

TUC Women's Conference 2025

Preliminary Agenda

Motions

Composite 1 Tackling misogyny, sexism, the rise of incel culture and the far right

Conference recognises the publication of The National Police Chiefs Council's report on violence against women and girls (VAWG) and its description of online influencers driving misogyny.

Conference also recognises the 37% rise in VAWG-related crimes between 2018/19 and 2022/23. These crimes are becoming more complex and proliferated, with online incidents of harassment, revenge porn and stalking becoming more common.

Conference recognises that some online influencers are increasingly producing harmful content. Alleged sex trafficker and rapist Andrew Tate has been increasingly cited as an influencer, with his content easily accessible online and unrestricted on platforms.

Conference is concerned about the rise of the 'incel' movement in the UK. The term ""incel"" stands for ""involuntary celibate", who are primarily men, who struggle to form romantic or sexual relationships despite wanting to. The movement is an online subculture where misogyny is promoted by individuals who blame women for their lack of sexual activity.

Conference acknowledges that the incel movement has been linked to several high-profile incidents of violence in the UK and globally. Further almost 1,000 references to dehumanising misogyny or violent action against women are recorded each day in the "incelosphere".

Conference notes a large rise in the number of young men referred to the Prevent scheme over the women-hating "incel" ideology resulting in it being described as an 'emerging risk'.

Conference notes with concern that much of the political dialogue running up to the general election last year moved further to the right and that whilst the Tories may have lost the General Election, this was in part because their vote was split by traditional Conservatives and the emboldened far right in the shape of the Reform Party.

The far-right riots in this country and the rise of the far-right across the globe are a concern for female trade unionists because a covenant of the far-right ethos is 'a woman's place is in the home'.

Old-fashioned views are setting back in. Women are openly mocked in the workplace, rights to abortion are under constant attack and sexual harassment is still prevalent.

Conference Notes

- i) Right-wing ideology is directly fuelling racism, misogyny, and hatred across the country.
- ii) 2024 Police Chiefs' Council reported, 2 million women a year are victims of male violence.
- iii) The impacts of misogynoir faced by Black women.
- iv) The rise of the Incel movement and its appeal to young men.
- v) Too often gender stereotyping is still prevalent in all sectors, including in the creative industries.

Conference commends government plans to introduce peer-to-peer influencers in schools to help counter the misogynistic content presented to young males online.

Trade unionists must lead with education and have important conversations with fellow employees to make them aware that misogyny and the far-right go hand in hand.

Conference calls on the TUC Women's Committee to:

- a) Raise awareness of the incel ideology and the dangers it presents to women and girls.
- b) The TUC Women's Committee to continue to campaign against sexual stereotyping in all its forms.
- c) The TUC to call on members to monitor the extent and influence of Incel/Misogynist Ideology in UK workplaces and communities.
- d) The TUC to formulate recommendations to challenge Misogynist/ Incel culture in workplaces, and communities.
- e) The TUC to lobby the Labour Government to add Misogyny to the definition of hate crimes
- f) Develop strategies to counter the widespread escalation of misogyny on social media platforms
- g) Campaign for the implementation of stronger regulation to ensure misogynistic content or content/users that encourage VAWG are banned from social media platforms in the UK.
- h) Lobby Government to provide the necessary resources and guidance to support schools to play their part in tackling misogyny, misogynoir and VAWG.
- i) Invite a speaker from one of the organisations who specifically tackle incel culture and violence, such as Hope Not Hate, Refuge or the NSPCC to address the 2026 TUC Women's Conference.
- j) TUC to enable and support TU Representatives to produce recommendations that challenge current portrayals of women in media images and combat stereotypical storytelling of women's lives.
- k) Affiliates to share and discuss the report commissioned by TUC Black Women and Sexual Harassment Advisory Group on the sexual harassment experienced by Black Women and to take action to address this.
- l) Assist with sharing best practice on the production of guidelines and talking points that reps can use to counter misogyny in the workplace.

- m) support the work of the NUJ in educating and supporting journalists and communications professionals to improve the ethical and accurate reporting and portrayal of women.

Mover: CWU

Seconder: RMT

Supporters: ASLEF, AUE, NAHT, NUJ

5 Domestic Abuse Workplace Policies (as amended)

Conference is alarmed that 1 in 4 women with suffer domestic abuse in their lifetime and a huge proportion of victims are targeted at work.

Conference recognises that much work has been done in raising awareness and the provision of support, including the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 which provides a useful and welcome framework but still contains holes. For example, there is no statutory requirement for employers to have a domestic abuse policy or guidance and ACAS guidance merely recommends that employers consider the adoption of a policy.

However, conference also notes that whilst the cost of domestic abuse to business is estimated at £1.9 billion a year, only 5% of organisations have a specific policy.

Conference congratulates the TUC on work done in training reps and raising awareness and agrees that now is the time to call on the TUC Women's Committee to:

- i) Mount a new campaign to raise awareness of domestic abuse as a workplace issue as a priority.
- ii) Work with the TUC to call for a statutory duty on employers to adopt workplace domestic abuse policies that include a commitment to training, zero tolerance of abuse and appropriate support to victims.

Mover: BDA

Seconder: Unite

Composite 2 Women's Safety on public transport

Conference Notes:

- i) Figures published in July 2024 by the British Transport Police (BTP) show that recorded violent crimes against women and girls on the transport network have risen in the past year by 20%.
- ii) That on average, 31 violent crimes committed against women and girls on the network, daily.

- iii) Recorded sexual offences - which include rape, indecent exposure and upskirting - increased from 2,246 last year to 2,475.
- iv) This May, sexual offences against young women increased on London's transport network by 33%.

Many women working in the performing arts sector along with those in healthcare, hospitality, retail, emergency services, and transport deal with late-night travel as part of their working lives. The risks for these workers are always present but the potential of harassment and assault by the lack of adequate, safe, public transport is heightened in these hours. A cost-of-living crisis, especially those in low-paid/precarious employment, puts further limitations on other options such as taxis or ride-shares.

Conference Believes:

- a) That this increase in sexual harassment and violence is unacceptable - our transport network should be safe for everyone.
- b) That regularly opened travel centres, well-staffed transport and transport hubs, are integral to preventing violence and harassment of women and girls. And that these remain open at anti-social hours, particularly for those who work in the creative industries, cleaners, transport and other workers, and remain accessible for those who work and travel at anti-social hours.
- c) employers have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of their employees traveling to and from their workplace.
- d) Workers should be safe and secure regardless of their time of travel. Affordable, safe late-night transport is essential to support women's economic participation and overall well-being in the workforce.

We call on Government to:

- 1) work with trade unions to produce an action plan for tackling violence and sexual harassment on our transport network.
- 2) Implement a national strategy supporting safe and affordable late-night transport options for workers, particular attention to women and vulnerable employees.
- 3) ensure that adequate protections for staff and passengers are properly enforced and funding to the BTP increases.
- 4) Encourage local councils to invest in secure, well-lit, accessible transport services.
- 5) Urge employers to provide late-night transport assistance: subsidised taxis, secure pick-up points, and carpooling schemes.
- 6) Support trade unions and women's rights organisations' campaigns advocating safe and affordable late night travel options.

Conference asks the TUC to campaign for transport, ticket offices and travel centres to be well staffed and stay open and remain accessible for those who work and travel at anti-social hours.

Mover: Equity

Seconder: TSSA

8 Decriminalisation of Sex Work

Conference notes that whilst in opposition the Labour Party put forward an amendment to legislation that saw prostitution redefined as 'adult sexual exploitation', a move that if pursued whilst in government would undermine the health and safety of sex workers as well as removing their autonomy. Clients would also be criminalised which is proven to increase the risk of violence for sex workers, the majority of whom are women.

Conference believes an increase in police powers would lead to a rise in prosecutions. A criminal record for prostitution makes sex workers targets for the police and others in authority to discriminate and deny them their rights. It can mean a greater risk of exploitation, abuse, and other violence and is a barrier to leaving sex work to obtain other employment.

Criminalising sex workers or their clients does nothing to address the poverty, homelessness and the cost-of-living crisis that have pushed so many more women, particularly mothers, into sex work.

Conference therefore calls upon the TUC Women's Committee to adopt a policy in favour of full decriminalisation, recognising sex workers as workers and to campaign alongside appropriate organisations to achieve this.

Aslef

9 Sex work is still work

Conference notes that in 2024/25, sex work is still not fully decriminalised. Whatever society's moral judgement on those who work in the industry, we cannot fail to recognise that workers without rights or proper union organisation are left vulnerable to unscrupulous practices and exploitation.

Sex workers are particularly at risk due to laws that mean they are often forced to work alone, in isolated areas and without the support of security, police and other services that could provide safety.

The workforce is predominantly working class women, often just trying to survive or support their children in a poverty stricken world. Decriminalisation is an ethical way to

diminish the risk of exploitation and provide a pathway to justice when workers face abuse.

The TUC and affiliated unions are here to ensure every worker has access to fair wages, to a safe workplace, to justice, to life. Sex workers are calling for decriminalisation, and it is our duty to stand alongside them.

We call upon the TUC Women's Committee to adopt a policy position of full decriminalisation of sex work, work alongside organisations such as Decrim Now to lobby the government, and work with affiliates to organise sex workers across the country.

GMB

Amendment

Add at the end :

Workers in the sex industry, the majority of whom are women, are stigmatised by society and denied basic human, civil and labour rights. They need our support to fight against criminalisation, hypocrisy, prejudice, violence and exploitation. We therefore call on the TUC Women's Committee to support affiliates organising sex workers and to campaign for the decriminalisation of sex work.

CWU

10 Prosecutions for Rape and Serious Sexual Assault (RASSO)

Conference notes 2022 England and Wales Crime Survey data that shows 7.9 million adults have been victims of a sexual crime since they turned 16. Two million of those have been victims of rape.

At present, only two per cent of rape cases lead to charges. The Centre for Women's Justice states that "rape and sexual abuse have been effectively decriminalised."

The government has committed to halve violence against women and girls (VAWG) and prioritise RASSO prosecutions.

An FDA survey of Crown Prosecution Service staff, including over 100 RASSO lawyers, concluded that inadequate staffing levels and increased workload are major factors in the poor state of the system, but the speed and effectiveness of RASSO prosecutions can be improved.

Conference calls on the TUC Women's Committee to support the recommendations of FDA's report, and to:

- i) Campaign for a single VAWG and RASSO prevention strategy, including additional and sustained funding for the justice system and its RASSO specialists
- ii) Work with trade unions on policies to provide additional support for victims through union and employer action
- iii) Coordinate intersectional research with affiliate trade unions on the prevalence of rape and assaults for different groups of women.

FDA

11 Sexual harassment at work (as amended)

Conference welcomes the new Worker Protection Act which introduces a new proactive obligation on employers to take preventative steps to eliminate workplace sexual harassment.

Achieving this change in law is remarkable but there is still significant work to do to make what has been introduced effective.

The 2023 TUC poll found that 58 per cent of women have experienced sexual harassment at work.

The poll also found that 71% of sexual harassment incidents happened in the work premises and that in two out of five (39%) of the incidents, the perpetrator was a third party rather than another member of staff.

Yet, the duty on employers to protect workers from harassment and abuse by third parties like customers or clients was excluded from the new Worker Protection Act.

Conference also commends the TUC Black Women and Sexual Harassment Advisory Group for their ground-breaking report highlighting the intersecting nature of race/gender on Black women in the workplace.

There have been numerous campaigns against harassment at work but despite our efforts, sexual harassment remains an endemic problem within our workplaces.

We welcome the recent suite of legislation giving back power to women and girls who experience violence. We cannot forget the discrimination, harassment, and sexualised behaviours Black women also face. Research shows a lack of trust in the reporting structures to keep them safe at work.

Conference calls on the TUC Women's Committee and affiliates to:

- i) continue to campaign to strengthen the law further to ensure everyone is protected and has access to justice.
- ii) support implementation of policies and campaigns to protect women's rights to respect and dignity at work.

- iii) profile the findings of the Black women and sexual harassment report and implement in full its recommendations.
- iv) organise activist briefings on the intersecting nature of sexual harassment in the workplace.

Mover: UNISON

Seconder: NASUWT

Supporter: CSP

12 Palestine - solidarity to women journalists

Conference notes that according to the UN, around 70 per cent of people killed in Gaza are women and children.

These women include journalists who play a crucial role in covering the war and bringing this information to the attention of the rest of the world. Israel is blocking foreign media from Gaza, and it is local men and women who have been covering the war.

Journalists are working in desperate conditions, denied access to the basics of water, food, and electricity and with homes and workplaces destroyed. Women journalists experience the indignity of lacking access to sanitary products.

Conference notes the work of the IFJ to set up Media Solidarity Centres in Gaza to provide access to internet and power and spaces to work.

Fundraising continues to provide aid to journalists in Gaza including equipment and safety kits. Freelance journalists are especially at risk, lacking employer support and struggling to make a living.

Conference calls on the TUC Women's Committee to send a message of solidarity to women journalists, condemn the atrocities breaching international law in Gaza and Westbank and back the IFJ's calls for an independent investigation into all killings and attacks on journalists.

NUJ

Composite 3 Strengthening employment rights for women

We call upon the Trades Union Congress to demand that the government take immediate and comprehensive action to tighten and enforce employment rights to better support working women.

Despite progress in gender equality, working women continue to face significant challenges, including wage disparity, inadequate maternity leave, and lack of flexible

working arrangements. These issues hinder women's career advancement and economic independence.

People who are self-employed do not have holiday pay or sick pay, creating income inequality for women and other minoritised groups who choose freelancing to get around barriers in the labour market.

Barriers can include ageism, managing caring responsibilities and health conditions, including the impact of menopause and other women's health issues.

This conference notes the UK Labour Government's Employment Rights Bill makes very little provision for freelancers. Whilst it is important to tackle the exploitative nature of the gig economy, we must recognise that some people are freelance (self-employed) by choice. One third of the NUJ's membership is freelance.

Government data collection on atypical working arrangements such as freelancing is poor, creating lack of data on pay gaps and working conditions for freelancers. This means that inequalities experienced by women freelancers are not being addressed.

This conference calls on the Women's TUC to work with the NUJ and other creative unions to lobby for:

- i) more rights for freelancers in the Employment Rights Bill and;
- ii) better data collection on income and working patterns for people who are self-employed

By addressing these critical areas, we can create a fairer, more inclusive workplace that empowers women and benefits society as a whole. We urge the TUC to champion these essential changes.

Conference instructs the TUC Committee to:

- a) Mandate transparency in pay structures and enforce equal pay for equal work across all sectors
- b) Ensure adequate, fully paid maternity leave, and support for shared parental leave to promote gender equality at home and work
- c) Guarantee the right to flexible working arrangements without discrimination or career penalty
- d) Strengthen protections against pregnancy and maternity discrimination and ensure robust
- e) mechanisms for reporting and addressing grievances
- f) Implement policies that support working parents with caregiving responsibilities, such as subsidised childcare and eldercare support

Mover: PCS

Seconder: NUJ

Composite 4 Tackling the Gender Pay Gap

On November 20th, 2024, women stop being paid compared to men. This is the point in the year when, on average, women effectively work for free. The gender pay gap is now 11.3%, up from 10.7% last year. It's a stark reminder that while progress has been made, gender pay inequality persists.

Even when men and women work the same hours and in the same roles, nearly two-thirds of the gender pay gap remains unexplained. This points to pay discrimination as a major factor still holding women back.

Despite the introduction of mandatory gender pay gap reporting in 2017, women are still paid less on average than men. Even in sectors where the workforce is overwhelmingly female.

Progress made in narrowing the gap appears to have stalled.

Unless the support and caring jobs that women do are properly valued, the gender pay gap will remain stubbornly wide.

The pension gap between men and women has also continue to widen. Pay inequity for working women extends into retirement because they tend to earn less than men throughout their working life. Over two thirds of pensioners living in poverty are women.

Conference recognises the latest figures which show that, as of September 2024, there were around 4.28 million self-employed workers in the United Kingdom - representing around 15% of the total workforce.

Conference further recognises that there are currently over 1.6 million women classed as self-employed and that self-employment among women in the UK has been increasing at a higher rate than any other category of employment in recent years.

Conference Notes:

- i) Pay in the creative sector is consistently low, with workers often exploited in low or no pay working conditions. This is a critical issue to tackle in the creative industries, if we want to see more diverse and working-class voices heard and celebrated.
- ii) These poor pay conditions intersect with caring responsibilities, to drive the under-representation of women in the creative industries.
- iii) For example in the visual arts, in 2021 just 36% of the artworks acquired by Tate were by women artists. Again in 2021 there were no women artists in the top-ten highest growing sales across the key Christie's 20/21st Century evening sales in 2021.

Conference believes that becoming self-employed should not mean women having to accept greater gendered disparities in pay. However, current sources of data for gender pay gap reporting exclude the incomes of the self-employed making it difficult to understand the scale of the issue or explore its causes. Where estimates do exist, they

cite the self-employed gender pay gap at a shocking 43% - dramatically higher than the current gender pay gap for employees.

Conference calls on the TUC Women's Committee and affiliates to:

- a) Advocate for the arts, and acknowledge the critical role that culture plays in the health and wealth of working people.
- b) lobby for increase pay for artists and creative workers
- c) Work to tackle the gender pay gap in the creative industries.
- d) enact its previous pledge to commission artists' work
- e) Campaign for employers to commit to meaningful actions to close the gender pay gap as part of the annual pay round.
- f) Demand that the Government commit fully to gender pay gap reporting and for gender pay 'action plans' to be mandatory.

Conference calls on the TUC to lobby the government to:

- 1) Flexible working as a default across all sectors
- 2) Transformation of the childcare system, making it accessible and affordable for all
- 3) Eradicate pay discrimination to ensure that men and women are paid equally for equal work.
- 4) Tackle the intersectional pay gaps that particularly affect Black, minoritised, and disabled women.
- 5) Create a dedicated self-employment champion on a single enforcement body to tackle unequal pay.
- 6) Ask the ONS to produce a new data source which collects hours and earnings data for the self-employed and to publish an annual estimate of the gender pay gap for self-employed people.

Mover: UNISON

Seconder: CSP

Supporters: Community, AUE

Composite 5 Scrapping benefit caps

Conference is concerned that 123,000 households are affected by the household benefit cap. The vast majority are lone parents, mainly women, with children.

The benefit cap introduced in 2013, limits the total amount a part-time, low-earning or out-of-work household can receive in benefits, trapping families in deep poverty.

The cap:

- i) has a disproportionate impact on survivors of domestic abuse and on children.

- ii) makes it almost impossible to afford private rents, with social rents becoming unaffordable.

Conference is concerned that in 78 local authority areas in England, average council and/or housing association rents are unaffordable for capped families. This contributes to homelessness, as families are trapped in refuges and other forms of temporary accommodation and are unable to move on to secure and affordable homes.

The two-child cap, limiting financial support to the first two children in low-income families, is fundamentally flawed and cruel. This policy targets children, penalising them for the circumstances of their birth, rather than addressing broader socioeconomic challenges. Families affected by this cap often face increased financial strain, leading to housing instability, food insecurity, and limited access to children's educational resources for their children. These disproportionately affect larger families already at a disadvantage, pushing them further into poverty.

The policy fails to account for unexpected changes in family circumstances eg. through job loss, illness, or relationship breakdown, which may lead parents to rely on social security for support. The cap ignores these complex situations. Additionally, poverty has significant, lasting effects on children's health, development, and opportunities, perpetuating cycles of deprivation that could impact future generations. Government does not need to wait for its new Child Poverty Taskforce to publish its 10-year strategy before removing the two-child limit.

Conference notes that the benefit cap has failed in its stated aims to:

- a) Encourage more people into work
- b) Restore "fairness into the benefit system by ensuring non-working families do not receive more in benefits that a working family earns from work; and
- c) Make financial savings

We call on the TUC Women's Committee to lead a cross-union campaign and push the government to:

- 1) Remove the two-child benefit cap, immediately
- 2) Deliver on its promise of confronting the drivers of poverty ahead of the publication of its new Child Poverty strategy
- 3) for the benefit cap to be scrapped, so that survivors of domestic abuse, children and families are protected from further harm.

Mover: Unite

Seconder: BDA

Composite 6 Improving parental rights

Conference recognises caring for children and other dependants is a responsibility which falls disproportionately on women within our society. Negatively impacting

women's salaries and career progression, contributing to the gender pay gap and gendered stereotypes across society.

Conference notes that discriminatory attitudes are forcing musicians to hide their pregnancy for as long as possible to avoid losing work.

When women do give birth, they face another set of challenges because current legislation and benefits do not protect or provide for freelancers who are pregnant or parents.

The Musicians Census 2023 revealed that 29% of women musicians experienced career barriers because of family/caring commitments and 15% reported finding childcare as a barrier.

Being a mother or parent should not be a barrier to a career as a musician.

Congress strongly disagrees with recent comments by Kemi Badenoch, suggesting that maternity pay is "too generous." We believe these remarks are not only out of touch with the reality faced by working women but also detrimental to the progress in achieving gender equality in the workplace. Far from being "too generous," maternity pay in the UK lags behind that of many other developed nations.

Conference believes the UK's maternity, paternity, and parental leave policy design is based on an out-of-date model, which fails to provide adequate financial support or to encourage sharing of care between parents. Congress recognises that Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) is already insufficient to support new mothers and their families during one of the most critical times of their lives. Currently, SMP provides 90% of average weekly earnings for just six weeks, followed by a meagre flat rate, which often leaves mothers struggling to cover basic living costs.

The average payment rate for maternity leave in the UK ranks amongst the worst within OECD countries; our statutory paternity leave is the worst in Europe; and take-up of shared parental leave remains incredibly low. For many women this financial strain forces a premature return to work. The low rate of Maternity Allowance means many women return to work before they'd like to because they can't afford enough maternity leave and fear it will damage their careers.

Once back at work extortionate and inflexible childcare mean women have no choice but to turn down work, further damaging their careers.

Conference welcomes the Labour Government's commitment to review the current parental leave system.

Unions have a strong track record of winning improvements to parental rights for working parents and carers, however, our scope is limited by the current statutory framework of parental leave which is failing millions of working parents. The current system needs replacing with a system that reflects the reality of today's labour market, supports both parents to make meaningful decisions about how they combine paid

work with care, reduces pregnancy and maternity discrimination, promotes gender equality, and closes the gender pay gap.

Conference believes that, at the very least, pay and leave rights must be:

- i) Accessible to all regardless of employment status and available from day one.
- ii) Individual, stand-alone, well-paid entitlements that help to rebalance childcare between parents more equally.

Furthermore, any reform must not diminish but extend and improve existing rights and should be part of a package of wider reform, including improvements to childcare and flexible working.

Conference also supports the introduction of an obligation on employers to formally meet with women employees before they go on maternity leave to discuss the company's maternity policy, including maternity pay, job security, flexible working options on their return and any impact these decisions may have on their pension.

Conference calls upon the TUC, in consultation with the TUC Women's Committee, to give this issue a high priority in their ongoing conversations with the new Labour Government and ensure women's voices are centred in all discussions.

Conference asks the TUC to lobby Government to:

- a) Ensure protections for pregnant women include the self-employed.
- b) Invest in low-cost, flexible childcare.
- c) review maternity pay, with the aim of increasing its duration and value to ensure new mothers are not left financially vulnerable. We urge the government to extend the period of full pay and raise the flat rate to a level that genuinely reflects the cost of living and a rate more in-line with the top half of OECD countries. Maternity pay should empower, not impoverish, women.
- d) Bring Maternity Allowance in line with Statutory Maternity Pay.
- e) Increase statutory paternity leave and pay, to be more in-line with the top half of EU countries
- f) Consider 'default policy option' models which provide both partners with an equal share of leave, some of which is transferable, to promote more gender equal caring
- g) Extend Shared Parental Pay to self-employed workers.
- h) Improved legislation for parents who are self-employed

Mover: USDAW

Secunder: Community

Supporters: MU, RCPD, RMT

25 Maternity Rights for Women Seafarers

Conference notes the unique challenges faced by women at sea related to maternity rights due to the nature of their maritime work.

Despite efforts to improve gender equality and recruit more women, they remain under-represented and under-protected. The lack of maternity leave and post-maternity support can force many women to choose between starting a family and continuing their careers impacting retention in sea-going roles.

Conference calls upon the Womens committee to:

- i) Lobby to ensure that women seafarers receive statutory maternity leave of at least 26 weeks with full pay for those working on UK flagged vessels or working in UK waters. This should align with UK shore-based standards to recognise the challenges to employment and career progression faced by women.
- ii) Press the government to mandate that shipping companies guarantee job security for women returning from maternity leave. This must include provisions to protect against redundancy and develop policies that ensure women returning to work have access to the same career advancement opportunities and training as their peers, allowing them to progress in their careers without penalty.
- iii) Support the implementation of flexible working arrangements, including temporary shore-based work options and job-sharing opportunities, to support women balancing a family and a career.

Nautilus International

26 Ethics and responsible use of AI in the music industry

Conference notes that the rise of AI brings with it several ethical concerns and considerations that may disproportionately affect women.

According to the Harvard Business Review, there is evidence of AI adopting gender bias, reinforcing gender stereotypes and other outdated biases. The creative industries are lobbying against the misuse of AI, noting the risks to artists' copyright and intellectual property rights.

Additional AI risks include plagiarism, inaccuracy of data, and authorship issues. The STANDING Together project notes gaps in the data that informs AI contributes to biases, e.g. where data feeding AI reinforces gender stereotypes or representation issues.

It is also important to acknowledge that AI-based tools can be empowering and make creative endeavours more accessible.

Conference calls on the TUC to:

- i) Lobby government to introduce legislation that ensures an ethical minimum standard for the use and application of AI, including a rigorous licensing regime requiring a full audit trail of any copyrighted material, and appropriate remuneration for original copyright holders.
- ii) Support creative sector unions' efforts to protect artists' intellectual property and rights amidst the rise of AI.
- iii) Endorse the Responsible Handover framework from Sense about Science.
- iv) Endorse the Council of Music Makers' Five fundamentals for music and AI.

MU

27 Women creative workers and generative AI

The rapid development of generative artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming work across the creative industries.

While many changes will be positive, there is a risk this could exacerbate gender inequalities, especially affecting women who are already at a higher risk of precarity due to part-time contracts, freelance work, and gig-based employment structures. There could be benefits through improved access to remote work and increasing flexibility. But early research has shown that women are less likely than men to be utilising generative AI in their work, with the greatest gender gap in usage occurring among younger cohorts.

Moreover, these systems are trained on datasets that often reflect and reinforce gender biases, leading to outputs that may marginalise women's perspectives, reinforce stereotypes, or devalue creative work typically associated with women.

Conference calls on the TUC and constituent unions to ensure women are fully supported to engage with and benefit from emerging technologies by:

- i) Commission and publish research on the specific impact of generative AI on women in the creative industries, focusing on job displacement, pay disparities, and challenges to creative autonomy.
- ii) Organise a working group to build awareness and share insights, prioritising the interests of women creative workers affected by generative AI.

Prospect

28 Technology, the advance of Artificial Intelligence and coercive control

Conference, the rapid advancement of technology and artificial intelligence brings undeniable benefits, yet it also introduces new forms of coercive control, particularly affecting women. AI-powered tools and surveillance technologies, if misused, can

become tools for controlling and monitoring women's movements, communications, and choices, often without their consent. Abusive partners may use location-tracking apps, spyware, or even smart home devices to exert power, making it harder for women to maintain privacy or escape harmful relationships.

In workplaces, algorithmic bias in AI can reinforce gender discrimination, with some systems amplifying stereotypes that disadvantage women, particularly in hiring or promotional decisions. Online, social media algorithms often prioritise engagement over safety, allowing harmful content to target women or normalise abusive behaviour, which can foster an environment of intimidation and fear.

Conference, it is essential to implement strict ethical guidelines and regulations to protect women's rights and autonomy as technology evolves. AI must serve as a tool for empowerment and equality—not a means of control.

We call on the TUC Women's Committee to develop a model policy and guidance, specifically addressing the discriminatory workplace impact of new technology and its impact on women workers including employer actions and monitoring.

Unite

29 Threats to arts education (as amended)

The dumbing down of arts in the national schools' curriculum is detrimental to the future development of a healthy society where women are free from outdated, discriminatory gender stereotyping. This often leads to misogyny, domestic violence, revenge porn and sexual harassment.

With AI technology blurring lines between facts and fake news, plus over-whelming volumes of information on the internet, the teaching of critical thinking within an all-round arts education is essential. AI-generated deepfake images, low-tech forms of disinformation impede change and progress crucially in equality and respect for women and girls.

Technological progress can lead to high unemployment. However, the creative sector generated £126 billion in 2022 for the UK economy and employed 2.4 million workers. Arts education has long been a route for disadvantaged girls and women to lift themselves out of poverty and exploitation and it also supports good mental health.

However, state schools in working class areas will be the first and hardest hit by cuts and deprioritisation of arts subjects, as will educational institutions such as Further Education colleges and Adult Education classes, where girls and women, have in the past accessed art subjects, sometimes for the first time.

Conference calls on Government to reverse the decline in arts education, strengthen critical thinking and commit to enforcing Keir Starmer's pledges in full (March 2024) to put creativity at the heart of education.

Mover: Equity

Seconder: AUE

30 Cost of living crisis and impact on education

Conference condemns the continuing rise in the cost of education to families and carers.

Conference notes that the on-going cost of living crisis is disproportionately impacting poorer socio-economic groups with families and carers having to make difficult decisions when prioritising essential items such as heating, food and clothing – with many women reporting they are going without in order to protect and provide for their children.

Conference further notes with concern that despite statutory guidance for schools on the cost of school uniforms, many families still struggle financially to meet the requirements of school uniform policies.

Conference asserts that equality, equity and diversity should be at the heart of all government funding and policy issues.

Conference calls on the TUC and affiliates to campaign for:

- i) Improved funding for schools, so that families and carers are not obliged to provide resources for learning.
- ii) Equitable funding for school uniform grants and an end to the postcode lottery; and
- iii) Full implementation of the Children's Wellbeing Bill and inclusive school uniform policies that support all children and young people.

NASUWT

31 Industrial strategy is a women's issue

The government's approach to industrial strategy prioritises growth in the creative industries and across a number of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) based industries, including advanced manufacturing, green energy, defence, and digital technology. The STEM disciplines have a long history of gender inequality. It will take deliberate effort to build a STEM-centric economy that puts women on an equal footing. This work will be most delicate in the green - and digital - transitions of traditionally male industries such as energy and defence.

Balancing the needs and expectations of today's members with our ambitions for a more diverse workforce can only be achieved with women as equal shapers of industrial strategy and emergent sectors. Trade unions must lead by example: we cannot leave industrial strategy to the men.

Conference calls on the TUC and its constituent unions to bring women and equalities into the heart of industrial strategy, with:

- i) Equality and diversity as core objectives in industrial policy and bargaining agendas.
- ii) Gender-balanced trade union representation in industrial strategy boards and consultations.
- iii) Training and materials to support female and minoritised reps and officers to make a full and equal contribution to industrial strategy, policy and campaigns.

Prospect

Composite 7: Flexible working

Conference welcomes recent improvements to the right to request flexible working including removing the length of service requirement. However, it still operates on the assumption that workers can freely negotiate flexible working when few have little power to do so.

It is risky for low paid women workers to ask for flexible working because they are then seen or perceived as unreliable, making them feel even less secure at work.

TUC research has shown that one-in-three requests for flexible working are turned down and workers in low paid jobs have least access to flexible working.

Flexible working is a component of employment law and the continued initiative of the People Plan 2020/21. Section 33 of the NHS Staff Council amended the NHS terms and Conditions to allow the right to request flexible working from day one of employment, now enacted by statute.

Government's commitment to making flexible working the default is welcome, as is the right to guaranteed hours and notice of shift change, but more needs to be done to level the playing field between worker and manager and to rid the labour market of one-sided flexibility.

NHS England advises employers to maintain central oversight to ensure fairness, but how is data being utilised and is it integrated into workforce planning? Who is accountable for compliance with this law?

Whilst the NHS staff survey 2023 suggests increased satisfaction, are there disparities in uptake based on protected characteristics? Is flexible working consistently referenced during recruitment, or are groups such as parents disadvantaged? Is there ambiguity

around whether flexible working requests during probationary periods impact employment outcomes?

The TUC and unions need to continue making the case for further changes to flexible working rights.

This motion calls for unions to:

- i) A duty to indicate options in all job adverts and subjecting refusals to greater scrutiny and appeal.
- ii) Introduction of the right to written reasons, a right of appeal and the power of tribunals to make wider recommendations.
- iii) Lobby for mandatory disclosures of flexible working statistics to ensure transparency and compliance with equality in its implementation.
- iv) Review of recruitment practices and probationary policies to safeguard against discrimination and ensure equitable access, with checks and balances in place.
- v) Ensure data informs workforce plans to address.

Mover: Usdaw

Seconder: SOR

34 Addressing the Hidden Costs of Employment that Disproportionately Affect Women

Conference notes the growing number of hidden costs in employment, particularly in sectors where women make up the majority of the workforce. These costs include mandatory payments for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, professional registration fees, and work-related equipment or uniforms.

Women, who make up the majority of workers in health and social care, are disproportionately affected by these hidden costs. In the NHS women account for over 75% of the workforce, and many are already struggling with pay that has not kept pace with inflation. For part-time workers, who are predominantly women balancing work with caregiving responsibilities, these additional financial burdens are particularly harmful.

Conference recognises that requiring employees to pay for essential checks like DBS not only exacerbates gender pay inequality but also discourages entry and retention in key public service roles. This disproportionately impacts women, especially those from lower-income backgrounds, further entrenching economic inequality.

Conference calls on the government to fully fund DBS checks for public sector workers and to review other hidden employment costs that undermine gender equality. It further urges TUs to campaign for employers to absorb these costs to ensure women are not unfairly penalised for working in sectors essential to public welfare.

RCPod

35 Advocating BAME Women Representation

Conference notes that BAME women often face a range of challenges that stem from intersecting issues of racism, sexism, and classism.

Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort by our movement to implement inclusive policies and ensure that Black women have a voice in all levels of union activities.

Conference recognises the excellent work being carried out by the TUC's Equality Department and affiliates in creating BAME safe spaces for women and raising awareness of BAME women's experiences in the workplace.

As a movement we have a responsibility to provide inclusive environments where all members feel valued and supported. Establishing safe spaces and support structures helps foster a more inclusive and equitable environment for all members

Conference therefore instructs the TUC Women's Committee to work with the TUC to promote and encourage affiliate unions to:

- i) Create Safe Spaces for BAME women.
- ii) Introduce positive action measures such as mentorship and Leadership Programs for BAME women to encourage activism in more prominent roles within the union.
- iii) Provide regular training on diversity, anti-racism and tackling misogyny/misogynoir.
- iv) Carry out research and gather regular feedback of BAME women's experiences to understand the needs and concerns of BAME women.

CWU

36 Women in Management and Leadership Roles

Conference acknowledges that women MP numbers have reached an all-time high proportion of 40.5%, with 46% Cabinet posts held by women. 47.3% of Senior Civil Servants are women.

However, to accelerate action for women, we need to ensure management and leadership roles made more accessible across society. For example, women represent

77% of the NHS workforce, but only 37% of very senior managers. There is a lack of opportunities for women, especially for women of colour.

The FDA and Managers in Partnership support internal development programmes for women, and provide opportunities for development through training and the successful Women into Leadership events, run with Dods Events. There is also a need for targeted training programmes and enhanced support to help equip women with the skills for managing staff and leading in complex circumstances, such as how to support staff with mental health needs.

Conference calls on the TUC Women's Committee to:

- i) Identify examples of good practice that empower women to develop skills and become leaders in their fields and share these with affiliate trade unions.
- ii) Campaign for continuous professional development across sectors to create an inclusive, supportive and intersectional environment for aspiring and existing women leaders.

FDA

37 Implementing our rights in the workplace

Conference notes:

Despite progress, identifying women continue to face gender discrimination, pay inequality, disproportionate casualisation, less access to leadership roles, and work-life balance issues that intersect with multiple oppressions. This motion proposes an actionable, practical toolkit to implement our rights in the workplace. Possible resources include legal resources, guidance on negotiating and campaigning skills; workshops on public speaking, confidence building, and strategic decision-making; family-friendly policies, guidelines for ensuring gender-balanced recruitment and promotion practices; practical steps to prevent and address harassment and promote a culture of respect and accountability and much more.

Conference resolves:

- i) To create a fully inclusive, intersectional toolkit for all identifying women.
- ii) Review of workplace data on gender pay and promotion.
- iii) A survey to understand women's needs and challenges in the workplace.
- iv) The committee will form a working party to create a toolkit.
- v) A study of existing toolkits demonstrating good examples of accessible design and use.

UCU

38 The Canary Girls Memorial Project

There are well documented details about our brave men who fought for our freedom in World Wars I and II.

During the wars women were required to take on the factory jobs that were traditionally held by men, a total of almost 3 million women, with around 2 million employed in the manufacture of munitions.

The munitions women were exposed to a deadly cocktail of toxic chemicals, which turned their skin and that of their newborn babies yellow. They risked being blown up, disfigured, having miscarriages and suffered other life-changing injuries.

Not only a primary target for enemy bombing there were daily accidents in the factories and 1000s were killed in huge TNT explosions.

Yet the 2 million women who were largely responsible for keeping the allies armed are the only group whose contribution to the war effort has no national monument.

Now a campaign to have an official memorial to the forgotten heroines is gaining momentum.

Conference asks the TUC Women's Committee to contact all TUC affiliated unions and ask for donations so that a memorial for these brave women can be erected in the National Arboretum to mark their important place in the history of the United Kingdom.

POA

Composite 8 Menopause

Conference deplores employers' lack of understanding of the symptoms of perimenopause, menopause and post menopause. Menopause typically begins between ages 45 and 55, with perimenopause starting as early as 20 to 40, according to Age UK. Trans, non-binary and intersex people can also experience the menopause. Menopause before 45 is referred to as early menopause and before 40 as premature menopause, which affects one in 100 women. Menopause happens naturally or for reasons including genetics, cancer treatment, or surgery.

NHS Inform highlights various menopause symptoms, including cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, UTIs, weight gain. Women experiencing menopausal symptoms face a greater risk of developing musculoskeletal issues, including osteoarthritis.

This lack of knowledge contributes to a culture of stigma around women's health, leaving workers less able to advocate for themselves and others to access timely work adjustments. Many women also face caring responsibilities.

Supporting women through menopause positively impacts workforce retention – keeping valuable skills and supporting health and wellbeing. However 6/10 women say their symptoms have a negative impact on their working lives.

Conference notes: the Women and Equalities Committee found that women aged over 50 were the fastest growing group in the workforce, but that they were found to be cutting back on their hours or missing out on promotion opportunities.

- i) 10% of women left their job during menopause due to symptoms.
- ii) 14% reduced their hours at work.
- iii) 8% had not applied for promotion.
- iv) Black and ethnic minority women disproportionately receive insufficient menopause care.

According to the HCPC (2019), women make up a significant portion of the radiography workforce, with 26,059 women compared to 8,480 men, including therapeutic radiographers. The Pensions Act 2014 reviews retirement age every five years, currently set at 68. However, the SoR and HCPC suggest retirement at 65 due to health declines and slower decision-making, which may impact care. Increasing retirement ages will place added pressure on women to work longer despite declining health.

To support women in an aging workforce and enable them to work safely until pension age, it's crucial to implement measures that safeguard their well-being.

Conference calls on the TUC and unions to:

- a) Equip reps to challenge competency procedures used inappropriately, build awareness of discrimination patterns faced by women in this age group, and bargain for monitoring those on competency procedures by age, ethnicity and gender.
- b) Highlight the value of workplace reps in supporting menopausal women facing workplace issues.
- c) Raise awareness of the stages and symptoms of perimenopause, menopause and post menopause, and update guidance.
- d) Campaign for effective workplace policies on menopause, to improve women's access to adjustments to working practices, including reasonable adjustments and flexible working. Particularly in male-dominated sectors.
- e) Advocate regular health checks for Menopausal and perimenopausal women
- f) Review safe working practice ages and to provide when required reasonable adjustments to support women going through menopausal symptoms.
- g) Promote policies in all radiography workplaces to safeguard against discrimination of all menopausal women.

Mover: NEU

Seconder: CSP

Supporter: SOR

42 The Gender PPE Gap

Despite previous research and guidance, including TUC's 2017 'Personal Protective Equipment and Women', employers still do not take this issue seriously.

PPE should be comfortable, fit for the purpose and gender specific. Generic items based on the dimensions of the average man simply aren't good enough. Neither are smaller versions of the same equipment. PPE for women, trans and non-binary workers must fit correctly and be suitable for their body shape to ensure they are protected from the identified hazards. If PPE doesn't fit, it fails to do its job of protecting the worker and can even make work even more dangerous by, for example causing a trip hazard, obscuring vision or restricting movement.

We are asking TUC, along with the member unions and the TUC's Union Health and Safety Specialists Gender in Occupational Safety and Health group, to get together to create a package of materials that help people get the PPE they need. This could include;

- i) Example letters to employer to help workers request PPE.
- ii) A webinar for workers.
- iii) Information or graphics that could be shared on social media.
- iv) A toolkit to help with campaigning, including posters and leaflets.

GMB

43 Women's Health

Conference notes that:

- i) Almost eight out of ten women go through the menopause at work;
- ii) One in ten women live with endometriosis.
- iii) Women's health issues continue to be downplayed, even dismissed, by many employers, resulting in many women being forced out of work.
- iv) Women overwhelmingly outnumber men as sufferers of the longer-term effects of Covid-19.
- v) Women are disproportionately vulnerable to long-term inflammatory immune conditions, and many sickness absence and health and safety policies fail to address gender-specific conditions; and
- vi) Black women are at a great risk of maternal mortality in the UK compared to white women.

Conference condemns the stigmatisation of women's health in the workplace and society in general. Too many women are forced to suffer in silence and reluctant to seek the work-life adjustments they need.

Conference calls on the TUC and affiliates to:

- a) Campaign for greater awareness of intersectional gender-sensitive health and safety issues.
- b) Demand that employers develop gender-sensitive sickness absence and health and safety policies with mandatory training for all managers; and
- c) Women's health is considered as part of wider campaigns around public sector workforce planning, flexible working and pensions.

NASUWT

44 Promoting better Black maternal health outcomes

Conference notes that the MBRRACE-UK analysis of maternal deaths, stillbirths and neonatal deaths shows mothers and babies from Black/Black British and Asian/Asian British ethnic groups have poorer outcomes. Compared to White women, maternal mortality rates are:

- i) More than four times higher for Black women.
- ii) Two times higher for mixed ethnicity women.
- iii) Almost twice as high for Asian women.

Black mothers' rights to safety, dignity and equality in pregnancy and childbirth are not being upheld. Black workers face racist attitudes, microaggressions, dismissal of concerns and breakdowns of trust – all affecting interactions with maternity services. Black women face barriers to services and inappropriate advice when receiving contraceptive and pre-pregnancy advice.

Conference instructs TUC to:

- a) Educate the union movement about the challenges around Black mothers, maternity services and disparity in outcomes.
- b) Empower unions to demand that employers support Black workers throughout pregnancy and the return to work, raising awareness of the need for employers to carry out appropriate and sensitive assessments.
- c) Provide education and awareness for affiliates about the additional physical and mental health risks for Black mothers who experience barriers in maternity services and workplaces.
- d) Call on unions to support Black Maternal Mental Health Week.

NEU

45 Decolonise midwifery practice to address health inequalities

There is overwhelming evidence that Black and Asian women have significantly poorer maternity health outcomes, despite years of campaigning for change. Latest reports

show that during pregnancy and up to six weeks after, when compared to white women, Asian women are twice as likely to die; Black women are three times more likely to die, and twice as likely to have a stillbirth.

Scarcity of literature, education and training on the assessment of women and birthing people with varying skin tones exacerbates health disparities. Lack of trust, active listening and inadequate interpreting services create inequitable care. A review by the NHS Race Health Observatory also reported that existing practices are ineffective in assessing wellbeing of Black, Asian and minority ethnic babies.

Action is required so that the practical changes required to deliver culturally competent care are achieved.

Government must step up. Conference calls on the TUC to campaign for:

- i) Ring-fenced investment for NHS interpreting and translating services.
- ii) Partnership working to identify and scale up good practice.

RCM

46 Pregnancy Loss – Awareness Raising, Policy, Guidance and Special Leave

Around 1:4 pregnancies end in the first 24 weeks. There are many reasons for this. It can be physically and emotionally painful. The loss affects not only the individuals but also their partners, families and colleagues.

Pregnancy loss is a workplace issue and a trade union issue.

We have policies for maternity but not necessarily for early pregnancy loss. There is no legal right to time off for loss under 24 weeks. We need special leave provision.

Everyone experiences loss differently and requires different types of support at different times. Employers' awareness of, and their approach to, pregnancy loss varies. We need to increase understanding and to break down taboos around pregnancy loss.

Conference instructs the TUC Women's Committee to:

- i) Support unions to raise awareness of the issue of pregnancy loss and implementation of best practice policies.
- ii) Support unions to draft policies, guidance and support materials to raise awareness of the issue and impact and to share examples of any current policies.
- iii) Support unions to work with employers to introduce (or review) policies and guidance on pregnancy loss – in line with best practice.

- iv) Support unions to increase the number of days special leave for pregnancy loss.

PCS

47 Toilets at Work

Conference commends the TUC's research about toilets at work.

Conference notes that access to toilets is a fundamental workplace need, but so often workers are denied sufficient breaks to be able to get to a toilet, and that the toilet provision itself is of a poor standard or completely lacking.

Conference notes for example that bus drivers have long shifts with little time or facility provision to have a toilet break and trains are run with no functioning toilets in breach of guidelines.

The issue of access to toilets is a concern for every worker, but particularly for women who have the additional sanitary needs due to menstruation, pregnancy and menopause. Restrictions to toilet breaks when needed can cause urinary tract infections as well as other problems.

Conference therefore calls on the TUC Women's Committee to campaign for improved and enforced welfare regulations including better toilet provision for all workers.

RMT

48 Increase the number of women health and safety reps (as amended)

In 2024 Health and Safety at Work Act celebrated its 50th anniversary, this year marks the 50th anniversary of the Sex Discrimination Act. There is no better time for unions to increase the number of women in this important role.

Health and Safety reps can effect real change in workplaces. 70% of new trade union members considered health and safety "very important". RCM surveys show that the health and wellbeing of maternity staff is a priority.

Women in insecure work, like those in film and TV, are at greater risk of ill health, and would benefit most from female health and safety reps negotiating improvements. But only employees can be represented by health and safety reps.

Stereotypes of what the role entails remain, the NHS workforce is more than three quarters women and this is even higher in maternity services. However issues that particularly impact (or differently impact) women have not topped the agenda, breastfeeding, menopause, violence and sexual safety, lone and night working.

Being a union rep opens up opportunities for working people to develop new skills through education and training and to get more involved in the wider movement. A more diverse and representative rep base benefits all workers.

Conference calls on the TUC to continue to support unions to:

- i) Increase the number of women health and safety reps.
- ii) Campaign on the health and safety issues that impact women.
- iii) Campaign to extend the right to be represented by a health and safety rep to all workers.

Mover: RCM

Second: Prospect

49: Campaign for decriminalisation of abortion (as amended)

Women's Conference sends solidarity to activists fighting for reproductive justice everywhere.

Conference notes:

- i) TUC 2022 motion 38 Defend Abortion Rights.
- ii) Abortion remains a crime except under specific circumstances in England, Wales, Scotland, and capacity of provision within legal limits remains challenging in NI.
- iii) Medical organisations in favour of decriminalisation include: Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists; Royal College of Midwives; Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare; British Medical Association; Royal College of Nursing.
- iv) The All Party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development has called for complete decriminalisation of abortion throughout the UK.

Conference believes:

- a) Free, safe, legal, and accessible abortions are vital to healthcare and bodily autonomy and should be viewed as a key contributor to public health.
- b) Current abortion law is unfit for purpose.
- c) Decriminalisation of abortion will:
 - 1) empower women and pregnant people to make informed healthcare choices.
 - 2) challenge stigma.
 - 3) support medical professionals to deliver best practice which supports every woman to have control over her own body and her fertility.

Conference resolves to amplify and develop unions' role in the campaign for abortion decriminalisation, by calling on TUC women's committee to:

- A) work with Abortion Rights and allied organisations on decriminalisation, including through roundtable campaign discussions
- B) encourage all unions to:
 - i) affiliate to Abortion Rights.
 - ii) keep members updated on the campaign for decriminalisation.
 - iii) encourage members to write to their MPs in support of decriminalising abortion.

Mover: UCU

Seconder: RCM

Constitution

1 Title and purpose of the conference

The title of the conference shall be the 'TUC women's conference' and its purpose shall be to encourage women to play a full and active role in the trade union movement. The conference seeks to allow both debate on motions and wider capacity building work and workshop-based engagement for delegates.

2 Date of conference

The conference meets annually and takes place over no more than four sessions of half a day each. In general, there will be two sessions focused on motions-based business and two focused on more interactive sessions.

3 Basis of representation

Affiliated unions are entitled to be represented at the conference by a minimum of two delegates, provided that the organisation has paid the fee prescribed in Rule 3 of the Rules and Standing Orders of the Trades Union Congress. For affiliates with 10,000 or more members, the following entitlements also apply:

- a. Affiliated organisations with between 10,000 and 20,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 5 delegates.
- b. Affiliated organisations with between 20,001 and 50,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 10 delegates.
- c. Affiliated organisations with between 50,001 and 100,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 15 delegates.
- d. Affiliated organisations with between 100,001 and 500,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 20 delegates.
- e. Affiliated organisations with over 500,001 and 1,000,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 25 delegates.
- f. Affiliated organisations with over 1,000,001 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 30 delegates.

Affiliated organisations shall be entitled to be represented by additional delegates based on the total of their women members according to the following banding arrangements:

- i. Affiliated organisations with between 5,000 and 10,000 women members shall be entitled to 1 additional delegate.

- ii. Affiliated organisations with between 10,001 and 15,000 women members shall be entitled to 2 additional delegates.
- iii. Affiliated organisations with between 15,001 and 20,000 women members shall be entitled to 3 additional delegates.
- iv. Affiliated organisations with between 20,001 and 100,000 women members shall be entitled to 4 additional delegates.
- v. Affiliated organisations with over 100,001 and 250,000 women members shall be entitled to 6 additional delegates.
- vi. Affiliated organisations with over 250,001 and 500,000 women members shall be entitled to 8 additional delegates.
- vii. Affiliated organisations with over 500,001 women members shall be entitled to 10 additional delegates.
- viii. All delegates shall be women.

It is the TUC's strong expectation that general conference delegates put forward by unions should as far as possible be women. There is also an expectation that union delegations reflect the full diversity of their wider union membership (ensuring, for example, appropriate representation of disabled workers, LGBT+ workers and young workers). All additional delegates attending (in line with the banding arrangements set out above) shall be women.

4 Elections

i) General Council representation

The General Council members of the Women's Committee shall be appointed by the General Council of the TUC.

ii) Elected members

There shall be **no more than twenty-one elected members** of the Women's Committee.

One nomination shall be for Section A (fourteen places)

One for Section B (four places for black women),

One for Section C (one place for a disabled woman)

One for Section D (one place for a lesbian, bisexual and trans woman)

One for Section E (one place for a young woman).

Each affiliated union is entitled to nominate one candidate for each section.

Affiliated unions with over 1.5 million members have the right to make two nominations for election to Section A.

Candidates shall be given the opportunity to submit a **nomination statement of no more than 150 words** that will appear in the nomination document that will be circulated to delegates. The statement should contain biographical details and relevant details of work carried out in the trade union movement but should not be in any way an election address.

No candidate is eligible for election unless she is a delegate to the Conference from her trade union. If a nominee is unable to attend the conference, her nomination will stand only if the reason for non-attendance is acceptable to the Women's Committee.

Voting shall be by ballot. Each trade union delegate attending the conference shall have fourteen votes for Section A and four votes for Section B, not more than one vote to be given to any one nominee, and one vote each for Section C, Section D and E.

Any elected member of the Women's Committee who during the year ceases to be the official representative of her nominating trade union shall cease to be a member of the committee.

Should a vacancy occur during the year among the elected seats, the runner-up in the election at the previous conference will be invited to fill it. If there is no runner up, or the runner up does not wish to take the seat, the Committee may decide to invite co-options to the Committee. Co-opted members do not have voting rights on the committee.

If the Committee decide to appoint co-optees, this must be done in accordance with the existing process for electing members, in line with the rest of the processes set out in rule ii).

iii) Conference Arrangements Committee

The Women's Committee shall act as the Conference Arrangements Committee.

5 Motions

- i. Motions for the annual conference agenda must be signed by the general secretary of the trade union sending them and must reach the Secretary of the Committee at least ten weeks before the date fixed for the Conference. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- ii. Each affiliated union shall be **allowed two motions of no more than 200 words**. Each motion should deal with one subject only, relate to issues about women's equality and specifically mention women. The Women's Committee, acting in their capacity as the Conference Arrangements Committee, shall consider whether motions are competent and comply with

the requirements for inclusion in the agenda. The decision of the Committee shall be final.

- iii. The motions included in the preliminary agenda shall be sent to each affiliated union as soon as possible after the closing date for their submission. The order in which subjects shall be discussed shall be decided by the Women's Committee acting as the Conference Arrangements Committee.
- iv. Each affiliated union shall be allowed **one amendment of not more than 60 words**. All amendments to the motions submitted by affiliated unions must reach the Secretary of the Committee by a date to be agreed by the Women's Committee. Amendments must be signed by the general secretaries of the trade unions submitting them. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- v. Affiliated unions that have had an amendment submitted to their motion will be asked if their union accepts the amendment(s). Affiliated Unions decisions on acceptance or rejection of amendment(s) must be signed by the General Secretary. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- vi. In planning for the conference, the Women's Committee shall have authority to take any steps they consider necessary to co-operate with the unions submitting motions and amendments, in order that composite motions may be obtained wherever practicable. Where affiliated unions have accepted amendments, the motions and amendment(s) will appear on the final agenda as composites. Failure to comply with the Women's Committee's arrangements may involve a union's motion being deleted from the final Agenda.
- vii. Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Women's Committee may submit statements on issues that are on the agenda or emergency issues that are relevant to the conference that have arisen after the closing date for motions. The committee may not submit emergency motions. Additionally, any affiliated union shall, subject to the approval of the Women's Committee, be permitted to submit an emergency motion for consideration of the delegates to the conference. No such permission shall, however, be granted unless:
 - Such an emergency motion is received from the Secretary of the affiliated organisation by the General Secretary of the TUC no later than the morning of the day, two days prior to the opening of conference; and
 - At least two-thirds of the delegates to the conference agree to its inclusion in the agenda of that conference.
- viii. Delegates will select, by secret ballot, one resolution of the conference to go forward onto the agenda of the succeeding TUC Congress.

Standing orders

1 Hours of conference

The Conference assembles annually and takes place over no more than four sessions of half a day each over consecutive days. Lunch breaks will be no less than an hour. In general, the hours of Women's Conference will be from 14.00 to 17.30 on the opening day. From 09.30 to 17.30 on the second day and from 09.30 to 15.00 on the final day. Lunch times on both days shall be from 12.45 to 14.15.

2 Conference chair

The Chair of the TUC Women's Conference shall rotate amongst women members of the Women's Committee based on seniority; this being defined as the longest continuous service.

3 Business of the conference

Included in the business of the annual conference shall be the consideration of the annual Report of the Women's Committee and of motions and amendments. The Report and the Agenda for the conference shall be sent to delegates not later than two weeks prior to the conference.

The Women's Committee as the Standing Orders Committee for conference will prepare an order of business that indicates the Committee's attitude to each motion as follows:

- **Support:** In order to allow more time for delegates the Committee usually (but not always) waive their right to speak in a debate on a motion or amendment they support.
- **Support with comment/explanation:** If necessary, a Committee member will explain to conference any procedural issues they may have on a motion.
- **Support with reservations:** If necessary, a committee member will explain to Conference any reservations they may have on a motion or amendment they otherwise support. The union concerned is notified in advance of the Committee's reservations.
- **Seek remission:** The Committee may ask remission of a motion before Conference. If the union will not agree to remit the motion a committee member will speak in opposition to it. The union remitting the motion is allowed to speak to their motion but there is no debate or vote.

- **Seek withdrawal:** The committee may seek withdrawal of a motion from the submitting union. If the motion is not withdrawn, the motion will be opposed by the Committee. The union will not speak to the motion if the request to withdraw is accepted.
- **Oppose:** A Committee member will speak on any motion or amendment opposed by the Committee
- **Leave to conference:** The Committee do not take an attitude and conference votes on the motion.

4 Appointment of scrutineers and tellers

Four ballot scrutineers and four tellers will be appointed by delegates at the start of the conference.

5 TUC Regional and Trades Council observers

TUC Regions and Trades Council can send **one Observer** to conference, respectively. The TUC Regional or Trades Council observer **may speak on motions at the discretion of the Chair.**

6 Limitation of speakers

Five minutes shall be allowed for the mover of a motion and three minutes for each subsequent speaker. Speeches on behalf of the Women's Committee shall be limited to six minutes unless otherwise agreed by the conference, except for **the chair's address which shall be no longer than 15 minutes.** Other guest speakers shall not exceed the length of the chair's address.

A delegate shall not speak more than once on any motion unless permission to do so, on a point of order or explanation, is given by the Chair. The mover may be allowed a maximum of three minutes to reply to discussion on the motion concerned but no new matter may be introduced into such reply.

Movers of amendments do not have the right of reply. Delegates shall vote on the motion immediately the mover has replied.

7 Closure

Delegates may request that a debate is closed by moving any one of the following procedural motions.

- That the previous question be put: This motion can be moved during an amendment debate. All debate on the amendment will cease and the original motion will be put to the vote. The amendment will be abandoned.

- Move next business: All debate on the current business will cease and that item of business will be abandoned.
- Closure of the debate: All debate on the current business will cease but a vote will be taken. Should the closure be carried, the mover of the original motion shall have the right to reply in accordance with Standing Order 6.

Procedural motions in this instance must be seconded and can only be moved by delegates who have not previously spoken during the debate. There shall be no speeches on such motions.

8 Voting

The method of voting at the TUC Women's Conference on all matters except the election of representatives to serve on the Women's Committee, and the selection of one resolution to go forward onto the agenda of Congress, shall be by voice or show of hands.

The Chair will order votes to be counted by tellers where the result of a show of hand is not clear.

9 Conference reception

The TUC General Council shall support a delegate reception at the close of the first day of the conference.

10 Suspension of standing orders

Standing Orders may be suspended only in exceptional circumstances and if agreed by at least two-thirds of delegates to the Annual Conference who are present and voting.

11 Chair's ruling

The chair's ruling shall be final.