

annual report 2020

OFFICERS

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Professor Keith Ewing

Chairperson:

Lord John Henty QC

Treasurer:

Geoffrey D Shears

Director:

Carolyn Jones

INTRODUCTION

Last year was the IER's 30th anniversary year. Due to the generosity of our trade union members who responded to our 30th Anniversary Appeal and to our Manifesto Project Development Fund, we entered 2019 in a strong financial position.

In the knowledge that a general election wasn't far away, we intensified our efforts to popularise and promote our policy ideas for a new framework of employment rights and trade union freedoms. We began implementing our Project Development Plan and developed our links with politicians and supporters in Scotland and Wales in an effort to refine and streamline our message across the nations of the UK.

In October 2019 a general election was called and all focus turned to a December election. We are proud of IER's contribution before and during that election campaign. The fact that the election did not deliver the result that would have led to our policy proposals reaching the statute book was very disappointing.

The year ended in the grip of a global pandemic. The pandemic crisis highlighted the extent to which the UK's framework of labour law was not fit for purpose, exposing the weaknesses in a system based on enterprise bargaining, individual rights and poor enforcement mechanisms. Against that backdrop, we enter 2020 in the knowledge that the work of IER in developing and delivering a framework of law fit for the modern world is needed more than ever.

ADMINISTRATION

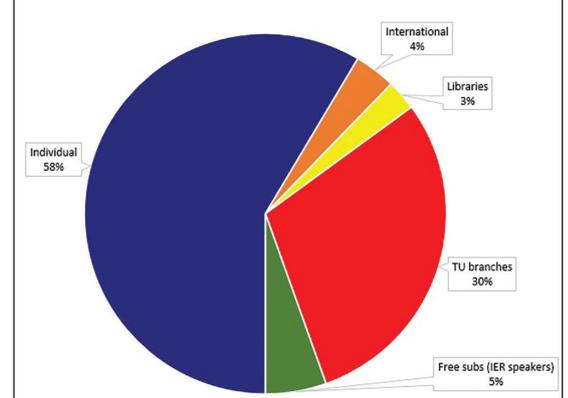
Our Office and staffing levels remained consistent in 2019. We had hoped to appoint a Finance Officer for two days a week but didn't attract enough applications. We hope to develop and strengthen our staffing complement in the year ahead.

MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS

Our membership figures currently stand at 80 (+4), of which 36 are trade union representatives.

We have a total of 405 (-82) subscribers on our database. Of those, 237 (-27) are individuals, 120 (-9) are trade union branches, 11 (-3) are commercial libraries, 15 (-4) are international, and 22 (-39) are free subscriptions gifted to our speakers. Of these, reduced rate subscriptions

Subscriber Numbers



4th Floor,
Jack Jones House,
1 Islington,
Liverpool, L3 8EG
Tel 0151 207 5265
Fax 0151 207 5264
email office@ier.org.uk
www.ier.org.uk

IER
Institute of
Employment
Rights

(mainly students paying £25) now stand at 69 (-11).

The largest demographic decline last year covered those designated by IER speakers to receive a free annual subscription. Our aim is twofold: to thank speakers and to capture a new audience. This year we cleansed our database of those who had not renewed, leading to a large decline in free subscribers. We also tried a subscription referral offer last year, giving existing and new subscribers a discount for one year. However, the results were disappointing. On the plus side, we are hoping that our new website will attract more visitors and online subscriptions will increase due to the more user-friendly nature of the site.

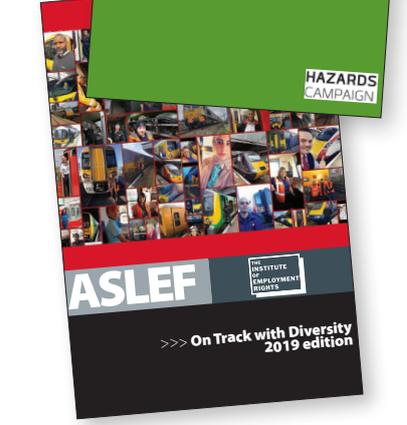
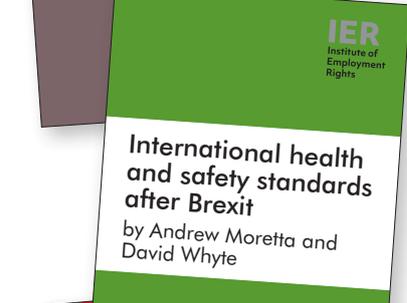
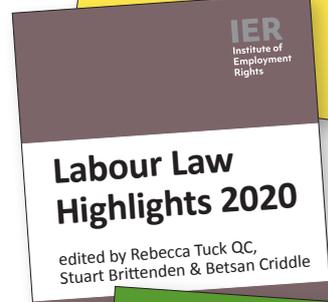
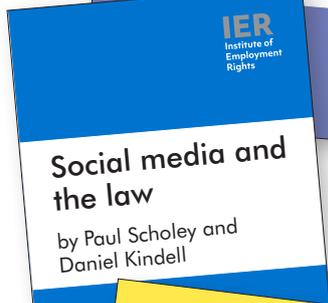
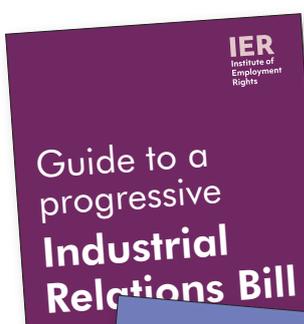
While most paid subscribers continue to manage their accounts offline, 116 subscribers currently pay their dues through PayPal, down 7% on last year. Income from online bookings for conferences and events increased by 21% to nearly £16,000.

Over 5,300 readers now subscribe to our electronic subscription list to receive weekly news briefs and promotions.

PUBLICATIONS

Last year we overachieved on publications by producing more than our contracted 6 per year. We produced 7 publications, 6 of which were mailed out to members and subscribers.

Guide to a progressive industrial relations bill formed part of our Manifesto Project Development promise to trade unions, providing a popular, easy to read summary of the employment law policy



ideas contained in Rolling Out the Manifesto. We printed 10,000 copies of that report which were successfully circulated throughout the trade union movement.

Brexit and workers' rights by Nicola Countouris and Keith Ewing presented a timely analysis of the possible impact of a 'no deal' exit from the EU on workers' rights in the UK. Due to the speed with which the publication had to be drafted and its limited shelf-life in what was a fast-moving scenario, we decided to produce the publication as an e-book - our first, on-line only publication. The e-book proved to be popular, with nearly 700 downloads and over 1,500 visits. Given the interest that was shown in the report and the subsequent increase in on-line activity, we are examining to what extent future publications should be digital only.

Social media and the law by Paul Scholey and Dan Kindell of Morrish Solicitors examined the interplay between social media use and workers' rights. The report was commissioned based on the popularity of and interest in presentations Paul provides at IER events. The report concludes by offering handy tips for individuals or representatives dealing with social media disciplinary cases.

Benchmarking freedom of association: the UK's non-compliance with international standards offered a detailed analysis of the UK's trade union laws and their incompatibility with labour law conventions to which the state is a signatory, including ILO conventions. The report flowed from the work done by the author, Andrew Moretta, for a PhD at Liverpool University, supported by IER.

Labour law highlights 2020 is our annual analysis of statute and case law developments on employment rights and trade union issues. It was authored once again by our team at Old Square Chambers.

International health and safety standards after Brexit by Andrew Moretta and David Whyte shines a light on the UK's dismal record of signing, monitoring and enforcing international standards on health and safety. The authors urge the UK trade union movement to take the initiative in demanding UK compliance with ILO standards, particularly now as we face uncertainty about the regulatory content of future trade deals.

PUBLICATIONS PLANNED FOR 2020/2021

- **Post pandemic policy proposals** – by Keith Ewing and John Hendy

- **The gender pay gap** – Caroline Underhill (Thompsons Solicitors) et al.
- **National minimum wage** - Lydia Hayes.
- **H&S agenda for change revisited** - Phil James and David Whyte.
- **Enforcement of rights at work** – Michael Ford
- **Green employment policy** – Jenny Patient
- **Band of reasonable responses** – Paul Draycott, Doughty Street Chamber

In 2019 the 2nd edition of the IER/Pluto **International Journal**, was published. The contents included 8 Good reasons why adult social care needs sectoral collective bargaining (Lydia Hayes); Health and Safety at work (Phil James and David Walters); and the Legacy of Thatcherism in European Labour Relations (Aristea Koukiadaki and her colleagues). The text for Volume 3, Rolling Out the Manifesto, is currently in production.

PROJECTS, COMMISSIONS AND PUBLIC POLICY WORK

In term of projects, our focus in 2019 was on popularising our proposals around a new framework of labour law. Following a series of meetings with our trade union members, a budget and a programme of work was agreed. We met our budget target of £75,000 and managed to produce most of our planned promotions – apart from animations. The underspend from the project (see Box A) will go towards ensuring the continued work of IER, based on discussions with trade unions about IER's immediate and longer-term priorities.

Our work in Scotland and Wales continued with a fringe at the SNP conference and a public meeting in Wales to discuss work around the Fair Work Commission. A meeting in Holyrood was planned to discuss our Charter of Workers' Rights for Scotland but the plan was disrupted first by the general election and then by the pandemic.

Ben Crawford, our PhD student at Liverpool University continued his work on Workers' Rights v Shareholders Rights, producing a number of blog pieces for IER's website. In February, Ben took up a placement with the Liverpool City Region Metro Mayor's office, assisting the policy team with the consultation and policy development process for a new 'Fair employment charter', offering another avenue to express IER's developed policy proposals.

We completed a second piece of Commissioned work for ASLEF, highlighting progress achieved in promoting diversity on the railways since our original 2012 report. On Track with Diversity 2019, by Nadia Motraghi and Ijeoma Omambala

	PDF Budget	Actuals 2018/19	Actuals 2019/20
INCOME			
Project Development Fund	£75,000	£58,000	£16,922
EXPENDITURE			
Design & print	£13,000	7,114	£3,743
Salaries	£22,000	£8,000	£10,000
Promotional work	£5,690	£2,758	£3,926
Travel/rooms/refreshments	£3,685	£456	£1,194
Telephones/postage	£3,750	£1,450	£1,548
Office Stationary	£500	£250	£185
IT Development	£26,285		£13,308
Budget Expenditure	£74,910	£20,027	£33,904
		Actual Expenditure	£53,931
		Surplus	£21,069

from Old Square Chambers was produced as a 40-page booklet and a 4-page summary and was launched in Westminster. Our proposed piece of commissioned work for RMT on employment rights for seafarers was placed on hold.

Apart from our work around developing public policy ideas, we also responded to two specific government consultation requests. Written evidence was submitted to the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee on IR35 (Michael Ford) and IER was represented by Michael Ford at a government round-table discussion on proposals for a Single Enforcement Body.

CONFERENCES, EVENTS AND EDUCATION PACKAGES

In 2019-2020 the Institute hosted 4 events, 2 in London and 2 in Liverpool. We focused once again on our most popular topics, with Equality and Employment Law Update. A total of 258 delegates attended our events, up by 39 from 2018. We also hosted two free events to welcome Bill Gould from the USA, who updated us on events in US labour law.

We initially had 4 events planned for 2020-21 – two on Health and safety at work and our yearly two employment law update events. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, all IER events and meetings for 2020 were cancelled. Instead, we took the opportunity of our new website facilities to invite stay-at-home workers to a series of free, on-line events:

ONLINE EVENTS FOR 2020-2021

- Health and safety at work: Building not burning regulations.
- Equality: It’s a class issue.
- Post pandemic policy proposals: building a new world order.
- Education: health and psychological wellbeing.
- Roles and responsibilities: the role of the state, the public sector and trade unions.
- Transitioning to a sustainable and greener economy.

IER continued to explore the possibility of developing an education programme via universities. Discussions were held with both Birkbeck and Ruskin College and a draft educational programme is being developed.

IT & COMMUNICATIONS

The biggest boost to the IER’s communications strategy this year has come with the launch of our new website. In the two months since the site went live, views of and engagement with our online materials has more than doubled. There were 105% more visitors to our site compared with the same period last year. Between them, they made 120% more visits and viewed 95% more pages.

Among the features of the new site are easily accessible electronic downloads of our publications, an easy-to-search library of all of our materials – including consultation responses, briefings, seminar papers and publications – and new advertising space, currently occupied by Morrish Solicitors, Pellacraft and the Hazards Campaign.

Our users were invited to fill out a survey both prior to and after the new site was launched, the results of which reveal that we have met our stated objectives of improving the ease of navigation of the site and modernising the design. The proportion of users who were “mostly” or “always” able to find what they were looking for rose from 69% to 83%, while those who “liked” the design increased from 31% to 67%.

As the new site has been optimised for multiple platforms, we have also seen a large increase in the number of people using mobile technology to visit the site on the go – a key measure of accessibility. Visits from a mobile phone platform have increased by 217% and those from a tablet have risen by 42%.

Another aim set out in 2019 was to produce more multimedia materials. Over the past 12 months, we have published seven videos, one of which – featuring Laura Pidcock



speaking on a Ministry of Labour – achieved over 12,000 views. Two podcasts are also currently in production.

On social media, we have seen a significant jump in engagement, with Facebook likes up 18% on last year (from 775 to the 914) and Twitter followers up 20% (from 2,288 to 2,738).

CONCLUSION

Our 30th year was full of promise and expectation of what could be achieved if the political will existed to transform the world of work. As we move into a post-pandemic society with all the economic, industrial and political uncertainties that entails, the future is unclear. Brexit remains in the shadows, trade deals are being negotiated behind closed doors and Britain is facing the possibility of the biggest economic depression since the 1930s. People are demanding a new world order – no return to business as usual. At IER we will continue to offer our thoughts and ideas on how that new world order should look.

Carolyn Jones, Director
cad@ier.org.uk

IER Officers & EC

OFFICERS

President:
Professor Keith Ewing
Chairperson:
Lord John Hendy QC
Treasurer:
Geoffrey D Shears
Director:
Carolyn Jones

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Len McLuskey *UNITE*
Professor Aileen McColgan
Professor Sonia McKay
Dave Prentis *UNISON*
Tim Roache *GMB*

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Ged Nichols *Accord*
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Dave Penman *FDA*
Roy Rickhuss *Community Rod*
Robertson
Mickey Rubenstein
Grahame Smith *STUC* Gordon
Taylor *PFA*
Mick Whelan *ASLEF*
Matt Wrack *FBU*

IER Budget Report 2019-20

Year to 31st March 2020

£s	Budget 2019-20	Actual 2019/20	Actual 2018/19
INCOME			
Sales of Publications	20,000	7,069	20,408
Donations	50,000	47,932	65,372
Subscriptions	23,000	22,055	21,800
Sponsorship	5,000	1,500	3,100
Seminar Receipts	13,000	15,725	12,410
Royalties	1,000	783	984
Commissioned Work	7,500	4,964	863
Project Development	0	16,976	66,121
Advertising	500	390	360
TOTAL INCOME	120,000	117,393	191,417
INCOME minus PDF		100,471	
EXPENDITURE			
Printing: Promotional	6,000	3,698	6,812
Printing: Publications	10,000	10,647	8,727
Design Work	1,500	3,483	2,992
Salaries	81,000	73,380	84,411
Rent	5,500	2,933	6,396
Sundries	2,500	5,784	3,403
Advertising	1,000	1,105	675
Insurance	500	641	608
Room Hire & Refshts	1,000	411	1,067
Professional Fees	2,000	2,615	3,743
C&E Hotels	300	349	293
C&E Fares	300	0	44
Travel	1,500	4,007	2,729
Telephones	1,200	1,259	1,132
Office Stationery	1,000	625	967
Postage: Couriers	1,000	504	934
Postage: Mailing	3,000	4,224	3,855
Repairs & maintenance	250	0	0
IT Development	1,500	14,707	982
Bank Charges	1,000	635	854
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	122,050	131,006	130,624
EXPENDITURE minus PDF		97,102	
Surplus/deficit	-2,050	3,369	60,793
Money in bank:		56,055	67,768
Bills to be paid		1,579	5,438
Invoices owed to us		22,902	5,025