTU Secretariat provide updates from time to time on any progress made. The ICTU General Secretary replied stating that Congress welcomed the pausing of the planned increase to age 67 in January 2021 for the Pensions Commission to report on the sustainability of the State pension. She said increases in the qualifying age, and the loss of income for workers in their retirement, would continue to be vigorously resisted by Congress. Congress has made detailed submissions to Government commission and has vigorously advocated for the necessary reform.

Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its major 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 74 - FGE Branch

This Conference condemns the increase in the state pension age, all future planned increases in that pension age and in particular demands that the pensions of low paid members, employed in the public sector, have their particular pension issues, these changes have brought to light, addressed immediately by the Fórsa National Executive.

The NEC decided that the best course of action lay in supporting the efforts of Congress to oppose the proposed increases in the State pension age and any diminution of benefits and entitlements. It was also agreed that we would support Congress efforts to persuade the Government to increase the rate of employer PRSI to European norms. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting that the ICTU Secretariat provide updates from time to time on any progress made. The ICTU General Secretary replied stating that Congress welcomed the pausing of the planned increase to age 67 in January 2021 for the Pensions Commission to report on the sustainability of the State pension. She said increases in the qualifying age, and the loss of income for workers in their retirement, would continue to be vigorously resisted by Congress. Congress has made detailed submissions to Government commission and has vigorously advocated for the necessary reform.

Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its major 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 75 - PSO Sligo Clerical Branch

This Conference instructs the National Executive to seek support from ICTU to campaign for all elected public representatives, including An Taoiseach, to receive their pensions in line with the state pension retirement age.

The matter was referred to the ICTU, and Fórsa remains active in ICTU campaigning and lobbying for the abandonment of Government plans to increase the State pension qualification age. Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its major 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 76 - Revenue C&E Dublin Branch

This Conference calls on Fórsa to continue to pursue a claim to put in place arrangements for premium payments to be treated as pay for pension purposes for members who work on regular shift allowance roster.

The NEC decided to review the possibility for claims to be lodged in the light of the outcome to the public service pay talks.

Motion 77 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference, calls on the incoming NEC to seek that the 40 year rule in respect of retirement age for public servants recruited before 1st April 2004, be extended to more than 40 years when calculating retirement benefits.

The "40 year" rule is provided for in legislation and would require a change in the law. Fórsa has been in correspondence with DPER on the issue and revised rules have been introduced on foot of a review of the manner in which it has been applied.

Motion 78 - Cork General Clerical Branch

That this Conference calls on the NEC to engage in talks with Government to allow public servants, if they so wish, to retire after 40 years' service with full pension entitlements.

There is currently provision for actuarially reduced benefits for people leaving before normal retirement age. This was a specific recommendation of the Commission on Public Service Pensions. Described as cost neutral early retirement, it is designed to reflect the cost to the State of paying benefits earlier. There is little likelihood of securing a provision for earlier retirement with full benefits in circumstances where public policy is to increase retirement ages, even in circumstances where people have full service.

Motion 79 - Foreign Affairs Clerical Branch

This Conference notes the very real risks of poverty and misery in retirement that will be faced by members of what is sometimes called "generation rent," as the burden of paying rent is likely to continue for many members of this generation long past retirement age. Conference further notes that the decimation of the pension entitlements of public servants appointed from 1st January 2013 onwards (whose pensions are to be calculated by reference to "career average" earnings rather than final salary) will make the situation even worse for those affected by it, with the cut to retirement income estimated at 35% by DPER's own figures. This Conference, being the supreme governing body of the union, condemns this disgraceful inequality of post-2012 recruits to the public service be reversed in its entirety.

The 'career average' scheme represented a better option than unilateral action by the Government. The overall position in relation to occupational pensions has not improved and calling for its reversal is only likely to lead to a worsening of the position.

Motion 80 – Dublin City Branch

That this Conference calls on delegates to the Biennial Conference to mandate the union's National Executive to negotiate with Government and public sector employer so that the cost to the employee of buying notional service in respect of periods of unpaid Parental or Carers Leave would be no greater than the normal amount of superannuation payable (Class A employee) for such a period.

The cost of purchasing periods of service reflect the employee and employer cost. The motion appears to seek that the service should reckon if the employee contribution is paid albeit in respect of carers' leave and parental leave. The challenge here is that the legislation governing these forms of leave specifically provide that they are not reckonable for pension purposes. The issue could be raised with DPER as a matter of public policy, but resistance can be expected. Nevertheless, Fórsa is liaising with ICTU on possible avenues for progress.

Motion 81 – Dublin City Branch

That this Conference calls on delegates to the Biennial Conference to mandate the union's National Executive to pursue better value and wider choice for members in the availability of Additional Voluntary Contributions (via direct salary deduction) (AVC) pension schemes, including competitively tendering for a Fórsa endorsed scheme.

The NEC decided that preliminary research should be carried out. The General Secretary wrote to the DGS requesting that this be considered in consultation with the Membership Services Sub-Committee. Fórsa has ensured that tax-approved AVC schemes are available to all members. These are to be reviewed in 2022, and the union's broker has been asked to invest in bringing them to the attention of all members.

Motion 82 – Cavan Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to lobby government to enact legislation granting negotiation rights to representative organisations with respect to retired members.

The General Secretary wrote to Tánaiste Leo Varadkar TD who is Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment requesting him to consider the matter and to ask his officials to respond. This has proven a difficult subject in the past often leading to a sense of frustration on the part of individuals who perceive themselves as deprived of a voice and access to influence once they reach retirement. While some arrangements have been made within the public service to provide consultative mechanisms for representative groups this falls short of a negotiating role.

Motion 83 – Cavan Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference mandates Fórsa to negotiate to seek the restoration of the link between retired members pension rates and their equivalent pay grade on retirement and any cost of living increases applicable to their grade, to apply across the public sector.

This is being rectified as pay rates increase. The discrepancy arose because pensions were reduced by a lower percentage than pay under the FEMPI legislation.

Motion 84 - Probation Officers Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to campaign for a return to a retirement age of 65. Fórsa should campaign for an immediate reversal of the Government's decision to increase the age of pension entitlement from 66 to 67 in 2021 and again from 67 to 68 in 2028. This is a negative development for all workers and is especially detrimental for women and for low paid workers who do not have the luxury of paying into a private pension fund.

The NEC decided that the best course of action lay in supporting the efforts of Congress to oppose the proposed increases in the State pension age and any diminution of benefits and entitlements. It was also agreed that we would support Congress efforts to persuade the Government to increase the rate of employer PRSI to European norms. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting that the ICTU Secretariat provide updates from time to time on any progress made. The ICTU General Secretary replied stating that Congress welcomed the pausing of the planned increase to age 67 in January 2021 for the Pensions Commission to report on the sustainability of the State pension. She said increases in the qualifying age, and the loss of income for workers in their retirement, would continue to be vigorously resisted by Congress. Congress has made detailed submissions to Government commission and has vigorously advocated for the necessary reform.

Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its major 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 85 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee of Fórsa to ensure that there is no further increase in state pension age or dis-improvements in state funded pensions or any such measure that is to the detriment of worker income.

The NEC decided that the best course of action lay in supporting the efforts of Congress to oppose the proposed increases in the State pension age and any diminution of benefits and entitlements. It was also agreed that we would support Congress efforts to persuade the Government to increase the rate of employer PRSI to European norms. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting that the ICTU Secretariat provide updates from time to time on any progress made. The ICTU General Secretary replied stating that Congress welcomed the pausing of the planned increase to age 67 in January 2021 for the Pensions Commission to report on the sustainability of the State pension. She said increases in the qualifying age, and the loss of income for workers in their retirement, would continue to be vigorously resisted by Congress. Congress has made detailed submissions to Government commission and has vigorously advocated for the necessary reform.

Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its major 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 86 - PSO Sligo Clerical Branch

This Conference instructs the NEC to actively oppose the increase in the old age pension qualification age. We believe that when a citizen of the state reaches 66 years that it should be the qualification age for state pension. We believe Fórsa in conjunction with ICTU should call for a National day of protest to highlight or opposition to the increase in the pension age.

The NEC decided that the best course of action lay in supporting the efforts of Congress to oppose the proposed increases in the State pension age and any diminution of benefits and entitlements. It was also agreed that we would support Congress efforts to persuade the Government to increase the rate of employer PRSI to European norms. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting that the ICTU Secretariat provide updates from time to time on any progress made. The ICTU General Secretary replied stating that Congress welcomed the pausing of the planned increase to age 67 in January 2021 for the Pensions Commission to report on the sustainability of the State pension. She said increases in the qualifying age, and the loss of income for workers in their retirement, would continue to be vigorously resisted by Congress. Congress has made detailed submissions to Government commission and has vigorously advocated for the necessary reform.

Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its major 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 87 - Revenue C&E Dublin Branch

This Conference calls on Fórsa to pursue the rolling back of the social welfare old pension qualifying age to 65.

The NEC decided that the best course of action lay in supporting the efforts of Congress to oppose the proposed increases in the State pension age and any diminution of benefits and entitlements. It was also agreed that we would support Congress efforts to persuade the Government to increase the rate of employer PRSI to European norms. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting that the ICTU Secretariat provide updates from time to time on any progress made. The ICTU General Secretary replied stating that Congress welcomed the pausing of the planned increase to age 67 in January 2021 for the Pensions Commission to report on the sustainability of the State pension. She said increases in the qualifying age, and the loss of income for workers in their retirement, would continue to be vigorously resisted by Congress. Congress has made detailed submissions to Government commission and has vigorously advocated for the necessary reform.

Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 88 - Waterford Clerical Branch

Conference instructs the incoming executive to seek the reintroduction of pension age to 65 or lower.

The NEC decided that the best course of action lay in supporting the efforts of Congress to oppose the proposed increases in the State pension age and any diminution of benefits and entitlements. It was also agreed that we would support Congress efforts to persuade the Government to increase the rate of employer PRSI to European norms. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting that the ICTU Secretariat provide updates from time to time on any progress made. The ICTU General Secretary replied stating that Congress welcomed the pausing of the planned increase to age 67 in January 2021 for the Pensions Commission to report on the sustainability of the State pension. She said increases in the qualifying age, and the loss of income for workers in their retirement, would continue to be vigorously resisted by Congress. Congress has made detailed submissions to Government commission and has vigorously advocated for the necessary reform.

Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 89 - An Post Branch

This Biennial Conference calls on the trade union movement to mobilise and campaign against the mandatory increase in the pension age. With the roll out of new technology and work practices we should be moving in the direction of shorter working hours and working years for all workers in the future. This conference/AGM will campaign, mobilise and if necessary ballot for industrial action to keep the voluntary pension retirement from rising above 65. Furthermore, steps should be taken by this union to reduce the pension age in line with other European countries such as France.

The NEC decided that the best course of action lay in supporting the efforts of Congress to oppose the proposed increases in the State pension age and any diminution of benefits and entitlements. It was also agreed that we would support Congress efforts to persuade the Government to increase the rate of employer PRSI to European norms. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting that the ICTU Secretariat provide updates from time to time on any progress made. The ICTU General Secretary replied stating that Congress welcomed the pausing of the planned increase to age 67 in January 2021 for the Pensions Commission to report on the sustainability of the State pension. She said increases in the qualifying age, and the loss of income for workers in their retirement, would continue to be vigorously resisted by Congress. Congress has made detailed submissions to Government commission and has vigorously advocated for the necessary reform.

Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 90 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee of Fórsa to ensure that there is no further increase in state pension age or dis-improvements in state funded pensions or any such measure that is to the detriment of worker income.

The NEC decided that the best course of action lay in supporting the efforts of Congress to oppose the proposed increases in the State pension age and any diminution of benefits and entitlements. It was also agreed that we would support Congress efforts to persuade the Government to increase the rate of employer PRSI to European norms. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting that the ICTU Secretariat provide updates from time to time on any progress made. The ICTU General Secretary replied stating that Congress welcomed the pausing of the planned increase to age 67 in January 2021 for the Pensions Commission to report on the sustainability of the State pension. She said increases in the qualifying age, and the loss of income for workers in their retirement, would continue to be vigorously resisted by Congress. Congress has made detailed submissions to Government commission and has vigorously advocated for the necessary reform.

Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 91 – Architectural Engineering & Heritage Services Branch

That this union do all in its power to restore the pension eligibility age to 65 years and in order to offset any perceived demographic financial shortfall, to have a fully operational extension to the working age to 70 years and beyond, if health allows.

The NEC decided that the best course of action lay in supporting the efforts of Congress to oppose the proposed increases in the State pension age and any diminution of benefits and entitlements. It was also agreed that we would support Congress efforts to persuade the Government to increase the rate of employer PRSI to European norms. The General Secretary wrote to the ICTU General Secretary requesting that the ICTU Secretariat provide updates from time to time on any progress made. The ICTU General Secretary replied stating that Congress welcomed the pausing of the planned increase to age 67 in January 2021 for the Pensions Commission to report on the sustainability of the State pension. She said increases in the qualifying age, and the loss of income for workers in their retirement, would continue to be vigorously resisted by Congress. Congress has made detailed submissions to Government commission and has vigorously advocated for the necessary reform.

Fórsa highlighted its call for an increase in employers PRSI contributions to fund the retention of the current qualification age for eligibility for the State pension as a major strand of its major 2022 report on the post-pandemic Irish State.

Motion 92 – Tipperary South Health & Community Branch

That pensions be determined by the best four years of an employee's life career/salary and not restricted to the best four years of the previous ten.

The motion appears to be factually incorrect. The criterion is the best three consecutive years in ten in respect of pensionable allowances. This was a significant improvement on the average of the final three years and came about as a result of the Report of the Commission on Public Service Pensions.

Conditions of service: General

Motion 93 – Dublin South Health & Welfare Branch

That this Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to ensure that public service employers promote the practice of remote working and are amenable to workers operating from workplaces as close to their homes as possible.

The union commissioned a major membership survey on remote working, made a comprehensive submission to a Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation consultation, and published a detailed remote working policy in 2020. Since then, Fórsa has been the leading union voice on the issue, achieving frequent and prominent media coverage.

In early 2021, the union lodged a claim with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), which sought urgent negotiations on a public service framework agreement on remote and blended working. This formed the basis of the union's approach to negotiations, which began in late summer of 2021 and continued into February 2022. The outcome was a detailed and agreed civil service framework document, which provides a template for similar agreements across the public service and non-commercial semi-state sectors.

Simultaneously, the union was active at all levels (national, divisional and branch) in seeking to maximise the maintenance of remote and blended working arrangements following the so-called 'return to workplaces' that followed the easing of official Covid-19 restrictions from January 2022.

Along with ICTU, Fórsa has also been the most prominent union voice in campaigning and lobbying for legislation on the right to request remote working for employees across the economy. The union is active in the focussed ICTU working group now lobbying for substantial amendments to the inadequate draft legislation published by the Government in February 2022.

Motion 94 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

This Conference calls on Fórsa to seek clarity and transparency from all public sector employers with regard to any serious physical assault schemes in operation, to ensure the protection of all workers who may on occasion be assaulted during the carrying out of their daily duties.

The heads of division were asked to raise with employer bodies and to advise when their division had considered and actioned the motion.

Motion 95 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference of Fórsa instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to campaign for Illness Benefit to be paid from the first day of certified illness while ensuring that there is no change to State funded Sick Pay that is to the detriment of Workers take-home pay.

The NEC decided to support ICTU's efforts on this issue and the General Secretary sought updates from Congress. The ICTU General Secretary that ICTU had advocated for a reversal of this policy and had raised it repeatedly in pre-Budget submissions and meetings with various social protection ministers. On foot of these efforts and the union campaign for legislation on mandatory sick pay, Budget 2021 announced a reversal of the three days. ICTU continues to advocate for no waiting days for sick pay and continues to advocate this position through the Labour-Employer Economic Forum (LEEF) Employment Rights Sub Committee, and elsewhere.

Motion 96 - Coillte Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to secure as a matter of extreme urgency the inclusion and protection of retired workers under the aegis of the Workplace Relations Commission.

The General Secretary wrote to Tánaiste Leo Varadkar TD, who is Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, asking him to consider the matter and have his officials to respond. While some arrangements have been made within the public service to provide consultative mechanisms for representative groups, this falls short of a negotiating role. In March 2022, the Government launched a public consultation on a proposal for the introduction of a statutory right for retired workers to be included in collective trade disputes, and how to balance any such rights with existing rights and interests of workers and employers.

Motion 97 - Longford Health and Local Government Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to engage with the employers to agree an Occupational Health Scheme for any Civil or Public Servants or individuals who are injured while carrying out their duties similar to the scheme our colleagues in the HSE and Tusla benefit from. We call on conference to seek the introduction of an Occupational Health Scheme for all Civil and Public Servants.

The divisions were asked to consider the terms of the motion with a view to lodging claims as appropriate. The heads of divisions were asked to advise when their division had considered and actioned the motion.

Motion 98 - Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Branch

That this Conference notes the potential benefits of remote and home working in terms of climate action and work life balance. This Conference agrees to seek the implementation of a remote and home working policy across all sectors.

The union commissioned a major membership survey on remote working, made a comprehensive submission to a Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation consultation, and published a detailed remote working policy in 2020. Since then, Fórsa has been the leading union voice on the issue, achieving frequent and prominent media coverage.

In early 2021, the union lodged a claim with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), which sought urgent negotiations on a public service framework agreement on remote and blended working. This formed the basis of the union's approach to negotiations, which began in late summer of 2021 and continued into February 2022. The outcome was a detailed and agreed civil service framework document, which provides a template for similar agreements across the public service and non-commercial semi-state sectors.

Simultaneously, the union was active at all levels (national, divisional and branch) in seeking to maximise the maintenance of remote and blended working arrangements following the so-called 'return to workplaces' that followed the easing of official Covid-19 restrictions from January 2022.

Along with ICTU, Fórsa has also been the most prominent union voice in campaigning and lobbying for legislation on the right to request remote working for employees across the economy. The union is active in the focussed ICTU working group now lobbying for substantial amendments to the inadequate draft legislation published by the Government in February 2022.

Motion 99 - Revenue C&E Dublin Branch

This Conference calls on Fórsa to make a claim for benefits like the 'homemakers scheme' for civil and public servants, that allows a man or woman who provides full-time or part-time care for either:

- a child under 12
- an ill or disable person aged 12 or over

Such that a full/partial tax year spent as a carer is regarded as service in the calculation of pension.

The General Secretary wrote to the Minister for Finance asking him to consider the matter and to ask his officials to investigate the possibility of such a scheme. His office responded to say that Fórsa's correspondence had been forwarded to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, which deals with the matter. The General Secretary also wrote to the Head of the Civil Service Division stating that, as this motion came from the Revenue C&E Dublin Branch, a claim at General Council would be in order. The Head of Division raised the matter with DPER, with a view to a possible claim at General Council.

Motion 100 - Boards & Voluntary Agencies Branch

That this Conference acknowledges that the rise of the gig economy with its precarious work practices and erosion of workers' rights is a negative development and will ultimately lead to the growth of an underclass of working poor.

The NEC decided to note the motion and reflect the terms in policy and campaigning work. Fórsa will continue to advocate for a new model of work which shares the benefits of technological changes with workers and places workers' rights at the centre, and reject the precarious nature of the gig economy, through our policy, advocacy and campaigning activity on the future of work and our leading involvement in the Four-Day Week Ireland campaign.

Motion 101 - Kildare Local Authority Branch

We call on the NEC to seek to protect all family friendly policies and to work on improving and enhancing family friendly policies for all members.

The General Secretary wrote to the heads of division asking them to take appropriate action and to advise when their division had considered and actioned the motion.

Motion 102 - SNA South Dublin South Leinster Branch

We seek parity with other public sector workers that can move from department/workplace without break of service being imposed.

The NEC decided to refer this motion to Education Division in the first instance.

Job evaluation

Motion 103 - PSO Sligo Clerical Branch

This Conference instructs the NEC to ensure that job evaluation is positively agreed with DPER and introduced into all divisions of Fórsa that request the initiative.

There is little prospect of cross-sectoral agreement with the employers and so the motion was referred to divisions, who were asked to consider and act on the motion. A job evaluation scheme operates fully in the health services. The scheme was withdrawn in Túsla and this matter is being processed through industrial relations channels. The Head of Civil Service Division reported that job evaluation in the civil service has been explored previously and the employer is opposed on the basis that there is less rationale for such a scheme given the extent of promotions in the civil service. A ballot of members in local authorities was rendered impossible by the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead, there were further talks with management and the issue returned to the Labour Court. It has since been referred back to the Workplace Relations Commission as four years had elapsed since the original Labour Court recommendation. A date for conciliation is awaited. There has been progress in some non-commercial semi state agencies.

Motion 104 - Ballina General Branch

This Conference instructs the NEC to work with Fórsa head office negotiators to seek to ensure that the job evaluation process is accessible to all members in all six divisions. Negotiators to take into account the growing changes within our workforce and in particular our graded structures.

There is little prospect of cross-sectoral agreement with the employers and so the motion was referred to divisions, who were asked to consider and act on the motion. A job evaluation scheme operates fully in the health services. The scheme was withdrawn in Túsla and this matter is being processed through industrial relations channels. The Head of Civil Service Division reported that job evaluation in the civil service has been explored previously and the employer is opposed on the basis that there is less rationale for such a scheme given the extent of promotions in the civil service. A ballot of members in local authorities was rendered impossible by the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead, there were further talks with management and the issue returned to the Labour Court. It has since been referred back to the Workplace Relations Commission as four years had elapsed since the original Labour Court recommendation. A date for conciliation is awaited. There has been progress in some non-commercial semi state agencies.

Motion 105 - Clare CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the NEC to ensure that job evaluation which has been agreed and implemented in some Fórsa divisions, is agreed for all Fórsa members in all divisions that don't have agreements in place for the scheme for implementation.

There is little prospect of cross-sectoral agreement with the employers and so the motion was referred to divisions, who were asked to consider and act on the motion. A job evaluation scheme operates fully in the health services. The scheme was withdrawn in TúsIa and this matter is being processed through industrial relations channels. The Head of Civil Service Division reported that job evaluation in the civil service has been explored previously and the employer is opposed on the basis that there is less rationale for such a scheme given the extent of promotions in the civil service. A ballot of members in local authorities was rendered impossible by the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead, there were further talks with management and the issue returned to the Labour Court. It has since been referred back to the Workplace Relations Commission as four years had elapsed since the original Labour Court recommendation. A date for conciliation is awaited. There has been progress in some non-commercial semi state agencies.

Working time, hours of work and related

Motion 106 - National Executive Committee

Conference commends Fórsa for taking the lead in establishing the Four-Day Week Ireland (4DWI) coalition of trade unions, environmentalists, NGOs, businesses and academics to campaign for shorter working time, without reductions in pay or productivity, in all sectors of the economy.

Conference endorses the view that working time and working patterns across the economy need to be fundamentally reviewed and reformed to take account of new and developing technologies, environmental imperatives, and demographic shifts including longer life expectancy and increasing non-work caring demands. In this context, conference believes reduced working time will be better for business, for workers, for women, and for the environment.

Conference also believes that reduced working time will be an important mechanism for maintaining employment as new technologies replace or change traditional jobs, and for sharing the benefits of improved productivity that flow from automation and other technological developments.

Conference therefore calls on the union's National Executive Committee and senior officials to continue to work for a steady and managed transition to a shorter working week for all workers in the private and public sectors, and to include in this work the short-term goals of:

- Increasing in the number of public holidays from Ireland's internationally-low number of nine
- Securing four-day week pilots in appropriate public and private/commercial employments
- Developing, promoting and negotiating the implementation of mechanisms, including home-working, that can improve work-time flexibility to the benefit of workers, employers and the economy
- Develop and promote mechanisms for work-time flexibility for those approaching retirement, in light of increased life expectancy and other demographic trends.

Fórsa has campaigned and developed policy on the issues set out in the motion. The union ensured that the Haddington Road hours were addressed in the Building Momentum agreement, leading to the recommendation that they be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022. The issue of the low number of public holidays was raised with ICTU and, with other unions, Fórsa successfully pressed for a permanent additional public holiday in the wake of the pandemic. ICTU continues to campaign for more progress in this area.

The union led the four-day week campaign in Ireland and built on its formal launch by conducting a survey and promoting the results in September 2020. The campaign has led to the establishment of pilots in a number of companies, and Fórsa continues to press for pilots in the civil and public service. This has involved political lobbying and events and a meeting with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the issue.

Fórsa has led in making the case for remote working in direct negotiations, submissions to consultations, conducting the largest ever Irish survey, in direct engagements with employers, and in the media and wider public domain. The union has been the most prominent union voice in campaigning and lobbying for legislation on the right to request remote working for employees across the economy, and is currently active in the focussed ICTU working group lobbying for substantial amendments to the inadequate draft legislation published by the Government in February 2022.

Fórsa divisions were asked to raise flexibility measures for those approaching retirement with employer bodies.

Motion 107 - Letterkenny CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming Executive to lobby for the consideration of the introduction of a four day working week and the option of working from home. The government is looking to reduce the national carbon footprint and a reduction of traffic to and from offices would reduce same by at least 20%.

Fórsa has campaigned and developed policy on the issues set out in the motion. The union ensured that the Haddington Road hours were addressed in the Building Momentum agreement, leading to the recommendation that they be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022. The issue of the low number of public holidays was raised with ICTU and, with other unions, Fórsa successfully pressed for a permanent additional public holiday in the wake of the pandemic. ICTU continues to campaign for more progress in this area.

The union led the four-day week campaign in Ireland and built on its formal launch by conducting a survey and promoting the results in September 2020. The campaign has led to the establishment of pilots in a number of companies, and Fórsa continues to press for pilots in the civil and public service. This has involved political lobbying and events and a meeting with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the issue.

Fórsa has led in making the case for remote working in direct negotiations, submissions to consultations, conducting the largest ever Irish survey, in direct engagements with employers, and in the media and wider public domain. The union has been the most prominent union voice in campaigning and lobbying for legislation on the right to request remote working for employees across the economy, and is currently active in the focussed ICTU working group lobbying for substantial amendments to the inadequate draft legislation published by the Government in February 2022.

Fórsa divisions were asked to raise flexibility measures for those approaching retirement with employer bodies.

Motion 108 - Legal and Professional Branch

That this Conference calls for a re-negotiation of terms and conditions of employment to enable public servants work their week over a four day pattern.

The union led the four-day week campaign in Ireland and built on its formal launch by conducting a survey and promoting the results in September 2020. The campaign has led to the establishment of pilots in a number of companies, and Fórsa continues to press for pilots in the civil and public service. This has involved political lobbying and events and a meeting with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the issue.

Fórsa has also led in making the case for remote working in direct negotiations, submissions to consultations, conducting the largest ever Irish survey, in direct engagements with employers, and in the media and wider public domain. The union has been the most prominent union voice in campaigning and lobbying for legislation on the right to request remote working for employees across the economy, and is currently active in the focussed ICTU working group lobbying for substantial amendments to the inadequate draft legislation published by the Government in February 2022.

Motion 109 - Buncrana Clerical Branch

That this Conference calls on the NEC to lead the calls for a 4 day week. This will reduce our members' carbon footprint while increasing their quality of life.

The union led the four-day week campaign in Ireland and built on its formal launch by conducting a survey and promoting the results in September 2020. The campaign has led to the establishment of pilots in a number of companies, and Fórsa continues to press for pilots in the civil and public service. This has involved political lobbying and events and a meeting with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the issue.

Fórsa has also led in making the case for remote working in direct negotiations, submissions to consultations, conducting the largest ever Irish survey, in direct engagements with employers, and in the media and wider public domain. The union has been the most prominent union voice in campaigning and lobbying for legislation on the right to request remote working for employees across the economy, and is currently active in the focussed ICTU working group lobbying for substantial amendments to the inadequate draft legislation published by the Government in February 2022.

Motion 110 - Justice Executive Branch

This conference instructs the National Executive Committee to seek to have a four-day working week with no loss of pay as part of any future pay negotiations.

The union led the four-day week campaign in Ireland and built on its formal launch by conducting a survey and promoting the results in September 2020. The campaign has led to the establishment of pilots in a number of companies, and Fórsa continues to press for pilots in the civil and public service. This has involved political lobbying and events and a meeting with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the issue.

Fórsa has also led in making the case for remote working in direct negotiations, submissions to consultations, conducting the largest ever Irish survey, in direct engagements with employers, and in the media and wider public domain. The union has been the most prominent union voice in campaigning and lobbying for legislation on the right to request remote working for employees across the economy, and is currently active in the focussed ICTU working group lobbying for substantial amendments to the inadequate draft legislation published by the Government in February 2022.

Motion 111 - Dublin South Health & Welfare Branch

That this Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to push for the initiation of a four day week in the public service without loss of pay.

The union led the four-day week campaign in Ireland and built on its formal launch by conducting a survey and promoting the results in September 2020. The campaign has led to the establishment of pilots in a number of companies, and Fórsa continues to press for pilots in the civil and public service. This has involved political lobbying and events and a meeting with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the issue.

Fórsa has also led in making the case for remote working in direct negotiations, submissions to consultations, conducting the largest ever Irish survey, in direct engagements with employers, and in the media and wider public domain. The union has been the most prominent union voice in campaigning and lobbying for legislation on the right to request remote working for employees across the economy, and is currently active in the focussed ICTU working group lobbying for substantial amendments to the inadequate draft legislation published by the Government in February 2022.

Motion 112 – Sligo CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming executive of the NEC to give support to the 4 Day Week Campaign across all divisions.

The union led the four-day week campaign in Ireland and built on its formal launch by conducting a survey and promoting the results in September 2020. The campaign has led to the establishment of pilots in a number of companies, and Fórsa continues to press for pilots in the civil and public service. This has involved political lobbying and events and a meeting with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the issue.

Fórsa has also led in making the case for remote working in direct negotiations, submissions to consultations, conducting the largest ever Irish survey, in direct engagements with employers, and in the media and wider public domain. The union has been the most prominent union voice in campaigning and lobbying for legislation on the right to request remote working for employees across the economy, and is currently active in the focussed ICTU working group lobbying for substantial amendments to the inadequate draft legislation published by the Government in February 2022.

Motion 113 – Education & Skills Executive Grades Branch

The Irish economic recovery is at an advanced stage, with the labour market fast approaching full employment. In this regard, it is noted and welcomed that various Acts have initiated the phased repeal of FEMPI measures. In this regard, this Conference instructs Fórsa that when negotiating any future public sector agreements, the restoration of our time and working conditions is a priority for members in the upcoming negotiations.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations." Fórsa ensured that, under the Building Momentum agreement, overtime and premium payments reduced or abolished under the HRA were fully restored on 1st July 2021 and that the hour of unpaid overtime introduced under the HRA would be abolished as pre-Haddington roads overtime rates resumed.

Motion 114 – Justice Executive Branch

This conference instructs the National Executive Committee to ballot members for industrial action in relation to restoring pre-Haddington Road hours without loss of pay. Members should be balloted solely on this issue prior to any pay deal. Further, to ensure there is a meeting on the issue in every branch and sub-branch with a union official present prior to the ballot.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 115 - Donegal Health & Welfare Branch

This Conference calls on public sector management to give more consideration to the member's applications for shorter working year.

The union led the four-day week campaign in Ireland and built on its formal launch by conducting a survey and promoting the results in September 2020. The campaign has led to the establishment of pilots in a number of companies, and Fórsa continues to press for pilots in the civil and public service. This has involved political lobbying and events and a meeting with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the issue. The divisions were asked to consider possible claims and to advise when it had been considered and actioned.

Motion 116 - Higher Education Branch

The Higher Education branch calls on Conference to pursue an agreement to eliminate the increase in working hours on promotion.

This matter will be resolved with the restoration of pre-Haddington Road agreement working hours. Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 116 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to negotiate a flexitime arrangement for all members in the public service, to ensure that members have access to similar schemes that currently exist in other parts of the public service.

Fórsa continues to work and campaign for improved and standardised flexitime arrangements across the civil and public service, and for broader flexible working measures. The union's Equivalent Grades Committees conducted a cross-divisional study of flexi systems, along with research into comparable pay, annual leave and hours of work.

Motion 118 – EASP Clerical Dublin City Centre Branch

That this Conference instructs that as our employer has spent a considerable amount of time telling us how much it would cost in the long run (€621 million for 100%, between €311 million and €466 million for 50% - 75%) to employ enough staff to cover our unpaid additional working hours (slave labour) and in their view, that they are not willing to go this route, then they should go the route of paying for those hours. No additional recruits needed, no extra money for employing extra staff and their associated pensions, accommodation, overtime. They have outlined the value of the additional hours, to themselves and the public at large and the cost of reversing the additional hours, but not the cost of paying us for them.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Travel and subsistence

Motion 119 – Civil Service No.1 Branch

That this conference directs that equality and fairness are applied by all employers in the calculation of work-related expenses and that these calculations adhere to agreed circulars

The divisions were asked to ensure compliance and to advise when their division had considered and actioned the motion.

Annual leave

Motion 120 – Higher Education Branch

The Higher Education branch calls on Conference to support our request for no loss of leave on promotion and an elimination of the 30-day cap on annual leave on promotion.

The divisions were asked to take action as appropriate and to advise when it had been considered.

Sick leave scheme, parental leave and related

Motion 121 - Clare Health & Welfare and Local Government Branch

That this conference mandates Fórsa to negotiate the amendment of the Parental Leave Act by increasing the age of eligibility for taking parental leave up to the child's 18th birthday.

The General Secretary wrote to the Minister for Justice, asking her to consider the policy issues involved and ask her officials to investigate the potential for such changes. Her private secretary replied to say that the correspondence had been referred to the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Motion 122 - Laois Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to work with all employers to introduce a scheme similar to Parental Leave Act to allow workers the same time and flexibility that is available to parents to care for their children, to be put in place to allow workers to care for their elderly relatives in view of the lack of state supports available.

The General Secretary wrote to the Minister for Justice, asking her to consider the policy issues involved and ask her officials to investigate the potential for such changes. The divisions were requested to arrange discussions with employers in their sector.

Motion 123 - CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to renegotiate the calculations of recording Sick Leave regarding Saturdays and Sundays so that both salary payment and social welfare payments are calculated over the same number of days.

The divisions were asked to lodge claims as appropriate.

Motion 124 - CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to seek agreement with DPER that force majeure can be recorded as a half day.

The divisions were asked to lodge claims as appropriate.

Motion 125 - Kildare Local Authority Branch

With reference to the sick payments scheme, Kildare LA Branch seeks Fórsa to ensure that the changes are reviewed on the basis that members do not suffer loss of earnings upon returning to work after critical illness, that cover be extended to allow such persons to attend follow up medical appointments upon recovery.

There is little prospect of further progress on the critical illness provisions following the referral to the Labour Court and subsequent outcome. The union made some progress in the civil service, encouraging the exercise of management discretion. If pressed, employers will always regard medical appointments as medical absences. Discretion given locally cannot be prescribed as it would no longer be seen as discretion. A claim was submitted to the Local Authority National Council in October 2020.

Motion 126 – Kildare Local Authority Branch

That this union seeks the full restoration of members' sick leave entitlements from three months full pay and three months half pay, to six months full pay and six months half pay.

Such a claim would be rejected and would serve to undermine the union's priorities in any public service pay talks.

Motion 127 – Cork Health & Local Government Branch

This Conference, requests Fórsa to seek the enactment of an occupational injury leave scheme, in order to protect the sick leave entitlement of those staff injured during the course of their work and through no fault of their own.

The General Secretary wrote to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform asking him to consider the terms of the motion and to ask his officials to take steps to develop such a statutory scheme. His response said that "it is for each sector to make a policy decision on the existence and/or scope of any occupational injury or illness scheme weighing up the risks and benefits of their particular scheme in light of their own particular working environment."

Motion 128 – Dublin City Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to seek statutory leave for employees engaged in medical and/or related treatments in relation to reproduction.

The General Secretary wrote to the Minister for Health asking him to consider the matter and liaise with relevant Cabinet colleagues with a view to putting such an arrangement in place. He responded to say that the correspondence was receiving attention.

Motion 129 – Ballina General Branch

This Conference instructs Fórsa negotiators who are involved in the next round of PSSA talks seek to ensure that provisions are made to amend the sick leave regulations for those public servants with disabilities. Those amendments to take into account the fact that people with disabilities attend more hospital, consultant and medical appointments which at the moment must be taken as sick leave which reduces the sick leave available to a disabled person when compared to the non-disabled.

This issue was raised in discussions with the official side, but the union side is constrained by legal findings which says there is a distinction between "reasonable accommodation" and a blanket provision that certain categories would have different sick leave allowances to others. The definition of disability in relevant legislation is also a factor. We will continue to discuss the matter with the official side, but also need to guard against creating expectations that cannot be met.

Motion 130 – SNA Munster Branch

That this Conference addresses the issue of members who have a long-term illness or disability having to use their sick leave to attend hospital appointments.

The union made some progress in the civil service, encouraging the exercise of management discretion. If pressed, employers will always regard medical appointments as medical absences. Discretion given locally cannot be prescribed as it would no longer be seen as discretion.

Motion 131 - Clare CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming Executive to address the unfair delay that some of our members are faced with when applying for Carers Benefit (or allowance) when taking unpaid Carers Leave. In early 2019 an application to Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection took 13 weeks to process due to staff shortages and it would appear that the backlog is even longer now. This is putting a very severe financial strain on low-paid members who are already under personal pressure and stress with the circumstance that has resulted in them applying for Unpaid Carers leave in the 1st place.

The General Secretary wrote to the Secretary General of the Department of Social Protection in relation to the inadequate staffing levels that are affecting the processing of carer's benefit and allowance, and sought measures to address this matter. In his response, the Secretary General acknowledged the delays and said that new processes had reduced the average processing time from 12-15 weeks four weeks.

Recruitment

Motion 132 - Cavan Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to demand more transparency and independence in the recruitment of clerical and administrative grades across the public service.

The General Secretary wrote to the Branch stating that the NEC has asked if the branch could elaborate on the terms of the motion so that the full intent is understood. The Health and Welfare division reported that the recruitment processes in the health sector is covered by collective agreement.

Other

Motion 133 - Sligo Health & Local Government Branch

We call on the incoming NEC to seek that all public sector employers provide a paid hour per working day to all breastfeeding mothers for feeding or expressing, extending this from the current provision providing this only for the child's first six months of age.

The divisions were asked to lodge claims. The Education Division secured new provisions for SNAs, which provide for a paid 60-minute breastfeeding break available for 104 weeks following the birth of a child. The head of the Local Government and Local Services Division sought the application of HSE provisions that allow time off for up to two years after childbirth. A circular was issued on 21st August 2020. Legislation proposed in April 2022 would extend the current right to paid breastfeeding breaks from six months to two years. A claim has been lodged in the health sector.

Motion 134 - Defence Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to enter negotiations with the official side to introduce a commuting time credit for periods spent commuting to/from work. Commuting is an arduous part of modern life, a phenomenon known to have negative impacts on mental health but there is also an economic cost to individuals forced by the current rental crisis and access to affordable housing to live long distances from where they work.

The NEC decided to pursue this matter in the context of the renewed focus on remote/home working.

Motion 135 – Kildare Health Branch

That Fórsa will negotiate terms and conditions that employees of the public sector will have the same due process afforded to the public under allegations of abuse made against them.

The divisions were asked to reflect the terms of the motion in negotiations on disciplinary processes or investigative procedures.

Equality and diversity

Motion 136 – National Executive Committee

Conference welcomes the commitments given by all political parties to fully support the enactment of the Gender Pay Gap Reporting Bill in the next Dáil. Closing the gender pay gap requires employers to publish meaningful data, and also to set out the measures they propose to take to reduce the pay gap.

Once data on the gender pay gap is published trade unions must, as a priority, engage with employers to agree appropriate measures to reduce pay inequality. Those measures may include the use of appropriate structural measures such as gender quotas, equal pay audits, additional training and career support for women in the workplace, as well as increasing the availability of flexible working and family-friendly employment policies at all levels.

The publication of gender pay gap data will increase the likelihood of women raising equal pay complaints. The most effective way to resolve such complaints will be to use job evaluation schemes to ensure that the work of men and women is valued equally using objective criteria.

Conference therefore instructs Fórsa to continue to seek the introduction of job evaluation schemes in all sectors.

Fórsa continued to campaign with ICTU and independently for effective legislation on gender pay gap reporting. In March 2022, the union welcomed the Government’s announcement that it will this year introduce an obligation on employers of more than 250 staff to report on their gender pay gaps. The union also called for a rapid expansion of the number of companies covered. The divisions were asked to lodge claims where necessary.

Motion 137 – Dublin Central CS Clerical Branch

This branch calls on the NEC to redouble its work in the area of equality and diversity, in particular, the branch calls on the NEC to prioritise efforts to end the earnings gap between men and women nationally and within each of the employment areas where Fórsa represents our members.

Fórsa continued to campaign with ICTU and independently for effective legislation on gender pay gap reporting. In March 2022, the union welcomed the Government’s announcement that it will this year introduce an obligation on employers of more than 250 staff to report on their gender pay gaps. The union also called for a rapid expansion of the number of companies covered. The divisions were asked to lodge claims where necessary. The divisions were asked to continue to pursue this and other aspects of the motion.

Motion 138 - National Executive Committee

Conference resolves that it should be the policy of this union that, at all levels of representational structures, the representation of women and men should reflect their respective membership of the union.

Conference notes that by reference to this criteria, men are over-represented at all levels of the union's representational structures. Consequently, it follows that women are significantly under-represented.

Conference agrees that the NEC should take steps to ensure that real and practical measures are taken to address the significant imbalance. These steps should include:

1. An annual audit
2. An examination by the National Equality Committee of the effectiveness or otherwise of gender quotas and gender targets in trade union structures and in society generally.
3. Commissioning the National Equality Committee to identify positive actions that could be adopted to address the gender imbalance across all structures of the organisation with a directive to report back to the biennial conference 2022.

The NEC referred the motion to the Equality Committee. The General Secretary wrote to the union's Vice-President advising that the issues should be considered by the Equality Committee in the first instance, liaise with the relevant senior officials, and report to the NEC. The strategic change project commissioned an external consultant to report on gender and diversity issues within Fórsa, and the report was under consideration as this report was finalised.

Motion 139 - Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Branch

That this Conference welcomes Fórsa's support for TransPride events and transgender advocacy and support groups. This Conference notes the progress that has been made towards recognition of transgender rights as human rights, but also notes the continuing difficulties and discrimination that transgender people face both in society and in the workplace.

This Conference resolves to continue to support the pursuit of rights for transgender people both through the work of Fórsa's Equality Committee and through the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

The NEC agreed to continue to support as stated.

Motion 140 - Visually Impaired Branch

This Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to seek a review through the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to cross examine all IT systems and their access and compatibility with that of disabled employees in the public service. Conference notes that disabled employees are being disadvantaged/discriminated against as they cannot carry out their day to day duties independently without the assistance of colleagues.

The General Secretary wrote to the Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform seeking for the terms of the motion to be met.

Motion 141 - Justice Executive Branch

This Conference resolves that it shall be the policy of the union that the Equality Legislations should extend to include a tenth ground of 'socio-economic status'. Conference notes that the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2016 recommended that the equality legislation in Ireland should be extended to include protection against discrimination on the basis of 'social origin, birth, or other status'. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) also recommended the prohibiting of discrimination on the basis of 'disadvantaged socio-economic status'.

Conference notes that the government in early 2018 issued a 'money message' in relation to the Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2017 which sought to amend Equality Legislations in include socio-economic background. Conference further notes that following the government's block of the Bill in 2019, a commitment from the Department of Justice and Equality to tender for a research project was given, which is currently being carried out by the Head of Subject for Social Justice and the Director of the UCD Equality Studies Centre, Judy Walsh with an expected completion dates in early 2020. The purpose of this study is to examine how socio-economic status will be included in Equality Legislation. Conference also notes that the equality laws in Croatia, Belgium, France and Hungary and a number of other European countries prohibit discrimination on the basis of socio-economic status and ample research has also been carried out that also shows discrimination exists on this ground in Ireland.

On these grounds, Conference calls that Fórsa policy be that a new ground of socio-economic status should be added to the Employment Equality Act and the Equal Status Act and instructs the National Executive Committee to take whatever further steps it deems appropriate to promote a change in the law on this point.

The NEC decided to engage with ICTU to establish how best to achieve the terms of the motion. The General Secretary wrote to David Joyce in the ICTU secretariat. He replied that ICTU had met with the equality minister and raised a number of issues, including the one raised in Motion 141. The Programme for Government contains a commitment to examine the introduction of socio-economic disadvantage as a ground under the Employment Equality and Equal Status Acts. The minister reported that the Department of Justice had commissioned a study from Judy Walsh of UCD and was awaiting that report before proceeding. As this report was being finalised, the matter was being studied a part of a wider review of equality legislation, and was addressed in ICTU's December 2021 submission in the consultation process.

Motion 142 - Education & Skills Clerical Dublin Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to consider rearranging women only meetings (for Fórsa women activists) to take place during the week and not to be held at weekends.

The General Secretary wrote to the chair of Fórsa's Womens' Activists' Network seeking the views of network members.

Motion 143 - SNA Connacht Ulster Branch

We seek that Fórsa negotiates with the relevant managing bodies to have postnatal depression included in pregnancy related sick leave.

The divisions were asked to lodge claims with the employer bodies where necessary.

Motion 144 - Laois Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to work with all employers to introduce a policy to support their female workers cope with the emotional, psychological and physical difficulties, as well as the sleep deprivation that arises as a result of the menopause.

The divisions were asked to lodge claims with the employer bodies where necessary.

Motion 145 - Dublin Science and Arts Attendants Branch

This Conference notes the role played by family members many of who are grandparents in providing childcare for others in their extended family.

Increasingly younger women can only hope to access lower paid employment if their parents/grandparents provide child minding support as they cannot afford external professional child care. This Conference instructs the incoming executive and equality & diversity committees to redouble this union's efforts to secure better and more affordable childcare support for parents seeking to re-enter the workforce.

The NEC agreed to continue to make childcare a priority issue in the union's engagement with Government and employers in various fora. In particular, it was decided to continue to press for high quality, affordable childcare and for public investment to be raised to European norms. This issue featured strongly in the union's work on 'post-Covid' society and economy, including the 2022 TASC report on 'The Irish State Post-Pandemic.'

Union finances

Motion 146 - National Executive Committee

That this Conference appoints Mary McPartlan, Gerry Monaghan and Tara Robertson as union trustees from the close of this 2020 National Conference until the close of Conference 2022, and appoints the following to the panel provided for in Rule 32 (iii); Gina O'Brien, Paul Carey, and Pierce Dillon.

This motion was adopted at the November 2020 digital conference, and actioned thereafter.

Motion 147 - Revenue Clerical Limerick Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming NEC to ensure that all certified expenses be approved and processed within 10 working days.

The divisions were asked to raise with employers as necessary.

Motion 148 - Revenue Clerical Limerick Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming NEC to ensure all branches receive conference expenses at least 10 working days prior to the date of the commencement of Conference.

For the 2022 conference, the union has committed to pay expenses in advance of conference so long as the expense claim is received before a stated deadline. This only applies in cases where the expenses are administered centrally by the union.

Motion 149 - Education & Skills Clerical Dublin Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to ensure that all branches receive their conference expenses at least 6 working days in advance.

For the 2022 conference, the union has committed to pay expenses in advance of conference so long as the expense claim is received before a stated deadline. This only applies in cases where the expenses are administered centrally by the union.

Union organisation and development

Motion 150 - Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Branch

That this Conference notes the excellent work of Fórsa's training unit in providing wide-ranging, high quality courses to assist members in their representative roles. This Conference notes however the lack of broader education about trade unionism available, in particular in third level institutions.

This Conference resolves that Fórsa, in conjunction with any other interested unions, will investigate the possibility of partnering with third level institutions to provide programmes of trade union studies to encourage ongoing interest in, and engagement with, trade union history and values.

The Director of Training and Development is engaged with other ICTU affiliates on this matter. SIPTU College provides the QQI accredited level 6 programme in trade union studies in conjunction with the National College of Ireland, and this is open for Fórsa members to take up.

Motion 151 - Dublin Central CS Clerical Branch

This branch calls on the incoming NEC to ensure that all branches and grades are serviced and supported equally within the nationally and within their divisions, in particular, that every effort is made to ensure the number of full-time industrial officials available is sufficient to meet the needs of each branch in the workplace. This branch further calls on the NEC to work to deliver improved co-operation between branches of the union operating in the same employment to ensure better recruitment of new members.

The terms of the motion were noted and will be reflected in the ongoing administration of the affairs of the union, mindful that priorities and demands vary and union resources are limited.

Other internal matters

Motion 152 - Laois Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calling on the incoming NEC to ensure that all strategic and policy of reviews of this Union are fully inclusive of members at all levels of the process in terms of consultation and decision making.

The NEC and the union aspire to operate approaches that are as inclusive as is practicable. The SORT project has engaged in extensive consultations on many issues.

Motion 153 - Athlone CS Clerical Branch

The Conference instructs the incoming Executive to provide free GP scheme to all low paid workers similar to panel of doctors' scheme that is operated for An Garda Síochána.

A letter issued to the Deputy General Secretary to arrange for the issue to be considered by the Membership Services Sub-Committee and a report to be prepared in due course for the NEC. The union's Membership Services Committee added this feature into the terms of reference of the review of the income continuance schemes.

Motion 154 - Taoiseach Executive Grades Branch

This Conference notes that as per rule 20 (i) in the Fórsa rule book the Biennial Conference is the governing body of the union. As the governing body of the union we accept all decisions at Conference as being the policy of Fórsa.

This Conference requests the National Executive Committee to issue an update to the Consultative Council on the current status of all motions passed at the preceding national Conference. This will take the format of each motion and its current status in tabular form.

A report setting out the action taken on motions passed at the previous national conference is presented at each conference. The Consultative Council was presented with an interim report in the period following the submission of 2020 conference motions.

Motion 155 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to demand as an urgency, the completion of a public consultation in Ireland on 5G and digitalisation, given the Health and Safety Hazards to Human Health and the reduction in Human Employment and take-home pay that is caused by this plutocracy generating phenomenon in Ireland.

The NEC noted the motion but decided not to take any action.

Motion 156 - Cabin Crew Branch

Conference notes the success of the IDRb model in the IAA branch of the Services and Enterprises Division and the interest of branches in other divisions in this model.

Conference recognises the value of these models and where they are under threat calls for them to be protected and supported.

The divisions were asked to take action as necessary.

Motion 157 - CS Supervisors Branch

That this conference calls on Fórsa to give guidance to its members who choose to join social media groups where the motivation and opinions are in conflict with Fórsa policies and branch established positions.

The General Secretary wrote to the CE Supervisors' Branch stating the NEC decided to seek further clarification from the branch in relation to the concerns giving rise to the motion so as to assist its consideration.

Motion 158 - Probation Officers Branch

That this Conference calls upon the NEC and national officials to address the discrepancies in criteria for the payment of critical illness benefit under the members insurance policy. Rigid adherence to a pre-defined list of conditions has resulted in payment being denied in cases of critical illness conditions that are equal to or greater in seriousness than some of the conditions listed. Payments under the critical illness scheme should be awarded on the basis of the level of criticality to the member along with the level and type of medical intervention used. Fórsa will engage with the policy provider on this as a matter of urgency.

The scheme is insurance-based and, like any insurance policy, includes exceptions. The union is in ongoing discussions with the policy provider and broker on issues requiring clarification and where particular difficulties arise. The union considers these issues and seeks to amend the cover on affordable terms when the policy is for renewal. The union has also addressed certain difficulties unilaterally.

**SOC deemed motions
159 to 189 not to be in order.**

Appendix one: Motions appropriate for discussion at divisional conferences

The Standing Orders Committee considered motions 190 to 225 to be appropriate for discussion at divisional conferences. These motions were referred to the appropriate head of division to arrange for their consideration.

Motions 211 and 213 refer to cross-divisional issues. See Motion 121 above for action taken.

Motion 190 - PSO Sligo Clerical Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming Executive Committee to have included in the national pay talks a pay claim on behalf of clerical officers who are classed as deciding officers due to the advancement of technology the level of decision making has increased for clerical officer but the level of pay has not.

Motion 191 - EASP Clerical Dublin City Centre Branch

That this Conference instructs that seniority/suitability to be restored to CO's with 15-20 years' service done, as they are being overwritten by this new "expressions of interest" positions and their knowledge is extremely valuable in the workplace.

Motion 192 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming Executive Committee to seek the rescinding of Circular 08/2019 - Revised arrangements applying to starting pay. The reduction also affects the Higher Duty Allowance and will have a long-term effect of pensions.

Motion 193 - Tipperary North Health & Community Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to establish how many members it has in Local Development Companies who are funded from public monies and to negotiate to have their terms and conditions of employment brought into line with the public sector to ensure that provision is made for increments, maternity pay, sick pay, pensions and all other employment rights.

Motion 194 - Ballina General Branch

This ADC instructs the incoming NEC to ensure that Fórsa head office negotiators seek to have the wait time of one year before moving up the pay scale following assignment to the Clerical Officer higher scale abolished with immediate effect.

Motion 195 – EASP Clerical Navan Road/Finglas/Ballymun/Blanchardstown Branch

Conference notes the ongoing dispute of workers in the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Thousands of members of NIPSA have taken service wide strike action against the erosion of real wages. Conference notes the role played by trade union branches in the south in providing support and solidarity to struggles in the north such as unite construction branch sending a delegation to the Harland and Wolff occupation and INMO giving practical support to the RCN. Conference believes that real and practical solidarity between workers and their unions is indispensable in increasing the power of our movement.

Therefore Conference now calls on our central executive committee to offer any practical support we can including sending delegations to stand in solidarity with NIPSA members on future strike days throughout this dispute.

Motion 196 – EASP Clerical Navan Road/Finglas/Ballymun/Blanchardstown Branch

Like any employer the department has a duty of care to their staff. Conference agrees our members should not have to deal with verbal or physical harassment, violence, or intimidation which our members feel exposed to without glass in reception area. Conference calls on the Fórsa EC to campaign to get the glass back into reception areas of DEASP.

Motion 197 – Education & Skills Clerical Dublin Branch

This Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to insist on the amount of EO liabilities be made known as these are impeding an internal EO competition being held.

Motion 198 – Education & Skills Clerical Dublin Branch

This Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to instruct Fórsa to negotiate with the department to have an internal EO competition, it's vital clerical officers have promotion prospects.

Motion 199 – Garda Executive Grades Branch

I propose that the incoming National Executive to acknowledge the contribution and work carried out by Finance Officers in designated posts in the Garda area for several years and that their posts are upgraded to HEO (Higher Executive Officer)/AP (Assistant Principal).

I propose that the incoming National Executive to acknowledge the contribution and work carried out by regional HEO's in designated posts in the Garda area for several years and that their posts be upgraded to AP (Assistant Principal)/PO (Principal Officer).

Motion 200 – Boards & Voluntary Agencies Branch

That this Conference condemns the practice by government departments of employing under-qualified persons through healthcare agencies, to work with vulnerable service users and that this Conference draws attention to the inherent risks attached to this continued practice.

Motion 201 – Boards & Voluntary Agencies Branch

That this Conference calls upon the Health and Welfare Divisional Executive to examine the practice whereby health care agencies contracted by government departments use health care assistants to fill roles heretofore filled by social care workers.

Motion 202 - Ballina General Branch

This ADC instructs the incoming Executive to clarify the role of the clerical officer duties in the Department of Rural Community & Development and to respect its members in instructing DRCD to refrain from elevating CO duties without Fórsa approval and in conflict with CO duties across the civil service.

Motion 203 - Donegal Health & Welfare Branch

That this Conference in association with the HSE to immediately implement the jointly agreed review of Hospital Pharmacy (McLoughlin Report 2011) as reaffirmed and updated by the Composite Report of 2017 which still goes unhonoured almost a decade on, despite WRC intervention.

Motion 204 - Donegal Health & Welfare Branch

That this Conference in relation to any new pharmacy career structure agreement, this branch requests that Fórsa will ensure all grades of pharmacists whose current function is the same as a new post in the new career structure is not required to re-interview for the role regardless of the time the employee has been in the post or any difference in remuneration that may arise.

Motion 205 - Revenue Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee and relevant full time officials to request a review of the reasons for denial of shorter working year. And official measures put in place to safeguard employee welfare if this is denied.

Motion 206 - Clare CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the NEC to ensure that staff in DEASP working a 37 hour week are reverted to 35 hours a week.

Motion 207 - Kildare Health Branch

That Fórsa will negotiate and agree policies and interpretation of the employer of the National Travel and Subsistence document.

Motion 208 - Revenue C&E Dublin Branch

This Conference calls on Fórsa to continue to pursue claim for restoration of taxable petty travel expenses for all members.

Motion 209 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to seek to have all allowances paid in Allowance Posts increased in line with recent pay restorations.

Motion 210 - Education & Skills Clerical Dublin Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to instruct Fórsa to negotiate that the current rule of leave been restricted in year three, only applies to anyone who has in excess of 12 days or more.

Motion 211 - Revenue Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to seek extension of the upper age limit to utilise parental leave in the civil service to the age of the child's 15th birthday from age 12 as per the legislation (circular No.13/2010).

This is not a divisional motion. See motion 121 and action taken.

Motion 212 - Dublin Hospitals' Branch

On Fórsa trade union to seek the full implementation of paid parent's leave as announced by the Government last November. A recent circular from the HSE and St. James's Hospital outlines that this leave is unpaid and that the only entitlement to pay during the period of leave was from the department of social protection. This union must seek the top up of pay during the period of parent's leave like paternity leave and maternity leave.

Motion 213 - Education & Skills Clerical Dublin Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to seek an extension of the upper age limit to utilise parental leave in the civil service to the age of the child's 15th birthday from the current age of 12 as per legislation (circular 13/2010).

This is not a divisional motion. See motion 121 and action taken.

Motion 214 - Kildare Health Branch

That Fórsa will support social workers in the public sector to protect their job descriptions and good practices of assessment and not outsource or agree social care workers to take on such practices.

Motion 215 - Revenue Executive Grades Branch

This Conference instructs the relevant full-time official in charge of finance in Fórsa, to ensure that when a certified expense claim form is submitted for payment that, once approved, this shall be processed within 10 working days of receipt of the claim.

Motion 216 - Ballina General Branch

This ADC instructs the incoming NEC to extend the deadline for receipt of benefit applications for COs under the former CPSU benefit scheme to the end of January each year. To allow members time to have the necessary forms completed by the relevant hospital, dentist or optician.

Motion 217 -EASP Clerical Dublin City Centre Branch

That this Conference instructs that a lot of civil servants want their pay restored, especially at lower levels. I think that a more productive request would be to ask for our supports to be returned to us; one such example would be the long gone subsidised childcare that used to be in place for all civil servants. The issue we have is that things are becoming too expensive, and rather than just throwing more money at us or cutting our taxes/pension levies, try and subsidise or support us in availing of the things we need like childcare, housing or even just better working patterns. The €250 a year increase in pay we got is enough to tax a small car for the year; why not use that €250 x 54,000 civil servants in Fórsa (€1.35 million) to make our tax saver travel cards even more cost effective to reduce climate emissions, or to pay for the subsidisation of a childcare service or even a publicly owned canteen; all the canteen services (as far as I'm aware) are contracted out to private companies, but we could instead invest in our

own catering staff and services to further subsidise it by running everything in house and also creating more sustainable and stable jobs for citizens. We need help living, not a fiver in our pockets to pay for another sandwich or half a packet of smokes. I will gladly forsake my pay restorations and live with extra taxes and levies if I can have the supports I need to live my life without the need for worry, and I would hope for those supports to be available to all of my colleagues too because we are a suffering work force and we need help and support, not tokens to placate us which is all I feel these restorations are.

Motion 218 -EASP Clerical Dublin City Centre Branch

That this Conference instructs that very few of the buildings that government departments operate out of are actually owned by the state; they have to pay out exorbitant rents to private landlords, money that could be spent on services or restoring our pay. Their counter argument may be that property taxes and maintenance fees would be expensive, but not more expensive than the rents they currently pay. Also just even looking to Gandon House; it's a rented building and should be maintained by the landlord - one of the main lifts hasn't been working for years. We're not getting value for money and the government are squandering what resources they have on private rentals when they could just compulsorily purchase the buildings for the good of the state. Even just look at the Smithfield debacle when we were supposed to have staff moving there; it was put off for so long because agreements with the landlords kept changing or falling through. If we had just procured our own premises, or better yet, had compulsorily purchased Oisín House before it was re-appropriated by Trinity College, we wouldn't have had any of this mess.

Motion 219 -EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference of Fórsa instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to campaign for a reversal of the National Shared Services Organisation (N.S.S.O.) programme so thereby returning payroll and personnel functions to the original organisations in the interest of the common good while securing employee salaries in addition to ensuring that N.S.S.O. employees will be redeployed to other departments and public sector organisations.

Motion 220 -Monaghan Health and Local Government Branch

That this Conference call on the Health and Welfare Divisional Executive Committee to ensure that any staff who are on a SPC/Temporary Contract/Acting up arrangement for four years automatically receive permanent status.

Motion 221 -PRA Executive Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming DEC to insist that the NSSO & PeoplePoint develop a better and fairer system of paying staff on pension rate pay or on illness benefit for pre 95 staff on long term sick or temporary rehabilitation rate to remove the added stress of having to fight local HR to receive the payments that they are entitled to.

Motion 222 -Coillte Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa as a matter of extreme urgency to engage with relevant government departments, commercial semi-state companies and new ERA to resolve immediately the totally unacceptable pension freeze now in its 13th year.

Motion 223 -Revenue C&E Dublin Branch

This Conference calls on Fórsa to enable all staff currently working 24/7 shift to be eligible to apply for the University Programme run by their departments.

Motion 224 -Clare CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming Executive to ensure all staff who are critically or terminally ill have access to a trained liaison officer from HRD in their own department. The liaison officer should be able to provide all financial and pension related information necessary to enable the employee to make informed work-related decisions required as a result of their illness. This trained liaison officer would be separate to the EAS which provides a different service.

Motion 225 -Revenue Executive Grades Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee and relevant full-time officials to engage with PeoplePoint in regard to their procedure of noting phone calls are recorded in relation to GDPR and then subsequently being unable to produce them when asked.

Appendix two: Motions reiterating existing Fórsa policy

The Standing Orders Committee considered motions 226 to 300 to be motions that reiterated existing union policy and which, therefore, did not require a decision.

Motion 226 -Revenue C&E Dublin Branch

This Conference seeks that Fórsa immediately assign a full-time official, to deal solely with Brexit related issues, until the end of the transition period.

The head of division advised that this was unnecessary as officials are already dealing satisfactorily with all aspects of Brexit and its implications for the civil service.

Motion 227 -EASP Executive Grades Branch

Now that the end of “pay restoration”, as it is called is in sight this Conference calls on Fórsa to seek pay increases of no less than six percent and the abolition of all additional hours, which its members are forced to work, as part of the Haddington Road and Croke Park agreements. Fórsa will seek these improvements immediately when the current agreement ends and will commit to having them delivered no later than one year after the ending of the current scheme.

Fórsa led the negotiations that led to the Building Momentum agreement, which was overwhelmingly accepted in a national ballot of members. It addressed pay and the Haddington Road Hours.

Motion 228 -Tipperary South Health & Community Branch

South Tipperary Health and Community branch demands that provision 7.1.3 and 7.1.4 of the Public Service Stability Agreement are met in regard to ensuring that all matters of dispute are swiftly resolved when the PSA is not followed the union must strongly respond up to and including industrial action.

The union side has conveyed its frustration with the operation of the PSSA disputes resolution procedures and ensured that more effective arrangements were agreed as part of the Building Momentum agreement.

Motion 229 - Tipperary South Health & Community Branch

South Tipperary Health and Community branch instructs the National Executive Council to robustly seek the abolition of the Haddington Road Agreement unpaid working hours in the next public sector pay agreement talks.

Fórsa led the negotiations that led to the Building Momentum agreement, which was overwhelmingly accepted in a national ballot of members, and which addressed the Haddington Road Hours.

Motion 230 – Garda Executive Grades Branch

I propose the incoming National Executive restore and demand the restoration of hours back to Pre-Haddington Road.

Fórsa led the negotiations that led to the Building Momentum agreement, which was overwhelmingly accepted in a national ballot of members, and which addressed the Haddington Road Hours.

Motion 231 – Architectural Engineering & Heritage Services Branch

That in any new pay agreement Fórsa continues their good work in negotiating to include pensioners.

Fórsa led the negotiations that led to the Building Momentum agreement, which maintained existing policy on the application of pay increases to civil and public service pensions for the duration of the agreement. In the main, this means that pension payments will be adjusted in line with pay adjustments for serving staff. However, this is done in a way that takes account of the fact that, in a small number of cases, pension payments currently exceed parity with pay.

Motion 232 – Letterkenny CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming Executive to enter into discussions with DPER at the earliest date possible with a view to reversing the last of the pay cuts which was the imposition of a longer working day and which DPER have valued as the equivalent of a 5% pay cut. However, as this forms part of the reintroduction and normalising of our terms and conditions to the pre-crash era, these negotiations should not form part of any new pay deal and agreement nor should any further restrictions or requirements be imposed by DPER on our members prior to the reversal. We call on this issue to be negotiated, agreed and finalised prior to any substantive talks on a new pay agreement taking place. Failure to resolve this issue satisfactorily will result in a ballot of the members on industrial action up to and including strike action.

Fórsa led the negotiations that led to the Building Momentum agreement, which was overwhelmingly accepted in a national ballot of members, and which addressed the Haddington Road Hours.

Motion 233 – CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to negotiate the discontinuation of the USC in order to help restore net pay for our members in any new Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA) that is due to take effect from January 2021.

The NEC decided that this approach conflicts with the union's wider policy on taxation because USC is a relatively equitable form of taxation insofar as it is levied on all income.

Motion 234 – Defence Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to seek the permanent removal of increment points skipped as part of the 'new entrants' agreement in 2019 to prevent them being reactivated by a future Government.

In the context of other union priorities, it was not feasible to address this matter in the negotiations that led to the Building Momentum agreement.

Motion 235 – Defence Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to seek the permanent removal of increment points skipped as part of the 'new entrants' agreement in 2019 to prevent them being reactivated by a future Government.

In the context of other union priorities, it was not feasible to address this matter in the negotiations that led to the Building Momentum agreement.

Motion 236 - Tipperary South Health & Community Branch

That Fórsa immediately seeks the abolition of the pension related deduction/additional superannuation contributions introduced under the FEMPI (austerity measures) legislation.

The union side negotiated the conversion of the pension-related deduction to an additional superannuation contribution, under the PSSA collective agreement, in order to protect public service pensions from further attack.

Motion 237 - Tipperary South Health & Community Branch

That the Conference opposes the double taxation by way of USC on pension contributions. Fórsa will seek an immediate end to this double taxation.

The NEC decided that this approach conflicts with the union's wider policy on taxation because USC is a relatively equitable form of taxation insofar as it is levied on all income.

Motion 238 - Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive to negotiate the return of working conditions taken from the civil and public sector as part of austerity measures. This is a return to the working conditions prior to the FEMPI arrangements. In many cases the measures that were introduced have proven gender discriminatory, in contradiction of work like balance measures and have not been family friendly.

Fórsa led the negotiations that led to the Building Momentum agreement, which was overwhelmingly accepted in a national ballot of members, and which addressed the Haddington Road Hours.

Motion 239 - School Completion Programme Branch

That this conference calls on the NEC to work towards the immediate and full restoration of pay for all members whose pay was cut under the Financial Emergency Measures Acts.

By the end of 2020, pay levels for those earning up to around €70,000 a year had been restored. This represents approximately 90% of public servants. Under the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017 the balance of workers were to have had their pay restored by mid-2022.

Motion 240 - Dublin South Health & Welfare Branch

240. Motion

That this Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to ensure that relevant service in Section 39 funded agencies is recognised for incremental credit purposes with public sector bodies, equal to the current circumstances of Section 38 agencies.

Fórsa and other members of the ICTU group of voluntary and community sector unions are continuing their campaign for comparable conditions to the public service in Section 39 bodies.

Motion 241 - CE Supervisors Branch

That this conference calls on Fórsa to continue supporting Community Sector workers in their campaigns for the implementation of the 2008 Labour Court Ruling LCR 19293 to provide funding for an occupational pension for CE Supervisors; and pay restoration for Section 39 workers.

In December 2021, community employment supervisors announced that they had voted to accept proposals for a retirement gratuity in settlement of this long-running pensions dispute.

Motion 242 - FGE Branch

This Conference notes that the after tax position of its members, is lower than that which existed prior to the onset of the financial crisis and implementation of FEMPI.

In that context this Conference demands the following.

The return, to at least those hours worked, prior to the crisis and the return to the overtime rates that applied prior to that crisis. In this context this Conference demands that the NEC of Fórsa prioritise this in any national pay talks.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations." Fórsa ensured that, under the Building Momentum agreement, overtime and premium payments reduced or abolished under the HRA were fully restored on 1st July 2021 and that the hour of unpaid overtime introduced under the HRA would be abolished as pre-Haddington roads overtime rates resumed.

Motion 243 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to negotiate/campaign for the restoration of the tax credit for subscriptions paid by trade union members.

The union is continuing to work with ICTU to achieve this objective.

Motion 244 - Boards & Voluntary Agencies Branch

That this Conference recognises that the politics of racism, hate and anti-immigrant agitation has no place in Irish society.

The union has supported the idea of setting up a sub-group of the ICTU Executive Council to address this topic and the Deputy General Secretary has been nominated to participate.

Motion 245 - Boards & Voluntary Agencies Branch

That this Conference calls upon the incoming 2020 government to prioritise ending the housing and homeless crisis.

Housing and homelessness are among Fórsa's top campaigning priorities, and the union continues to actively support ICTU's housing and homelessness campaigns including the union-led 'Raise The Roof' campaign.

Motion 246 - Revenue Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs Fórsa to examine the issue of payments into the Spouses and Children's scheme by single persons and whether there is a possibility of repayment of these contributions upon retirement where someone remains unmarried and without children.

As currently structured, the scheme makes provision for post-retirements events including marriage. To change the scheme in the manner suggested would remove potential benefits from people in these circumstances.

Motion 247 - Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive to complete an information paper on how they perceive that artificial intelligence and technology will be implemented by Fórsa members' employers over the next five-ten years and to make this information available to members. A third party advisory service should be used where necessary. This paper should look at all sectors of Fórsa union and inform a Fórsa position on these matters.

Fórsa's Communications Unit published 'Acting on automation: A scoping report on how new technologies could impact on Fórsa and its members' in 2019. The motion has also been referred to the SORT project for consideration.

Motion 248 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee of Fórsa to seek to reverse the downward effects on worker take-home pay through structural implementation of social dialogue, as part of national pay, wages and salary agreements.

The union has been to the fore in pressing the case for a renewed form of social dialogue, and the General Secretary has raised the issue with An Taoiseach and senior ministers on several occasions, including through the Labour-Employer Economic Forum (LEEF).

Motion 249 - Revenue Executive Grades Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to seek the continued maintenance of the terms and conditions of the pre-existing 2013 public service pension entitlements and negotiate improved terms and conditions for post 2013 recruits to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme introduced during the financial emergency.

The union side negotiated the conversion of the pension-related deduction to an additional superannuation contribution, under the PSSA collective agreement, in order to protect public service pensions from further attack. As the position in relation to occupational pensions generally has not improved in the meantime such a claim would be unwise.

Motion 250 - CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to negotiate the discontinuation of the ASC or the 'additional superannuation contribution' which was formerly known as the Pension Related Deduction (PRD) to help restore net pay for our members in any new Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA) that is due to take effect from January 2021.

The union side negotiated the conversion of the pension-related deduction to an additional superannuation contribution, under the PSSA collective agreement, in order to protect public service pensions from further attack. As the position in relation to occupational pensions generally has not improved in the meantime such a claim would be unwise.

Motion 251 - CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to renegotiate the pension actuarial reduction factor where staff have their 40 years' service completed in advance of reaching the preserved age as outlined in Finance Circular 10/2005. This conference feels it is entirely unfair whereby people who have worked their 40 years' service would have their pension significantly reduced for the entirety of their pension claiming years.

The provision for actuarially-reduced benefits for people leaving before normal retirement age was a specific recommendation of the Commission on Public Service Pensions. Described as cost neutral early retirement, it is designed to reflect the cost to the state of paying benefits earlier. There is little likelihood of securing a provision for earlier retirement with full benefits in circumstances where public policy has been to increase retirement ages.

Motion 252 – EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa negotiators to ensure that there will be no diminution whatsoever in civil and public sector pensions in any future pay talks.

This was achieved in the Building Momentum agreement and the union will endeavour to achieve this objective in any future talks.

Motion 253 – EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs Fórsa to seek to have service in all semi state companies made reckonable for, and regarded as service, for pension purposes.

It is not clear what is involved here. There are transfer schemes which enable the transfer of service in most instances.

Motion 254 – EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee and our negotiators to ensure that Additional Superannuation Contributions (ASC) and the additional hours worked are the cornerstone of any future pay negotiations.

The Pension Levy was stealthily changed to the ASC in January 2019. The current rate of 10% is crippling Fórsa members. Combined with the additional hours, many members are disillusioned and are questioning their continued membership. If they can't be renegotiated, a higher pay award must be sought. Mortgages linked to extinct pay scales, exorbitant rents and childcare costs are just a flavour of the issues drowning our members. The motion must be a priority to give Fórsa any credibility moving forward.

The NEC reviewed this motion and decided that such a claim would be unwise and potentially counterproductive. The union side negotiated the conversion of the pension-related deduction to an additional superannuation contribution, under the PSSA collective agreement, in order to protect public service pensions from further attack.

Motion 255 – CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to support the reinstatement that the allowance of taking additional hours off that were previously worked up under the flexible working hours is reinstated for newly assigned Assistant Principals.

The NEC referred this motion to the Civil Service Divisional Executive Committee to pursue.

Motion 256 – Laois Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls on all employers to provide all employees with an annual benefits statement as is their right by law.

The NEC referred this motion to divisions to raise with employer bodies and employers as appropriate. The issue was raised with local government management, who advised that members of the single pension scheme are entitled to annual statement, while other scheme members were entitled to request a statement. It said most single scheme members receive annual pension statements, though it accepted that there may be technical issues in specific locations.

Motion 257 - NETB Branch

That this Conference seeks that the job evaluation scheme currently in place for the higher education and the health service is extended to include all public servants.

The NEC referred this motion to divisions and to the Equivalent Grades Committee for action. Work on the development of the job evaluation scheme for higher education is close to completion and, once implemented, the Union will proceed to lodge claims for a similar scheme across education and training boards.

Motion 258 - Sligo CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming executive of the NEC to look to have job evaluation expedited to all members regardless of their division.

The NEC referred this motion to divisions and to the Equivalent Grades Committee for action.

Motion 259 - Athlone CS Clerical Branch

The Conference instructs the incoming executive to revert back to the six hours 57 minutes per day, total number of working hours per week is 34 hours 45 minutes.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 260 - Education & Skills Clerical Dublin Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to have the restoration of the 6.57 hour day in line with the motions passed at the bi-annual conference of 2018.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 261 - Garda Executive Grades Branch

I propose the incoming National Executive get immediate payment of all additional hours worked under Haddington Road and Lansdowne Road Agreement since their commencement.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 262 - Clare Health & Welfare and Local Government Branch

That this conference directs Fórsa negotiating team to prioritise the restoration of hours that were given up by public service in any new pay agreement and made it a red line issue at the talks.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 263 - CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to negotiate the discontinuation of the extra 27 mins per workday in any new Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA) due to take effect from January 2021.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 264 - Legal and Professional Branch

That this Conference calls for a re-negotiation of terms and conditions of employment to enable public servants of all grades to avail of flexitime arrangements if they so choose.

The union is developing a policy paper to aid negotiations on flexible working hours and related issues in the light of the exceptional arrangements that resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Motion 265 - Revenue Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference notes that it is Fórsa's policy to seek a restoration of the 6.57 hour day for civil service staff. In the event of Fórsa being unable to achieve this goal in the upcoming negotiations (with government) the Conference asks that they demand a 6% pay rise solely to compensate for the excess hours being worked. This 6% should not be factored into any other pay rise claim being sought.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 266 - Buncrana Clerical Branch

That this Conference calls on the NEC to prioritise working time in the upcoming pay talks and to seek to have pre Haddington Road hours re-implemented as it is a pay cut in kind imposed on our members.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 267 – State Laboratory Branch

That this conference requests Fórsa to concentrate on getting the previous working hours reinstated for all staff.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 268 – Garda Executive Grades Branch

I propose the incoming National Executive outline the progress on return of hours and pay.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 269 – Higher Education Branch

The Higher Education branch calls on Conference to seek an agreement for a reversal of the extra Haddington Road hours as these hours were in effect a pay cut and should be restored in line with all public service pay cuts.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 270 - PSO Sligo Clerical Branch

This Conference confirms Fórsa's position on recovering the hours per policy agreed at the last biennial conference.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 271 - Sligo Health and Local Government Branch

That this union wants restoration of hours as pre Haddington Road Agreement without loss of pay.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 272 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to negotiate the restoration of the 35 hour week from 37 hours per week for all members in the public service.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 273 – DAFM Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming NEC to seek the restoration of the pre HRA working hours.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 274 – Dublin Hospitals' Branch

That Fórsa negotiates with government to restore the working week to pre-economic crisis levels for all Fórsa public servants, regardless of pay grade.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 275 – Taoiseach Executive Grades Branch

This Conference notes that the Haddington Road agreement allowed for the length of the working week to increase without compensation for our members. We note the many motions that have been passed at subsequent conference seeking a return to pre-Haddington Road hours.

Conference notes that the current Public Service Stability Agreement is due to end in December 2020.

We call on the National Executive not to recommend acceptance to if our next agreement does not include recognition of these extra hours and some pathway to reduction without loss for our members.

Fórsa prioritised the restoration of additional working time introduced in the Haddington Road agreement, and other outstanding austerity issues, in the talks that led to the Building Momentum agreement, and won broad union support for this approach. The union made clear to the employer side that it would not recommend an agreement that did not address the 'Haddington Road hours.' As a result, an Independent Body was established to address the issue by 2021. Fórsa led the union side in making written and oral presentations to the body. The details of these were made available to members and widely publicised in Fórsa communications. In early 2022, the Independent Body recommended that the 'Haddington Road hours' be fully abolished for most affected workers from July 2022, albeit with a standardised floor of a 35-hour full-time working week. On 14th April 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the full report of the Independent Body, which includes the implementation date of 1st July 2022. Its statement said that the health minister would engage with health sector unions "on the measures that are required to ensure safe implementation of the recommendations."

Motion 276 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference calls on the National Executive Committee of Fórsa to seek a positive overhaul of Travel and Subsistence rates.

There is an annual review of travel and subsistence rates in accordance with agreed formulae. This reflects cost increases in the various factors involved.

Motion 277 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to seek an increase in travel rates as a matter of urgency.

There is an annual review of travel and subsistence rates in accordance with agreed formulae. This reflects cost increases in the various factors involved.

Motion 278 - EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference calls on Fórsa to seek an increase in subsistence rates as a matter of urgency bearing in mind the high cost of hotel accommodation.

There is an annual review of travel and subsistence rates in accordance with agreed formulae. This reflects cost increases in the various factors involved.

Motion 279 - Kildare Health Branch

Kildare Health branch ask Conference to support the motion that annual leave can be applied for and taken in hours. As some disciplines the shortest leave they can apply for are half days.

The divisions were asked to consider the feasibility of such a claim. Clerical staff in education have this facility through flexitime, but it is not generally feasible for SNAs because of the need to cover their absences. A claim was submitted to the Local Authority National Council on 30th October 2020.

Motion 280 - Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Branch

That this Conference agrees that the changes introduced to sick leave arrangements introduced in 2014 have been to the detriment of our members. This Conference notes that the Critical Illness Protocol continues to fail to address the difficulties faced by some members with chronic conditions.

This Conference also notes the gendered impact of reductions in sick leave allowance.

This Conference notes previously adopted motions, including at Conference 2018, which sought the restoration of sick leave arrangements. This Conference therefore agrees that the NEC should seek the restoration of previous arrangements as a matter of urgency. This Conference requests the NEC to provide a progress report to the next Consultative Council.

Changes in sick pay arrangements resulted from binding Labour Court recommendations. The union continues to address specific issues related to the application of the critical illness protocol, and has recorded successes in this regard.

Motion 281 - CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to negotiate with DPER and/or PeoplePoint for the introduction of the facility of Parental Leave entitlement to be taken in hours as per the Parental Leave Act 1998 Part 2, Section 7, subsection (1b), number (iii).

The NEC referred this motion to the Civil Service Divisional Executive Committee.

Motion 282 – EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference calls on the incoming NEC to have marriage leave, like other special leave such as bereavement leave, be independent of annual leave.

The NEC referred this motion to the divisions, who were asked to confirm current arrangements and consider lodging claims as appropriate.

Motion 283 – EASP Executive Grades Branch

That this Conference instructs the incoming NEC to seek to enforce the terms of the bereavement leave circular DPE 202-020-2016 para. 2A “where there is the death of a spouse (including cohabiting partner), child (including adopted children and children being cared for on the basis of in loco parentis) or any person in a relationship of domestic dependency, the amount of bereavement leave shall be twenty working days”. This enforcement should result in Fórsa members who are the sole carer of a domestically dependant relative being entitled to avail of the full twenty days of bereavement leave following the death of their carer.

The NEC referred this motion to the Civil Service Divisional Executive Committee.

Motion 284 – FGE Branch

This Conference condemns the hardships the changes in sick leave arrangements have caused its members. This Conference supports the return to the sick leave arrangements which applied prior to the financial crisis and instructs the incoming National Executive Committee act on this.

Changes in sick pay arrangements resulted from binding Labour Court recommendations.

Motion 285 – Clare CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the NEC to ensure sick leave entitlements are reverted back to six months full pay from three months in a rolling period.

Changes in sick pay arrangements resulted from binding Labour Court recommendations. The union continues to address specific issues related to the application of the critical illness protocol, and has recorded successes in this regard.

Motion 286 – Clare CS Clerical Branch

That this Conference instructs the NEC to make allowances for staff to attend follow-up medical appointments without having to use sick leave days or annual leave days, after returning to work after long term sick.

Divisions were asked to consider raising the issue mindful of the position reported under motions 125 and 130 above.

Motion 287 – Cavan Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference directs the National Executive Committee to seek the ending of the practice of retired management, across all sectors of the public service, being deployed to sit at interview boards.

The NEC asked divisions to consider the motion and to take action if deemed appropriate. The Local Government and Local Services Division raised the issue with the Local Government Management Agency, who said all members of interview boards were aware of the relevant competencies and that candidates who are dissatisfied with the outcomes of interview processes can raise the issue with their local authority if they believe interview board members lack competence.

Motion 288 - Revenue Executive Grades Branch

This Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to seek that ergonomic sit-stand workstations be made available to all members across the public and civil service.

The NEC referred this motion to the health and safety sub-committee for advice.

Motion 289 - Longford General Clerical Branch

That this conference re-examine the inequality and imbalance caused by the implementation of circular 07/2019: Application of additional increments awarded in relation to New Entrants under the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020.

The premise that the increases would not be applied to persons in service before 31 December 2010 at 1.4 but under 1.3 from 1 January 2019. This resulted in persons hired between 1 January 2011 to 29 February 2019 with longer service being paid a lower pay rate for nearly a full year than colleagues hired later than 1 March 2019.

The head of the Civil Service Division advised that, in relation to circular 07/2019 on skip increments, there was an agreement between Fórsa and Government which is unlikely to be changed. The dates set in the circular were the best that could be achieved through negotiation.

Motion 290 - Revenue Executive Grades Branch

This Conference calls on Fórsa to ensure that payment of the union's death in service benefit is extended to include payment into the estate of any member who passes away in service.

The scheme is underpinned by a life assurance policy that prioritises payment as quickly as possible to the next of kin of the deceased member. The death of a member, or their spouse/partner, is an insured risk with terms and conditions. As this report was being finalized, the Membership Services Committee was working on a mechanism to deal with interim death certificates to ensure that these do not delay payments.

Motion 291 - CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to ensure that the Fórsa training programme is given extra resources to facilitate and ensure the training and upskilling of the branch committee members so that proper and sufficient representation can be delivered on behalf of Fórsa and its membership at branch committee level. All training courses should be advertised months in advance to the committees.

The NEC referred this motion to the training sub-committee for consideration and advice. In July 2021, the following staffing resources were allocated to support the work of the newly created Fórsa Skills Academy: One director of training and development, one coordinator, one administrator. The annual budget for the Fórsa Skills Academy is €86,000. These additional resources coincided with a successful restructuring of branch representative training programmes. Branches receive communications from the Skills Academy each month, and applications are requested months in advance of training courses beginning.

Motion 292 - Buncranca Clerical Branch

That this Conference calls on the NEC to ensure that Fórsa officials deal with branch issues passed on to them in a timely manner in conjunction with Appendix 2 - Code of Service Standards of the amalgamated union.

It was agreed to action this motion in the context of day-to-day operational management.

Motion 293 – CSO Executive Grades Branch

That this conference calls on the incoming National Executive to give members the option to receive their copy of the union magazine in electronic format rather than print.

The Communications Unit suspended publication of the Fórsa magazine at the outset of the pandemic, and intensified its digital communications direct to members. Over 85,000 sectoral ebulletins are now distributed direct to members each fortnight, along with additional special bulletins when required. The union is now actively considering the role of print magazines (and/or a digital magazine format). The Civil Service Division magazine switched to an online format at the outset of the pandemic.

Motion 294 – Kilkenny Health and Local Government Branch

The Kilkenny Health and Local Government branch request that Fórsa allows a nominated person from each branch executive in line with DGPR regulations, access to a live copy of the members affiliated to their branch for purposes of validating the membership and communication.

The NEC decided to consider this motion in the context of ongoing work to develop a new membership system, and it's planned to address the issue once the new Solas system goes live for branches.

Motion 295 – Kilkenny Health and Local Government Branch

The Kilkenny Health and Local Government branch request that Fórsa allows a nominated person from each branch executive in line with GDPR regulations, access to a live copy of the members affiliated to their branch for purposes of validating the membership and communication.

The NEC decided to consider this motion in the context of ongoing work to develop a new membership system, and it's planned to address the issue once the new Solas system goes live for branches.

Motion 296 – Dublin South Health & Welfare Branch

That this Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to ensure that recognition of union service, whether that be on secondment or in fulltime employment in Fórsa, is recognised as relevant service for incremental credit purposes with public sector employers such as the HSE, Tusla, Civil Service, Section 38 and Section 39 funded agencies.

The NEC referred this motion to divisions to negotiate on a case-by-case basis. This approach is currently recognised for secondment arrangements in the health sector.

Motion 297 – Kildare Health Branch

This Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to ensure that recognition of union service, whether that be on secondment or in full-time employment in Fórsa, is recognised as relevant service for incremental credit purposes with public sector employers such as the HSE, Civil Service, Section 38 and Section 39 funded agencies.

The NEC referred this motion to divisions to negotiate on a case-by-case basis. This approach is currently recognised for secondment arrangements in the health sector.

Motion 298 – Kildare Health Branch

This Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Committee to ensure that relevant service in Section 39 funded agencies is recognised for incremental credit purposes with public sector bodies, equal to the current arrangements with Section 38 agencies.

The NEC referred this motion to the Health and Welfare Divisional Executive Committee. The head of the Health and Welfare Division reported that the issue is under discussion with employers in the sector. A facility for seeking incremental credit in such circumstances is in place for health and social care professionals.

Motion 299 - Cork Health & Local Government Branch

That this Conference calls on the NEC not to agree to any new public sector wage agreement that does not immediately eliminate the continuing pay disparity between new and recently recruited employees and those recruited before 2010.

Although progress has been made to deal with this issue through the PSSA in 2017, it is unacceptable that any disparity in pay continues. The continuation of this disparity undermines the ability of Fórsa to recruit new entrants and gives ammunition to those who attack trade unions as being only interested in protecting so called 'insider groups'. The trade union movement is built on the principles of universalism and fair treatment for everyone. Removing this disparity is essential if we are to state our unequivocal commitment to these principles.

The branch indicated that it wished to withdraw the motion.

Motion 300 - Education & Skills Clerical Dublin Branch

This Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Committee to enable better communication for all members and their branches, to ensure that membership lists are as accurate as possible and shared with branch secretaries. That head office contacts are easily identified, i.e. mapping of individuals in head office.

The NEC decided to consider this motion in the context of ongoing work to develop a new membership system. It was also agreed to develop an organogram for union staff/structures.



FÓRSA

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