



ANNUAL REPORT

'91/92

BELFAST CENTRE FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

Annual Report of the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre

1993/94



Annual Report 2003



10th Annual Report of the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre

1994/95



Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre Annual Report 2001



Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre

Annual Report 1999

1997 ANNUAL REPORT



Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre

Annual Report 2002

belfast unemployed resource centre

annual report '05

belfast unemployed resource centre

annual report '06

40TH

ANNIVERSARY

Annual Summary

2023/24



03

Foreword

The previous year has been marked by significant political and social challenges, internationally, nationally and locally. Economic pressures, political instability, and social unrest have led to a rise in the popularity of far-right politics in Europe.

Nationally and Locally: increasing economic pressures; healthcare reform; environmental concerns and Migration were all issues facing Government. With the continued cost of living crisis, high inflation and austerity, impacting particularly on lower income households. Food banks reported record levels of demand, and there were widespread protests calling for government action to address these issues. In Northern Ireland, the situation was exacerbated by political instability, which hampered effective policy responses.

Labour won a majority in May elections, with a focus on decreasing inequality and increased investment, thereby ending the conservative majority for the last 14 years.

Nationally, the National Health Service (NHS) remained under significant pressure, with long waiting times and staff shortages affecting service delivery. Strikes by healthcare workers, demanding better pay and working conditions, became more frequent. In Northern Ireland, the health service faced similar challenges,

There has been a significant increase in protests against the government with a focus on the economy, climate change, and healthcare.

Northern Ireland has continued to face a significant housing shortage, rising property prices and Rent and the shortage of available homes. The lack of affordable housing options has forced some families into temporary accommodations or overcrowded conditions, which have long-term implications for health and well-being.

Social housing remains a critical component of Northern Ireland's housing sector, yet it is plagued by chronic underinvestment. The political instability in Northern Ireland, particularly the impasse in the power-sharing government, has hindered effective policy-making and investment in social housing.

The welfare system in NI continues to face significant challenges and changes; overall, while the welfare system provides essential support, it is under pressure to adapt to the evolving needs of its claimants, particularly in light of economic challenges and social inequalities.

NI has one of the highest rates of poverty in the UK, with significant disparities affecting children and working families. The welfare system is crucial in providing a safety net, but we need the government to better address the significant issues claimants are facing.

According to information provided to the board of the Education Authority (EA). Half of Northern Ireland's schools were already in financial deficit by the end of March 2024. The EA board has been told that "if no further funding was allocated to schools in year, this figure would rise to 80%". Education faced a number of cuts to schemes to support schools and pupils in 2023, many of which are unlikely to be restored.

Just a few weeks before the evolved government in Northern Ireland was restored, after a 2 year hiatus, more than 100,000 public sector workers in Northern Ireland staged a mass walkout. Nurses, Teachers, transport workers and civil servants took part in the action, as they had not received a pay rise in the previous couple of years. Northern Ireland's Health and Social care staff remain the lowest paid in the UK.

In the middle of 2024 Immigration and its attendant issues came under the spotlight. Far right protests emerged across major cities in the UK and Belfast did not escape. The opposition was to diversity and multiculturalism and across the UK migrant owned business' were attacked and people of colour were targeted. Despite the myth of "uncontrolled immigration", Northern Ireland has low rates of immigration and remains mainly white and Christian according to recent Census figures. Data from the Home Office shows that a total of 2,248 asylum seekers were in receipt of support in Northern Ireland as of March 31, 2024.

What drives people to extremist actions and what the far Right thrive on is inequality, poverty, the collapse of the health system and, most of all, housing. Migrants and refugees are affected by these issues as well. Anger was focused on the wrong group. The conditions which led to the listed issues are a result of lack of funding, lack of Policy, systemic failings going back years and a feeling of dissatisfaction within communities who feel neglected and forgotten by the Government systems

BURC would like to take this opportunity to thank those who support our work: The National Lottery Community Fund; European funders; Belfast City Council; IFI (International Fund for Ireland) & CBPES (Cross Border Partnership for Employment services) the volunteer's staff and committee for their tireless work and many others who help us create opportunities and resources.

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aims+ Objectives

WHO WE ARE

The Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre (BURC) was set up in September 1984 and the premises were opened in 1985.

The Northern Ireland Trade Union Education & Social Centre (NITU) is a charitable organisation operating as Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre (BURC) whose aims and objectives are to provide support, education/ training and facilities to the unemployed and other groups suffering from social and economic disadvantage.

VISION

NITU/BURC aims to be recognised as an innovative provider in effecting change towards a fair and inclusive society.

PURPOSE

To promote equality, through supporting the participation and inclusion of all individuals, groups and communities.

VALUES

The core values of the organisation are to deliver sustainable activities and services, through a flexible creative approach based on partnership, networking, accountability and leadership.



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Welfare Advice Service Highlights 2023-2024.



Welfare advice services in Northern Ireland are facing increasing pressure to maintain a high standard of support for clients amidst the ongoing cost of living crisis. As individuals and families grapple with financial challenges, exacerbated by rising costs and economic uncertainties, the demand for welfare advice and assistance has surged.

Service providers are tasked with navigating this delicate balance of meeting the escalating needs of vulnerable populations while managing limited resources and capacity constraints. The ability to deliver effective and timely support to those struggling financially has become paramount, highlighting the critical role that welfare advice services play in addressing the complex socio-economic issues facing communities in Northern Ireland.

Mental Health on the rise

In the current climate of uncertainty, individuals in Northern Ireland are facing unprecedented challenges, particularly in the realm of mental health and financial stability.

With mental health cases on the rise, many are grappling with heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and depression, exacerbated by the ongoing uncertainty and isolation brought about by the global pandemic.

Compounded by financial strain, individuals are finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet, with earnings often falling short of covering necessities. This bleak reality paints a stark picture for those living in Northern Ireland, where the intersection of mental health struggles and financial hardship creates a daunting landscape for many individuals and families.

2023 – 2024 Achievements:

- 301 Benefit Enquiries
- 84 Other Enquiries
- 47 Debt Enquiries
- 22 Housing Related Enquiries
- 07 Health Related Enquiries
- 07 Employment Related Enquiries

Total Amount Generated
£642,774.77



What are people saying about the Welfare Advice Service?



The Welfare Advice Service has received praise as we continue to provide dedicated support and assistance to clients facing unemployment and navigating the welfare system. People have commended the centre for its knowledgeable and compassionate staff who provide valuable guidance on benefits, housing issues, and financial support. Clients have expressed gratitude for the personalised and thorough advice offered; helping them access the resources, they need to improve their circumstances. The centre's commitment to empowering individuals and advocating for their rights has been widely recognised, making it a trusted and invaluable resource for those in need in the Belfast community.

Funding

On behalf of the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre and our clients, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude



for the funding you provide that enables us to continue offering vital welfare advice services to those in need. Your support plays a crucial role in helping us empower individuals facing unemployment and financial challenges to navigate the complexities of the welfare system and access the assistance they require. Your commitment to our organisation allows us to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our clients, and we are truly thankful for your ongoing partnership. Thank you for your dedication to supporting our community and helping us fulfil our mission.

What are the priorities for the year ahead?

We will be focusing on addressing the evolving needs of vulnerable populations in the year ahead. This includes providing tailored support for individuals impacted by changes in welfare policies, ensuring access to accurate and up-to-date information on benefits and entitlements, advocating for social justice and equality in welfare provision, and promoting financial literacy and empowerment among our clients. Collaborating with community organisations, government agencies, and other stakeholders will be crucial in delivering holistic and person-centred welfare advice services that prioritise the well-being and rights of individuals in Northern Ireland. Continuous training and development for advisors to stay informed on policy changes and best practices will also be essential in delivering high-quality and effective support to those in need.

Vision of BURC Advice Service

Our advice service aims to empower individuals to make informed decisions, navigate complex systems, and access their rights and entitlements.

We strive to promote social justice, equality, and advocate for the marginalised and vulnerable.



Case Study

We have a client who has agreed for their story to be shared with you, this individual is in their mid-forties, and they were homeless, with no family support and a drug and alcohol addiction for many years.

This individual was referred on to us to provide welfare advice and at the first appointment, the individual was quite angry saying that no one ever helps them and they were tired of repeating themselves. This individual was engaged with other agencies and I guess they had got to the point in their life when they had, enough. We worked with them, phoning them to check in with them, encouraging them and ensuring there was support from a social worker on the day of their assessments. This person never responded well to anyone in authority, most likely from previous events and trauma.

We persevered, even when the individual got angry through frustration and stuck with it, working closely with their social worker we managed to get them on Universal Credit, in receipt of Limited Capability for Work Related Activity, once this was secured accommodation was next. Now the Northern Ireland Housing Executive could be sure of receiving their rental costs and the individual's lifestyle was much more settled and less chaotic. To be honest their social worker was excellent and went above and beyond as well, slowly things started to fall in to place. This individual started attending the drug and alcohol addiction centre and fast forward two and a half years later; this person finally has a place to call their own. They have since been awarded Personal Independence Payments, the Enhanced Rate Daily Living component and the Enhanced Rate of Mobility and this has meant they can focus on their health, build family relationships and continue to stay drug and alcohol free.

Speaking to this individual recently, they have since started grief counselling to deal with past trauma that started their drug and alcohol addiction and are finally looking forward in life and making plans and not having to sit on the streets of Belfast, asking strangers for money to survive each day. This is one case, we have many like this, we also have other cases whereby an individual has never had to claim benefits before and does not know the first thing to do, we have families struggling, worried sick because their children are suffering. This is a normal day for us, but one that is so rewarding that it keeps you pushing forward for all of our clients to get justice and support in many different ways.

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Advanced Manufacturing Pathways Schools Project.



BURC were provided with the opportunity to partner with Louth/ Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) to deliver a cross border schools initiative on Advanced Manufacturing. **LMETB had previously, successfully, delivered this programme, and we were able to pilot this on a cross border basis linking with Schools from Louth & Belfast.**

The Advanced Manufacturing Pathways Schools program was established with the aim of equipping students with practical skills and experiences essential for careers in the manufacturing industry. Funded through the International fund for Ireland grant application, the program addresses various objectives outlined to meet the demands of the manufacturing sector.

These objectives include:

- Developing practical skills such as robotics programming, cybersecurity, and 3D printing, which are in high demand in the industry.
- Enhancing problem-solving abilities through exposure to real-world manufacturing challenges.
- Fostering collaboration and teamwork through cross-border/community projects.
- Providing students with project management skills necessary for organizing and executing manufacturing projects.
- Familiarizing students with industry standards and practices.
- Exploring diverse career paths within advanced manufacturing.
- Facilitating networking opportunities with industry professionals.
- Boosting students' confidence and self-esteem through project completion.
- Bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application.
- Increasing interest in STEM fields to address the skills gap in the manufacturing industry.



The eight participating Schools :

- Belfast**
- 1 - St Louise's college
 - 2 - Dundonald High
 - 3 - Mercy College
 - 4 - Boys Model

- Louth**
- 5 - Scoil Uí Mhuirí
 - 6 - Coláiste Chú Chulainn
 - 7 - O'Fiaich College
 - 8 - Bush Post Primary School



We are pleased to announce, that we were successful in gaining funding from the International Fund for Ireland, to deliver the programme, to a new cohort and include four new Schools in the programme.

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Capacity Building programme.

Belfast City Council have funded BURC to deliver Capacity Training to local and new communities.

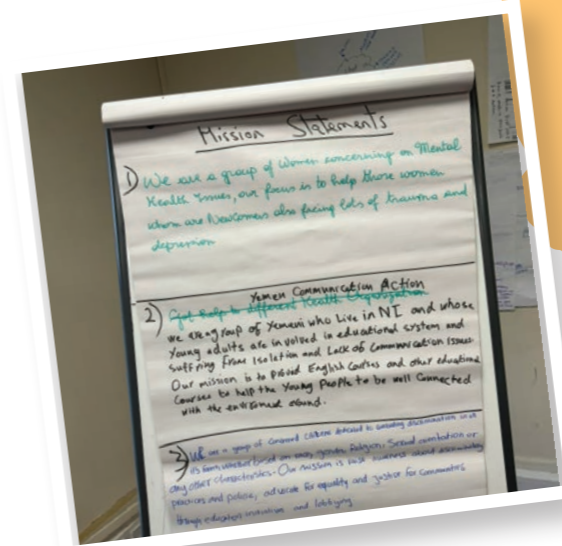


Training includes:

- **Community Leadership Training**
Bespoke training to support communities to advocate for themselves and others.
- **Train the Trainer**
Community Leadership - to leave skills within communities beyond the length of the programme. Also the leadership course will be able to be delivered in any language, thereby speeding up integration.
- **Workshops**
Bespoke workshops delivered on a number of topics, identified by local communities according to their needs.

These include:

- North Belfast:** Cliftonville over the Wall Cross Community Women's group
- South Belfast:** HAPANI (Horn of Africa People's Aid)
- East Belfast:** Ledley Hall - Pitt Park
- West Belfast:** Suffolk Events Circle



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ESOL (ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES).

Empowering adult refugees and asylum seekers in Belfast and beyond by supporting the development of their English Language to support integration and employability.

Artificial Intelligence Integration

AI has significantly influenced our activities, starting with Arthur McKeown and Claudia Belloni's presentation at the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) ESOL Conference in May 2023.



Online ESOL Classes

Our free online ESOL classes continue to thrive, with an average of 130 to 150 learners registered per each of our 8-week modules. We cater to over 25 nationalities, with learners geographically dispersed in different countries.

Our fantastic Team of Volunteer Tutors teach five different courses:

- Absolute Beginners**
- Advanced Beginners**
- Progressors**
- Advanced Progressors**
- Conversation**

At our centre, we actively encourage learners to advance to higher levels when they demonstrate readiness. At the end of each module, our dedicated Tutors assess each learner's situation on an individual basis, taking into account factors such as attendance and active participation. This personalised approach ensures that decisions regarding progression are made with careful consideration and tailored to each learner's needs

Additionally, our inaugural survey of learner satisfaction yielded encouraging results. It marked the first instance of feedback collection since our courses moved online, and the responses underscored a high level of satisfaction and effectiveness regarding our courses.

The survey can be viewed at the following link:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-rmL2cDvnW0K2bKhW0_2BSf2w_3D_3D/

Khaled Zalitou, one of our learners from Syria, shares his remarkable journey with Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre (BURC) ESOL courses. His narrative showcases the profound impact of BURC's Tutors and ESOL Programme on his language proficiency, cultural understanding, and career aspirations.

MY BURC STORY

I joined online classes more than two years ago as I had not learnt English before I came to Belfast. The thing that distinguishes these lessons is that they are vital and useful in many areas, for example in my daily life were I need English to communicate on the street, on public transport, in the hospital and many other different situations. The most important aspect that distinguishes BURC is the teaching staff. I have found them from the start to be kind, professional, helpful, encouraging and they have given me the confidence to improve my spoken English. They have great patience and care with students of different levels.

Another benefit of the BURC classes is that I have learnt many details about life and culture for the local people in Northern Ireland. We have been introduced to the human heritage, history of this part of the world through idioms and slang of this kind people. As a result I now have a "wee" knowledge of the local "craic" and flavour of their language.

This year I joined the BURC advanced class and I continue also with the conversation class. These classes gave me the confidence to embark on a translator course, which I finished with merit. I'm now working as interpreter for two languages, Arabic my mother tongue and Russian which I am fluent in.

My wish for the future is that BURC will continue working to support new comers to Northern Ireland. It is most important that people are given the opportunity and confidence to start their new life as I did with the amazing help from BURC. My two daughters hope to join me in Northern Ireland, I will highly recommend that they study with BURC.

On behalf of all my fellow students from all around the world, thank you to the wonderful staff at BURC, we will always be indebted to you.



Face-to-Face ESOL Classes

We initiated face-to-face classes in collaboration with Antrim & Newtownabbey County Council, Since August 2023, five courses have been provided for adult refugees and asylum seekers, with over 60 successful completions. A celebration event was hosted at Antrim Library on April 26, 2024.

Volunteer Induction Training: Train the Trainer Programme

Drawing from our extensive expertise in training Volunteer ESOL Tutors, BURC has developed a comprehensive training course aimed at empowering ESOL practitioners within the community to effectively plan and deliver ESOL classes in their local areas. In March 2024, the course was successfully conducted both online and face-to-face in Carrickfergus, providing participants with versatile learning opportunities to enhance their teaching skills and community engagement.

Organisational Memberships and Contributions

We remain active members of NATECLA and NALA, and have joined AONTAS.

Committee participation includes NATECLA Island of Ireland (IOI), where we have attended various events and webinars.

Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board (CMETB)

Arthur McKeown, supported the development of methodologies for QQI ESOL Levels 1 and 2 Special Purpose Awards, with course material launched in Cavan on June 4th.

ESOL Policy Development

Regular attendance by Arthur McKeown at a special interest group focused on ESOL policy for Northern Ireland, involving various stakeholders.

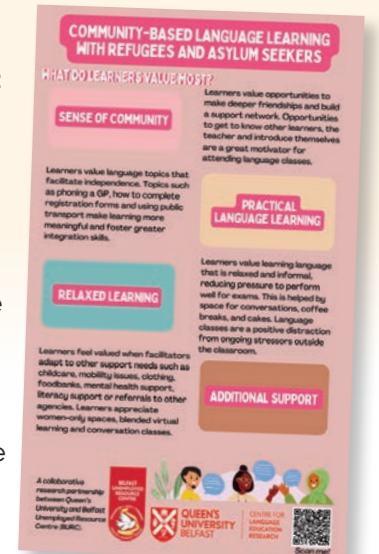
Expressing our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated Volunteer Tutors with a festive Christmas lunch. Their unwavering commitment and hard work make a profound difference in our community and beyond.

Queen's University Belfast

The Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre partnered with Queen's University Belfast to offer a Collaborative PhD Scholarship funded by the Dept for the Economy. From 2021-2024, PhD student Bella Robinson conducted a comparative study of the impact of community-based language education

initiatives for asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants. Bella has a background of volunteering within refugee and asylum seeker communities, supporting women who have been trafficked to overcome barriers to integration and language learning in Belfast. Presenting some of the initial findings from the study, Bella noted that what learners value the most are a sense of community, a relaxed environment, and practical language learning opportunities. The research supervisory team included Aisling Cartmill (BURC), Arthur McKeown (BURC), Sarah Millar (QUB), and Aisling O'Boyle (QUB). Discussing the research findings and partnership.

Aisling O'Boyle, Director of the Centre for Language Education Research at Queen's University Belfast commented that "The community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland, and beyond, have long provided non-formal language classes to meet the socially embedded communicative needs of refugees and asylum-seekers. This partnership model of research is essential to better understand and to evidence the kind of impact that community initiatives have on people's lives."



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The Cross-Border Partnership for Employment Services. (CBPES)

The CBPES was established to help make things easier for those who wish to commute daily or weekly across the border to work. It does this by attempting to overcome at least some of the obstacles which people face.

In particular it provides pathways to the information required by people moving across the border, for example, jobseekers that need information on employment and training opportunities on both sides of the border, on taxation and the social security systems.

The Partnership also aims to assist employers by providing them with access to a larger pool of labour i.e. jobseekers living on both sides of the border. Advice is available to employers on a range of cross-border recruitment issues.

The Partnership covers all Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland (Louth, Cavan, Monaghan, Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim).

The Partnership is guided by a Steering Committee of up to 12 members nominated by the Partner Organisations and is supported by a full-time Co-ordinator. There is a network of specialist advisers on cross border issues, who are located in the Partner Organisations in 2025 the Department of Communities NI will be funding this project for three years, and after this time it will revert back to The Public Employment Services cross border.

BURC (Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre) as part of the partnership, provides English language support and job skills training to job seekers, cross border to keep a job, get a job or get a better job.

We have provided online English for Employability Language support to 162 Job seekers so far this year.

The project is intended to provide three significant benefits:

- Unlocking migrant capabilities, as people developed language skills that will enable them to contribute more to the local community where they live.
- Saving costs to public services.
- Promoting social cohesion.



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North Belfast Friendship Club Everyone welcome!

The friendship club continues to meet at the Quaker Meeting House, Frederick Street, Belfast. This venue is easily accessible and provides a relaxing environment in which to welcome anyone from North Belfast to join us for free tea/ coffee and biscuits.

We encourage people to come along, have some conversation, play games, practice English & meet like minded people.

The Club meets every Tuesday evening from 6.00pm – 8.00pm.

The Club Members got involved in May Day Celebrations event this year, as volunteer attendants at the Family Fiesta event in Larkin Square.

The club was pleased to be part of the Solidarity Walk, to help raise funds for phone credit for refugees and Asylum seekers.



40TH ANNIVERSARY

Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre

The Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre (BURC) was established in 1984 during a period of significant social and economic upheaval in Northern Ireland high unemployment rates resulting from the decline in traditional industries like shipbuilding and textiles, exacerbated by the policies of the Thatcher government.

The founding of BURC was driven by the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), along with the Workers' Educational Association and the Belfast Law Centre. The early 1980s were marked by widespread unemployment, particularly in working-class areas of Belfast, largely as a result of the industrial decline and the socio-political conflict known as "The Troubles."

Attention was drawn to an EU initiative to assist areas experiencing high unemployment, such as N.I. A Judgement call was made, that the Trade Union movement, which was an organisation dealing with significant redundancies at the time, should be involved. Those who believed this faced strong opposition, much to their surprise.

The issues was that some Trade Unionists felt that this was a job for community rather than Trade Unionists.

It was debated and by majority decision this position was defeated.

The Centre went on to identify and respond to issues, in areas of highest unemployment and social disadvantage and seek to provide skills development and employability pathways to help secure a future with more opportunities.

Our experience suggests that it was not inappropriate for Trade Unions to be involved. Our most recent experience significantly show an increase in trade unions and communities working together for example on wage inequality and employment itself.

Burc was an organisation which has formally been associated with both communities and the Trade union, successfully straddling both, which was the aim of the centre from the beginning.

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The establishment of the BURC was driven by the need to address the systemic issues faced by unemployed individuals in Belfast. The founders recognised that unemployment was not just an economic problem but also a social issue that led to increased poverty, social isolation, and mental health challenges. They sought to create a centre that would offer a range of services, including advice on welfare rights, job search assistance, and opportunities for education and training. The initiative was rooted in a strong belief in the importance of solidarity, community, and self-empowerment.

Early History and Growth

In its early years, the BURC operated in a climate of significant challenges. The ongoing conflict in Northern Ireland made it difficult to engage with all parts of the community, but the centre worked hard to be inclusive, offering its services to people from all backgrounds. The centre quickly became a hub for the unemployed, providing a safe space where they could access support and share experiences.

Throughout the late 1980s and into the 1990s, the centre expanded its services in response to the evolving needs of the unemployed. It began to offer more structured training programs, including IT skills and adult literacy education classes, recognising the changing demands of the job market. The centre also became more involved in advocacy, lobbying for better welfare provisions and fair employment practices.

1984: Establishment of the BURC

In 1984 the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (NICTU) examined a range of initiatives which might be taken to highlight the plight of the unemployed and provide them with community support. A coordinator was appointed.

1985: Official Opening

The centre was formally opened by the poet John Hewitt, who was a key figure in Belfast's cultural life. His involvement lent significant visibility to the centre's mission.

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1986: Launch of Welfare Rights Advice Services

BURC launched its Welfare Rights Advice Services to help unemployed individuals navigate the complex welfare system, ensuring they received the benefits to which they were entitled.

1987: Acquisition of Premises

BURC secured ownership of its premises, providing a stable base from which to expand its services.

1988: Expansion of Educational Programs

Recognising the need for skills development, BURC began offering a range of educational and training programs, including literacy, numeracy, and vocational courses.

1990: Cross-Community and Cross Border Initiatives

In response to the sectarian divisions in Belfast, BURC launched cross-community initiatives aimed at bringing together people from different backgrounds to work on common issues related to unemployment and poverty, emphasising peacebuilding and social justice. Throughout the 90's, the International Fund for

Ireland, funded European and International projects. These supported young job seekers from Belfast, to experience work and life in other areas, these included: Chicago; Boston; Germany; Australian and Canada.

1991: Renovation of Building

The new renovated premises were officially opened by former Beirut hostage Brian Keenan on the 25th November 1991.

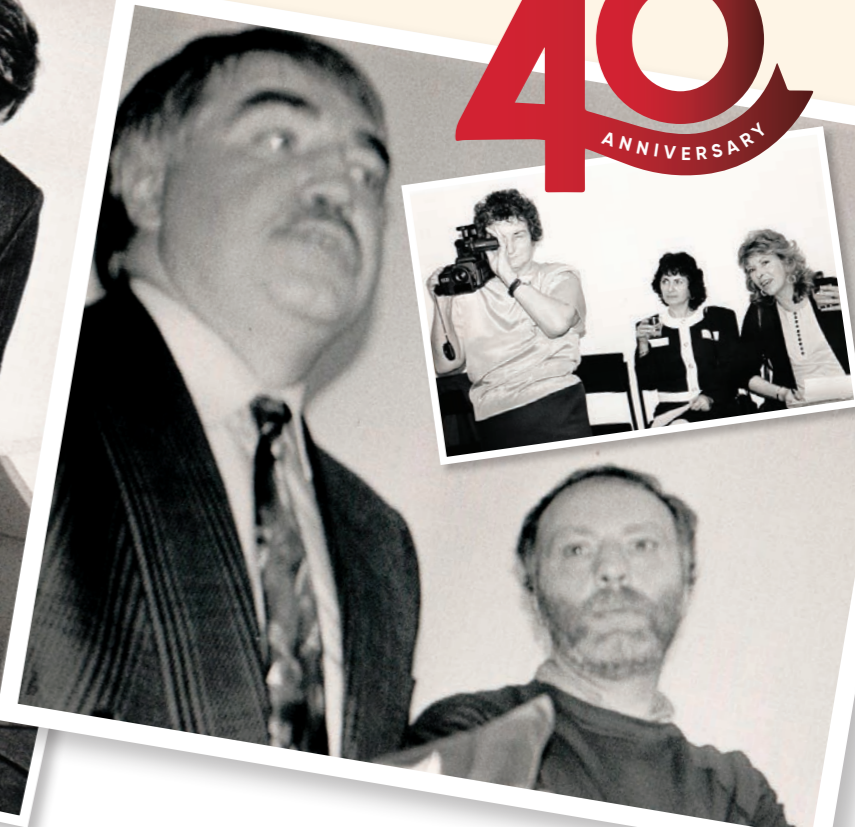
1994: Partnership with Trade Unions

BURC formalised its partnership with various trade unions, including the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), to strengthen its advocacy efforts and provide more comprehensive support to the unemployed. Links with European Trade Unions were made throughout the European programmes.

1998: Good Friday Agreement and New Opportunities

The signing of the Good Friday Agreement marked a turning point in Northern Ireland, with a focus on peace and economic regeneration. BURC began exploring new opportunities to contribute to the peace process through employment and training initiatives.

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1999: Social Enterprise

The John Hewitt Bar, a social enterprise established by BURC, began operations. The bar was named after the poet and was set up to generate funds for the centre's activities, which was an innovative approach to sustaining its community services. This was the first Social enterprise Bar in Northern Ireland. The Centre has since set up a Training Social Enterprise, Access skills Ireland/ NI and are currently developing an English Language Social Enterprise.

2002: Launch of Mental Health Support Services

In response to the growing recognition of the link between unemployment and mental health issues, the BURC introduced mental health support services, including counselling and peer support groups.

2008: Economic Crisis and Increased Demand for Services

The global financial crisis led to a sharp increase in unemployment, particularly among young people. BURC responded by expanding its services to meet the growing demand. To advocate for stronger protections for the unemployed during this period of economic uncertainty.

2012: Commemoration of 25 Years of Service

BURC celebrated its 25th anniversary, reflecting on its achievements and setting goals for the future. The anniversary was marked by a series of events highlighting the centre's impact on Belfast's unemployed community.

2019: English Language and Integration Programs

BURC focused on programs like ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) to help migrants integrate and access the labour market, reflecting the evolving demographics of Belfast.



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40TH ANNIVERSARY



2020: Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread economic disruption, leading to increased unemployment. BURC adapted its services to support those affected by the crisis, including offering online resources.

2024: Current Focus

The centre continues to deliver a range of services to local communities to support with Employment; Welfare; Advocacy and responding to needs as they arise. Improving the experiences of those we work with, still lies at the heart of what BURC do.

2024 marks 40 years since BURC started to support individuals and communities. We look forward to celebrating this milestone, with a resolve to moving forward and continuing to support communities.

**BELFAST
UNEMPLOYED
RESOURCE
CENTRE**



BURC YouTube channel

Committee and Staff Members

Committee Members – Northern Ireland Trade Union
Education and Social Centre

Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre.

Mr Joe Bowers – Chairperson
Mr Kevin Doherty – Treasurer
Mr Brendan Mackin – Secretary
Ms Anne Molloy – Member
Mr Arthur Mc Keown – Member
Ms Mary Gray – Member
Ms Kerry Fleck – Member

Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre – Staff

Aisling Cartmill – Centre Coordinator
Adele Moore – Finance Manager
Joanne Farrell – Welfare Advice
Claudia Belloni – Co-ordinator ESOL

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