

# class

Centre for Labour  
and Social Studies

## Annual Report

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Year End March 2015

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## Introduction

**This report outlines the activities of the Centre for Labour and Social Studies (Class) from April 2014 to the end of March 2015.**

2014-15 was an important year for Class, the labour movement and working people across the UK. While this annual report focuses on Class activities up to the end of March 2015, the General Election was a major focus for most of this period, and the result will undoubtedly impact upon the future directions and priorities of Class.

This year Class welcomed the support of UCU, taking our number of union supporters to 15. The importance of a strong foundation across the labour movement is vital to ensuring the focus of Class is grounded in the experiences of working people. In 2014-15 Class engaged many more trade unionists, politicians, academics, journalists, opinion formers and activists – raising its profile as a major resource for progressive thinking.

Our event with Thomas Piketty at Parliament in June sealed Class's position as a forum for rigorous academic debate; and our range of public meetings across the country ensured Class played a big role in political discussions. This year we held another successful national conference – attracting nearly 500 delegates and some of the most high-profile speakers from across the labour movement, academia and the media.

Class published a total of 24 publications last year, which ranged from the high-level series on the role of the modern state, to our extensive pre-election briefings which were distributed in hard copy form to 30,000 activists across the country. Over the course of the year we consolidated our website as an important source of progressive policy analysis. We published nearly 80 blogs addressing developments including the Budget, benefit sanctions, zero-hours contracts, rent control, arts and culture funding, academies and bankers' bonuses. Our trade union policy library now hosts 30 research documents from our supporting unions.

Over the coming year Class will continue to engage and promote big ideas, ensuring the voice of working people is taken seriously in policy formulation. Class will continue to stress the role of organised labour and trade unions in the economy and how we begin to reverse growing income inequality. Our papers need to be more incisive, our media operation much wider, our events bigger and better, our connection with policymakers greater, our influence on political parties stronger, but above all, we need to include activists much more in this battle of ideas to shift the debate. Over the next important period Class will work tirelessly to this end.

## Organisation and Administration

At the end of our third year Class has three full-time permanent members of staff – Rachel Yates (Coordinator and Commissioning Editor), Ellie O’Hagan (Media and Communications Officer) and Dulcie Fairhurst (Project and Events Officer) – and until 30 June 2015 Michael Lumpkin (Project Support Officer). Class is an independent organisation supported by a number of trade unions. While the day-to-day activities of Class are run by the staff and overseen by the elected Officers, strategy, policy priorities and the overall management of Class are the responsibility of the Management Committee. At the end of March 2015, Class had the support of 15 trade unions.

### Supporting Unions 2014-2015



### Management Committee

The Management Committee is made up of representatives of supporting unions, Officers of the Institute of Employment Rights and nominated parliamentary advisors from the Class National Advisory Panel. Nominated officers from the Management Committee act as Directors of Class for financial purposes. The 2014-15 Management Committee and Officers were:

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>President:</b> Tim Roache – GMB</li> <li>• <b>Vice-President:</b> Isabelle Gutierrez – MU</li> <li>• <b>Vice-President:</b> Geoff Shears – IER</li> <li>• <b>Chair:</b> Steve Hart – Unite</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chris Kitchen – NUM</li> <li>• James McGowan – ASLEF</li> <li>• Steve Murphy – UCATT</li> <li>• Andrew Murray – Unite</li> <li>• Doug Nicholls – GFTU</li> <li>• Gerry Morrissey – FEU</li> <li>• Matt Waddup - UCU</li> <li>• Dave Watson – PCS</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christine Blower – NUT</li> <li>• Manuel Cortes – TSSA</li> <li>• Nick Cusack - PFA</li> <li>• Ian Hodson - BFAWU</li> <li>• Keith Ewing – IER/Kings College London</li> <li>• Steve Bell – CWU</li> <li>• John Hendy QC - IER</li> <li>• Carolyn Jones – IER</li> </ul> | <p><i>Parliamentary Advisors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jack Dromey MP</li> <li>• Jon Trickett MP</li> </ul>   |

### Class National Advisory Panel

Class has an extensive National Advisory Panel of experts who offer policy guidance on their specific areas of expertise and assist in whatever capacity they are able to.

More information: <http://classonline.org.uk/about/panel>

## Events

During our third year Class held a number of very successful and well attended public events across the country. Our events included a large one-day national conference in November, a debate in Parliament with Thomas Piketty and Lord Stewart Wood and a series of regional and fringe events.

### Lectures and keynote speeches



#### Thomas Piketty: in conversation with Lord Stewart Wood

*Monday 16 June 2014, London*

In June 2014 we held an event with Thomas Piketty, author of the ground-breaking book "Capital in the Twenty-First Century", which was hosted by Lord Stewart Wood at the House of Commons. The event attracted national media coverage and was attended by a range of high-profile MPs and journalists.



#### Lisa Nandy MP: Keynote speech on patriotism and the Left

*Tuesday 24 March 2015, London*

Ahead of the General Election Shadow Minister for Charities, Lisa Nandy MP, gave a keynote speech on how the left can reclaim patriotism. The event was chaired by Kevin Maguire (Mirror) and featured Prof Eric Kaufmann (Birkbeck) and Sabby Dhalu (UAF).

### Regional tours

#### Election 2015: What's at stake for working people

*Thursday 12 Feb - 19 March 2015 – Glasgow (work, pay and unions), Newcastle (housing), Birmingham (economy), Manchester (NHS) and Bristol (tax)*

As part of our election project Class held events across the country looking at what was at stake at the 2015 General Election for working people on a range of subjects. Speakers included Prof Allyson Pollock, Richard Murphy, Neil Findley MSP, Liz McInnes MP, Cat Hobbs, and many more.

#### Regional Tour: The Great British Rip Off - How to solve the cost of living crisis

*Thursday 15 May 2014 - Wednesday 30 July 2014 – Cardiff, Nottingham, Sheffield and Brighton*

Class, Unionstogether and the Trade Union Group of MPs collaborated on a series of regional events to discuss the living standards crisis and steps to address it. In total this series included 6 events with the Newcastle and London events taking place at the end of the last year.

#### Defeating austerity, free trade deals and attacks on trade union rights

*25 March - 28 April 2015 – Leeds, Cardiff and Liverpool*

Class supported the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom's and IER's series of regional events on trade union and employment rights in the run up to the election.

### Fringe meetings at union conferences and Labour Party conference

#### Labour Party Conference 2014 (Manchester)

*Monday 22 - Tuesday 23 Sep 2014 – The Great British Rip Off, What Britain Needs, and Wealth, Inequality and Power*

Class held three fringe meetings at the 2014 Labour Party Conference, one jointly with UnionsTogether and the Trade Union Group of MPs. Speakers at these meetings included Lisa Nandy MP, Ros Wyn-Jones (Mirror), Christine Blower, Louise Haigh PPC, Angela Eagle MP, and many more.

Eve of Gala Rally 'class, power and inequality' @ The Durham Miners' Gala

*Friday 11 July 2014, Durham*

Ahead of the Durham Miners' Gala, Class, the Institute of Employment Rights and the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom, held an evening meeting with expert speakers.

Union Conference Fringes

*GMB Congress: How can unions make work pay? - Monday 9 June 2014, Nottingham*

*Unite Policy Conference: Wealth, Class and Power - Monday 30 June 2014, Liverpool*

*TUC Congress 2014: Challenging Power, Raising Living Standards - Monday 8 September 2014, Liverpool*

**One-day conferences**

Employment Law after the election: what kind of laws do we want?

*Wednesday 11 February 2015, London*

Class supported the IER's one day conference in the run-up to the General Election for trade unionists, academics, lawyers and anyone with an interest in workers' rights and trade union freedoms. Speakers included Len McCluskey, Frances O'Grady and Mark Serwotka.

Class Conference 2014: What Britain Needs

*Saturday 1 November 2014, TUC Congress Centre London*

Class held its second national conference on Saturday 1st November 2014 at TUC Congress House. About 500 delegates joined around 70 of the leading figures in the labour movement for a day of debate and discussion of the most important issues ahead of the 2015 General Election. The conference was incredibly successful - both delegates and speakers said it was one of the best conferences they had attended, or even the only conference they would consider attending.

The conference provided the opportunity to build closer relationships with organisations such as Oxfam, Generation Rent, Friends of the Earth, LGSM and the Family and Childcare Trust. The conference raised Class's national profile with an increase in national media coverage and a stronger social media presence as a result of the conference itself. Promotion in the run up to the day also led to significant engagement with high profile individuals and organisations, extending both our presence and recognition across a wide range of subject and interest areas.

Ultimately, perhaps the most significant outcome is that it has reinforced and further ensured that Class has established itself as a serious, progressive think tank, something which is crucial in building a credible reputation for pushing policies in the lead up to the General Election and beyond.

# Publications

Between April 2014 and the end of March 2015 Class published 24 papers covering the policy areas of the economy, public services, housing, social security, tax, work and pay, health, inequality, education, political reform, legal aid, Europe and many more.

## Publication Releases April 2014 – March 2015



**Essay Series: The First 100 Days: What should a progressive government implement?**

Think piece, 29 April 2015

Contributors included: Dave Prentis, Moussa Haddad (CPAG), Howard Reed, Prof Gemma Moss, Oliver Hayes

(Friends of the Earth), Prof Nicole Busby, Omar Khan (Runnymede Trust).



**Tackling the housing crisis: Alternatives to declining standards, displacement and dispossession**

Policy paper, 7 October 2014

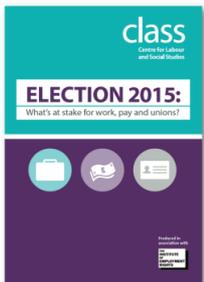
Professor Marjorie Mayo, Ines Newman



**The Great British Rip Off: How to solve the cost of living crisis**

Briefing, 30 September 2014

With Trade Union Group of MPs and unionstogether



**Election 2015 series: 6 briefings covering what's at stake for fairer tax / social security / NHS / economy / housing / work, pay and unions?**

Contributors: Frances O'Grady, Richard Murphy, Allyson Pollock, Ann Pettifor, Frances

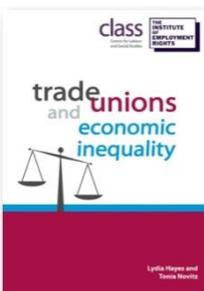
Ryan and many more.



**The role of local government in a modern state**

Policy paper, 18 September 2014

James Murray



**Trade unions and economic inequality**

Briefing, 18 Nov 2014

Dr Lydia Hayes, Prof Tonia Novitz



**Securing a decent deal for workers: Employee representatives on boards**

Think piece, 11 September 2014

Jim Sheridan MP



**Raising our quality of life: The importance of investment in arts and culture**

Policy paper, 12 November 2014

Dr Abigail Gilmore



**State intervention for wage-led development**

Policy paper, 1 September 2014

Professor Özlem Onaran



**In the public interest: The role of the modern state**  
Think piece, 9 August 2014  
Yvonne Roberts



**How can the European left deal with the threat posed by xenophobia?**  
Think piece, 28 April 2014  
Glyn Ford



**Public services: The good, the bad, and the future**  
Policy paper, 16 July 2014  
Professor Roger Seifert



**The politics of curriculum in schools**  
Policy paper, 16 April 2014  
Terry Wrigley



**Renewing Public Ownership: Constructing a Democratic Economy in the 21st Century**  
Policy paper, 9 July 2014  
Professor Andrew Cumbers



**Without Social Europe there can be no Social Britain in our lifetime**  
Think piece, 15 April 2014  
Bernadette Ségol, Jude Kirton-Darling MEP



**The importance of the labour movement in tackling inequality**  
Think piece, 1 July 2014  
Professor Richard Wilkinson,  
Professor Kate Pickett



**Think Big, Think Bold: Why the Left must aim for a radical Pan-European Green New Deal**  
Think piece, 10 April 2014  
Professor Yanis Varoufakis



**State and finance in financialised capitalism**  
Think piece, 12 June 2014  
Professor Costas Lapavistas



**Essay series: Can the European Union deliver for working people?**  
Think piece, 2 April 2014  
John Cryer MP, Billy Hayes, Carolyn Jones, Professor Jonathan Michie, Clare Moody MEP, Claude Moraes MEP

## Website and Social Media

Class has increased its web and social media presence significantly over the past year – not only in terms of quantity, but quality. Class has achieved this by ensuring our social media platforms disseminate current information on policy and aggregate high-quality analysis, alongside live-tweeting key policy debates and announcements. This has enhanced our reputation as a centre for key debates about progressive policy and as a trustworthy source of up-to-date news, information and statistics. But more can and will be done over the next year to drive traffic to the website.

Class has also improved our relationship with supporters via our mailing list. In addition to regular email updates Class send out key policy briefings to subscribers. These briefings provide articles, information and statistics on newsworthy policy developments and are produced in easily downloadable factsheet formats. This year Class produced briefings on the check-off system for union dues and numerous analyses on key election announcements in the run up to the General Election.

**10,537 – Peak monthly visitors to the Class website (compared to 8,980 last year)**  
**58,543 – Total users of Class site over the year (compared to 53,074 last year)**

This year our conference was the most successful tool in attracting visitors to the website. The conference had its own landing page on the site, which included venue information, speakers, seminar titles and ticket costs. Class arranged a great deal of publicity for the conference, all of which redirected users to the website where possible.

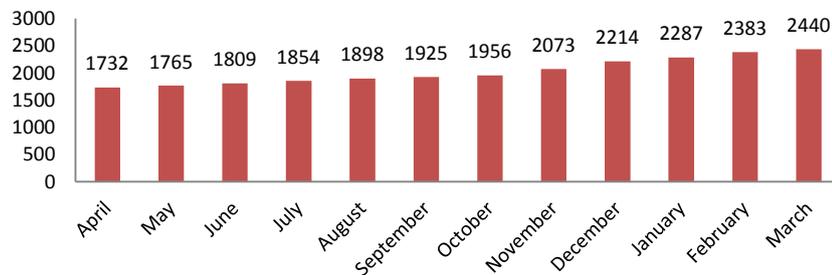
### Social Media

Class has **2,440 likes** on Facebook. At the end of the year our Twitter followers stood at **over 11,190**.

We have also produced a range of infographics which have been very widely circulated and which have contributed to a **33% increase** in Class' twitter engagement rate.

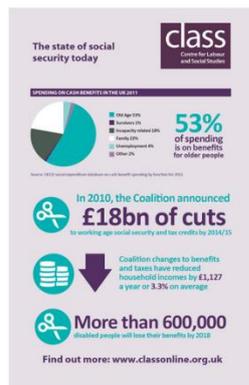
A tweet on social security ahead of the election reached 79,551 people and an NHS tweet reached 67,701.

Facebook likes



class Class @Classthinktank

More than 600,000 disabled people will lose their social security by 2018 under Coalition plans #BattleforNumber10



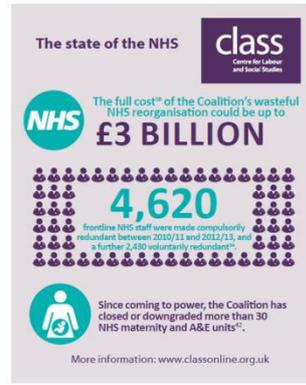
RETWEETS 362

FAVORITES 98



class Class @Classthinktank

Since coming to power the Coalition has closed or downgraded more than 30 maternity & A&E units #BattleForNumber10



RETWEETS 246

FAVORITES 64



# Finance Report 2014-2015

1 April 2014 - 31 March 2015

Income	(£) Actual	(£) Budget	2013-2014
2014 Donations <sup>1</sup>	165,000	169,500	77,510
Unite the Union	100,000 <sup>2</sup>		
GMB	40,000		
ASLEF	2,500		
TSSA	5,000		
NUT	5,000		
Musicians Union	5,000		
UCATT	2,000		
NUM	1,000		
BFAWU	1,500		
UCU	3,000		
Sales	200	-	120
Events	7,730	19,200	14,407
Tickets	3,060	3,000	
Sponsorship	4,000	10,000	
Food	620	800	
Stalls	50	200	
Grants	-	5,000	
Commissioned Work	-	5,000	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>172,930</b>	<b>193,500</b>	<b>92,037</b>

<sup>1</sup> 2014 donations from CWU, PFA and GFTU were paid in the previous year's accounting period.

<sup>2</sup> Includes £50,000 for 2013 donation received in May 2014 and £50,000 for 2014 donation received in November 2014.

Expense	(£) Actual	(£) Budget	2013-2014
Salaries, wages and training	99,351	116,000	72,420
Events	13,114	16,700	15,838
Website and publicity	20,339	19,100	9,313
Travel and subsistence	3,472	1,550	1,442
Office expenses and printing	23,428	11,800	7,935
Professional Fees	4,408	5,000	4,009
Bank Charges and Interest	66	70	62
General Expenses / Contingency	-	20,000	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>164,178</b>	<b>190,220</b>	<b>111,019</b>

<b>Interest</b>	122	72
<b>Taxation</b>	24	14

<b>Net Surplus/Deficit after tax:</b>	8,850	3,280	-18,924
<b>Cash in bank:</b>	15,436		67,217
<b>Reserves:</b>	65,065		