

Congress Comhdháil AMLÉ



Union of Students in Ireland *Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn*

2021

MOTIONS BEFORE CONGRESS PRIORITISED (CD2 DOCUMENT)

This document contains the policy proposals made by Member Organisations and members of the committees, including the USI Executive Team, which will come before USI Congress 2021. It includes the interim policies adopted by USI National Council from the conclusion of USI Congress 2020 until March 2021.

This motions have been prioritised in line with the regulations.

Errors and Omissions Excepted. As ever, any errors will be corrected upon their notification.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Motions before Congress Prioritised (CD2 Document)	1
Table of Contents	1
Constitutional Amendments.....	5
2021 CA 1 Use of Irish in Titles	5
2021 CA 2 Advisory Panel Composition.....	5
2021 CA 3 Student Advisory Group Panels.....	8
Welfare	8
2021 WEL NC 1 SUPPORT FUNDS FOR PART-TIME STUDENTS.....	8
2021 WEL NC 2 Stim Room for ASD students.....	9
2021 WEL NC 3 Ask for Angela	9
2021 WEL 1 Trans Healthcare	10
2021 WEL 2 Student accommodation Issues	10

2021 WEL 3	Promoting Consent and Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment	11
2021 WEL 4	Regional Food Banks	12
2021 WEL 5	Social Supports for Students During and Post-Covid-19	12
2021 WEL 6	Student wellbeing and engagement post COVID-19.....	13
2021 WEL 7	Student Pregnancy Supports.....	13
2021 WEL 8	USI Health Promotion Strategy 2021-2024.....	13
2021 WEL 9	USI Grant Reform Position Paper 2021-2024.....	14
2021 WEL 10	Substance Misuse, addictive behaviours, harm reduction, promotion, and celebration of recovery	14
2021 WEL 11	Expansion of provision of free HIV supports.....	15
2021 WEL 12	Exam Destress Campaign	15
Equality	16
2021 EQ NC 1	Motion on residency criteria for returning emigrants	16
2021 EQ NC 2	Accessibility to Higher Education for Students with Disabilities.....	16
2021 EQ 1	Equality Proofing of USI Campaigns and Events.....	17
2021 EQ 2	Understanding Privilege and Inclusion	18
2021 EQ 3	Insurance for International Students	19
Citizenship	19
2021 CZN 1	Sustainability in USI campaigns and events	19
2021 CZN 2	Sustainability Festival.....	20
2021 CZN 3	The Hostile Environment and Higher Education	21
2021 CZN 4	USI Climate Action Network.....	21
Gaeilge	22
2021 GAE NC 1	Síneadh Fada.....	22
2021 GAE NC 2	Comharthaíocht Dhátheangach ar Champas // Bilingual Signage on Campus	23
2021 GAE NC 3	Imeachtaí d'Fhoghlaimoirí / Events for Learners.....	23
2021 GAE 1	Seimineár na Gaeilge	24
2021 GAE 2	Cur Chun Cinn na Gaeilge sna Balleagraíochtaí // Promoting Irish in Member Organisations	25
2021 GAE 3	Seachtain na Gaeilge	25
2021 GAE 4	Seachtain Na Gaeilge (Repeal + Replace).....	26
2021 GAE 5	Comhoibriú le hEagraíochtaí Mac Léinn san Eoraip // Co-Operation with Student Groups in Europe	26
2021 GAE 6	Páipéar Seasaimh ar an nGaeilge sa Chóras Oideachais // Position Paper on Irish in the Education System	27
2021 GAE 7	Suirbhé le haghaidh ModúilgaeilgE / Survey for Irish module.....	28
National and International Affairs	28
2021 NA NC 1	Caomhnú na Gaeltachta // Preservation of the Gaeltacht	28

2021 NA NC 2	Support for Dying with Dignity	29
2021 NA NC 3	De-Platforming and Rejecting Fascism	30
2021 NA NC 4	Support for Gay Mens' Health Service (GMHS)	31
2021 NA NC 5	USI to support Irish Nightclubs during COVID19 crisis.....	32
2021 NA NC 6	Gender Quotas.....	32
2021 NA NC 7	OPT-OUT ORGAN DONATION	33
2021 NA 1	Supporting Students in Direct Provision.....	34
2021 NA 2	Seanad Reform	34
2021 NA 3	Right to disconnect.....	35
2021 NA 4	Post Covid-19 Economic Recovery	35
2021 NA 5	Sanctions, Fees and Fines.....	35
2021 NA 6	USI Support for Equality for Children Campaign	36
2021 NA 7	Levies.....	37
2021 NA 8	Autonomy.....	37
2021 IA NC 1	USI to Be in Solidarity with Movements in Africa	37
2021 IA 1	Justice and human rights for Palestine.....	38
Academic Affairs.....		39
2021 AA NC 1	Postgraduate Follow Up Training	39
2021 AA NC 2	Fees Sanctions.....	40
2021 AA NC 3	Repeat Fees	40
2021 AA NC 4	Alternative Admissions	40
2021 AA NC 5	Parity for Psychological Doctoral Students	41
2021 AA NC 6	Digital & Distance Learning Position Paper.....	42
2021 AA NC 7	Support for Graduate Entry Medicine Students	42
2021 AA NC 8	Parity of Funding for Technological Universities.....	43
2021 AA 1	Hidden Course Costs.....	43
2021 AA 2	Placement & Work-Based Learning Strategy 2021-2024	44
2021 AA 3	Clarity on Postgraduate & International fees.....	44
2021 AA 4	Lecture Record	44
2021 AA 5	Summertime Placement Funding.....	45
2021 AA 6	Position on Proctoring.....	45
2021 AA 7	Equality of access to Postgraduate education and research for Non-EU residents	46
2021 AA 8	Clarification to the USI Postgraduate Workers Rights Charter.....	46
2021 AA 9	2018 AA12 Anonymous Marking.....	47
2021 AA 10	Making the Most of Micro-credentials	47
2021 AA 11	USI Further Education & Training Strategy 2021-2024	48
2021 AA 12	Effectiveness of Proctoring	48

2021 AA 13	Amending Postgraduate Students Strategy	48
2021 AA 14	Subsidies on Textbooks	49
2021 AA 15	Learning Analytics	49
2021 AA 16	National NFQ Level 9+ Stakeholder Forum	50
2021 AA 17	Back to Education Allowance Reform Strategy Paper	50
2021 AA 18	Maynooth Students' Union Reintroduction of in-Person Examinations	50
2021 AA 19	Academic Calendar Reform.....	51
2021 AA 20	Recording of Lectures and Tutorials	51
Union Organisation.....		52
2021 UO NC 1	Regional Leadership & Personal Development Training	52
2021 UO NC 2	VOTER REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN	52
2021 UO NC 3	Regional Training Events.....	53
2021 UO NC 4	Remit Specific Training Day for Deputy Presidents/Campus Conveners	53
2021 UO NC 5	Casework training day	54
2021 UO NC 6	Campaigns Directory.....	54
2021 UO NC 7	Student Sport Ireland	54
2021 UO NC 8	Recommended standard wage report for Sabbatical Officers.	56
2021 UO NC 9	Motion on USI support for the Le Chéile Campaign	57
2021 UO 1	Lobby training.....	58
2021 UO 2	COVID-19 Officer Handbook.....	58
2021 UO 3	REFLECT - Supporting Students' Union Officers	59
2021 UO 4	Support for NUS-USI and MOs in the north/Northern Ireland.....	59
2021 UO 5	Bystander Intervention Training.....	60
2021 UO 6	Running for Election	60
2021 UO 7	Making USI Accessible	60
2021 UO 8	Comprehensive Training for Officers With a Remit for Ent's, Marketing and Commercial Activity	61
2021 UO 9	Casework Debriefing Sessions	61
2021 UO 10	Pre-Budget Submission	62
2021 UO 12	Motions Collaboration	62
2021 UO 13	Review of Regional Officer Roles & Remits.....	62
2021 UO 14	Ents Marketing and Commercialisation Working Group	63
2021 UO 15	Student Affairs Ireland Engagement	63
2021 UO 16	Edit to Student Accommodation Position Paper 2019.....	64
2021 UO 17	Reporting On Campaigns and Events –	64
2021 UO 18	Tool-Kit for Constitutional Amendments	64

2021 UO 19	Planning Submission Fees (Amendment of the USI Student Accommodation Position Paper)	65
2021 UO 20	Best Practice at Council 2021.....	66

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

ALL CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS REQUIRE A 2/3RDS MAJORITY TO PASS

2021 CA 1 USE OF IRISH IN TITLES

PROPOSED BY THE LEAS-UACHTARÁN DON GHAEILGE

In Article 10.6 Insert The Union shall adopt the practice of naming internal bodies in line with Schedule N

Schedule N Executive Team shall be referred to primarily as Coiste Gnó National Council shall be referred to primarily as Comhairle Náisiúnta Congress shall be referred to primarily as Comhdháil

2021 CA 2 ADVISORY PANEL COMPOSITION

PROPOSED BY THE USI VICE PRESIDENT FOR EQUALITY AND CITIZENSHIP

In Schedule H, replace:

H1 Academic Affairs & Quality Assurance

H1.1 A person with experience/knowledge of apprenticeships.

H1.2 A person with experience/knowledge of postgraduate research.

H1.3 A person with experience/knowledge of medical studies.

H1.4 A person with experience/knowledge of further education.

H1.6 A person with experience/knowledge of teacher training

H1.7 Such other persons as the VP/Academic may feel are necessary

H2 Equality & Citizenship

H2.1 A person with experience/knowledge of disability rights.

H2.2 A person with experience/knowledge of international student issues.

H2.3 A person with experience/knowledge of mature student issues.

H2.4 A person with experience/knowledge of the LGBTQ campaign.

H2.5 A person with experience/knowledge of the Irish language campaign.

H2.6 A person with experience/knowledge of voter registration and youth politics.

H2.7 A person with experience/knowledge of gender issues.

H2.8 A person with experience/knowledge of environmental campaigns.

H2.9 Such other persons as the VP/Equality may feel are necessary.

H3 Welfare

H3.1 A person with experience/knowledge of road safety.

H3.2 A person with experience/knowledge of mental health campaigns.

H3.3 A person with experience/knowledge of physical health campaigns.

H3.4 A person with experience/knowledge of sexual health campaigns.

H3.5 A person with experience/knowledge of substance abuse campaign

H3.6 A person with expertise in Student Finance.

H3.7 Such other persons as the VP/Welfare may feel are necessary.

H5 VP for Irish Language

H5.1 Such persons the VP for Irish Language may feel are necessary.

H6 VP for Postgraduate Affairs

H6.1 Such persons the VP for Postgraduate Affairs may feel are necessary

With:

H1 Academic Affairs

H1.1 A person with experience/knowledge of Apprenticeships.

H1.2 At least two people with experience/knowledge of International Affairs.

H1.3 At least three people with experience/knowledge of professionally accredited programmes, including but not limited to nursing & midwifery, teaching and social care.

H1.4 A person with experience/knowledge of Further Education.

H1.5 A person with experience/knowledge of Quality Assurance.

H1.6 A person with experience/knowledge of Student Engagement & Partnership.

H1.7 A person with experience/knowledge of online/digital education.

H1.8 A person with experience/knowledge of Third-Level Education in the North.

H1.9 A person with experience/knowledge of Teaching & Learning

H1.10 Such other persons as the VP/Academic Affairs may feel are necessary.

H2 Equality & Citizenship

- H2.1 A person with experience/knowledge of disability rights.
- H2.2 A person with experience/knowledge of international student issues.
- H2.3 A person with experience/knowledge of mature student issues.
- H2.4 A person with experience/knowledge of LGBTQ+ issues.
- H2.5 A person with experience/knowledge of voter registration and youth politics.
- H2.6 A person with experience/knowledge of gender issues.
- H2.7 A person with experience/knowledge of environmental campaigns.
- H2.8 A person with experience/knowledge of migrant issues.
- H2.9 A person with experience/knowledge of ethnic minority issues.
- H2.10 Such other persons as the VP/Equality and Citizenship may feel are necessary.

H3 Welfare

- H3.1 A person with experience/knowledge of road safety.
- H3.2 A person with experience/knowledge of mental health campaigns.
- H3.3 A person with experience/knowledge of physical health campaigns.
- H3.4 A person with experience/knowledge of sexual health campaigns.
- H3.5 A person with experience/knowledge of alcohol and drug use/misuse campaigns.
- H3.6 A person with expertise in Student Finance.
- H3.7 A person with expertise/knowledge of consent and sexual violence and harassment.
- H3.8 A person with expertise/knowledge of eating disorders and body positivity.
- H3.9 A person with expertise/knowledge of addictive behaviours such as gambling and smoking.
- H3.10 A person with expertise/knowledge of bullying and cyber-bullying.
- H3. 11 A person with expertise/knowledge of peer learning, belonging and social supports.
- H3.12 Such other persons as the VP/Welfare may feel are necessary.

H5 Gaeilge

- H5.1 A person with experience/knowledge in translation and terminology.
- H5.2 A person with experience/knowledge in teacher education.
- H5.3 A person with experience/knowledge in language rights in the South.
- H5.4 A person with experience/knowledge in language rights in the North.
- H5.5 A person with experience/knowledge in campaigning.

H5.7 A person with experience/knowledge in the Gaeltacht.

H5.8 A person with experience/knowledge of other minority languages.

H5.9 A person with experience/knowledge of other social justice and equality issues.

H5.10 Such other persons the LU/Gaeilge may feel are necessary

H6 Postgraduate Affairs

H6.1 A person with experience/knowledge of postgraduate research.

H6.2 A person with experience/knowledge of mental health matters relevant to postgraduate issues.

H6.3 A person with experience/knowledge of postgraduate representation and engagement.

H6.4 A person with experience/knowledge of postgraduate working rights.

H6.5 A person with experience/knowledge of postgraduate matters in the North.

H6.6 Such other persons the Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs may deem relevant.

2021 CA 3 STUDENT ADVISORY GROUP PANELS

PROPOSED BY THE USI VICE PRESIDENT FOR EQUALITY AND CITIZENSHIP

These Equality student advisory groups shall support the work of the Vice President for Equality and Citizenship. These student advisory groups will be made up of students from USI member organisations with the exception of the AHEAD/USI Students with Disabilities student advisory group. Students within these advisory groups will be selected on a yearly basis and service a yearly term with their term on the advisory group not exceeding two years. The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship shall be the chairperson for following student advisory groups:

7.3.1 Traveller student advisory group

7.3.2. Trans student advisory group

7.3.3 LGBTQ+ student advisory group

7.3.4. Mature student advisory group

7.3.5. Parents and Carers advisory group

7.3.6. Black student advisory group

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship shall co-chair the following student advisory group:

7.3.7. AHEAD/USI Students with Disabilities student advisory group

WELFARE

2021 WEL NC 1 SUPPORT FUNDS FOR PART-TIME STUDENTS

PROPOSED BY VP E&C

CONGRESS NOTES:

That a number of support funds including the Fund for Student with Disabilities, the Maintenance Grant are only available for students studying on a full-time basis in recognised Higher Education Institutes.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

That part-time students are not able to avail of the “free-fees” scheme.

CONGRESS MANDATES THE VP ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, VP WELFARE AND VP EQUALITY & CITIZENSHIP:

To campaign and lobby for support funds and the free fees scheme to be extended to include part-time students.

2021 WEL NC 2 STIM ROOM FOR ASD STUDENTS

PROPOSED BY VP BMW

CONGRESS NOTES:

That some students find it hard to concentrate and integrate into the student body during lectures and exams due to environmental sensitivity, such as florescent lighting, overcrowding, heat temperature and distracting sounds.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

That students internationally with conditions such as ASD (autism spectrum disorder) have benefited from stim rooms, which is a low cost resource that can be easily implemented into universities and institutes across the country.

CONGRESS MANDATES:

VP Equality & Citizenship to investigate the feasibility of implementing this across all colleges in the country.

2021 WEL NC 3 ASK FOR ANGELA

PROPERTY OF CONGRESS

CONGRESS NOTES:

That consent has become a point of mandatory understanding in society, particularly among the third level sector.

CONGRESS NOTES:

That the concern for student safety within the community is of paramount importance also and student movements have an obligation to work with the local community wherever possible to ensure their safety.

CONGRESS UNDERSTANDS:

The Ask for Angela Campaign targets student social areas (ie bars, social settings, etc.) by offering a safe, easily implemented system to escape a situation that may not be safe for them to be in.

CONGRESS APPLAUDS:

The work done across the country by Unions and USI around consent.

CONGRESS MANDATES:

The Vice-President for Campaigns to work with the Vice-President for Welfare to roll out a national campaign to support, encourage and promote where possible a National Ask for Angela Campaign each year.

2021 WEL 1 TRANS HEALTHCARE

PROPOSED BY ATHLONE IT SU

Congress notes: Transgender and Non-Binary people are people who don't identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. These people may seek medical methods of transition.

Congress further notes: The works that has been done by transgender and non-binary activist groups and USI in their submissions to the Gender Recognition Act.

Congress notes with regret: Transgender and non-binary people are currently unable to dictate their own need for hormone replacement therapy and need to go through an outdated 'medical-diagnostic system' in order to access treatment with the National Gender Service.

Congress mandates: The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship lobby the HSE to provide training for healthcare professionals in Ireland in transgender issues and their healthcare needs.

Congress further mandates: The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship lobby the Minister for Health to replace the current medical-diagnostic system run by the National Gender Service in place of a decentralized informed-consent model to allow all trans and nonbinary students to receive the treatments they need on a local level.

Congress further mandates: To work with Trans Healthcare Activist groups north and south of the border (ie; This Is Me - Trans Healthcare Campaign) to further lobby for the implementation of WPATH standard of care for Trans, Non-Binary & Intersex students.

Congress Repeals: 2018 EQ 3: Trans Healthcare

2021 WEL 2 STUDENT ACCOMMODATION ISSUES

PROPOSED BY TUDUBLINSU

Congress notes Youth homelessness increased by 85% in recent years (Focus Ireland, 2021). There are multi-faceted issues surrounding student accommodation. Issues such as extortionate 'student accommodation', eligibility for rent assistance, ability of landlords to increase rents as they choose, no legislation on 'Digs', and suitability of leases for student renters.

Congress also notes International students may be of further disadvantage as their accommodation allowance is often far less than needed to source accommodation. If these students are unable to work, it may render them particularly vulnerable as they are often ineligible for financial support here. These students are also at greater risk of being taken advantage of in regard to accommodation issues.

Congress applauds The work previously done by USI in supporting students in this area and raising awareness of these issues. Previous campaigns such as 'Break the Barriers' and 'Raise the Roof' are commended for the actions taken and awareness raised.

Congress therefore mandates The full USI exec to run active campaigns and continuous lobbying around; student renter rights; building of fit for purpose affordable accommodation; rent freezes; and student purposed leasing.

Congress therefore repeals

2018 WEL 3 Cap on Student Accommodation Prices on USI platforms

EM 20 – 1: Support for student renters during Covid-19

2021 WEL 3 PROMOTING CONSENT AND ENDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

PROPOSED BY VICE PRESIDENT FOR WELFARE

Congress notes with concern: That sexual violence and harassment are still very prevalent issues in today's society as reported through the findings of the Sexual Experiences Survey (2020), where:

29% of females, 10% of males, and 28% of non-binary students reported non-consensual penetration by incapacitation, force or threat of force.

29% of students said the perpetrator was a student at their college. Approximately 8% said the assault had taken place on campus.

44% of all students reported experiencing non-consensual behaviour – sexual touching, attempted or completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration.

Congress recognises: The work USI, Students' Unions, Rape Crisis Centres and Networks have been doing over the decades to drive forward cultural change through sexual health awareness campaigns, consent education via consent workshops, offering disclosure training, coordinating rallies and protests to stand in solidarity with survivors and lobbying for policy development, both on a local and national level.

Congress welcomes: The progress made with the launch of the "Framework for Consent in Higher Education Institutions; Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive – Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions" in 2019 which has been overseen through the National Advisory Committee. Further advancements have been made in the academic year of 2020/2021 with the development of the IUA Guidance for University Consent Framework, THEA PROPEL project and HEA Advisory Group on Gender-Based Violence aiming to develop best practices for HEIs through action plans, robust policies and effective procedures.

Congress therefore mandates: The adoption of the USI Sexual Consent Strategy 2021.

Congress further mandates: The Vice President for Welfare and the Vice President for Equality and Citizenship to coordinate survivor support campaigns, alongside lobbying for a better legal system and support services. These survivor support campaigns should include toolkits for MOs with information on reporting and local and national supports available.

Congress repeals: WEL 19 – 14, 18 EM 3”

2021 WEL 4 REGIONAL FOOD BANKS

PROPOSED BY THE SOUTHERN REGION WORKING GROUP

Congress recognises: That financial hardship is an issue many students experience during third level education. Students often work multiple part-time jobs, commute from their family homes to campus to save on rent costs or skip meals to save money. Eating healthily and having access to sufficient meals is extremely important for a person’s wellbeing.

Congress notes: Setting up a Food Bank requires you to rely on donations of products. Many organisations, including College Canteens, may throw out food at the end of the day for a number of reasons that include; being mislabeled, overproduced, are test -market items and/or products with short code dates. Most of the time this food is perfect to consume.

Congress further notes: Some charities currently work with supermarkets to collect foods and give them out to those in need. With the current economic situation, and the lack of funding for third level students, students’ who are struggling financially may find Food Banks beneficial to them.

Congress mandates: The Regional Vice Presidents to investigate and produce a guidance document to assist MO’s in setting up Food Banks. This guide should include information on external organisations that may be of help to MO’s.

Congress further mandates: This guidance document should be discussed with local MO’s when it is being produced to get input on what is currently in place in MO’s. This should be updated and produced no later than October each year.

Congress therefore repeals: 2018 WEL 8

2021 WEL 5 SOCIAL SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS DURING AND POST-COVID-19

PROPOSED BY WELFARE WORKING GROUP

Congress notes: That students have been hugely affected by the global pandemic with the closure of campuses and facilities, unable to engage fully with what their Higher Education Institute or Further Education College has to offer. Many students haven’t been able to connect with their classmates and feel a sense of belonging, which has negatively impacted on their mental health, wellbeing and overall student experience.

Congress recognises: The importance of extra-curricular activities, such as clubs, societies, volunteering initiatives, social gatherings and networking opportunities that really add to the overall student experience.

Congress notes with concern: The further negative knock-on effects Covid-19 will have on student wellbeing, including an increase in social anxiety, depression, further mental health difficulties and adapting to transitioning back to a more normal life and the business of campus life.

Congress mandates: The Vice President for Welfare and the Executive Team to lobby the Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to invest in peer-learning initiatives to be rolled out across the Island and provide social supports such as targeted wellbeing initiatives to support students during and post-Covid-19.

Congress further mandates: The Vice President for Welfare to include themes around isolation, staying connected, supporting one another and the impacts of Covid-19 on student mental health in future wellbeing campaigns.

2021 WEL 6 STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POST COVID-19

PROPOSED BY USI PRESIDENT

Congress recognises That a lot of emphasis has been placed upon issues affecting student wellbeing and engagement as a result of COVID-19.

Congress believes Many of the issues highlighted have been exacerbated by the pandemic but they will continue to exist post COVID-19. Issues such as assessment protocols, academic supports, timetabling, peer to peer engagements, social activities and student counselling supports have been spoken about at length due to the pandemic but ensuring these are accessible and resourced post COVID must be a priority.

Congress further believes The development of the Student and Learner Wellbeing and Engagement Working Group, chaired by the USI President, is a useful starting point to address these issues however, it has a limited timeframe to achieve results to support students.

Congress Mandates The USI President to Lobby the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to establish a sustainable basis for the work of the Student and Learner Wellbeing and Engagement Working Group to exist post COVID-19. This work should be central to the work of DFHERIS and should involve all key stakeholders.

2021 WEL 7 STUDENT PREGNANCY SUPPORTS

PROPOSED BY WELFARE WORKING GROUP

Congress recognises: The additional barriers student parents, students who are experiencing pregnancy and their partners endure when accessing education or progressing forward in their learning journey. Student pregnancies can be very stressful and challenging as a result of the lack of supports offered by their HEI or FE College during their pregnancy.

Congress further notes with concern: That student parents, students who are pregnant and their partners are at a higher risk of dropping out of their course due to the lack of financial, emotional and academic supports available to them.

Congress mandates: The Vice President for Welfare and Vice President for Equality & Citizenship to lobby for increased supports for student parents, students who are pregnant and for their partners.

Congress Further mandates: The Vice President for Welfare to include information on the different options available during pregnancy, such as the HSE My Options and supports available to student parents, those who are pregnancy and their partners during future sexual health, awareness and guidance campaigns.

Congress also mandates: The Vice President for Welfare to develop a toolkit for MOs to use as part of their local sexual health awareness and guidance campaigns including information on options available during pregnancy and supports available to student parents, students who are pregnant and their partners.

2021 WEL 8 USI HEALTH PROMOTION STRATEGY 2021-2024

PROPOSED BY THE USI VICE PRESIDENT FOR WELFARE

Congress notes: The importance of having a streamlined health promotion strategy plan for USI as it provides a sense of direction and outlines measurable goals for the Vice President Welfare and USI to achieve and evaluate.

Congress mandates: The adoption of the USI Health Promotion Strategy 2021-2024.

Congress further mandates: The Vice President for Welfare to review the strategy regularly to provide progress reports to members of National Council and update the strategy accordingly if deemed necessary.

Congress repeals: 20 WEL 17

2021 WEL 9 USI GRANT REFORM POSITION PAPER 2021-2024

PROPOSED BY VICE PRESIDENT FOR WELFARE

Congress notes: That many students struggling financially rely on the SUSI grant to access third level education. However, the SUSI grant does not accurately reflect the cost of living and does not provide the financial support that it was intended to do.

Congress further notes: Students who are experiencing financial hardship are at risk of dropping out of their course, are likely to have increased mental health difficulties with anxiety, stress and depression or not attend third level education in the first instance.

Congress therefore mandates: The adoption of the USI Grant Reform Position Paper 2021-2024.

Congress further mandates: The Vice President for Welfare and the Vice President for Academic Affairs to review and update the Grant Reform Position Paper 2021-2024 annually to ensure it is up to date for lobbying purposes.

2021 WEL 10 SUBSTANCE MISUSE, ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOURS, HARM REDUCTION, PROMOTION, AND CELEBRATION OF RECOVERY

PROPOSED BY ATHLONE IT SU

Congress notes, The sphere of addictive behaviours and substance misuse is multifaceted and complex. Work in this area is predominantly focused on, prevention, education, and harm reduction with regards to alcohol and substances. For many people problems arise with other addictive behaviours including but not limited to gambling, pornography, sex, and nicotine.

Congress further notes, There is currently several USI policies in place that mandate work in these areas. Multiple mandates have resulted in duplications and overlaps in the policy file. However, given the increase in 'problematic gambling' during the Covid 19 period (WOULFE, 2021), and the stigma faced by students in active substance misuse or recovery (SPENCER, 2017) this remains an important area of work.

Congress recognises, The work USI have done to date in many of these areas and very much would like this work to continue. This can be done in line with the current national best practice approaches of reducing harms, supporting, and celebrating recovery.

Congress therefore mandates USI VP Welfare to continue and strengthen the work in this area. Through awareness campaigns encompassing both educational aspects on addictive behaviours and harm reduction.

Also, a strong focus on promotion of and celebration for the recovery journey from addictive behaviours and substance misuse. This area of work should include (but not be limited to) a minimum of two national campaign per academic year on; 'Recovery'; Alcohol & substance misuse and dependency; and 'Gambling'.

Congress therefore repeals:

- 15 WE 25 Gambling
- 2018 WEL 11 Smoking cessation Campaign
- WEL 19-9 Second-hand Smoke
- 20 WEL 3 Celebrating and Supporting Recovery Through Harm Reduction and Support
- 20 WEL 6 Smoking Cessations
- 20 WEL 7 Drugs and alcohol harm reduction campaign.

2021 WEL 11 EXPANSION OF PROVISION OF FREE HIV SUPPORTS.

PROPOSED BY TCDSU

Congress notes The HIV epidemic is an intersectional issue affecting people of all walks of life, including the students we represent, and its continued presence in Irish Society for over 30 years alongside the many preventative measures we have available to us.

Congress further notes The inequalities of the HIV epidemic have been exacerbated by the Covid 19 pandemic, and the closure of the Gay Mens Health service, deeming it not a priority of our government.

Congress recognises The work done by many organisations such as HIV Ireland and MPOWER Ireland to make available free PrEP and free Rapid HIV testing kits.

Congress mandates The VP for Campaigns, the VP for Equality and Diversity, and the VP for Welfare to work HIV Ireland and MPOWER Ireland and work with and lobby the HSE to expand the provision of free rapid HIV testing kits and PrEP within a Universities Health Clinic for every student who needs it.

2021 WEL 12 EXAM DESTRESS CAMPAIGN

PROPOSED BY WIT STUDENTS' UNION

Congress Notes:

Individual MO's put a lot of work into destress campaigns around Exam times. As a national Union, USI organises campaigns throughout the year that aid/support these local campaigns.

Congress Believes:

It is imperative for USI to engage in campaigns that promote positive wellbeing among the student body, especially around exam periods. Exam periods are peak stress times for students and many will experience increased anxiety and stress. Students should be educated on what stress is, know the signs of stress and anxiety and should be able to reach out for support when needed both on a national and local level.

Congress Mandates:

The Vice Presidents' for Welfare, Academic Affairs and Regions to roll out a national Exam Destress Campaign. This campaign should be run towards the end of semester 1 and semester 2 when exams are taking place.

Congress further Mandates:

USI to provide resources to Officers to help with these campaigns. This can include, but not limited to, a stress pack, booklet, graphics, information on support services etc.

Congress Repeals: 12 WEL 5 12 WEL 14

EQUALITY

2021 EQ NC 1 MOTION ON RESIDENCY CRITERIA FOR RETURNING EMIGRANTS

PROPOSED BY VP E&C

CONGRESS NOTES

That students who have not lived in Ireland or another EU member state for 3 of the last 5 years do not qualify for EU tuition fee levels or the student maintenance grant, regardless of their nationality and/or citizenship.

CONGRESS REGRETS

That this policy has particularly affected the many young people who emigrated from Ireland during the economic crisis. Those who wish to return to Ireland to pursue higher education at both undergraduate and postgraduate level face significantly higher non-EU fee levels as a result of their residency in a non-EU state. In practice, this serves as an incentive to defer or reconsider repatriation.

CONGRESS ALSO REGRETS

That for a huge number of emigrants, emigration has not been a “lifestyle choice”. Hundreds of thousands of people have emigrated from Ireland over the past 10 years and many of whom did so under the obligation of a scarcity of opportunity.

CONGRESS ACCORDINGLY ASSERTS

That it is unjust to penalise those Irish citizens who were forced by external circumstances to seek opportunities abroad. Moreover, the current policy is inconsistent with government strategy to incentivise the repatriation of those same emigrants.

CONGRESS BELIEVES

That returning emigrants should be subject to less strict conditions of residency in order to qualify for EU fee levels and student supports

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES

Officer board to liaise with the Department of Education and the Higher Education Authority to pursue the implementation of less strict conditions of residency for these people.

2021 EQ NC 2 ACCESSIBILITY TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

PROPOSED BY VP POSTGRADUATE AFFAIRS

CONGRESS NOTES

The Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD) conducted a survey in 2017/2018 which notes that 14, 720 students with disabilities enrolled in third-level education, representing 6.2 percent of the total student population. This notes a 17% increase in one year. USI applauds this increase, yet notes that access to third level education is still very restrictive, and students with disabilities still form a minority within the overall student body.

CONGRESS NOTES

The need for an in-depth study on numbers of students with disabilities accessing third level education in Ireland, and the Institutional barriers faced by students with disabilities.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES

That Students' Unions can play a vital role in the encouragement of more students with disabilities enrolling in third level education, highlighting areas of Institutional inaccessibility on campuses and lobbying their Institutions towards greater support of students with disabilities.

CONGRESS MANDATES

The Vice President for Equality & Citizenship to work with MO's to highlight the need for, and resources required to greater enhance the numbers of students with disabilities accessing third level education in Ireland.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship and the Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs to lobby the government for greater investment in disability services across existing Higher Education Institutions on behalf of students with disabilities at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. "

2021 EQ 1 EQUALITY PROOFING OF USI CAMPAIGNS AND EVENTS

PROPOSED BY MAYNOOTH STUDENTS' UNION

Congress Notes

That the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) is the national representative body for circa 374,000 students in Ireland to date. Amongst those students is a varied diversity of different minority & under-represented groups included but not limited to:

Members of the LGBTQ+ community

Mature Students

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students

Migrants, Asylum Seekers & Undocumented Persons

Traveller & Roma Community

Transgender & Non-binary students

Students of faith

Students with disabilities

Students with caring responsibilities

Congress further notes That USI hosts a number of campaigns and events throughout the year in areas including but not limited to welfare, academic affairs, Gaeilge, postgraduate affairs, equality & citizenship. These campaigns and events reach various cohorts of students from different groups and backgrounds and highlight important issues and themes throughout the year.

Congress Believes

That USI should strive to have diversity at the forefront of its campaigns and events. Concerning the standards of equality, diversity, inclusion and interculturalism (EDI), the elevation of liberation voices and groups should be a priority; this requires a spotlight. There also is a necessity for USI campaigns and events to be equality-proofed, which is to say that campaigns and events within USI should strive to highlight and include the following: - Gaeilge (the Irish Language) - Representation of minorities - Relevance to postgraduate students - Accessibility

Congress therefore Mandates:

The VP for Equality & Citizenship and VP for Campaigns to work on an Equality-Proofing strategy that will ensure USI Campaigns and events are as inclusive and diverse as possible in highlighting: - Gaeilge (the Irish Language) - Representation of minorities - Relevance to postgraduate students - Accessibility

2021 EQ 2 UNDERSTANDING PRIVILEGE AND INCLUSION

PROPOSED BY MAYNOOTH STUDENTS' UNION AND SECONDED BY NATIONAL COLLEGE OF IRELAND STUDENTS' UNION

Congress Notes:

Recent events within the island of Ireland have highlighted many incidents in relation to discrimination towards students with disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community, Traveller and Roma community. There is also increasing amounts of racism, as highlighted during the peak of the Black Lives Matter Movement in 2020, towards BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic).

Congress Further Notes:

That of the aforementioned, there are a number of different groups who are under-represented, misrepresented, and discriminated against. An active stance must be taken against this within and by USI.

Congress Believes:

That 'PRIVILEGE' has been a theme that is misconceived within communities wide and far on the island of Ireland. Up until now, there has been a priority for narratives of teaching and learning within the student movement. Now, we must continue to uproot negative and false mindsets surrounding minority groups. We must continue the narrative of learning while also beginning the one of unlearning about PRIVILEGE & INCLUSION.

Congress therefore Mandates

The VP Campaigns and the VP Equality & Citizenship to work on an action plan that will focus on the unlearning of negative biases, decolonising minds to start afresh and liberate minorities across the island. The campaign should focus on not only helping SU officers and people to learn about differences in minority groups but equipping people with the tools to DO better.

Congress further Mandates

The USI Executive to ensure the action plan strives to *educate*, by providing educational tools that highlight privilege in ourselves and our communities. The plan should also recognise privilege and how it affects minorities. To *train*, by developing training on how to support marginalised groups in the social and learning environment. And, to *support minorities*, by working towards breaking down barriers to participation within minority groups and actively supporting the minorities to excel in positions of leadership. This should be done through developing campaigns and networks, but not limited to these. The plan should also highlight and celebrate the cultures and achievements of various liberation groups to celebrate and empower.

2021 EQ 3 INSURANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

PROPOSED BY VICE-PRESIDENT FOR POSTGRADUATE AFFAIRS

Congress Notes: Current law dictates that those considered “ordinarily resident” in Ireland must pay additional health insurance costs. The Irish immigration service requires that all non-EEA students have at least a basic policy covering emergency medical expenses. Proof of insurance is required at the time of registration with immigration authorities. For students on short-term courses and newly arrived first year students, travel insurance may suffice in some circumstances. Medical insurance policies that meet the minimum immigration service requirements have increased in cost for international students as a result of a ruling from the Court of Appeal determined that because students studying in Ireland for more than one year are ‘ordinarily resident’ in the state and they are required to purchase more expensive ‘community-rated’ policies. This means that insurance policies sold to non-EEA students must comply with the rules and obligations set down in the Health Insurance Act 1994.

Congress Further Notes: The majority of education programs in Ireland are longer than one year in duration.

Congress Recognizes: The recent high court ruling around “ordinarily resident” status within the Health Insurance Act saw an average insurance cost increase of roughly 300% for international students from roughly €100 to a community-rated health insurance premiums will cost in excess of €700 for the year.

Congress Further Commends: The work conducted by the Alliance for Affordable Insurance for International Students (AAIS) which USI are members of, for the work in highlighting this issue and lobbying the Department for Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, the Department for Justice, and the Department for Health on this matter.

Congress is Deeply Concerned: With international students being classed as “ordinarily resident” for the purpose of insurance while not be classes as “ordinarily resident” for the purpose of fees, where international students are being disproportionately burdened with higher fees and costs to study in Ireland.

Congress Mandates: The USI executive to continue working with AAIS in lobbying the Department for Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, the Department for Justice, and the Department for Health for a solution to this issue, including but not limited to the reversal of the high court decision on “ordinarily resident” status for international students.

CITIZENSHIP

2021 CZN 1 SUSTAINABILITY IN USI CAMPAIGNS AND EVENTS

Congress recognises That climate change and global warming is one of the biggest challenges facing the global community at present. Globally, we are already witnessing a steady rise in average temperatures both on land and sea. We can also measure the retreat of glaciers and the incremental increases in sea levels. In Ireland, our weather conditions have undergone significant changes in recent years. the average temperature has increased by 0.7 oC during the period 1890-2013 and according to Ireland's Climate: The Road Ahead, 2013, a further increase in mean temperature of around 1.5oC above the 1981-2010 mean is anticipated by mid-century.

Congress notes The Irish government needs to take action on climate change and climate injustice in Ireland and the Irish Government need to align itself with its commitments to the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement and do their part in lowering our carbon emissions to the point where we can limit global climate change to a 1.5°C average warming target above pre-industrial levels.

Congress Notes with Concern That Ireland was the second country in the world to declare a 'Climate & Biodiversity Emergency' in 2019, however, in the exact same year, Ireland exceeded its annual EU emissions target by 5 million tonnes, with little incentivisation to present in order to commit to carbon neutrality and achieving goals set out respectively in both 2030 and 2050, with a particular highlight to exploring the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement being explored as of February 2021, which presents catastrophic results to eco-activism and climate change commitments, allowing companies take legal action against Ireland's Government should they lose profits as a result of public policy.

Congress commends The work being undertaken by USI working with climate action groups and the internal work being done to make USI a more climate conscious organisation including being named as an SDG champion, working towards being a paperless office and being named a Fairtrade office.

Congress mandates The USI Executive team work to make USI events and campaigns more sustainable and aim to ensure USIs work is as close to carbon neutral as possible. USI to undertake a sustainability audit including USIs internal procedures and USIs work more broadly.

Congress Further Mandates: The USI Executive Team to hold a review of all events and campaigns ran (after the event is done), that will include a section on sustainability and examine where their campaign could have been more sustainable to be included as institutional memory for future campaigns to learn and grow from.

2021 CZN 2 SUSTAINABILITY FESTIVAL

Congress Notes: The Sustainable Development goals have been recognized as the solution to providing a sustainable future for all living things on the planet.

Congress Further Notes: That USI plays a key role in educating students about these goals.

Congress Applauds: The work done to date by the USI Executive on linking in with the Sustainable Development Goals and highlighting campaigns such as Fast Fashion, Plastic Free & Fair Trade

Congress Regrets: That Ireland is currently not on track to meet Carbon Net-Zero goals by 2050, and that lack of education plays into a huge factor in the immediate dangers imposed by climate neglect.

Congress Therefore Mandates: The Vice-President for Equality & Citizenship in association with the USI Executive Team to take lead in running a Sustainability Festival that will target the Sustainable Development Goals as the primary point of focus for educating on the event.

Congress Further Mandates: That the event ran, explores options to set a standard in sustainability and running events sustainably, targeting 0-waste as a benchmark.

2021 CZN 3 THE HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION

PROPOSED BY QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST STUDENTS' UNION AONTAS NA MAC LÉINN OLLSCOIL NA BANRÍONA

Congress recognises: The UK's hostile environment policy, formed through a number of discriminatory immigration laws, means many international students must register with local police upon arrival, apply for a biometric residence permit, pay a costly NHS surcharge and may find themselves subject to landlord immigration checks if they do not live in university accommodation.

Congress also recognises: The exorbitant fees that international students pay to attend university in the UK and Ireland, often 4 times higher than what home students pay.

Congress also recognises: Universities also play a role in monitoring international students under the hostile environment policy and the Prevent Duty.

Congress believes: Education and healthcare should be free for all students.

Congress also believes: In the free movement of all students and staff, including those outside of the EU.

Therefore, Congress mandates:

That USI work with NUS and NUS-USI to end the hostile environment and PREVENT, starting with the way these policies operate within higher and further education.

That USI work with NUS and NUS-USI to ensure free healthcare for all, and an end to NHS surcharge fees

That USI work with NUS and NUS-USI to ensure international students can access public funds to avail of financial support during their studies.

The USI work with NUS and NUS-USI to ensure students who challenge their universities can do so without this impacting their visa status.

The VP Equality and Citizenship work with MOs to support them in campaigning for their institutions to become Universities of Sanctuary and to create more bursaries and scholarships for students who are migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

The USI work with NUS and NUS-USI to end universities working with and investing in the very industries that cause migrant precarity and cause people to leave their home countries such as arms trade, fossil fuel industry, and prison and border industries.

2021 CZN 4 USI CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK

PROPOSED BY USI VICE PRESIDENT DUBLIN REGION

Congress recognises The important role young people and particularly students have played in the fight against global warming. Climate change is here. As the impact of climate change intensifies over the coming few years, it is the children and young people of today who will face the worst effects. Young people across the globe have taken to the streets, to protest against the lack of action on the climate crisis by Governments across the

globe which sparked a global movement of school-age students demanding greater action from governments to fight climate change. Now millions are marching to demonstrate their support.

Congress notes Governments across the globe are not taking action to fulfil the Paris agreement. Across the island of Ireland, the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Assembly continue to ignore their obligations and role in combating climate change. The Climate Action (Amendment) Bill 2020 aims to pursue climate neutrality by 2050 pursue but do not have to achieve it and the carbon budgets do not have to be consistent with the 2050 objective. In February, the Northern Ireland Assembly declared a climate emergency. Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK that does not have its own climate legislation, although it does contribute to wider UK targets on emissions reductions and has a Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019–2024.

Congress mandates The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship and Vice President for Campaigns to develop a network of students from across USIs membership with an interest in climate action. This network would comprise of students and student leaders from across the island to come together to fight climate change. The USI Executive Team would support the development and training of this network and organise gatherings of this network.

GAEILGE

2021 GAE NC 1 SÍNEADH FADA

PROPERTY OF CONGRESS

CONGRESS NOTES WITH CONCERN:

That Irish is the first language of the Irish State as outlined in the constitution and that many students on the Island of Ireland have Irish names.

CONGRESS NOTES WITH CONCERN:

That Ireland is one of the only countries in Europe, in which English isn't the first official language, where computer systems in State departments and in public organisations such as Iarnród Éireann, Leap Card, and the HSE, and HEI's are not equipped to process the síneadh fada or special characters.

CONGRESS ALSO NOTES:

That similarly in Northern Ireland there is little recognition for the síneadh fada on computer systems and within State departments.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

That people have the right to their identity and to have their name spelled correctly when dealing with state organisations and HEI's and on all identification issued by these organisations for example on student ID cards, Leap Card, and on public records such as the Register of Electors.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES:

For Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to lobby public sector bodies in both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland for the recognition of the síneadh fada, and for those bodies to update computer systems to allow for the síneadh fada and other special characters, as and when these systems need to be updated.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES:

Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to work with Our Fada to roll out a campaign highlighting the importance of the síneadh fada as part of people's identity as well as a potential breach in GDPR law.

PROPERTY OF CONGRESS

TUGANN AN COMHAIRLE FAOI DEARA

An tábhacht a bhaineann le comharthaíocht dhát heangach a bheith ar fáil ar champas do mhic léinn agus do bhaill foirne le Gaeilge.

TUGANN AN COMHAIRLE FAOI DEARA CHOMH MAITH

Obair na gcapall atá á déanamh ag na Cumainn Ghaelacha agus na Aontais na Mac Léinn ó Thuadh agus iad ag feachtasaíocht ar son na gcomharthaí dát heangacha seo.

CREIDEANN AN COMHAIRLE

Go bhfuil sé de cheart ag mic léinn a bhfuil Gaeilge acu comharthaíocht dhát heangach a bheith curtha in airde ar champas chun timpeallacht comhionann a chruthú don Ghaeilge agus dóibh siúd a labhraíonn í.

MAR SIN, SAINORDAÍONN AN COMHAIRLE:

Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge AMLÉ tacaíocht a thabhairt do mhic léinn ó thuadh comharthaíocht dhát heangach a lorg ar champas. Ba cheart go n-oibreoidh LU don Ghaeilge leis na Cumainn Ghaelacha agus Aontais na Mac Léinn brú a chur ar Údaráis an Choláiste comharthaí dát heangacha a chur ar champas le Gaeilge agus Béarla ar mhéid chomhionann.

CONGRESS NOTES

The importance of providing bilingual signage on campus for students and staff who speak Irish.

CONGRESS NOTES

The work being done by Irish societies and Students' Unions in the North in campaigning for bilingual signage on campus.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

Students who speak Irish should have the right to have bilingual signage in place on campus to create an environment of equality for Irish and for students who speak it.

THEREFORE, CONGRESS MANDATES:

The USI Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to support students in the North in getting bilingual signage on campus. The LU don Ghaeilge should work with the Irish societies and Students' Unions the put pressure on college authorities to provide bilingual signage on campus where Irish and English are given equal footing.

An deacracht a bhíonn ag daoine a bheith páirteach i gcur chun cinn na Gaeilge toisc nach bhfuil Gaeilge acu.

CREIDEANN AN CHOMHDHÁIL

Gur cheart go mbeadh tuilleadh deiseanna ag daoine gan mórán Gaeilge páirt a ghlacadh i gcur chun cinn na teanga laistigh den Aontas.

MAR SIN SAINORDAÍONN AN CHOMHDHÁIL

Go n-eagródh an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge imeacht amháin trí Bhéarla maidir le cúrsaí éagsúla a bhaineann leis an nGaeilge gach bliain le níos mó daoine nach bhfuil Gaeilge acu a mheallfadh le bheith páirteach i gcur chun cinn na teanga.

CONGRESS NOTES:

The difficulty some people have taking part in the promotion of Irish because they can't speak the language.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

That there should be more opportunities for those who don't have Irish to take part in the promotion of the language within the Union.

THEREFORE, CONGRESS MANDATES:

The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to organise one event a year through English which covers various aspects of Irish to encourage more people who don't have Irish to participate in the promotion of the language.

2021 GAE 1 SEIMINEÁR NA GAEILGE

MOLTA AG COISTE CULTÚRTHA AMLÉ

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil Go n-eagraíonn AMLÉ Seimineár na Gaeilge mar chuid de Sheachtain na Gaeilge gach bliain.

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil Go mbíonn an-rath ar imeachtaí ar nós Traenáil Bhándearg agus Mná i gCeannas, a spreagann mic léinn le bheith páirteach sa ghníomhaíocht agus a chruthaíonn pobail do mhic léinn éagsúla trasna an oileáin.

Mar sin sainordaíonn an Chomhdháil: Don Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge Seimineár na Gaeilge a eagrú do mhic léinn agus oifigigh in Aontas na Mac Léinn le Gaeilge gach bliain a dhíríonn ar an ngníomhaíocht teanga agus a chruthaíonn líonra do mhic léinn agus oifigigh in Aontas na Mac Léinn le Gaeilge trasna an oileáin. Ba cheart go n-eagrófaí Seimineár scartha ó imeachtaí Seachtain na Gaeilge agus ba cheart go ndíreofaí ar réimsí éagsúla a bhaineann leis an ngníomhaíocht teanga ar nós an Ghaeilge sa Chóras Oideachais, cearta teanga thuadh agus theas, agus caomhnú na Gaeltachta.

Aisghaireann 15 GA 1

Congress notes: That USI organises Seimineár na Gaeilge as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge each year

Congress also notes: That events such as Pink Training and Women Lead are successful in inspiring students to become more involved in activism and creating different communities for students across the island.

Congress therefore mandates: The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to organise Seimineár na Gaeilge for students and student officers with Irish each year which focuses on Irish language activism and which aims to create a

network of students and student officers with Irish across the island. The event should be run separately to events for Seachtain na Gaeilge, and should focus on various aspects of Irish language activism including, Irish in the education system, Irish language rights North and South, and the preservation of the Gaeltacht.

Repeals 15 GA 1

2021 GAE 2 CUR CHUN CINN NA GAEILGE SNA BALLEAGRAÍOCHTAÍ // PROMOTING IRISH IN MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

MOLTA AG AN LEAS-UACHTARÁN DON GHAEILGE

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil Go bhfuil an-obair déanta ag na balleagraíochtaí a ghlac páirt sa scéim Bonn na Gaeilge leis an nGaeilge a chur chun cinn ina gcoláistí féin.

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil Go bhfuil an-chuid deacrachtaí ag roinn balleagraíochtaí páirt a ghlacadh sa scéim, go háirithe na hAontais ó Thuadh, agus na hAontais bheaga nach bhfuil mórán acmhainní acu.

Creideann an Chomhdháil Go bhfuil an-tábhacht le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge sna balleagraíochtaí agus gur cheart tuilleadh forbartha a dhéanamh ar an scéim seo le cuidiú le balleagraíochtaí a bheith níos dátheangaí.

Mar sin sainordaíonn an Chomhdháil Go ndéanfaidh an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge tuilleadh forbartha ar an mbonneagar seo in éineacht le heagraíochtaí Gaeilge ábhartha leis an scéim a leathnú agus deis a chur ar fáil do níos mó Aontas agus mic léinn a bheith páirteach ann. Ní mór deiseanna maoinithe a fhiosrú le heagraíochtaí ábhartha chun go mbeidh deis ag níos mó balleagraíochtaí páirt a ghlacadh.

Ina theannta sin, sainordaíonn an Chomhdháil Go gcruthóidh an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge pacáistí acmhainní do na balleagraíochtaí atá ag glacadh páirt sa scéim le treoireacha ar chonas spriocanna áirithe a chur i gcrích mar atá leagtha amach sa scéim, ionas go mbeidh siad in ann a bheith níos dátheangaí.

Aisghaireann 20 GAE 8

Congress Notes: That a lot of work has been done by member organizations who have taken part in the Bonn na Gaeilge scheme to promote Irish in their own colleges.

Congress also notes: That many member organizations have found it difficult to participate in the scheme, especially MOs in the North, and smaller MOs without many resources.

Congress believes: That the promotion of Irish within MOs is extremely important, and that further development should be made to the existing Bonn na Gaeilge scheme to help MOs become more bilingual.

Therefore, Congress mandates: The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to further develop the scheme with relevant Irish language organisations, to allow more MOs to participate in it fully. Funding opportunities with relevant bodies should also be researched in order to allow more MOs to engage with the scheme.

Congress also mandates: The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to create a resource pack with specific guidelines on how to complete certain actions as outlined in the scheme, so that they can become more bilingual.

Repeals 20 GAE 8

2021 GAE 3 SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE

MOLTA AG/ PROPOSED BY COISTE CULTÚRTHA AMLÉ

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil Go mbíonn Seachtain na Gaeilge á réachtail go náisiúnta idir 1-17 Márta gach bliain.

Creideann an Chomhdháil Go bhfuil sé tábhachtach go n-eagraítear imeachtaí atá dírithe ar mhic léinn mar chuid den fhéile seo.

Mar sin sainordaíonn an Chomhdháil Go n-eagróidh an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge imeachtaí agus tionscainmh atá dírithe ar mhic léinn mar chuid de Sheachtain na Gaeilge gach bliain. Ní mór do na himeachtaí seo a bheith dírithe ar réimse leathan mac léinn ar nós, foghlaimeoirí, mic léinn sa Ghaeltacht, mic léinn ó Thuadh agus mic léinn sna Cumainn Ghaelacha.

Ina theannta sin, sainordaíonn an Chomhdháil: Go ndéanfaidh an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge seó bóthair a eagrú mar chuid de Sheachtain na Gaeilge agus deis a thabhairt do bhalleagraíochtaí nach féidir leo imeachtaí a réachtáil mar chuid den fhéile an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn i measc a gcuid mic léinn.

Aisghaireann 15 GA 4

Congress Notes: That Seachtain na Gaeilge happens nationally from 1-17 March each year.

Congress Believes: That it's important that events are organized for students as part of the campaign.

Therefore, Congress mandates: The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to organise events and initiatives for students as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge each year. These should meet the needs of a wide range of students such as those learning Irish, students from Gaeltacht areas, students from the North, and students in the Cumainn Ghaelacha.

Congress also mandates: The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to organise a Seachtain na Gaeilge roadshow to give MOs who can't organise their own events as part of the campaign to have the opportunity to promote Irish to their students.

Repeals 15 GA 4

2021 GAE 4 SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE (REPEAL + REPLACE)

PROPOSED BY TUDUBLIN SU

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil: Tábhact imeachtaí sóisialta agus conas a cabhraíonn siad le mic léinn a gcuid Gaeilge a chleachtú.

Sainordaíonn an Chomhdháil: An LU Gaeilge chun féile bhliantúil 'Seachtain na Gaeilge' a eagrú, le comhair ó Conradh na Gaeilge.

Congress notes The importance of social events has the ability for students to practice and use whatever Irish they have.

Congress Mandates: The LU Gaeilge to organize an annual Seachtain na Gaeilge festival, in conjunction with Conradh na Gaeilge,

Congress Repeals: 15 GA 4 Seachtain na Gaeilge

2021 GAE 5 COMHOIBRÍÚ LE HEAGRAÍOCHTAÍ MAC LÉINN SAN EORAIP // CO-OPERATION WITH STUDENT GROUPS IN EUROPE

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil Go bhfuil nasc láidir idir an Ghaeilge agus teangacha mionlaigh eile san Eoraip.

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil chomh maith Go bhfuil eagraíochtaí mac léinn i dtíortha eile a dhéanann obair le teangacha mionlaigh eile a chur chun cinn ag an tríú leibhéal

Creideann an Chomhdháil Go bhfuil sé tábhachtach go n-oibríonn AMLÉ le heagraíochtaí i dtíortha eile ar chur chun cinn na dteangacha mionlaigh i measc mic léinn le foghlaim uathu agus chun tacaíocht a thabhairt dá chéile.

Mar sin, sainordaíonn an Chomhdháil: Go rachaidh an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge i dteagmháil le grúpaí mac léinn a dhéanann obair le mionteangacha eile a chur chun cinn ag an tríú leibhéal le deiseanna comhoibríthe a fhiosrú leo agus le taighde a dhéanamh ar na bealaí éagsúla le mionteanga a chur chun cinn i measc mic léinn.

Aisghaireann IL 19-7

Congress notes: That there is a strong link between Irish and other minority languages in Europe.

Congress also notes: That there are student groups in other countries who work on the promotion of other minority languages at third level

Congress believes: That it is important for USI to work with organisations in other countries on the promotion of minority languages among students and to learn from them and to support each other.

Therefore, Congress mandates: The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to contact organizations in other countries who work on promoting minority languages at third level to look at opportunities for co-operation and to research the various ways to promote minority languages among students.

Repeals IL 19-17

2021 GAE 6 PÁIPÉAR SEASAIMH AR AN NGAEILGE SA CHÓRAS OIDEACHAIS // POSITION PAPER ON IRISH IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

MOLTA AG AN LEAS-UACHTARÁN DON GHAEILGE

Glacann an Chomhdháil le Páipéar Seasaimh AMLÉ ar Oideachas na Gaeilge

Congress adopts the USI Position Paper on Irish in the Education System

Aisghaireann / Repeals:

20 GAE 1

20 GAE 5

20 GAE 6

IL 19-4

2018 IL 5

PROPOSED BY NUI GALWAY STUDENTS' UNION

Note: In a previous version, this motion was presented without its title in the original Gaeilge. We would like to point out that this was an editing error and that the MO submitting the motion did include the Gaeilge.

Aithníonn an Chomhdháil Go bhfuil spéis ag méadú i leibhéal na Gaeilge a fhorbairt i measc mic léinn agus an daonra i gcoitinne.

Congress Notes That there is a growing interest for developing the level of Irish among students and the wider population.

Admhaíonn an Chomhdháil Go bhfuil easpa modúl agus cúrsaí á dtairiscint trí mheán na Gaeilge, agus nach bhfuil go leor á dtairiscint faoi láthair chun an fonn méadaithe atá ann neart na Gaeilge a fhorbairt sa daonra a shásamh.

Congress regrets That there is a lack of modules and courses offered through Irish and that there isn't enough currently being offered in order to satisfy the growing appetite for developing the strength of Irish within the population.

Mar sin, sainordaíonn an Chomhdháil An Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge suirbhéanna a úsáid chun imscrúdú a dhéanamh agus taighde a bhaint amach faoin éileamh atá ann do chúrsaí agus modúil, srl. a chur ar fáil trí Ghaeilge agus tuairisc a thaispeáint don Chomhairle Náisiúnta agus na Ranna Rialtais chuí trí obair a dhéanamh le heagraíochtaí a bheadh dírithe ar an ionchuimsiú agus ar chur chun cinn na Gaeilge.

Therefore, congress mandates The LUDG to use surveys to investigate and carry out research in exploring demand for offering courses, modules, etc. through Irish and to produce a report on this to National Council and the relevant Governmental Department through working with organisations that would tailor to inclusion and promotion of Irish.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

2021 NA NC 1 CAOMHNÚ NA GAELTACHTA // PRESERVATION OF THE GAELTACHT

PROPOSED BY: USI LEAS-UACHTARÁN DON GHAEILGE

This motion would require a 2/3rds majority to pass

AITHNÍONN AN CHOMHAIRLE:

An luach a bhaineann leis na ceantair Ghaeltachta agus a thábhachtaí is atá siad do thodhchaí na Gaeilge, agus do stair agus cultúr an oileáin seo.

ANUAS AR SIN, AITHNÍONN AN CHOMHAIRLE:

Go bhfuil géarchéim ag tarlúint anois sna ceantair Ghaeltachta ó thaobh cúrsaí teanga de agus gmbíonn fadhbanna ollmhóra ag daoine óga fanacht sa Ghaeltacht mar gheall nach bhfuil deiseanna fostaíochta ann dóibh nuair a chríochnaíonn siad sa Choláiste.

CREIDEANN AN CHOMHAIRLE:

Go bhfuil sé ríthabachtach na Gaeltachtaí a chaomhnú agus gur ceart don Rialtas maoiniú sásúil a dhéanamh ar na ceantair seo ionas go mbeidh siad fós anseo i gceann deich nó fiche bliana.

MAR SIN, SAINORDAÍONN AN CHOMHAIRLE:

Go dtacóidh AMLÉ, trí obair an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge, le feachtas a bhaineann le caomhnú na Gaeltachta agus go gcuideoidh an LU Gaeilge le heagraíochtaí eile, stocaireacht a dhéanamh ar an Rialtas dul i ngleic leis an ngéarchéim sa Ghaeltacht.

ANUAS AIR SIN, SANORDAÍONN AN CHOMHAIRLE:

Go n-eagróidh an Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge grúpaí fócais ar a laghad faoi dhó in aghaidh an tseamastair, le mic léinn ó na ceantair Ghaeltachta ar fad le plé a dhéanamh ar na fadhbanna is mó do dhaoine óga sa Ghaeltacht agus obair AMLÉ ar chaomhnú na Gaeltachta a stiúradh.

COUNCIL NOTES:

The value of Gaeltacht areas and their importance to the future of the Irish language, as well their importance in the history and culture of the Island.

COUNCIL ALSO NOTES:

That there is a language crisis happening in the Gaeltacht and that there are huge difficulties in keeping young people in Gaeltacht areas due to a lack of employment opportunities for them when they finish college.

COUNCIL BELIEVES:

That it is vital to preserve Gaeltacht areas and that the Government should provide adequate funding to these areas so that they are still in existence in ten- or twenty-years' time.

THEREFORE, COUNCIL MANDATES:

USI, through the work of the Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge, to support campaigns to preserve the Gaeltacht and to assist other Irish language organisations in lobbying the Government to tackle the ongoing crisis in the Gaeltacht.

COUNCIL ALSO MANDATES:

The Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge to organise focus groups for students from all Gaeltacht areas, at least twice a semester, to discuss issues facing young people in the Gaeltacht and to shape USI's work on supporting the Gaeltacht.

2021 NA NC 2 SUPPORT FOR DYING WITH DIGNITY

PROPOSED BY TU DUBLIN STUDENTS' UNION

CONGRESS NOTES:

The Dying with Dignity Bill, is a bill in favour of introducing Assisted Dying in Ireland, which is a part of End of Life Care, often decisions made by those diagnosed with terminal illness or long term health implications that impact a person's quality of life.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

The current bill proposed is currently going through legislation at the time of this motion being written up. The bill aims to legislate for the safe and monitored access to End of Life Care which includes the Right to Die. The current bill includes the provisional necessity for an independent medical practitioner to assess the case and safeguard against abuse, coercion or gaslighting.

CONGRESS RECOGNIZES:

The historic court cases taken by those who have sought a constitutional right to die or furthered this discussion, such as the abhorrent handling of the Cervical Check Cancer Scandal, or those who have sought to overturn legislation such as Marie Fleming, Gail O'Rorke and countless others.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

That bodily autonomy is a basic human right, and bodily autonomy derives from the absolute sovereign authority to make decisions that is best for one's self and that End of Life care is included in Bodily Autonomy and autonomy over one's health, wellness and future.

THEREFORE, CONGRESS MANDATES:

The Vice-President for Equality and Citizenship in conjunction with the Executive Team to lobby in favour of the Right to Die and to actively support the Dying with Dignity Bill.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES:

The Vice-President for Welfare in conjunction with the Executive Team to work with lobbying groups who have an in-depth knowledge on End of Life Care that encompasses empathy, compassion and understanding.

2021 NA NC 3 DE-PLATFORMING AND REJECTING FASCISM

PROPOSED BY TU DUBLIN STUDENTS' UNION

CONGRESS NOTES:

Fascism is a form of authoritarian ideology that focusing on power that uses forcible suppression of opposing views and opinions. It is a regressive and violent ideology that has seen an increase in reporting over the past years and now has now manifested into a full platform in 2020.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

Fascism actively harms minority groups, progressive movements, and grassroots community equity campaigns by any means available, using the guise of political stances to protect itself from de-platforming and rejection from societal based values.

CONGRESS RECOGNIZES:

That students come from all walks of life, opinions, and beliefs. Political beliefs and alignments vary in all students and it is important to recognize and support **all** students in their access, progression, and completion of their education and/or progression to life-long learning.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

That as a representative body we must ensure the protection of those who are most vulnerable in our society. Fascism actively aims to harm that core belief. We must ensure that access, progression and completion of education and its further progression into life-long learning must be safe from violence, oppression or hinderance, particularly from those with harmful, deceitful, or aggressive intent.

CONGRESS FURTHER BELIEVES

That as a collective Union we should seek to include as many diverse opinions as possible, that does not actively harm, disrupt or de-platform the vulnerable, marginalized or oppressed in our society.

THEREFORE, CONGRESS MANDATES:

The President in conjunction with the Executive Team actively rejects and de-platforms forms of fascism and to further re-invest resources into protecting the most vulnerable and/or marginalized students in our society.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES:

The Vice-President for Campaigns in conjunction with the Executive Team and Presidents' Working Group to engage in de-platforming actions such as counter-protests where safe, and to work with Organizations, Member Organizations and the relevant Executive Team officers to ensure training for officers in de-escalation, de-platforming and rejection of fascism is rolled out to all officers during key-training sessions.

2021 NA NC 4 SUPPORT FOR GAY MENS' HEALTH SERVICE (GMHS)

PROPOSED BY TU DUBLIN STUDENTS' UNION

CONGRESS NOTES

GMHS is Ireland's only dedicated statutory sexual health and wellbeing service for gay and bisexual men, men who have sex with men and the trans* community. The GMHS remains closed due to COVID-19 restrictions along with the PrEP clinic on the GMHS site. Since its establishment 28 years ago, the clinic has provided a range of essential health services including:

- Providing a full sexual health service
- A PrEP/PEP service that facilitates access to the national free PrEP/PEP programme and manages the ongoing monitoring of those using PrEP;
- A Hepatitis A, B and HPV vaccination programme;
- Counselling

CONGRESS REGRETS

The GMHS was closed in March 2020 and staff were redeployed to COVID-19 test centers with the GMHS remaining closed for over 330 days now. The HSE piloted a programme for at home STI testing for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, syphilis and HIV. This pilot programme was launched only in Cork, Kerry and Dublin and after a day of opening the programme it was temporarily halted after thousands of orders were placed for the kits.

CONGRESS ALSO NOTES

The reopening of the GMHS clinic is vital, almost 12,000 gay and bisexual men and trans* people availed of testing, treatment, vaccination and prevention services at the clinic last year. Alongside the PrEP programme at the GMHS was one of the busiest services of its kind in the country, with about 1,000 people accessing medication through it last year.

CONGRESS RECOGNISES

The important work being undertaken by LGBTQ+ organisations in calling for the reopening of the GMHS clinic and supports the opening letter written by several LGBTQ+ organisations calling for the reopening of the GMHS expressing concerns about the impact on the "sexual health and wellbeing of many in our community".

CONGRESS MANDATES

The USI Executive Team to lobby for the reopening of the GMHS clinic and further sexual healthcare facilities that are currently restricted and closed due to COVID-19 as an urgent priority. While also supporting LGBTQ+ groups in their work to reopen the GMHS clinic including groups such as ACT UP Dublin and many more.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES

The USI Executive Team to lobby the Department of Health to allocate resourcing to increasing access of these types of services provision beyond Dublin's GMHS.

2021 NA NC 5 USI TO SUPPORT IRISH NIGHTCLUBS DURING COVID19 CRISIS

PROPOSED BY: IT CARLOW SU

This motion would require a 2/3rds majority to pass

CONGRESS NOTES THAT:

Irish nightlife is a struggling industry as it is. Now, due to covid19, a lot of the nightlife industry must adhere to government guidelines and remain closed until a point where it is safe to open to the public. This puts even more pressure on Irish nightclubs to stay in business.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES THAT:

Pubs and restaurants have national representation through the LVA (Licensing Vintners Association) however nightclubs are not included within their remit of representation. 'Give Us The Night' is an independent volunteer group of professionals who campaign for positive changes to nightlife in Ireland but are not a formally recognised representative organisation.

CONGRESS BELIEVES THAT:

Nightclubs play a huge role, not only the student experience whilst in college, but for many employment opportunities to students. Nightclubs should be recognised as a vital part of the student experience and thus so recognised as such by the USI.

CONGRESS MANDATES:

The Vice President for Campaigns to actively and publicly work with members from 'Give Us The Night' whilst recognising the importance of nightclubs to Irish students. The Vice President for campaigns must offer support from the USI to nightclubs during the Covid19 crisis within reason as per government guidelines ensuring safety to the public is priority.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES:

The Vice President for Campaigns to deliver any relevant updates from 'Give Us The Night' and, if so deemed necessary, reach out to MO's if help and/or support is required by 'Give Us The Night' at a campus level.

2021 NA NC 6 GENDER QUOTAS

PROPOSED BY VP E&C

THIS MOTION WOULD REQUIRE A 2/3RDS MAJORITY TO PASS

CONGRESS NOTES

Gender quotas were introduced into Irish General Elections in 2011. The legislation stated State funding to parties would be halved unless 30 percent of their candidates at the next general election were women, with this target set to increase to 40% over the next few years. When these quotas were introduced, the percentage of women in the Dáil went from 16% to 22%.

CONGRESS RECOGNISES

The importance of grassroots and community organising. Gender quotas go some ways towards redressing this balance but must be accompanied by other measures.

Women who are selected for election must be supported to get on the ballot and furthermore and the whole way through the process.

CONGRESS AFFIRMS

As a national student movement we must push for greater diversity including but not limited to gender in Irish elections. USI has seen success from events such as Women Lead, EMpower, the Conference for Students with Disabilities, and Pink Training which provide spaces for minority groups to come together, and that work is reflected in the leadership we see in Students' Unions. USI unequivocally supports targeted measures which encourage greater diversity and break barriers to leadership positions for women, disabled people, people from an ethnic minority background, the LGBT+ community, and more.

CONGRESS MANDATES

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship to lobby for gender quotas to be extended to other Irish elections such as local elections, and to support increases in gender quotas at a national level.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES

The USI Executive team to support targeted initiatives which increase diversity in leadership structures.

2021 NA NC 7 OPT-OUT ORGAN DONATION

PROPOSED BY VP SOUTH

CONGRESS NOTES:

The importance of organ donation within this country in saving lives.

CONGRESS APPLAUDS:

The usage of organ donation cards and the promotion of organ donation within the “Irish Donor Network”.

CONGRESS FURTHER APPLAUDS:

The implementation of an “opt out scheme” for organ donation in neighbouring European countries.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

That further actions should be taken to lobby for an opt out scheme to be introduced in Ireland.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES:

USI President and VP for Welfare to lobby relevant parties for the promotion of an opt-out scheme in relation to organ donation.

2021 NA 1 SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN DIRECT PROVISION

PROPOSED BY NCI STUDENTS' UNION

THIS MOTION WOULD REQUIRE A 2/3RDS MAJORITY TO PASS

Congress Recognizes That students in direct provision are at a greater disadvantage when it comes to educational, financial, and mental health supports. The current asylum-seeking process in Ireland needs to be dramatically modified and better resource the administration of the asylum process in Ireland in order to allow for a quicker asylum reception process. The last official statistics published by the RIA was in November 2018. The average length of stay in Direct Provision is 24 months, with some residents having spent up to 10 or 12 years living in these conditions.

Congress Notes That a report in 2020 by Doras outlined that asylum seekers are five times more likely to develop mental health & psychiatric issues. International Protection applicants experience a disproportionately high rate of mental health difficulties. They are up to fifteen times more likely to be diagnosed with depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder¹ and five times more likely to be diagnosed with a psychiatric illness.

Congress further notes USI does not directly represent second-level students as they are not in third-level education but must recognize the inequality faced by these students in direct provision.

Congress Therefore Mandates The Vice President for Welfare to work with the Irish Second-Level Students' Union and relevant mental health organizations to provide mental health support and resources to students in direct provision.

Congress further mandates The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship to provide information resources to students looking to continue to third-level education. These resources should include institutes with sanctuary programs, mental health support services, and grants available to them.

2021 NA 2 SEANAD REFORM

PROPOSED BY USI PRESIDENT

THIS MOTION WOULD REQUIRE A 2/3RDS MAJORITY TO PASS.

Congress recognises The establishment of the Electoral Commission which has been a key priority for the Union of Students in Ireland for a number of years.

Congress believes There is a great opportunity to see true Seanad Reform as a result of the Commission.

Congress notes Recent efforts by Senators to enact the referendum passed over 40 years ago which would extend voting rights to all graduates of third-level institutions. While this is a welcomed step, it still facilitates an elitist system of representation.

Congress Mandates The USI President to lobby for Seanad Reform to ensure a fully democratically elected Seanad where all citizens have the right to vote in Seanad Elections.

Congress further mandates The USI President to lobby for a proposed amendment to the constitution to reform the Seanad including, but not limited to, the removal of 11 seats being nominated by the Taoiseach and the stipulation that all voting should be by secret postal ballot.

2021 NA 3 RIGHT TO DISCONNECT.

PROPOSED BY USI VICE PRESIDENT CAMPAIGNS

THIS MOTION WOULD REQUIRE A 2/3RDS MAJORITY TO PASS.

Congress notes: The issue of “always on” and “always available” amongst workers particularly during COVID-19 working arrangements and the impact this has on people’s personal lives.

Congress recognizes: The work done as part of the “Right to disconnect” campaign

Congress recognizes: The work done by Ireland’s Workplace Relations Commission on a consultation on a new code of practice which will give employees the right to disconnect outside normal working hours.

Congress therefore mandates: The USI Executive team to campaign for and support the calls for legislation around the Right to disconnect for workers.

2021 NA 4 POST COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY

PROPOSED BY USI VP CAMPAIGNS

THIS MOTION WOULD REQUIRE A 2/3RDS MAJORITY TO PASS.

Congress Notes The severe impact that COVID-19 restrictions has had on the Irish economy and the large sum of money borrowed by the Irish state in 2020 and 2021 to help cushion it’s respective impact.

Congress Further Notes The history of Irish Government’s responses to economic downturns being one including cuts to public expenditure and increases in taxes on income, as opposed to wealth; as well as the impact these decisions have had on Irish society as a large as being significantly negative.

Congress recognizes: The need for fiscal re-adjustment when normal life resumes, and the economy restarts on a long term basis.

Congress further recognizes: The need for the attempts to raise public monies should be done equitably and should be focused on progressive forms of taxation.

Congress mandates: The USI President and The Vice President for Campaigns to campaign and lobby for a just economic recovery and against economic policies routed in austerity.

2021 NA 5 SANCTIONS, FEES AND FINES

PROPOSED BY NUI GALWAY STUDENTS' UNION

Congress notes: That institutions put sanctions, fines & fees on students for such things as not paying fees on time, for having to repeat exams and breaking their code of conduct.

Congress Further Notes: That there are no best practice guidelines in place to deal with the issues such as late fee payment of students. Some institutions charge extra fees and others attempt to encourage students to pay their fees by locking out students of online resources including moodle, blackboard and emails.

Congress notes with concern: That this is resulting in students becoming very distressed, as the sanctions put in place are having a direct negative impact on each of the students' academics.

Congress further notes with concern: Students who rely heavily on family support and part-time work cannot afford these kinds of fines and fees that are imposed on them.

Congress mandates USI President to lobby DFHERIS and HEC to ensure greater fairness in these practices and by creating a model that institutions use when it comes to dealing with late-paying of fees, repeat exam costs and breaking rules etc.

Congress further mandates: USI President seeks that no monetary fees and fines are used for these issues.

2021 NA 6 USI SUPPORT FOR EQUALITY FOR CHILDREN CAMPAIGN

PROPOSED BY WIT STUDENTS' UNION

THIS MOTION WOULD REQUIRE A 2/3RDS MAJORITY TO PASS.

Congress Notes:

LGBT+ people in Ireland are currently still being discriminated against when it comes to LGBT+ Families. LGBT+ Families are currently prevented from having a legal relationship with both of their parents.

Congress Welcomes: The enactment of the Children and Families Relationships Act (CRFA) in Ireland. This Act allows for some LGBT+ Parents to have a legal relationship with their families.

However, Congress Further Notes: The CRFA still discriminates anyone who falls into the below categories:

Children born to male parents

Children born via surrogacy

Children conceived or born outside of Ireland

Children conceived using at-home insemination

Children conceived using known or anonymous donors

(Some amnesties apply to Children born or conceived prior to May 5th 2020)

Congress therefore Mandates:

The Vice President for Equality and Citizenship to join and support the Equality for Children Campaign and support LGBT+ parents in fighting this discrimination.

Congress Further Mandates:

USI President, Vice President for Equality and Citizenship and the USI Executive Team to call on the Government to end this discrimination by publishing an Assisted Human Reproduction Bill to include all children born to LGBT+ families; and by updating policy, supports, benefits and services that benefit children of heterosexual parents to also include children of LGBT+ parents.

2021 NA 7 LEVIES

PROPOSED BY NUI GALWAY STUDENTS' UNION

Congress notes: Under HEA guidelines a levy can only be charged with criteria being met of being "agreed with the student body via referendum."

Congress notes with concern: Levies are becoming a target for extra funding for institutions, there are many questions of levies and their place in higher education

Congress mandates: USI President to lobby DFHERIS and HEC develop policy to implement greater regulation to cover the establishment of levies such as ensuring a referendum is held to get approval of the student body and that funds gathered through levies should only used to fund student facing services and facilities as opposed to alternative sources of funding.

2021 NA 8 AUTONOMY

NUI GALWAY STUDENTS' UNION

Congress notes: Institutional autonomy of higher-level education is an issue that is coming more to light during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Congress notes with concern: Institutions were able to put different mitigations and offer different levels of support during the pandemic. This caused immense stress and upset for students in other institutions as they believed they were at a constant disadvantage to their counterparts in other institutions.

Congress mandates: USI President to lobby DFHERIS and HEC to ensure greater accountability for decisions that affect the student body. The HEC reviews with HEI's should feature sections relating to internal policies that affect student bodies and should be viewed against similar policies in other HEI's.

2021 IA NC 1 USI TO BE IN SOLIDARITY WITH MOVEMENTS IN AFRICA

PROPOSED BY MAYNOOTH STUDENTS' UNION

This motion would require a 2/3rds majority to pass

CONGRESS NOTES WITH DISMAY:

The atrocities taking place in numerous countries across the continent of Africa. With great horror, governments and organisations have destroyed various African nations and their people.

There are a series of horrific events that are taking place in the continent and various young people both within and outside of Africa have taken to justice.

African and non-African people alike have taken to the streets with protests and people across the world have shown their support through mass social media movements.

Movements such as:

- The **#EndSARS** Movement in Nigeria in which young people are being killed at the merciless hands of their country for having valuable items of belonging such as laptops, watches etc
- The **#ShutItDownNamibia** and **#AmINext South Africa** movements, where people, especially young women, trans women, and people cannot walk their home streets without being abducted, murdered or sexually assaulted.
- Liberia has just declared a **Rape a National Emergency**, as it is in other countries in the world
- The **#CongolsBleeding** Movement highlighting the ruthless genocide and usurpation of natural resources in the Democratic Republic (DRC) Congo by Western countries.
- The Cameroonian **#AnglophoneCrisis**
- **#ChildTrafficking** in Ivory Coast and Ghana

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

That there are thousands of students of the African diaspora and African descent who are internally suffering when they see their homelands shout for freedom. There is not enough acknowledgement and support of students of colour in general; more should be done for them and those in and from these countries mentioned above. With this, it is important to see that there are students in various MOs with close family and friends being hurt.

While there may not be an idea as to why this is relevant to a body like USI, it is important that the Union of Students in Ireland stand with the movements in Africa and the thousands of students of the African diaspora and African descent. Therefore, as a student movement we do what we can, when we can"

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

That these injustices across the world cannot continue with a blind-eye and that there is a need to support the continent of Africa in their fight for freedom and safety. While we stay here in the western world, we don't realise how much privilege knocks on our door. It is no longer enough to share hashtags and post on social media. We are a body that holds power and influence in the Island of Ireland. This influence should be used in whatever way it can.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES:

That the executive members of the Union of Students in Ireland stand in solidarity with Africa and African students in Ireland against the horrendous acts happening in Congo, Namibia, Liberia, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa and across the rest of the continent.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES:

The Vice-Presidents for Welfare, and Equality & Citizenship to research mental health services and provide them for African students and students of African diaspora across Ireland. This is to let them know there is help. In conjunction with that, promote those mental health and other supports the Vice-Presidents may deem appropriate. Any promotion of these mental health services should be aimed at these students and anyone affected by the crises in Africa.

Even though they are living in Ireland, there should be knowledge provided to them that USI, it's MOs and their HEIs are offering to stand beside them in this time of crisis.

The research and the support resources should also be provided to USI, its' MOs and their HEIs for their use.

THIS MOTION WOULD REQUIRE A 2/3RDS MAJORITY TO PASS

Congress notes: That the state of Israel is involved in a brutal military occupation of the Palestinian territories. The occupation is responsible for systematic, widespread and ongoing human rights abuses against the local Palestinian population, including destruction of homes, theft of land and water resources, imprisonment without trial, torture of prisoners, and construction of Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian land. That the State of Israel is in violation of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the United Nations. The settlements have also been declared illegal by the International Court of Justice and the UK government with Amnesty International stating that “Israel’s settlement policy is inherently discriminatory and has resulted in grave human rights violations including destruction of homes, forced evictions, unlawful killings, arbitrary detentions and collective punishment”.

Congress believes: That Israel should end its occupation of the Palestinian territories and allow the return of Palestinian refugees in accordance with international law. That the Palestinian people are entitled to the same human rights, dignity of person, self-determination, security and parity of esteem as all other peoples in the world today. That a boycott of Israel’s entire regime of oppression, including all of the Israeli companies and institutions that are involved in its violations of international law, is a reasonable non-violent activity that can be taken to register opposition to such crimes. That the Palestinian led BDS campaign does not target anyone or anything based on identity, but rather based solely on complicity in denying Palestinian rights and that BDS is a strategy for effective solidarity, not a dogma or ideology and certainly not an attack upon Jewish communities or individuals.

Congress mandates Officer Board: To inform MOs of the background to the situation in Israel/Palestine and to commemorate Palestine Solidarity Day, working with any relevant groups such as student societies and civil society organisations local to each of our campuses. To lobby to divest from and terminate any contracts with companies that are complicit in the occupation of the Palestinian territories and violation of Palestinian human rights more widely. To join the global movement for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel until it ends the occupation and complies with international law.

Congress Further mandates: The USI Executive Team to work with the Irish Council for International Students (ICOS) to engage with and support students on the Ireland-Palestine Scholarship Programme

Congress Repeals: 2018 IA 2

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

2021 AA NC 1

POSTGRADUATE FOLLOW UP TRAINING

PROPOSED BY VP POSTGRAD AFFAIRS

CONGRESS NOTES

That postgraduate students require very different support and needs than the undergraduate students.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES

That elected sabbatical officers generally have limited knowledge in regards to how to support and engage postgraduate students. Therefore sabbatical officers require additional support alongside the Postgraduate handbook.

CONGRESS MANDATES

The VP for Postgraduate Affairs to organize a follow up post graduate training for sabbatical officers.

2021 AA NC 2 FEES SANCTIONS

PROPOSED BY USI PRESIDENT

CONGRESS NOTES:

That many students are unable to pay their fees by the deadline put in place by each Third Level Institute.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

That there is no best practice guidelines in place to deal with the issue of late fee payment of students.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

That in an attempt to encourage to students to pay their fees, they can be locked out of online resources including moodle and emails.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

That this is resulting in students becoming very distressed, as the sanctions put in place are having a direct negative impact on each of the students' academics, as students are unable to access upload continues assessments or sit online exams.

CONGRESS MANDATES

The President to lobby the relevant bodies to set up a sub-group to examine best practice guidelines in relation to sanctions for late fee payment.

2021 AA NC 3 REPEAT FEES

PROPOSED BY: NUI GALWAY SU

CONGRESS NOTES THAT:

Repeat fees are used by colleges as a source of income and can be a barrier to education.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

Students are penalised enough by having to do a repeat exam and in some institutions by having a cap on the grade.

CONGRESS MANDATES:

VP Academic Affairs to undertake research on the repeat fees charged across colleges in Ireland, and the impact this has on students

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES THAT:

USI President & VP Campaigns lobby to reduce and abolish repeat fees.

2021 AA NC 4 ALTERNATIVE ADMISSIONS

PROPOSED BY: USI PRESIDENT

CONGRESS REGRETS:

The almost exclusive focus of the current third-level admissions route on prior academic attainment.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

That taking into consideration contextual data can ensure that an individual's true potential for performance in higher education is considered.

CONGRESS ALSO BELIEVES:

That such consideration would broaden the socio-economic demographic of the third-level student body; the current admissions system disproportionately advantages applicants from fee-paying secondary schools.

CONGRESS MANDATES:

That the USI shall support initiatives to create an alternative common admissions route for all publicly-funded third-level institutions where contextual data, including but not limited to socio-economic background, is considered in addition to prior academic attainment.

CONGRESS ALSO MANDATES:

The President to lobby for state investment in retention activities to prevent disproportionate drop out levels of those from non-traditional backgrounds.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES:

The President and the VP Academic Affairs to lobby for improved information, advice and guidance and careers information at all levels of education.

2021 AA NC 5

PARITY FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL DOCTORAL STUDENTS

PROPOSED BY: USI DEPUTY PRESIDENT/VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

CONGRESS NOTES WITH CONCERN:

The disparity in funding between the three primary strands of psychological doctoral courses in Ireland – Clinical, Counselling and Educational/Child with clinical psychology trainees having 60% of their fees covered by the HSE, and a student salary starting at €33,000 whilst Counselling and Educational/Child psychology students pay full fees of between €12,000 and €15,000 per year and carry out a minimum of 300 hours unpaid work throughout the duration of their three years of study.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

All strands of Psychology are recognized qualifications for Staff Psychology posts in the HSE, meaning that all trainees are eligible for the same staff posts.

CONGRESS ALSO NOTES:

Trainee Psychologists in all strands receive a salary for the duration of their studies in all parts of the UK.

CONGRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

The contents of the [Psychological Society of Ireland \(PSI\)'s Pre-Budget Submission 2021](#) which asks for just over €1.2 million to fund both of the above sets of trainees.

CONGRESS BELIEVES THAT:

Inequality amongst psychological trainees is deeply unfair and must not continue. All students deserve to be paid a fair wage for any work carried out as part of their education.

CONGRESS MANDATES:

The USI President and the USI Vice President for Academic Affairs to work with the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) to campaign for funding to be introduced to support Counselling and Educational/Child Psychology trainees, in line with the funding available to Clinical Psychology trainees.

2021 AA NC 6

DIGITAL & DISTANCE LEARNING POSITION PAPER

PROPOSED BY: USI DEPUTY PRESIDENT/VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

CONGRESS NOTES:

The change in traditional delivery of Higher Education over the last eight months as a result of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, and the quick transition to partially/fully online delivery of most programmes.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

The transition to blended & online delivery, whilst positive in some cases, has brought with it some concerning developments which have the potential to impact negatively on the student experience, such as online proctoring of exams.

CONGRESS FURTHER BELIEVES:

That the lessons learned from the first semester of the new academic year need to be brought forward in shaping the second semester, and beyond, in order to ensure that students are not left behind by the 'new' modes of delivery.

CONGRESS THEREFORE ADOPTS:

[The USI Position Paper on Digital & Distance Learning.](#)

2021 AA NC 7 SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE ENTRY MEDICINE STUDENTS

PROPOSED BY TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN STUDENTS' UNION

CONGRESS NOTES

That currently four institutions; RCSI, UCD, UCC, and UL all offer a Graduates Entry Medical course, such courses amount to around 1/3 of all EU students graduating from Medicine.

CONGRESS REGRETS

The exorbitantly high tuition fees which range from €14,580 - €16,970 per year for these programs which are not supported by SUSI or HEA Free Fees. These fees present a significant financial barrier to students from lower income backgrounds in accessing these programs while adding increased financial pressure on junior doctors graduating with large debt.

CONGRESS ALSO NOTES

The motion recently passed by TCDSU Council for TCDSU to work with USI to lobby on this issue at a national level.

CONGRESS RECOGNISES

The recent protest by UCD students wherein 70% of the GEM students have withheld their fees in protest to year on year GEM tuition fee increases.

CONGRESS MANDATES

The USI Executive Team to lobby the Government for increased financial support for graduate entry medicine students.

2021 AA NC 8

PARITY OF FUNDING FOR TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITIES

PROPOSED BY AIT STUDENTS' UNION

CONGRESS NOTES

That the landscape of Higher Education is changing with IoTs merging to become Technological Universities in Ireland.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES

The current funding allocation was put in place for the universities from 2006 and on a phased basis for the IoTs in 2009. It does not serve the purpose of the needs of HEIs today with Technological Universities being denied access to the larger allocated pot for Universities and Colleges. The new Technological University sector are expected to play a pivotal role in facilitating access and progression without the privilege of having access to the resources to facilitate this.

CONGRESS NOTES WITH CONCERN

Students' Unions are amalgamating their structures in becoming one entity for the new Technological Universities, with the respective Unions lobbying for their own sustainable funding framework to fund their services. Furthermore, with the TU sector not being given access to the larger allocated pot of funding this can only regress the Unions potential and opportunity to grow. Higher education funding is needed in a sustainable and equitable manner that will guarantee wider participation and fairness of access.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES

The USI President, to use their seat on the respective boards to lobby for equitable funding for Technological Universities to deliver on the provision of services the students need.

2021 AA 1

HIDDEN COURSE COSTS

PROPOSED BY THE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS WORKING GROUP

Congress notes: That many students are required to pay additional costs, on top of the student contribution/tuition fee. This includes but is not limited to materials fees, field trips, uniform costs and medical costs. These can range from 10s to 1000s of euros/pounds.

Congress further notes: In many cases, there is limited information provided to students in advance of enrolment on the additional costs that they will be required to pay throughout the course of their studies.

Congress believes: Hidden additional costs serve as a further reminder of the marketized Higher Education system that students across the island are being subjected to and may further inhibit students from progressing in their education particularly where these costs are mandatory.

Congress mandates: The USI President and Vice President for Academic Affairs to lobby key stakeholders, including the Higher Education Commission when formed to require institutions to provide full transparency of all additional costs within their colleges to prospective students.

Congress further mandates: The USI Executive Team to support MOs in raising awareness of additional course costs within their own colleges, and in lobbying for the reduction or abolishment of all additional costs. The USI Executive Team to support NUS-USI members in ensuring that colleges in the North continue to comply with CMA requirements around publication of additional costs.

2021 AA 2 PLACEMENT & WORK-BASED LEARNING STRATEGY 2021-2024

PROPOSED BY ACADEMIC AFFAIRS WORKING GROUP

Congress notes: The important role that placement and work-based learning plays in many students' education.

Congress further notes: The significant value that quality placement opportunities can have for students, but that they can also create pressure on students academically and personally.

Congress notes with concern: The negative impact that COVID-19 has had on the placement experience of many students.

Congress therefore adopts: The Placement and Work-Based Learning Strategy 2021-2024.

Congress Deletes: 20 AA 12 AA 19 10 2018 AA 3

2021 AA 3 CLARITY ON POSTGRADUATE & INTERNATIONAL FEES

PROPOSED BY POSTGRADUATE WORKING GROUP

Congress Notes: That the cost of individual postgraduate courses, and courses for non-EU students is dictated by the institution delivering the course.

Congress Further Notes: The current lack of clarity on how these fees are distributed after payment.

Congress Recognizes: That the creation of the Department for Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) has created potential for a focus on current postgraduate issues across campuses.

Congress therefore Mandates: The USI Executive Team to lobby the Department for Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) and the Higher Education Authority once formed to ensure greater transparency from institutions on the setting of international and postgraduate fees and how this money is used by institutions.

2021 AA 4 LECTURE RECORD

PROPOSED BY TUDUBLINSU

Congress Notes Not all HEI's have a policy in place for the recording of online lectures.

Congress further notes The Covid-19 pandemic has caused many difficulties for students when learning remotely. Lecturers refusing to record lectures has caused additional difficulties for students experiencing internet connectivity issues and outages.

Congress regrets That students have been put at a severe disadvantage academically this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and under additional stress as a result

Congress further regrets These disadvantages are hindering the progression of students' education already without lecturers refusing to record lectures and making their education even more challenging.

Congress mandates The VP AA officer to provide support and resources to MOs who are looking to lobby to implement lecture recording in their institute.

2021 AA 5 SUMMERTIME PLACEMENT FUNDING

PROPOSED BY THE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS WORKING GROUP

Congress notes: That many students who undertake placement as part of their course are required to have undertaken a certain number of practical placement hours/weeks in order to meet the professional requirements of the programme.

Congress further notes: The difficulties that many students have faced in securing and completing placement as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been the case across many programmes including but not limited to; nursing and midwifery, social care and allied health courses.

Congress notes with concern: That many students, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, will not have completed the required placement hours/weeks in order to proceed in their course and may need to undertake placement over the summer months.

Congress regrets: That in most cases, students undertaking mandatory placement over the summer period will not be paid and will be limited in their ability to work part-time, further inhibiting their ability to support themselves financially during their studies. Those on placement in healthcare settings, or with vulnerable service users may also be unable to work part-time whilst on placement.

Congress therefore mandates: The USI Executive Team to lobby the Minister for Further & Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science and all other relevant Ministers to secure financial support for students undertaking unpaid mandatory placement over summer. This should be in addition to USI's ongoing efforts to secure financial support for all students who undertake placement as part of their course.

Congress also mandates: The USI Executive Team to also lobby for the provision of suitable accommodation for students undertaking mandatory placement, where needed.

Congress further mandates: The USI VP Academic Affairs to work with local SUs to lobby for non final-year students to be permitted to progress in their course with required placement time owing.

2021 AA 6 POSITION ON PROCTORING

PROPOSED BY THE USI VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Congress Notes : That many students have been forced to complete assessments, including examinations, online due to the pandemic that the world is facing. Due to these assessments having to take place virtually, the standard invigilation procedures can not take place.

Congress Further Notes : Academic Integrity Procedures must still be followed to ensure that all assessments are taken fairly and that these assessments are an accurate reflection of the work that all students have put in.

Congress Also Notes: HEIs are currently looking into getting all online examinations fully proctored through different proctoring software like Examity etc.

Congress Believes: There are a range of concerns related to proctoring of assessment including but not limited to privacy, mental health and accessibility associated with the use of proctoring software.

Congress Mandates: The Vice President for Academic Affairs, working through the National Academic Integrity Network to investigate proctoring and produce a paper outlining uses of Proctoring, how it relates to Academic Integrity and the impact it has on the student experience regarding assessment.

Congress Further Mandates: The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Regional Vice Presidents to work with MOs to compile a picture of current uses of proctoring in assessment and to use this, and the work of the National Academic Integrity Network to inform the development of position papers and/or statements in relation to proctoring

2021 AA 7 EQUALITY OF ACCESS TO POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FOR NON-EU RESIDENTS

PROPOSED BY POSTGRADUATE WORKING GROUP

Congress Notes: The difficulty non-EU citizens face in pursuing postgraduate research and education in Ireland, such as higher fees and additional costs in the form of visas, resident permits and healthcare.

Congress Recognizes: This places multiple new pressures on non-EU citizens who come to Ireland to continue their education that they may not have been previously aware of.

Congress therefore Mandates: The VP for Postgraduate Affairs to work with the VP for Equality and Citizenship to lobby the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) on equal access to postgraduate education and research.

Congress further Mandates: The VP for Postgraduate Affairs to work with the VP for Equality and Citizenship, VP for Campaigns and the VP for Academic Affairs to organise an information campaign highlighting the additional costs of pursuing postgraduate education and research if travelling to Ireland as a non-EU researcher.

2021 AA 8 CLARIFICATION TO THE USI POSTGRADUATE WORKERS RIGHTS CHARTER

PROPOSED BY POSTGRADUATE WORKING GROUP

Congress Notes: There is a widespread practice at Irish Universities of demanding that Postgraduates carry out teaching or related academic duties without remuneration. The USI Postgraduate Workers Rights Charter represents USI's commitment challenge to this exploitative situation.

Congress Further Notes: The existing USI Postgraduate Workers Rights Charter works at cross-purposes to the campaigns of several grassroots groups of postgraduate workers who are campaigning to improve the working conditions at their respective universities.

Congress Recognizes: That exploitation is most effectively challenged with a collective voice, and that these divisions weaken the campaign for postgraduate workers rights.

Congress therefore Mandates: The VP for Postgraduate Affairs to coordinate between the different campaigns currently carried out by USI and postgraduate workers and to further develop the Postgraduate Workers Rights Charter in a democratic fashion.

2021 AA 9 2018 AA12 ANONYMOUS MARKING

PROPOSED BY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, SLIGO STUDENTS' UNION

AMENDED BY:

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK STUDENTS' UNION

Congress notes Anonymous marking is the correction of examinations by a lecturer without knowing the learners name first hand.

Congress further notes Leaving Certificate students entering into third level education will have already had their leaving Certificate examinations corrected anonymously.

Congress also notes The change to online learning as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic has led to i) an increase in the use of Continuous Assessment and ii) an increase in the use of the VLE (virtual learning environment) as an assessment platform, which has resulted in a decrease in the amount of assessments marked anonymously.

Congress Believes Anonymous marking may reduce the perception of bias marking be it accidental or otherwise.

Congress Therefore Mandates The Vice President for Academic Affairs to assist MOs in lobbying for anonymous marking within their own HEI.

2021 AA 10 MAKING THE MOST OF MICRO-CREDENTIALS

PROPOSED BY USI VICE PRESIDENT ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Congress notes: The increased attention being paid towards Micro-credentials across the worldwide Higher Education sector. Micro-credentials are defined by the European Commission as: "a proof of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a short, transparently-assessed learning experience. They are awarded upon the completion of short stand-alone courses (or modules) done on-site or online (or in a blended format)."

Congress further notes: That the Irish Universities Association (IUA) recently secured funding through the Human Capital Initiative to lead a sector-wide project on the development of an Irish framework for Micro-credentials.

Congress also notes: That USI recently joined the Steering Committee of Higher Education 4.0, a Human Capital Initiative funded project between the CUA partners (IT Sligo, GMIT and LYIT), a project which will include the development of several micro-credential programmes.

Congress believes: That micro-credentials will play a huge role in the future of Higher Education in Ireland over the coming years, and students must be at the centre of these discussions at a national level in order to ensure that they act to widen access to education on a short-term/flexible basis, rather than as a further symptom of marketisation.

Congress therefore mandates: The USI Vice President for Academic Affairs to keep abreast of developments in micro-credentials nationally, and internationally, engaging with the European Students' Union and other international stakeholders as appropriate. The Vice President for Academic Affairs to inform student representatives and students on micro-credentials through the development of policy papers and briefings on micro-credentials as appropriate.

Congress further mandates: The Vice President for Academic Affairs to seek to ensure students views are represented in the development of national initiatives in micro-credentials through their seat on the Higher Education 4.0 project, and through seeking representation on the IUA Microcredentials project.

2021 AA 11 USI FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING STRATEGY 2021-2024

PROPOSED BY THE USI VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Congress notes: That the Further Education & Training Strategy 2018-2021 is due to expire at Congress 2021.

Congress believes: That the development of a new standalone Department for Further & Higher Education provides a platform for USI to greatly increase its' activity within the FET sector and develop the structures for effective representation of students/learners within this sector so that it can be an effective and respected voice for the entire tertiary sector.

Congress therefore adopts: The USI Further Education & Training Strategy 2021-2024

2021 AA 12 EFFECTIVENESS OF PROCTORING

PROPOSED BY IT CARLOW STUDENTS' UNION

Congress Notes : That many students have been forced to complete assessments, including examinations, online due to the pandemic that the world is facing. Due to these assessments having to take place virtually, the standard invigilation procedures can not take place.

Congress Further Notes : Academic Integrity Procedures must still be followed to ensure that all assessments are taken fairly and that these assessments are an accurate reflection of the work that all students have put in.

Congress Believes : HEI's are currently looking into getting all online examinations fully proctored through different proctoring softwares like Examity etc. This gives students a lack of privacy when sitting assessments and may make students feel uncomfortable while sitting their assessments which may inhibit them from progressing their education.

Congress Mandates : The Vice President for Academic Affairs to investigate proctoring and produce a position paper to National Council to be sent to the relevant department outlining the effectiveness of Proctoring, and the impact it has on the student experience regarding assessment.

2021 AA 13 AMENDING POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS STRATEGY

PROPOSED BY VICE-PRESIDENT FOR POSTGRADUATE AFFAIRS

Congress notes: The existing postgraduate students strategy is due to expire at Congress 2021.

Congress further notes: The significant changes that have occurred in the Postgraduate portfolio over the last three years and the need for wider consultation in the development of USI's Postgraduate Strategy going forward.

Congress mandates: The VP for Postgraduate Affairs to work alongside the Postgraduate Working Group to create an updated strategy document to be presented to national council no later than June 2021.

2021 AA 14 SUBSIDIES ON TEXTBOOKS

PROPOSED BY NUI GALWAY STUDENTS' UNION

Congress Notes: Students year in year out are forced to buy textbooks as part of their core reading lists. These are generally only relevant to the student for one year. These books can range in price from €10 anywhere up to the €100 mark. This adds an extra barrier for students to access education as it is another major expense on top of accommodation and equipment. Some of these books cannot be bought second hand due to a specific code on the inside which is used for course work and assignments which means it cannot be stocked in the library. These libraries already have limited resources. This year students have been forced to do their entire course predominantly online with limited access to their library, study spaces and other areas on their campus which they are paying for through their tuition and levy. The libraries across the country are doing all they can in terms of providing a click & collect and scan & deliver service but for some students, this is insufficient due to the lack of books and the slow turnover. During this pandemic, there has also been a limit in students purchasing second-hand books which normally reduces the costs of books. Students who cannot afford these books are at a disadvantage in their degree to those who can afford it.

Congress Commends: All the work that is being done by the USI and MO's on the "Education for All campaign". In the year that's in it, this is one of the campaigns that has been pushed the most and engaged students.

Congress Mandates: The USI Academic Affairs Officer to work with MO's to lobby the Department of Higher Education, Innovation and Science to secure subsidies for students who are paying more than €50 a year for books.

Congress Further Mandates USI Academic Affairs officer to lobby for more Open Educational Resources and e-books to be used on reading lists rather than formal textbooks

2021 AA 15 LEARNING ANALYTICS

PROPOSED BY UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK STUDENTS' UNION

Congress notes As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been an increased use of informal learning analytics (LA), consisting of descriptive, predictive and prescriptive analytics, as well as increased discussion on the implementation of LA, within Member Organisations.

Congress further notes Although LA can be used to support student learning and highlight students in need of support, there are also many issues which can arise if LA is not used with students' best interests in mind.

Congress also notes LA are relatively new, with the term Learning Analytics only emerging in 2011 (National Forum, 2017) and many MOs will not have formally engaged with them previously.

Congress believes There is a need for informed student representation in ongoing discussions around LA.

Congress mandates The Vice President for Academic Affairs to inform student representatives and students on LA through the development of policy papers and briefings on LA as appropriate.

Congress further mandates The VPAA to ensure students' views are represented in national discussions on LA.

2021 AA 16 NATIONAL NFQ LEVEL 9+ STAKEHOLDER FORUM

PROPOSED BY VICE PRESIDENT FOR POSTGRADUATE AFFAIRS

Congress Notes: Many issues exist within research and taught fields at Level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications, and above.

Congress Further Notes: No dedicated platform exists for relevant stakeholders to meet and discuss relevant topics and issues so as to identify solutions.

Congress Mandates: The USI Executive to lobby the Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science for the creation of a Stakeholder forum for all involved in programmes at Level 9 and above in the National Framework of Qualifications.

2021 AA 17 BACK TO EDUCATION ALLOWANCE REFORM STRATEGY PAPER

PROPOSED BY THE USI VICE PRESIDENT FOR EQUALITY AND CITIZENSHIP

Congress notes: That the Back to Education Allowance Reform Strategy Paper (2018 AA 2) is due to expire at Congress 2021.

Congress believes: That the commitment to review the BTEA in the Programme for Government allows for an opportunity to address the current shortfalls within the current BTEA. Given the current economic climate the BTEA will allow for greater support to students returning to education.

Congress Adopts: The proposed Amended Back to Education Allowance Reform Strategy Paper

Congress repeals: 2018 AA 2: Back to Education Allowance Strategy

2021 AA 18 MAYNOOTH STUDENTS' UNION REINTRODUCTION OF IN-PERSON EXAMINATIONS

PROPOSED BY MAYNOOTH STUDENTS' UNION

Congress Notes: The moving of many exams to an online format across Higher Education Institutes, and the replacement of many exams with continuous assessment or assignments for the duration of third level education being conducted in an online capacity.

Congress further notes with: The lack of experience in sitting in-person exams with short time constraints that students who have come into Higher Education this year may have, due to the lack of in-person exams conducted this year coupled with the cancellation of the Leaving Certificate Examinations.

Congress believes: That many students are put under immense pressure during exam times, as large portions of exams within a short time period is a difficult undertaking for many students.

Congress further believes: That should all examinations immediately return to an in-person format once Higher Education returns to in-person teaching, students who have come into third level in the last year, and possibly those coming into Higher Education next year will be put into a high pressure situation which they have not had any experience in, which could lead to difficulty in performance in examinations.

Congress therefore mandates: The Vice President Academic Affairs lobby the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, and work with MO's to lobby individual MO's institutions for a gradual reintroduction of in-person examinations upon the reintroduction of in-person teaching.

Congress Further Mandates: The VPAA to lobby the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to ensure that higher education Institutions to provide additional supports to assist students with the transference from online assessments and exams to in-person examinations once in person teaching resumes.

2021 AA 19 ACADEMIC CALENDAR REFORM

PROPOSED BY MTU CORK STUDENTS' UNION

Congress mandates USI Executive team to work towards a reformed Academic Calendar for IOT's and/or Universities that are faced with an academic calendar that is not student friendly.

Congress notes: For example, on Munster Technological University Cork Campus, if a student fails an exam in May and wishes to appeal the result, the student will have to wait until lecturing staff are back from their holidays in September for the result of the appeal. Meaning the student must still sit the repeat exam in August just in case their appeal is not successful in September. This causes a great deal of unnecessary stress for the student appealing a result. Appeal results are sometimes delayed into October, therefor the student is ultimately not progressing until he/she knows the result of the appeal.

Congress mandates USI Executive Team to lobby the government to put a policy in place that protects students across Ireland from this unnecessary hardship.

Congress mandates USI Executive Team to launch an investigation into the different colleges that this affects and work together to reform poorly designed academic calendars that might suit staff but cause a great deal of stress for the student population.

2021 AA 20 RECORDING OF LECTURES AND TUTORIALS

PROPOSED BY MTU CORK SU

Congress proposes: the recording of lectures becomes mandatory for all Universities, TUs and IOTs.

Congress notes: At the moment there is no official policy across the board that makes the recording of classes mandatory for lecturers. This issue was further highlighted during the covid19 pandemic. It allows students to access material before exams without having to wait for an email reply from their lecturer. In a time where online learning only permits students to contact their lecturers via email we need an alternative and safety net to ensure students get access to the education that they are paying for. Lecturers were not obliged to record as it was never included in their employment contracts. As a result, it was not a level playing field for all students across the country. The students that were denied access to recorded lectures are at an academic disadvantage to those who have access. We cannot let students fall through the cracks. Who is thinking about the students who have or are recovering from Covid19? Who have to step in as carers? Who have learning difficulties and simply cannot keep up? Students who have poor broadband or lack of equipment?

Congress mandates USI executive team to work alongside the relevant department to ensure education is equal for all students across Ireland.

Congress proposes that a national policy needs to be put in place to make the recording of lectures mandatory

UNION ORGANISATION

2021 UO NC 1 REGIONAL LEADERSHIP & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

PROPOSED BY TU DUBLIN SU

CONGRESS NOTES

That leadership roles have become a staple demand of job seeking, role pursuing and many other aspects of advancing your personal/professional development. The trials and tribulations associated with this can have quite the heavy toll on people's work/life balance as well as stress management.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES

That running a large scale National event can be difficult to organize and risks excluding attendees due to additional cost associated with travel/accommodation.

CONGRESS RECOGNISES

Events such as Pink Training, EMpower, Women in Lead among others which encourage, support and facilitate students to take bold steps into leadership.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES

That Regional Officers organize regional leadership training focused on leadership and personal development. Such an event would encourage students from that region to engage, and also have a huge focus on minding yourself when going for leadership roles as well as maintaining healthy boundaries while dealing with the trials and tribulations of leadership.

2021 UO NC 2 VOTER REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN

PROPOSED BY VP E&C

CONGRESS NOTES:

The unusual political situation in the year 2010/2011 put USI under a lot of pressure as regards a Voter Registration Campaign in the run-up to a General Election.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

That a Voter Registration Campaign would be more feasible operationally if it was carried out at the start of the year instead of in the run up to the election.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

That to encourage people to vote an organisation must be registered. If MO's run a Voter Registration Campaign, it must be done through USI, who are registered.

CONGRESS MANDATES USI EXEC TEAM:

To run a Voter Registration Campaign every September/October, to provide help to MO's running Voter Registration Campaigns, to make officers available on the ground to MOs, and to approve all MO information etc for any Voter Registration Campaign.

2021 UO NC 3 REGIONAL TRAINING EVENTS

PROPOSED BY VP BMW

CONGRESS NOTES:

Training events for Students' Union Officers are frequently held within the Dublin Region.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

That therefore it is not always feasible for officers from other areas to attend these vital training events.

CONGRESS FURTHER BELIEVES:

During the academic term it can be difficult for SU officers to find the time to travel for required training.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

All training is important to SU officer's roles. Therefore by making it more accessible through regional training more SU officers will likely be able to attend the training.

CONGRESS MANDATES:

USI Exec Team to ensure that when they are organising training events aside from SUT, SUT+ and other events as determined by the Exec Team, that they do so in each region where logistically and financially possible.

CONGRESS FURTHER MANDATES:

The USI Exec Team to clarify and justify to USI National Council and/or relevant officer working groups why it is not possible to facilitate regional training events aside from SUT, SUT+ and other events as determined by the officer board in detail prior to the events being organised.

2021 UO NC 4 REMIT SPECIFIC TRAINING DAY FOR DEPUTY PRESIDENTS/CAMPUS CONVENERS

PROPOSED BY VP BMW

CONGRESS NOTES:

A number of Students' Unions have officers with specific or portfolio responsibilities on their campuses that may be additional to all other officers, if any, on that campus.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

That SUT and SUT+ are already jam-packed with modules, and that there isn't enough time to provide adequate training in a number of areas relevant to the role of the deputy president/campus convener/VP with responsibility for a campus.

CONGRESS RECOGNISES:

The USI Training Policy, and the methodology within it of assessing the needs of a group before providing training, and seeks to uphold this policy when ascertaining the additional training to be provided under the remit of this mandate.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES

In line with the USI Training Policy, the USI President to facilitate a daylong training day- to coincide with “Pres Day”, where possible, where training will be provided in essential areas as needed through assessing the needs of the relevant SU Officers. This day is to occur no later than August 30th in any given year.

2021 UO NC 5 CASEWORK TRAINING DAY

PROPERTY OF CONGRESS

CONGRESS NOTES WITH CONCERN:

The majority of Students’ Union Officers are presented with casework on a daily basis.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

The training provided at SUT and SUT+ doesn’t meet the full requirements to prepare officers entirely for casework.

CONGRESS MANDATES

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Welfare to organise a dedicated training day around casework as informed by the relevant working groups.

2021 UO NC 6 CAMPAIGNS DIRECTORY

PROPOSED BY VP SOUTH

CONGRESS NOTES WITH CONCERN:

Campaigns across different MOs. need support from USI in particular education, welfare and union campaigns.

CONGRESS APPLAUDS:

The past directories produced by a previous USI Vice President for Welfare titled ‘Welfare Campaigns Directory’.

CONGRESS NOTES WITH CONCERN:

There is a rising need for specialised supports around these campaigns ran across MOs.

THEREFORE CONGRESS MANDATES:

The Vice President for Campaigns, Academic Affairs and Welfare to produce a joint online campaigns directory to be published no later than SUT+ annually.

2021 UO NC 7 STUDENT SPORT IRELAND

PROPOSED BY: NUI GALWAY SU

CONGRESS NOTES:

USI represents many types of students which include students who play sport and are a part of clubs in colleges.

CONGRESS FURTHER NOTES:

As the governing body for third level sport in Ireland, Student Sport Ireland works in partnership with national and international bodies identifying pathways for college communities to participate, compete and develop through sport and physical activity. Its mission is to promote and develop third level sport in Ireland.

CONGRESS BELIEVES:

USI have an opportunity to represent students on many national fronts across Ireland.

CONGRESS THEREFORE MANDATES THAT:

USI form a relationship with Student Sport Ireland to ensure there is adequate student representation for sport at a national level.

PROPOSED BY: NUI GALWAY SU

CONGRESS MANDATES:

The President to compile a standard wage report for Sabbatical Officers of Students' Unions & USI.

PROPOSED BY: USI PRESIDENT

CONGRESS APPLAUDS:

USI's proud history of campaigning for inclusion, social justice, and equality for all.

CONGRESS NOTES WITH CONCERN:

The increasing activity of the far-right and increased activity of those who are peddling in the development and circulation of conspiracy theories in relation to COVID-19.

CONGRESS WELCOMES:

The establishment of the campaign group Le Chéile, which is a co-ordinated group of civil society organisations, trade unions, political representatives, and other similar minded groups. Le Chéile objectives are outlined below and align with USI's core values.

1. We commit to building a movement for a society based on the principles of real social solidarity and economic justice and recognise that the unity of working people, the marginalised and oppressed, regardless of colour, creed, gender, cultural background or sexual orientation is the key to achieving a better future for all.
2. We recognise that a new wave of far-right politics, emboldened by the toxic rhetoric of Trump in the US, Bolsonaro in Brazil, Orban in Hungary, Duterte in the Philippines, is a dangerous threat that, if unchallenged, will divide and weaken working people and all who believe in social justice, equality and freedom.
3. We pledge to resist the far-right and stand in solidarity with those they seek to target, such as immigrants, refugees, Travellers, women, the LGBTQ+ community, people with disabilities, religious minorities and other vulnerable and marginalised groups. We abhor all forms of discrimination and understand that division will weaken us all. We will make all efforts to include marginalised groups in our movement, and amplify their voices.
4. We recognise that the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and the economic and social hardship it has imposed, is being exploited by far-right groups who pose as anti-establishment champions in order to gain a foothold and promote dangerous Covid-19 myths and anti-science theories.
5. We understand that in the midst of the current crisis, many have just cause in not trusting the political establishment and large corporations, and therefore some can be attracted to far-right events while being unaware of their sinister agenda. We take seriously the need to educate people about the far-right and debunk their misinformation.
6. We understand the failure of the government to address economic inequality and crises in housing, healthcare and social provision creates the conditions in which the far-right can grow. Therefore to successfully oppose their dangerous agenda we must promote a progressive economic and social agenda.
7. We urge those who have a justified distrust of the establishment not to buy into the false claims of the far-right about Covid-19 or their wider toxic agenda. Covid-19 is a real threat to public health and particularly to our older and more vulnerable people.
8. We appeal to everyone to show solidarity with the vulnerable and frontline workers by working together to fight the pandemic. We urge all those, regardless of their opinions on the government's handling of Covid-19, to reject the far-right and avoid events involving these groups.
9. We call on the public to stand in solidarity with the groups targeted by the far-right to fight together for a fairer and more equal society and to reject the politics of hate and division.

10. We recognise as a priority that the far-right must not be allowed to gain a monopoly on street mobilisation and commit to prevent this from happening, while at the same time ensuring our actions do not endanger public health.

CONGRESS MANDATES:

The USI President and other relevant USI Executive Team members to actively engage and support the work of the Le Chéile campaign.

2021 UO 1 LOBBY TRAINING

PROPOSED BY ATHLONE IT SU

Congress Notes: That Students' Unions are inherently political organizations and will lobby elected officials in order to fight for their students on a local capacity.

Congress Further Notes: Lobbying politicians requires an in-depth understanding and breadth of knowledge to lobby effectively.

Congress Regrets: That Elected Officials with regressive policies and anti-student rhetorics, actively rely on lack of understanding/knowledge in order to use meetings as photo-opportunities.

Congress Therefore Mandates: The Vice-President for Equality and Citizenship in conjunction with the USI executive and VP Campaigns to organize "Lobby Training" which will consist of training for officers that has the same spirit as the 'Casework Training Day' and is a comprehensive training session that takes the time to explore effective lobbying.

Congress Further Mandates: That the training encompasses effective lobbying techniques, differentiating the roles of Counsellor, TD, Minister, MLA, etc., and that the training is specified to be holistic, and tailored for both sides of the border through working in collaboration with NUS-USI.

Congress Further Mandates: That the USI Executive explores the Program for Government and Election Mandates from the Northern Elected Officials, isolate the student-centric issues, apply accessible language to them and distribute a booklet based on these issues to officers prior to this training event

2021 UO 2 COVID-19 OFFICER HANDBOOK

PROPOSED BY TUDUBLINSU

Congress Notes: That the past year there has been a steep learning curve for officers when adapting to changes with remote working, with the Student Movement never before facing an issue this large or pressing previously.

Congress Believes: That it is helpful to have information provided to incoming officers from previous officers, as crossover information is crucial in the development and coordination of officers, Unions and the Student Movement.

Congress Regrets: The limitations placed on Students' Union across the country as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic with crossover implications, Union planning and managing an effective team, whilst working remotely for the most of the year.

Congress Notes With Concern: That, whilst there is a vaccination programme underway, the fallout and continuity of the COVID-19 Pandemic will be longer lasting than a singular year, and congress believes that furthermore, planning with the COVID-19 virus in mind, is essential to build and re-strengthen the Student Movement.

Therefore, Congress Mandates: The USI Executive Team to develop a handbook on best practice on remote working during the Covid-19 pandemic.

2021 UO 3 REFLECT - SUPPORTING STUDENTS' UNION OFFICERS

PROPOSED BY WELFARE WORKING GROUP

Congress notes: That Students' Union Training (SUT) and Students' Union Top-Up Training (SUT+) are extremely beneficial and useful to Students' Union Officers before the academic term begins. Sessions delivered during these training days allow Students' Union Officers to receive detailed knowledge on topics relating to their briefs, gain insight around potential challenges that may arise and focus on what they would like to achieve in the year.

Congress further notes: That all training provided by USI is usually during the summer months or before the academic term commences.

Congress notes with concern: That Students' Union Officers work in extremely stressful, highly pressurized and intense working conditions to adapt and react to the emerging issues around them.

Congress further notes with concern: That due to the nature of the workload many Students' Union Officers are at risk of experiencing burnout or a loss of motivation.

Congress believes: USI should facilitate and enable Students' Union Officers to work at their best capacity and feel supported by offering tailored training wherever deemed necessary.

Congress therefore mandates: The Vice President for Welfare, the Vice President for Campaigns and the Regional Officers to organise an event, in person or online, at the start of semester two including the following topics, but not limited to; motivation, leadership, goal setting and re-prioritizing manifesto policies, self-care and wellbeing. The structure of the event should be planned in agreement with Students' Union Officers of National Council.

2021 UO 4 SUPPORT FOR NUS-USI AND MOS IN THE NORTH/NORTHERN IRELAND.

PROPOSED BY QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST STUDENTS' UNION AONTAS NA MAC LÉINN OLLSCOIL NA RÍONA

Congress notes: NUS-USI represents 200,000 students across higher education, further education and apprentices. They have 1 elected officer and 3 support staff to represent the needs of 200,000 students.

Congress also notes: The Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge is the only policy officer to coordinate a working group to deal specifically with MOs and issues in their remit in the north.

Congress mandates: All USI Policy Officers work with counterparts at NUS to establish and coordinate Working Groups with NUS-USI for their particular area of work, and for these to be open to all FE SUs and Apprentices.

2021 UO 5 BYSTANDER INTERVENTION TRAINING

PROPOSED BY NCI STUDENTS' UNION

Note: in a previous version this motion was omitted. It appears in the text but was not correctly highlighted as a motion. This was not an error by the proposing MO.

Congress Notes Bystander Intervention is recognizing a potentially harmful situation or interaction and choosing to respond in a way that could positively influence the outcome.

Congress Further Notes That such training is provided, however, it primarily focuses on instances of sexual harassment.

Congress Believes It would be very beneficial that Bystander Intervention Training is provided to all Sabbatical Officers and places focus on positive intervention where appropriate and needed.

Congress Therefore Mandates The Vice-President for Welfare to organize Bystander Intervention Training for all Sabbatical Officers before September of each year.

2021 UO 6 RUNNING FOR ELECTION

PROPOSED BY PRESIDENTS' WORKING GROUP

Congress applauds The efforts made to increase engagement with elections at both a local and national level.

Congress notes There are different election processes within different member organisations and a single location to highlight the processes within Students' Unions would be useful to help promote elections on a national level.

Congress believes It is important to make sure students understand the processes of running for election within their local Students' Union but also within USI.

Congress further believes It is important to have an easy to follow website that provides all relevant information to students.

Congress Mandates The USI President and Executive Team to develop campaigns encouraging members to run for both local Students' Union elections and USI Elections. These campaigns should include but are not limited to tips for running for elections and outline processes for running for election.

2021 UO 7 MAKING USI ACCESSIBLE

PROPOSED BY THE EQUALITY AND CITIZENSHIP WORKING GROUP

Congress recognises The important work that USI has undertaken focusing on highlighting issues for students with disabilities and supporting students with disabilities within our membership. The Power of Disability conference and establishment of increased links with disability related organisations has supported USIs work in supporting and representing students with disabilities across the island of Ireland. USI had made a conscious effort to ensure our events, campaigns and work is accessible as possible.

Congress notes The effort which has been made to ensure USI is accessible for members at events and outward communication but a focus on ensuring internal communication with members is accessible is needed.

Congress mandates The USI President, Vice President for Equality and Citizenship and Vice President for Campaigns in conjunction with USI staff to conduct an audit on the accessibility of USI promotion and work including events, campaigns, marketing and promotional content to ensure USI is accessible as possible.

Congress further mandates A training event to be held for Students' Union Officers and student leaders to support MOs ensure their activities and content is as assessable as possible for all students. Along with a toolkit for MOs to support increased accessibility across our HEIs.

2021 UO 8 COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING FOR OFFICERS WITH A REMIT FOR ENT'S, MARKETING AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

PROPOSED BY MTU KERRY SU

Repeals: UO 19 – 10 Accommodating for Ent's, Marketing and Commercial during SUT+

Congress Notes: Training for officers with a remit for events, marketing and RAG is provided by USI at SUT and SUT+ during the summer. This is an important time for MO's to plan their events and campaigns for the year, with a particular focus on freshers/welcome week.

Congress Believes: USI should, to the best of their ability, book instructors who have experience running successful events and campaigns with Students' Unions in the past and can offer real life, relevant advice to current officers. They should have knowledge of the gaps and barriers to engaging students and how to address them, and encourage officers to work together, share resources, and come up with new initiatives in this area.

Congress Mandates: USI executive to organise training for officers with a remit for Ent's, Marketing & Commercial that include workshops where officers can brainstorm events and fundraising ideas together and formulate plans for their year ahead. Where possible, the facilitator should be someone who has experience running successful events and campaigns within a Students' Union.

2021 UO 9 CASEWORK DEBRIEFING SESSIONS

PROPOSED BY WIT STUDENTS' UNION

Congress Notes: The difficult casework which officers deal with on a regular basis; and often must rely on self-coping mechanisms between periods of little support.

Congress further notes: That although working groups or spaces at NC can be useful to debrief, an Exec member may not be adequately equipped to lead a facilitation session to help officers explore issues they have faced in their roles.

Congress therefore mandates: Each VP with responsibility for a Working Group to organise debriefing sessions, on the request of that working group, in order to best help officers. Debriefing sessions should be lead by an appropriately skilled facilitator, and also encompass coping skills that officers can use in self-care exercises.

Congress Repeals: WEL 19 – 15

2021 UO 10 PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

PROPOSED BY PRESIDENTS' WORKING GROUP

Congress welcomes The annual publication of the USI Pre-Budget Submission

Congress believes That this document is a useful lobbying tool that can be used throughout the year to lobby for increased investment but also legislative changes that are required.

Congress mandates The USI President to ensure the publication of an annual pre-budget submission that includes budgetary asks and legislative asks so the document can be used throughout the year to support Students' Unions when lobbying members of the Oireachtas.

Congress repeals 2018 UO15 : Pre Budget Submission

2021 UO 12 MOTIONS COLLABORATION

PROPOSED BY WIT STUDENTS' UNION

Congress notes Each Member Organisation of USI may bring a maximum of 5 motions to USI Congress each year. With this, many motions have duplicated over the years.

Congress further notes USI holds Motions Collab Days, however there is no policy on this at the moment and is at the discretion of the USI Exec Team each year.

Congress Mandates: The USI President to organise a Motions Collab each year with input from Presidents' Working Group on how this shall be run. This should be done no later than December every year.

2021 UO 13 REVIEW OF REGIONAL OFFICER ROLES & REMITS

PROPOSED BY ATHLONE IT SU

Congress Notes: Institutes of Technologies are merging to become Technological Universities across the island of Ireland, spanning cross-county campuses, and larger student bodies.

Congress Recognises: Technological Universities (TUs) have unique needs, as with the formation of TUs, Students' Unions are merging, which requires a huge amount of resourcing, experience and advice.

Congress Regrets: That while the current USI Regional Officers are absolutely integral to providing local support, their role will not be tailored to fit USI's requirements from Member Organizations when it comes to Technological Universities, and will not be able to represent all TUs coming down the line, for example; The Athlone-Limerick Consortium, which span 2 different regions.

Congress Further Recognises: That future mergers may also incorporate cross-regional Students' Unions and the National Union must adapt to suit those structures as the Higher Education Landscape adapts also.

Congress therefore mandates the USI President to institute a review into the best method to reflect the changed circumstances. This review to propose an appropriate constitutional amendment for USI Congress 2022.

Congress therefore mandates the USI President and regional officers serving MOs across regions to collaborate and co-ordinate their engagement until such times as such an amendment to the USI Constitution can be effected.

Congress additionally mandates the USI President to see to it that these interim arrangements are agreed and implemented by the time of the August 2021 National Council or sooner

This policy to expire upon the coming into force of such a constitutional amendment.

2021 UO 14 ENTS MARKETING AND COMMERCIALISATION WORKING GROUP

PROPOSED BY WIT STUDENTS' UNION

Congress Notes: Many Students' Union's across the country have Officers that have responsibilities for Ents, Marketing, Communications, Engagement etc. These Officers do not have a specific Working Group under the USI National Council structure, and so would fall into the Ents, Marketing and Commercialisation (EMC) Working Group. Officers with remits of Presidents', Welfare, Academic Affairs, Equality and Citizenship etc get an opportunity at every National Council to have a space to chat to the Officers in similar positions. There are many benefits to this and that can be seen by the strength in these Working Groups and the bonds built.

Congress Further Notes: Many Mandates have been passed by Congress in the past to relieve the pressure on these Officers and include them in USI. However, as each year the role of Chair of the EMC Working Group is delegated to an Officer, there may not always be a key focus on EMC in USI. Particular times that the EMC Working Group would be pre-September and pre-February for both Freshers' and Raise and Give weeks. This works, however Officers in these remits have constant events/campaigns throughout the year and having more meetings may aid these Officers.

Congress Recognises: Over that past number of months, digital meetings and learnings have become very useful. The EMC Working Group could decide that it would rather meet online rather than in person should this suit Officers within this remit more.

Therefore, Congress Mandates: The USI Exec Team to ensure that the Ents Marketing and Commercialisation Working Group meets as regularly as other Working Groups. This should be in line with National Council, where possible, to allow for a meeting to happen before September and early in the second Semester. The first meeting of the EMC Working Group to coincide with SUT. This meeting should allow for Officers to specify what training they require

Congress further Mandates: The USI Exec member with responsibility for Ents, Marketing and Commercialisation to work with EMC Working Group to schedule training for these officers on a needs basis.

Congress Repeals:

17 UO11

UO 19 – 11

UO 19 – 10

2021 UO 15 STUDENT AFFAIRS IRELAND ENGAGEMENT

PROPOSED BY USI PRESIDENT

Congress notes Student Affairs Ireland is a group that represents many of the Student Services within Higher Education Institutions across Ireland.

Congress believes That there are times where SAI and USI have similar goals such as increased funding for student supports.

Congress recognises Where appropriate, USI works with other organisations with similar groups to achieve a common goal because we recognise the benefits of working together. *Congress therefore mandates* The USI President along with the relevant Executive Team members to meet with the SAI Executive at least 3 times per year to discuss shared goals and potential joint activities, where suitable. These meetings should take place at the following times of the year: post-Congress to discuss motions passed and introduce Executive Team Elect, one in the first 6 months of the term and one pre-budget lobbying.

2021 UO 16 EDIT TO STUDENT ACCOMMODATION POSITION PAPER 2019

PROPOSED BY USI VICE PRESIDENT CAMPAIGNS

Congress notes: The passing of the USI student accommodation position paper 2019 at USI Congress 2020 Congress proposes:

The edited Student Accommodation position paper identical to the one passed at last year's congress with the two changes;

On Page 7, Replace Paragraph 3 Line 2 where “an artificial price cap” exists with “market rates”.

On Page 7, Remove “Ending artificial price caps and building affordable student accommodation” as title and replace with “Building affordable student accommodation and defining a fair price”

Congress accepts: The edited student accommodation position paper 2019 as amended and circulated.

2021 UO 17 REPORTING ON CAMPAIGNS AND EVENTS –

PROPOSED BY PROPOSED BY NCI STUDENTS' UNION

Congress Recognises That campaigns and events are an integral part of USI’s functions and the core part of educating their members on different topics and issues faced by the students on the island of Ireland.

Congress Notes It is highly important that we learn from each campaign and event organized by USI so that engagement continues to grow and brings further benefits to its participants.

Congress Further Notes That currently USI does not reflect and record events and campaigns which take place during the year and it is also unclear at times who are the target audience for each campaign/event.

Congress Therefore Mandates The executive to complete a detailed report after each campaign/event that they organize, which includes feedback from participants, and their reflection on the campaign/event and record this on their officer report and present it to their respective working group for consultation.

Congress Further Mandates The Vice-President(s) to bring their detailed report and present it to National Council for noting.

2021 UO 18 TOOL-KIT FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

PROPOSED BY NCI STUDENTS' UNION

Congress Notes The effectiveness of the Union relies heavily on robust Constitutions, which are an integral part of Union structures and democracy. Constitutions set out the rules and regulations of how Students' Unions function and hold Officers accountable.

Congress Further Notes That Officers do not receive training and may lack knowledge when it comes to the process for constitutional amendments and referenda. Due to the nature of annual Union Elections and the fast-paced environment, we recognize the need for further learning in this regard.

Congress Recognizes That many Colleges involved in Technological University mergers will be undergoing constitutional changes for the merged and newly formed Unions. Other Union's also undergo Constitutional amendments, based on the reason that they are looking to add more governance and transparency to their structure.

Congress Believes That it would be very beneficial that a Tool-Kit is created in order to aid Officers in structural and Constitutional changes. This 'Tool-Kit' should guide Officers through this process and enhance engagement with their members

Congress Therefore Mandates The President to create a Tool-Kit for Union officers to prepare for constitutional changes and holding a referendum. This should be completed by January 2022.

2021 UO 19 PLANNING SUBMISSION FEES (AMENDMENT OF THE USI STUDENT ACCOMMODATION POSITION PAPER)

PROPOSED BY MAYNOOTH STUDENTS' UNION

Congress notes The current USI Student Accommodation Position Paper as an all encompassing position paper on Student Accommodation issues.

Congress applauds The role of the USI Student Accommodation Position Paper in guiding USI's lobbying efforts in the area of Student Accommodation.

Congress further notes The challenges Member Organizations face in making submissions on planning applications.

Congress therefore mandates Insertion of the following into the USI Student Accommodation Position Paper:

Other Positions> Planning submission fees Anyone can make a written submission supporting or objecting to a planning application to a Local Authority or An Bord Pleanala. A fee has to be paid when making a submission, ranging from €20 for most applications to €50 for submissions on Strategic Infrastructure Project applications. This is not affordable to most students and as such, student views are not represented on planning matters, while the wealthiest and most privileged have a disproportionate influence. A number of organisations such as An Taisce and Fáilte Ireland are exempt from submission fees. In the past, planning applications for buildings to house student disability & health services and student accommodation were rejected due to concerns about their visual characteristics. The planning process should recognise students as key stakeholders when considering planning applications which will have an impact on nearby HEIs.

USI position:

USI is to lobby the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to be exempt from planning submission fees.

USI is to facilitate Member Organisations to make submissions through USI once USI's no submission fee status is granted by the Minister.

Link to the USI Student Accommodation Position Paper

2021 UO 20 BEST PRACTICE AT COUNCIL 2021

PROPOSED BY THE USI VICE PRESIDENT FOR THE BORDER, MIDLANDS AND WESTERN REGION

Congress Notes:

The importance of running appropriately structured councils where both officers and class representatives are informed on the correct council procedures so that student issues can be forecast and discussed within a clear, constructive, and efficient manner.

Congress further notes:

That council structures can vary across SUs and that students and exec officers within each Union serving their first terms may not be adequately versed in the most efficient council proceedings. This may hinder this vital process of dialogue within the movement on both a local and National level.

Congress believes:

That an update on the current mandate for best practice in council would be beneficial to both academic reps, its equivalent and the MO's. By providing MOs with information and resources to run efficient councils, this in turn may increase the level, and quality, of participation that takes place. By supporting MOs in further establishing a good foundation and structure to council, this will ensure a consistent space for informed discussion and debate.

Congress Mandates:

The VP for Academic Affairs and the VPs for the Regions to work together to develop resources that support MOs in the training and running of Councils, or equivalent structures.

Congress further mandates:

The regional VPs to compile a list of essential resources such as contacts for qualified external chairs in order to ensure that MOs in each region are equipped with the appropriate tools and knowledge to run optimally structured councils.

Congress Repeals:

AA19 – 9