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Innovation & Skills

**TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP 2010**

James Achur



A NATIONAL  
STATISTICS PUBLICATION

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# Foreword

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is responsible, in conjunction with the Office for National Statistics, for publishing the National Statistics on trade union membership.

An annual question on trade union membership was introduced into the Labour Force Survey (LFS) in 1989 and it has been asked in the fourth quarter (Q4) every year since 1992. Questions on trade union presence and recognition were added in 1993, and the question on collective agreements was introduced in 1996.

In the past, trade union membership statistics were published in an annual article in the ONS journal *Labour Market Trends*. This was replaced in 2004 by an annual National Statistic report, of which this is the seventh in the series.

This publication which was prepared by James Achur contains annual estimates of trade union membership from the Labour Force Surveys up to the fourth quarter of 2010 for both employees and all workers.

Estimates are presented on the proportion (density) of people in employment (including self employed) who are trade union members, and for employees whose pay and conditions are affected by collective agreements. We also provide trade union densities by age, gender, ethnicity, income, major occupation, industry, full and part-time employment, sector, nation and region. Industrial sectors are presented based on Standard Industrial Classification 2007 for the first time.

Estimates of trade union membership levels for the UK and the regions split by age, region, gender and sectors can be found in a small number of tables.

Official government statistics on trade union membership have been collected regularly for over a century. Data based on union administrative records began in 1892, compiled by the former Department of Employment until 1974; the Certification Office continued the series thereafter. This series is now presented in this publication.

I hope you find the report useful, and would welcome any comments or feedback you may have.



**Bill Wells**

Deputy Director, Labour Market Analysis and Minimum Wage  
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

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## **Symbols and conventions used**

All figures published in this report come from the fourth quarter (Q4) of each year, unless otherwise specified. Members of the armed forces are excluded from all figures, and unpaid family workers and those on college based schemes are also excluded from the “in employment” population.

Figures presented in all the tables and charts relate to UK employees apart from the following: Tables 1.1 and 1.2 also show information on those “in employment” in the United Kingdom and Great Britain respectively, and Tables 1.3 and 1.4 include information for employees on GB basis.

### **Symbols**

The following symbols are used:

\* sample size too small for a reliable estimate

- indicates data not available.

# Key findings

## 1. Trade union membership: National trends

- Trade union density for employees in the UK fell by 0.8 percentage points to 26.6 per cent in 2010 compared with 2009. Trade union membership levels for UK employees fell by 2.7 per cent (179 thousand) to 6.5 million compared with 2009. By comparison, total UK employment rose by just under a half per cent in the year to 2010.
- Private sector union densities fell by 0.9 percentage points while public sector union density fell by 0.3 percentage points.
- Union density among female employees in the UK fell by 0.1 percentage points to 29.4 per cent in 2010 as the rise in public sector union density of 0.2 percentage points was more than offset by a fall of 0.5 percentage points in the private sector. For male employees union density fell by 1.4 percentage points to 23.8 per cent in 2010 as both private and public sector densities fell at the same rate.

## 2. Trade union membership: Personal, work and job characteristics

- Union density was highest in professional occupations at 43.7 per cent whilst sales occupations had the lowest at 12.9 per cent.
- Females are now generally more likely to be union members than male employees and this relationship holds whether by age, in the public sector, workplace size, job or other individual characteristics.
- Employees of a UK nationality have a higher union density of 27.2 per cent compared with non UK nationals whose union density is 21.3 per cent.

## 3. Trade union membership: Trends over time

- Of the four nations, union densities in 2010 rose in Scotland by 0.5 percentage points to 32.3 per cent compared to 2009, but fell in all other nations by 0.9 percentage points each in England (to 25.2 per cent) and Wales (34.5 per cent), and by 4.2 percentage points in Northern Ireland to 35.7 per cent. Over the last ten years to 2010, trade union densities fell in all nations by around 3 percentage points apart from Wales which showed a fall of around 5 percentage points.
- Amongst the English regions, union densities fell in all regions with the North East recording the largest fall in union density of 7.4 percentage points over the decade whilst the East of England had the smallest fall of 1.0 percentage points.
- Between 2000 and 2010, union density grew in the professional & admin services and wholesale, retail trade and motor repair sectors but fell in all other sectors with water supply, electricity and gas supply sectors recording the sharpest fall of over 15 percentage points each.



#### 4. Trade union presence and collective agreements

- Across all sectors, just under half of UK employees (46.1 per cent in 2010) were in a workplace where a trade union was present – this represents a fall of 0.5 percentage points compared with 2009 and a fall of 2.8 percentage points over the last ten years from 2000. Just over 30 per cent of UK employees said their pay and conditions were affected by a collective agreement, down from 36.4 per cent in 2000.
- Collective agreements covered 16.8 per cent of private sector employees in 2010, a fall of 5.7 percentage points compared with 2000, but in the public sector this was nearly four times greater at 64.5 per cent, although this has fallen by 3.6 percentage points from 2009, and by 9.7 percentage points compared with 2000.

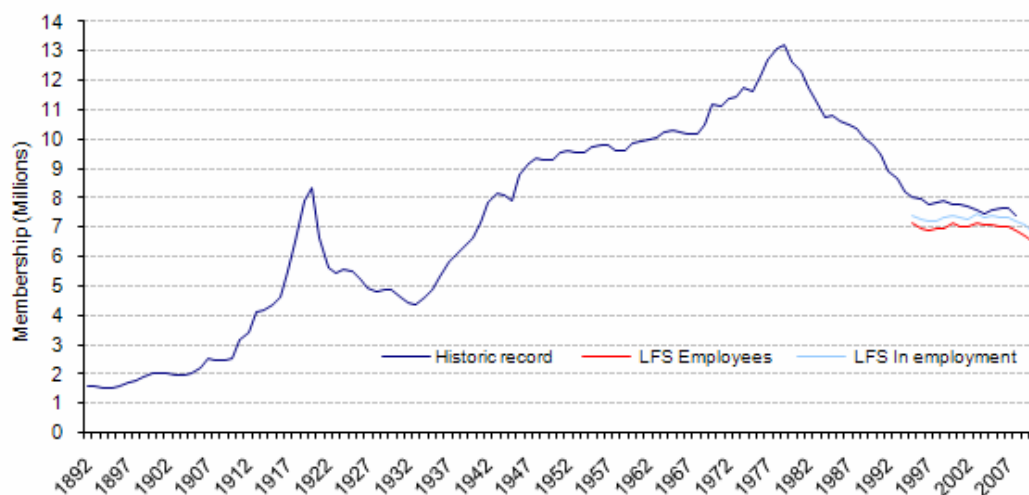
#### 5. Trade union member and non-member comparisons: wages and personal characteristics

- The hourly earnings of union members, according to the LFS, averaged £14.00 in 2010, 16.7 per cent more than the earnings of non-members (£12.00 per hour). Over the last ten years to 2010, the average hourly earnings have shown steady growth in both public and private sectors partly due to inflation. The trade union wage premium in 2010 was higher in the public sector at 21.1 per cent compared with 6.7 per cent in the private sector.
- Public sector employees accounted for 62.4 per cent of union members but only 17.6 per cent of non members. Professional, associated professional and technical occupations account for 45.5 per cent of all union members, although they only account for 22.8 per cent of non members. Overall, these occupations account for 34.1 per cent of all employees.

# 1. Trade union membership: National trends

Chart 1.1 shows that historically trade union membership levels reached their peak in 1979 and declined sharply through the 1980's and early 1990's but stabilised somewhat from the mid 1990s onwards. The trend in the historic series shows some similarity with the more recent LFS series where membership levels have also stabilised since 1995 despite the fact that there are significant methodological differences between the two series.

**Chart 1.1: Trade union membership levels in UK from 1892 to 2010**



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics; Department for Employment (1892-1974); Certification Office (1974-2008/09).

Tables 1.1 and 1.2 show trade union density and membership levels for employees and those in employment in the United Kingdom and in Great Britain respectively. LFS data for the United Kingdom is available from 1995 while for Great Britain it goes back to 1989. This report's focus is mainly on data for the whole of the United Kingdom.

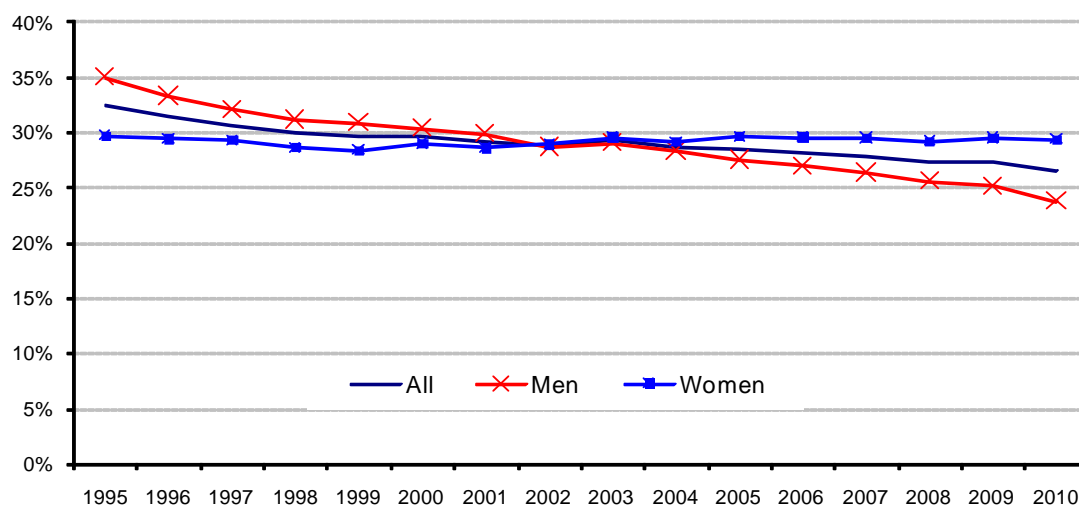
The rate of trade union density for all employees in the United Kingdom fell by 0.8 percentage points to 26.6 in 2010 – this represented a fall in membership of 179 thousand to 6.5 million. By comparison, total UK employment rose by just under a half per cent in the year to 2010.

Table 1.5 presents a longer historic time series on union membership levels back to 1892 using administrative data from the Department for Employment and Certification Office - there are significant methodological differences between these data and the levels reported by the LFS, these are described in Annex A.

Chart 1.2 provides union density for UK employees by gender. In 1995 union density for UK male employees was 35.0 per cent while for females was 29.7 per – this meant that the gap between men and women union densities stood at 5.3 percentage points as men were more likely to be trade union members. The gap showed a steady narrowing until 2001 but from 2002 females union density overtook mens' and the gap continued to widen. In 2010 trade union

density for men fell further by 1.4 percentage points compared with 2009 whilst for females it fell by 0.1 percentage points leading to the gap increasing to 5.6 percentage points in 2010 from 0.3 percentage points in 2002 respectively. This showed that for the ninth consecutive year, women are now more likely than men to be a trade union member. This difference is statistically significant. Table 1.1 shows that union density amongst women employees in the UK.

**Chart 1.2: Trade union density by gender, 1995 to 2010**



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Overall union density in the UK is higher for female employees, because a greater proportion of women (38.1 per cent) work in the public sector compared with only 19.7 per cent of male employees.

Table 1.3 presents trade union density in GB and in UK by gender for public and private sector employees from 1993 to 2010. It shows that trade union density has generally been falling in both sectors during this period.

In 2010, trade union density of public sector employees fell marginally by 0.3 percentage points to 56.3 per cent from 56.6 per cent in 2009, and down 5.0 percentage points compared with 1995. This represented a slight fall in membership of 34 thousand from 2009. For private sector employees, 14.2 per cent were union members, a decline of 0.9 percentage points compared with 2009, and down 7.2 percentage points compared with 1995.

Table 1.4 shows trade union membership levels in GB and in UK by gender for public and private sector employees. In 2010, 2.5 million private sector employees in UK were union members, down 145 thousand (5.6 per cent) from 2.6 million in 2009, and down 930 thousand (27.4 per cent) from 3.4 million in 1995. This contrasts with total private sector employment which showed a slight rise of about a half per cent in the year to 2010.

In the public sector, 4.1 million public sector employees in the UK were union members, down by around 34 thousand compared with 2009, but up by 340 thousand from 3.7 million in 1995. By comparison, total public sector employment also fell slightly by around half per cent over the last year.

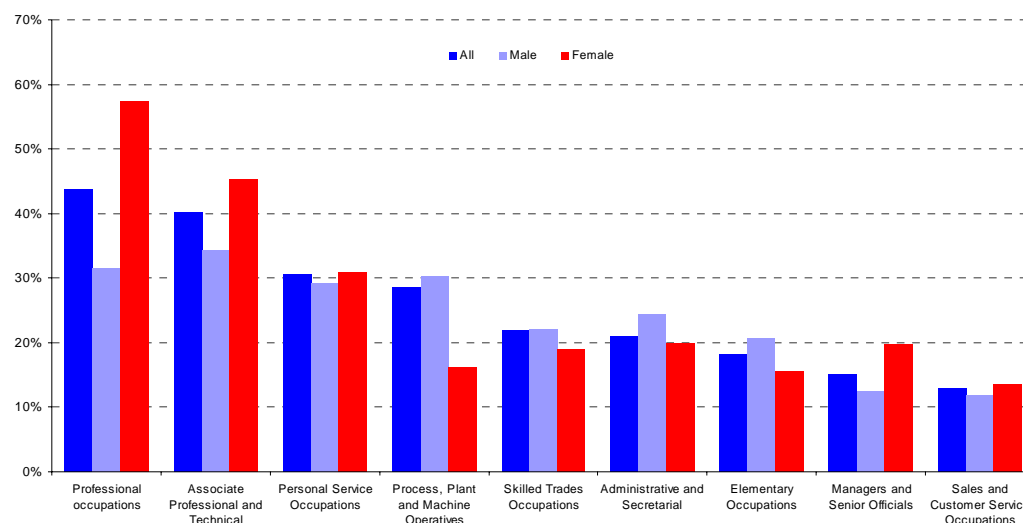
Whilst it is anticipated that the decline in trade union membership might accelerate in the next few years due to planned budget reductions in the public sector it is unclear what the impact on trade union density might be.

There is a clear difference between male and female employees in terms of union membership. In 1995 the gap between men and women stood at around 10 per cent for both the private and public sectors. Since then the gap has shown a steady narrowing but male union density is still higher in the private sector at 17.2 per cent compared to 12.4 per cent for females. However, in the public sector the gap narrowed faster and in 2009 union density for females in the public sector at 56.8 per cent and was marginally higher than for males at 56.2 per cent, and in 2010 this gap rose by 2.1 percentage points.

## 2. Trade union membership: Personal, work and job characteristics

Chart 2.1 shows that union density was highest in professional occupations at 43.7 per cent whilst sales occupations had the lowest at 12.9 per cent.

**Chart 2.1: Trade union density by gender and occupation, 2010**



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

As noted in Chapter 1, females were generally more likely to be union members than male employees and this relationship holds whether by age, in the public sector, workplace size, job or other individual characteristics. The only exceptions were in the private sector, home workers and lower qualified (GCE A level or equivalent and below) employees.

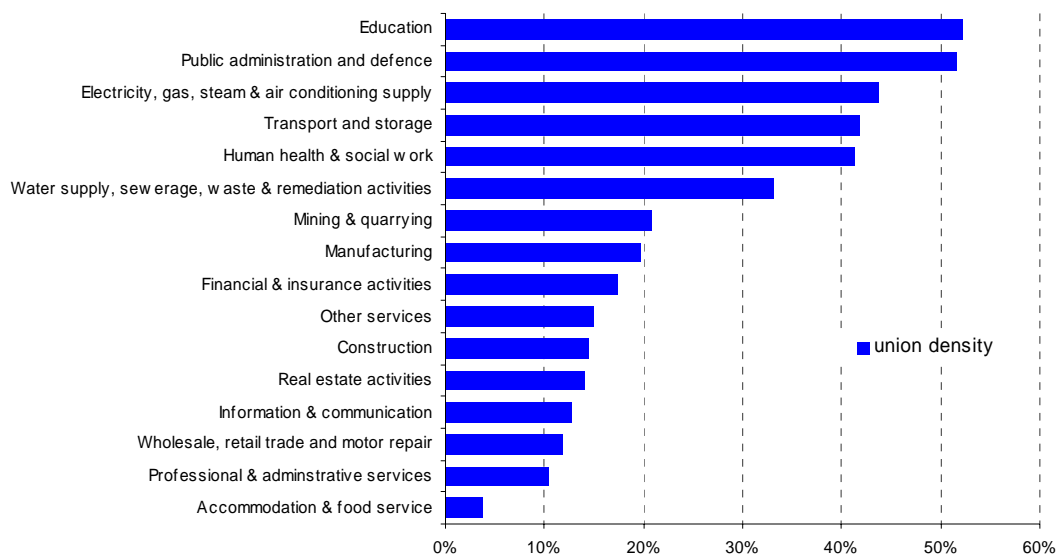
In 2010, full time employees had higher union densities than part timers in nearly all the characteristics listed. The only exceptions were amongst managers or supervisor, employees with a degree, and lower income earners. Similarly, permanent employees were more likely than those in temporary job to be union members in all categories of employment.

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 give union density for UK employees by gender, full-time/part-time and permanent/ temporary status for a number of personal, work and job characteristics like age, sector, occupation and industry.

Chart 2.2 shows trade union density by industry. Education and public administration and had the highest rates of union density at around 52.0 per cent each whilst accommodation and food services (3.8 per cent) had the lowest.

Men had the highest trade union density in public administration and defence whilst for women this was in education at around 53 per cent each. Females had higher union densities compared to men only in 4 out of 16 sectors: the financial sector, wholesale and retail trade, real estate activities and in accommodation & food services.

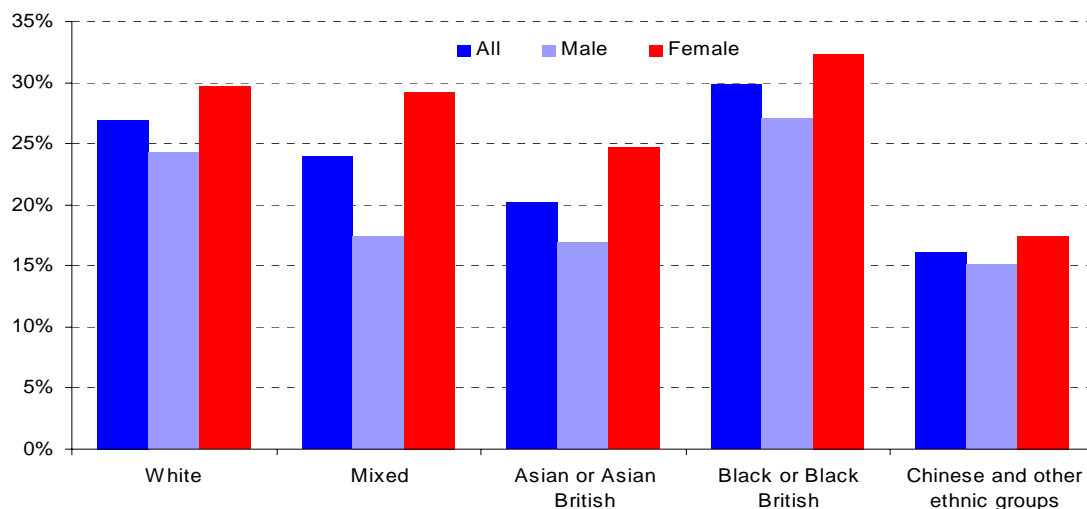
**Chart 2.2: Trade union density by industry, 2010**



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Chart 2.3 shows that union density was highest in black or black British employees at 29.8 per cent in 2010, this was followed by “white” employees at 27.0 per cent and by “mixed ethnic background” employees at 23.9 per cent. Chinese and other ethnic groups had the lowest union density at just 16.1 per cent – analysis by gender showed similar pattern.

**Chart 2.3: Trade union density by ethnicity, 2010**



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Employees of a UK nationality have a higher union density of 27.2 per cent compared with non UK nationals at 21.3 per cent. Similarly, UK born employees had higher union density (27.5 per cent) than non UK born (20.3 per cent).

Trade union density stood at just over a third (35.3 per cent) for employees at larger workplaces (with more than 50 employees) compared with 17.1 per cent for those with fewer than 50 employees.

Across all managerial statuses women had higher union densities than men. For all employees, the difference in union density between managerial and non-managerial jobs was fairly small, with 27.7 per cent of employees in managerial positions being union members, compared with 24.7 per cent of employees in non-managerial positions. It is worth noting that union density is greater in employees in managerial positions working part time than working full time (30.8 per cent compared with 27.3 per cent).

Union density is higher for permanent employees (28.6 per cent) when compared with temporary employees (21.2 per cent). This difference also exists when looking at male and female employees and whether they work in the public or private sector.

Employees, who have a degree or have been through higher education equivalent to NVQ level 4, reported higher rates of union membership, 33.6 and 37.6 per cent respectively. Female employees with a degree had a significantly higher union density (42.0 per cent) than their male counterpart at 25.2 per cent.

Middle-income earners were more likely to be union members than either low paid or highly paid employees. Employees earning between £500 and £999 per week reported higher union densities (38.5 per cent) than those earning either less than £250 per week (13.6 per cent) or £1,000 or more per week (19.5 per cent).

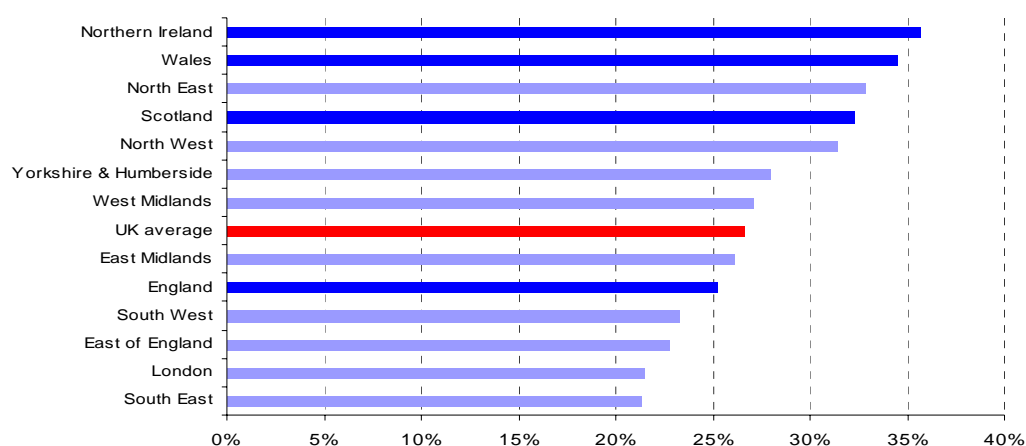
### 3. Trade union membership: Trends over time

Chart 3.1 shows trade union density by nation and government office regions in 2010. Amongst nations, Northern Ireland had the highest union density (35.7 per cent of employees); this was followed by Wales (34.5 per cent) and Scotland (32.3 per cent) whilst England had the lowest (25.2 per cent).

Of the four nations, union densities in 2010 rose in Scotland by 0.5 percentage points to 32.3 per cent compared to 2009, but fell in all other nations by 0.9 percentage points each in England (to 25.2 per cent) and Wales (34.5 per cent), and by 4.2 percentage points in Northern Ireland to 35.7 per cent.

Among the English regions, the North East continued to have the highest union density (32.8 per cent) whereas London and the South East had the lowest (around 21.0 per cent). Four regions: the North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber and West Midlands had higher union density than the UK average.

**Chart 3.1: Trade union density by nation and region, 2010**



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

In the last ten years to 2010, trade union densities fell in all nations by around 3 percentage points apart from Wales which showed a fall of around 5 percentage points.

Amongst the English regions, the East of England recorded the smallest fall in union density of 1.0 percentage points in 2010 compared with 2009 followed by the South East (1.4 percentage points) whilst the North East had the sharpest fall of 7.4 percentage points.

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 show union density and union membership levels respectively by nation and regions from 1995 to 2010. Over the last ten years to 2010, trade union membership levels in England fell by 514 thousand and in Wales and Scotland fell by some 30 thousand each but in Northern Ireland it fell by only 3 thousand employees.

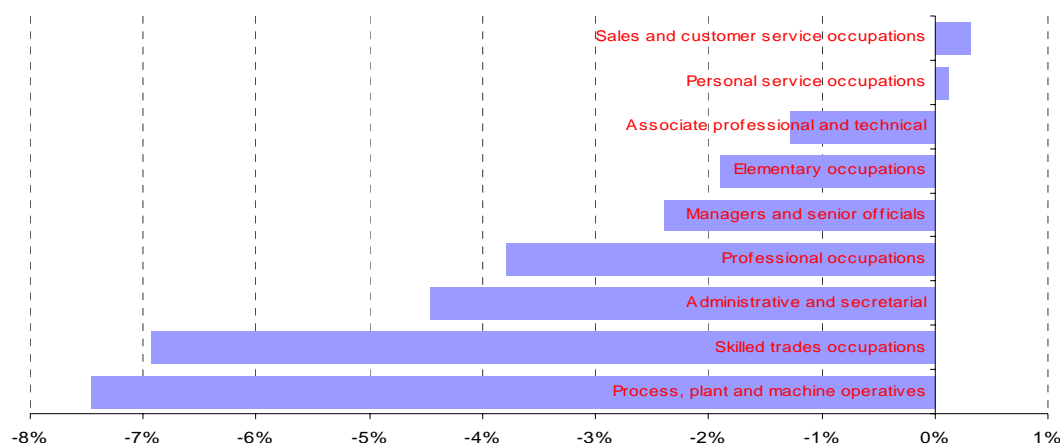


Similarly trade union membership fell in all of the English regions ranging from the East of England and South East by around 20 thousand to the North West which recorded falls of 123 thousand.

Chart 3.2 shows changes in union density by occupation between 2002 and 2010. From 2001, the occupational classifications were switched from SOC90 to SOC2000 and ONS introduced some methodological changes which meant that figures prior to 2002 are not comparable – see Annex A for further details. Over this period, union density grew marginally only in sales and personal service occupations by 0.3 and 0.1 percentage points respectively but fell in all other occupations ranging from associate professionals down to skilled trades and operatives by around 7.0 percentage points each.

Over the last decade, trade union density fell in all age groups except 55 to 59 group.

**Chart 3.2: Change in trade union density by occupation (percentage point change from 2002 to 2010)**



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Table 3.3 shows union density by major occupation groups and gender for all UK employees from 2002 to 2009.

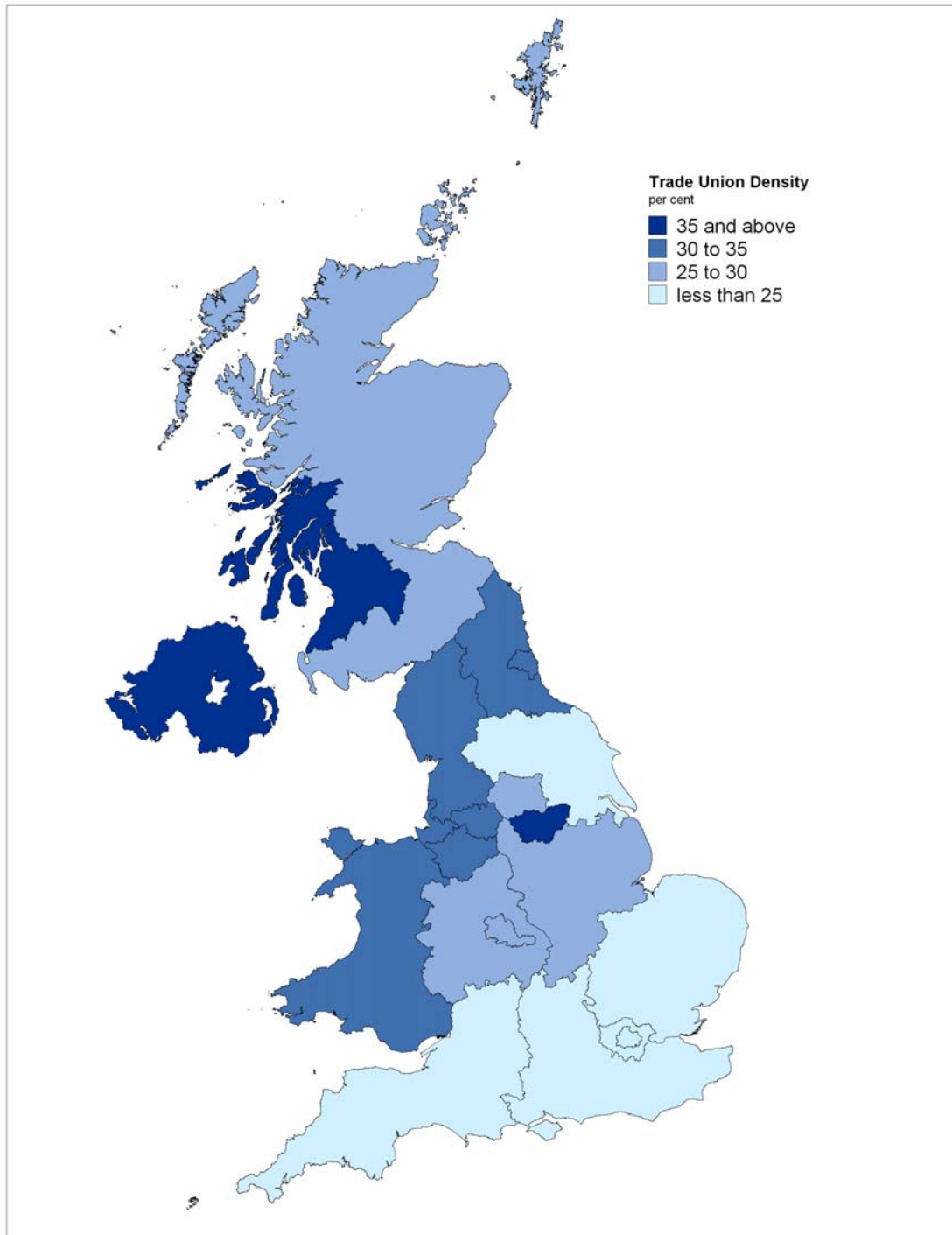
Interpreting changes in union density by industry over the last decade is not straightforward as the ONS switched to the new Standard Industrial Classification 2007 from January 2009 onwards. To facilitate comparisons ONS developed a program which maps SIC 1992 codes to SIC 2007 and certain assumptions were made where it was not possible to do one to one matching. ONS has undertaken some analysis based on comparing Q4 2008 (the last occasion when SIC92 was used) and Q1 2009 (when SIC 2007 was first used) to assess the impact of implementing SIC 2007 on historical series. This showed that some adjustments are required to overcome step changes arising from switching from SIC92 to SIC 2007. For example manufacturing sector which is traditionally seen as having large union members showed a contraction of 9 per cent – see more details in Annex A.

Table 3.4 shows union density by industry from 1994 to 2010. This shows that over the last decade, union density grew only in real estate activities sector and to a lesser extent professional & administrative services and wholesale,

retail trade and motor repair sectors but fell in all other industries. The sharpest fall in union density was in water supply, electricity and gas supply, financial & insurance activities and the mining industry (down around 15 percentage points) whilst public sector industries fell by under 5 percentage points.

Table 3.5 shows union density by gender and age groups from 1995 to 2010 and Chart 3.3 shows union density across the regions of the UK.

**Chart 3.3: Trade union density of UK employees, 2010**



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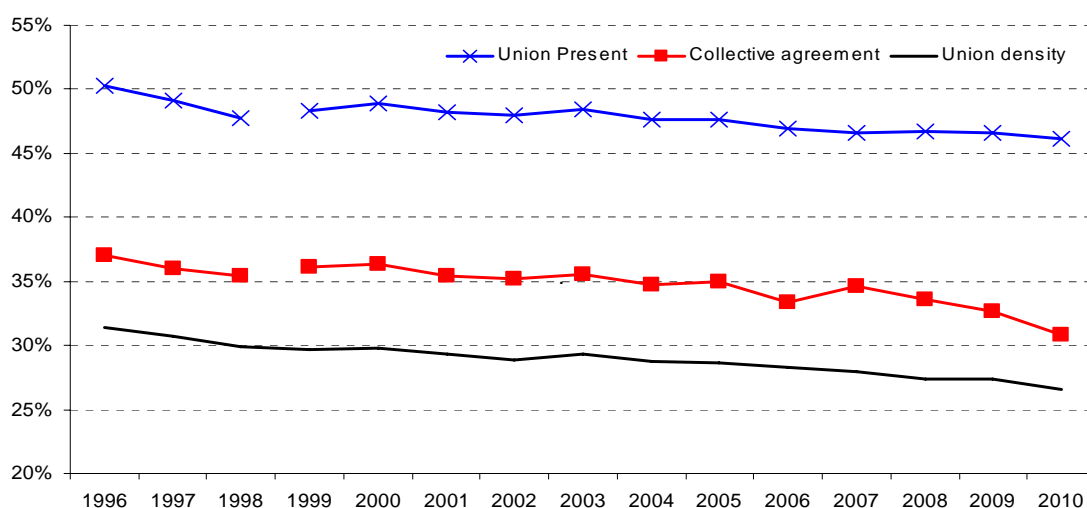
Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

## 4. Trade union presence and collective agreements

Chart 4.1 shows trade union density, collective agreement coverage and union presence in the workplace for UK employees from 1996 to 2010. Prior to 1996 no information was collected centrally on collective agreements – see Annex A for further details.

Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 provide data on trade union presence and collective agreement coverage for UK employees. Union presence is defined as the proportion of employees whose workplace has a union present and collective agreement is defined as the proportion of employees whose pay and conditions are agreed in negotiations between the employer and a trade union. Note that there was a break in the time-series in 1999 due to changes in the structure of trade union presence and collective agreement questions - Annex A gives explanation for change on routing questions.

**Chart 4.1: Union density, collective agreement coverage and union presence in the workplace, 1996 to 2010\***



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

\*results for 1998 and earlier were routed differently in the LFS questionnaire. This substantially affected the estimate

In 2010, 46.1 per cent of employees reported that trade unions were present in their workplaces, a fall of 2.8 percentage points from 2000. Trade union presence in workplaces was nearly three times higher amongst public sector employees compared with the private sector at 85.7 and 29.6 per cent respectively. The gap between the sectors was even higher for collective agreements coverage at 64.5 per cent for public sector against 16.8 per cent for the private sector. But these represent only a slight decline in union presence since 2000 for both private and public sector workplaces of 5.3 and 2.1 percentage points respectively.

Table 4.1 also shows the number and proportion of UK employees whose pay and conditions are affected by collective agreements from 1996 to 2010. As discussed above, this could be said to mirror union presence somewhat.

Chart 4.2 shows trade union presence in the workplace for UK employees in 2010. Of the nations, Wales had the largest percentage of employees where a trade union was present in the workplace at 54.8 per cent whilst England had the lowest at 45.1 per cent. Amongst the English regions, North East had the highest (51.8) percentage of employees with trade union at their workplaces and the lowest was in London and the South East at just over 40.0 per cent each.

Public administration and defence industry and education employees had the highest trade union presence at their workplaces of around 82.0 per cent each, whilst accommodation and food service industry had the lowest at 10.0 per cent. The pattern for coverage of collective agreements within industry was similar.

Table 4.2 shows union density, trade union presence and coverage of collective agreements for UK employees by sector, industry, workplace size and region in 2010.

Chart 4.3 shows trade union collective agreement coverage for UK employees in 2010. This shows that Northern Ireland had the highest proportion of employees covered at 42.4 per cent, a fall of 5.3 percentage points compared with 2009, while London had the lowest coverage at 24.8 per cent, a fall of 1.6 percentage points compared with 2009.

Full-time employees had a higher proportion of collective agreement coverage at 32.4 per cent compared with part-time employees at 26.5 per cent. Similarly, collective agreement coverage was higher for permanent employees at 31.1 per cent compared with temporary employees at 25.7 per cent. There was a marginal decline in collective agreement coverage for all characteristics compared with 2009.

As noted before, females had higher collective agreement coverage than males and this held true whether on full-time/ part-time and permanent/ temporary basis.

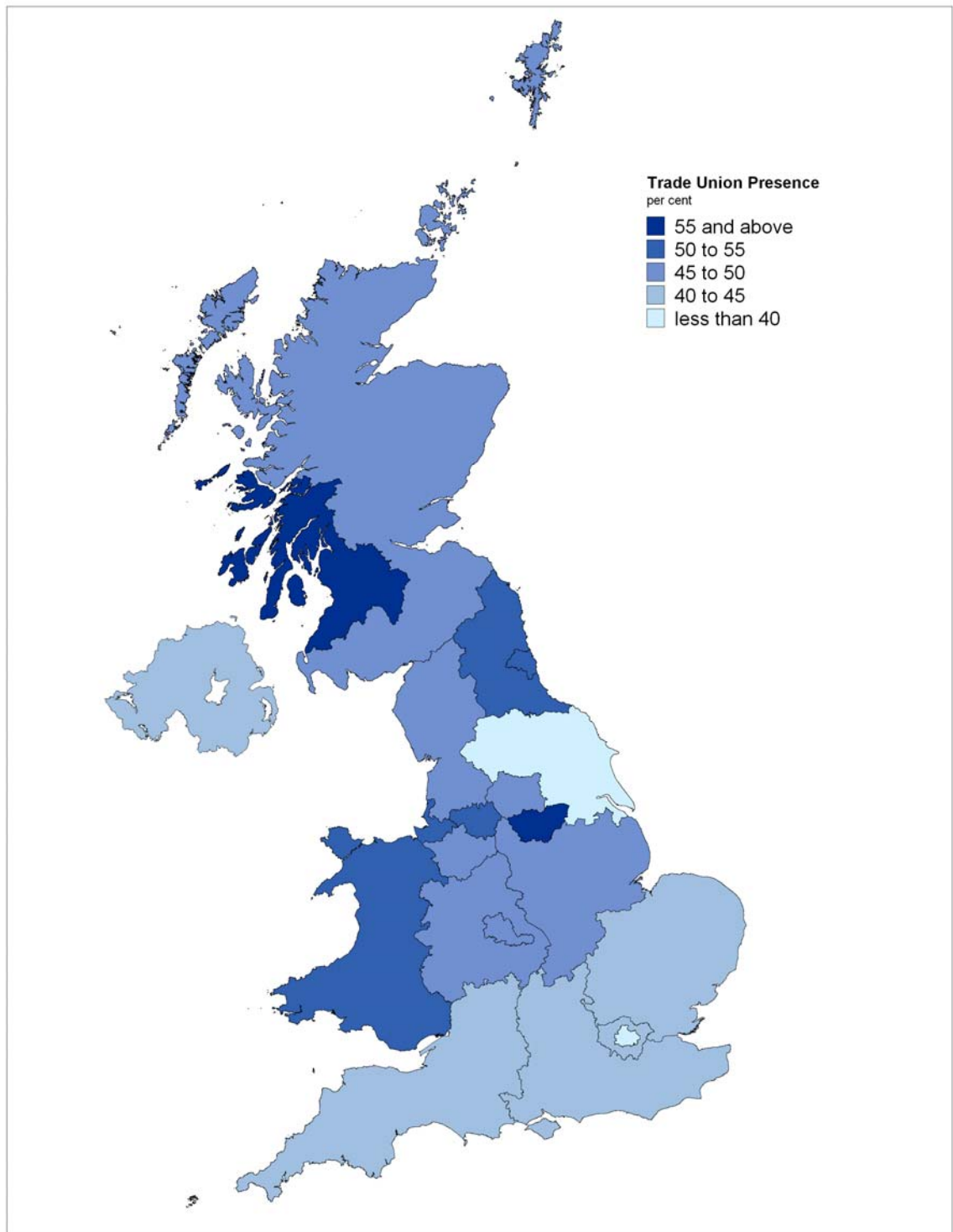
Collective agreement coverage was four and a half times greater for union members than for non-members, at 70.9 and 15.5 per cent respectively.

Workplaces with more than 50 employees had higher collective agreement coverage at 42.9 per cent than those workplaces with less than 50 employees (17.7 per cent).

Within industry, smaller sample sizes prevents detailed comparisons of collective agreement coverage for part time and temporary employees but the broad patterns of highest coverage in public administration and defence industry and lowest in hotels follow those for all employees.

Table 4.3 shows the coverage of collective agreements for UK employees in 2010 for full-time/part-time and permanent/temporary employees by gender, union membership, sector, workplace size and industry.

**Chart 4.2: Trade union presence in the workplace, 2010**



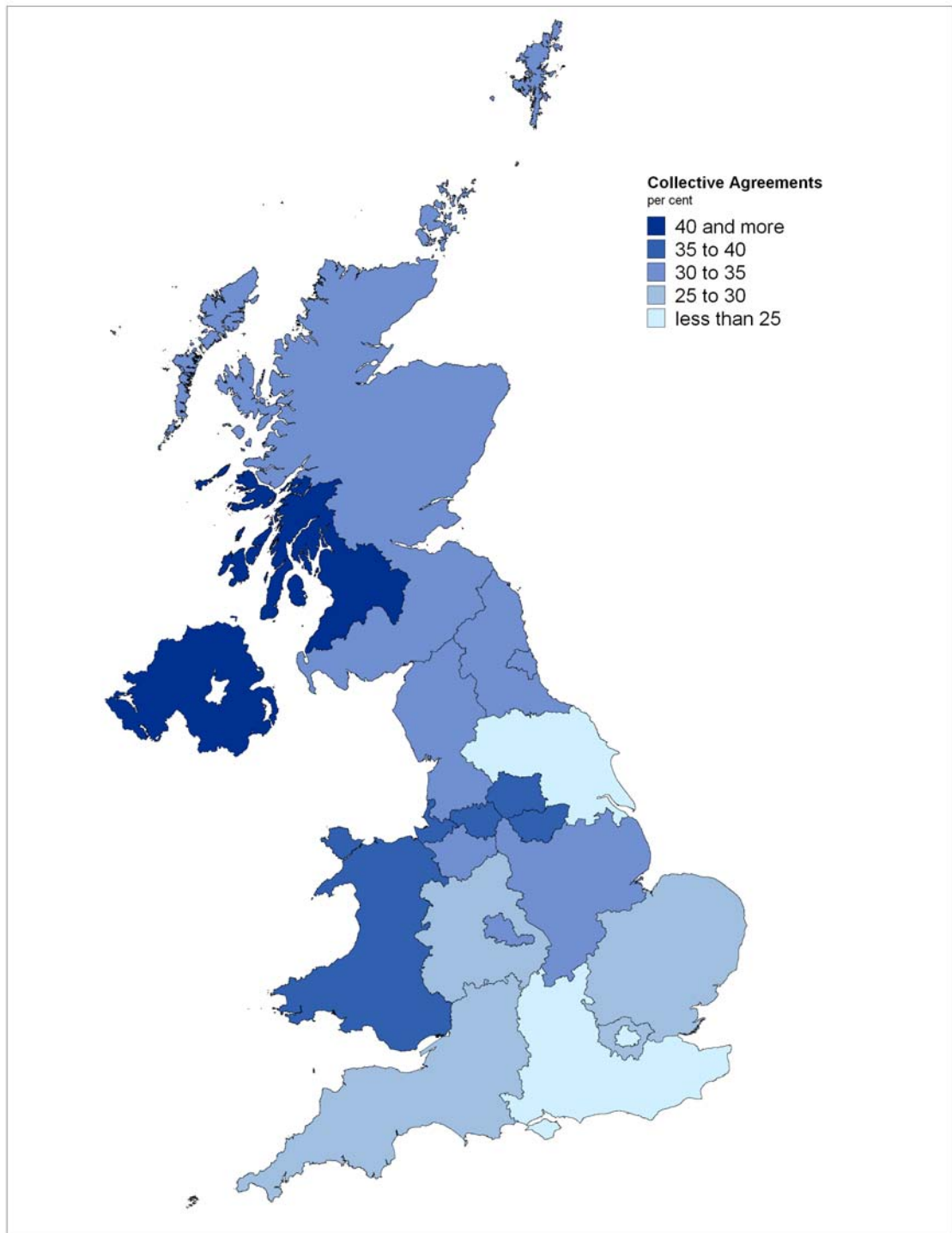
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Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

**Chart 4.3: Trade union collective agreement coverage, 2010**



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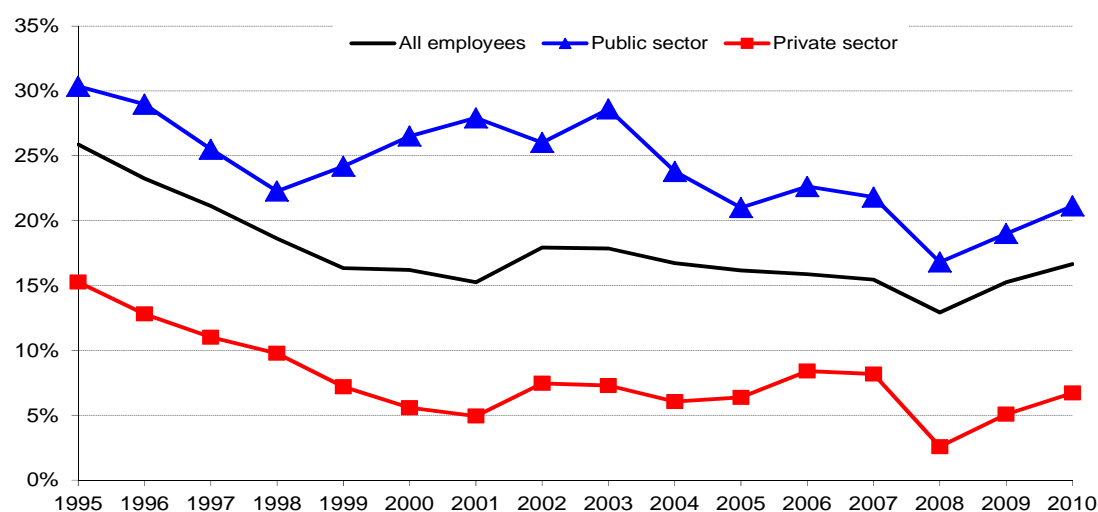


Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

## 5. Trade union member and non-member comparisons: wages and personal characteristics

Chart 5.1 shows that union wage premium is much larger for public sector employees than those in the private sector. Union wage premium is defined as the percentage difference in average hourly earnings of union members compared with non-members. In 2010, hourly wage rates for public sector employees were 21.1 per cent higher among union members than non-members compared with only 6.7 per cent in the private sector. Over the last ten years to 2010, the wage premium for all employees fell to the lowest level during recession in 2008 but it picked up in 2009 and continued to rise in 2010 by around 2 percentage points for both the public and private sector employees.

**Chart 5.1: Average union wage premium, 1995 to 2010\***



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

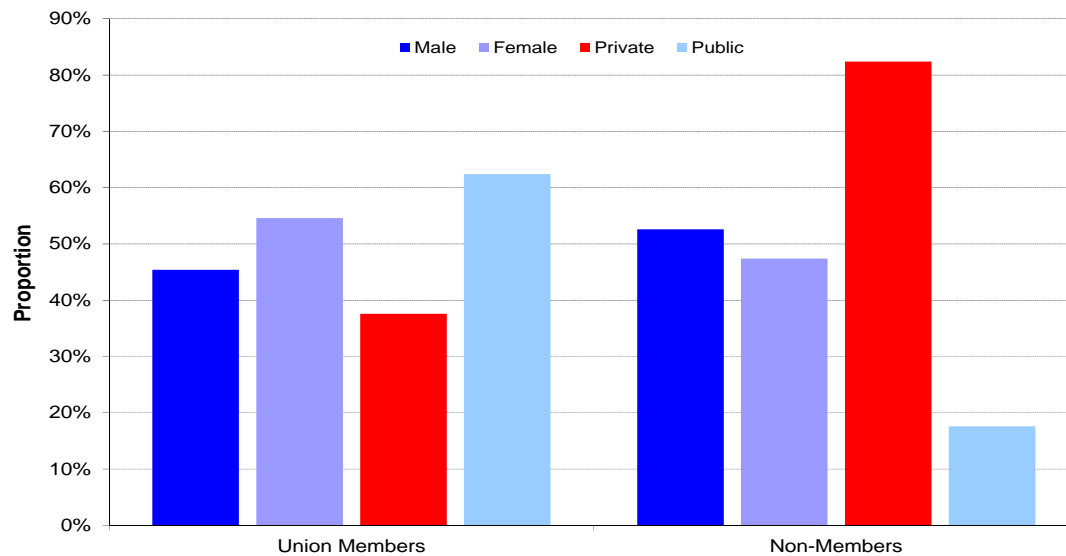
\*Percentage difference in average hourly earnings of union members compared with non-members.

Table 5.1 shows average hourly earnings by trade union membership for UK employees from 1995 to 2010, by sector. Union members earn a higher hourly rate on average than non-members. The hourly earnings of union members averaged £14.00 in 2010, 16.7 per cent more than the average hourly earnings of £12.00 paid to non-members.

It should be noted, however, that such raw estimates fail to adjust for various differences in characteristics, such as age and education levels, which will partly account for these differences in earnings.



**Chart 5.2: Characteristics of union members compared with non members, 2010**



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Table 5.2 gives the characteristics of union members and non-members for 2010. It shows that females accounted for 54.6 per cent of union members but only 47.4 per cent of non union members. Public sector employees accounted for 62.4 per cent of union members but only 17.6 per cent of non union members.

Just under four fifths (77.9 per cent) of union members work full-time, whilst 22.1 per cent work part-time. This split was broadly similar for non-members.

Employees aged 35 to 49 accounted for 43.1 per cent of union members, whereas employees aged 16 to 24 only accounted for only 4.8 per cent.

UK nationals accounted for 95.3 per cent of union members, and for 91.1 per cent of non union members.

Employees who are classified as being disabled make up 18.5 per cent of union members. This is higher than for non members and for all employees at around 14 per cent.

Professional, associated professional and technical occupations account for 45.5 per cent of union members but only for 22.8 per cent of non members.

The education and human health and social work industries each account for around a fifth of union members but only for 7.9 and 11.4 per cent of non union members respectively.

# Main Tables

## 1.1 Trade union density and membership levels, United Kingdom, 1995 to 2010<sup>a</sup>

Thousands and per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	Employees		In employment	
	Members ('000's)	Density (per cent)	Members ('000's)	Density (per cent)
<b>People</b>				
1995	7,125	32.4	7,424	28.8
1999	6,981	29.7	7,304	27.1
2000	7,120	29.8	7,418	27.2
2001	7,046	29.3	7,349	26.7
2002	7,025	28.8	7,300	26.3
2003	7,115	29.3	7,447	26.6
2004	7,061	28.8	7,353	26.0
2005	7,056	28.6	7,371	25.9
2006	7,021	28.3	7,359	25.6
2007	7,005	28.0	7,334	25.3
2008	6,878	27.4	7,219	24.9
2009	6,715	27.4	7,054	24.7
2010	6,536	26.6	6,854	23.9
Change from 1995	-589	-5.8	-570	-4.9
Change from 2009	-179	-0.8	-200	-0.8
<b>Men</b>				
1995	3,927	35.0	4,157	29.7
1999	3,749	30.9	3,980	27.2
2000	3,752	30.4	3,952	26.8
2001	3,693	29.9	3,917	26.3
2002	3,604	28.7	3,790	25.1
2003	3,611	29.1	3,844	25.4
2004	3,563	28.4	3,760	24.6
2005	3,474	27.6	3,711	24.1
2006	3,430	27.0	3,649	23.5
2007	3,379	26.4	3,606	23.0
2008	3,278	25.6	3,522	22.5
2009	3,121	25.2	3,344	22.0
2010	2,976	23.8	3,188	20.7
Change from 1995	-951	-11.2	-969	-9.0
Change from 2009	-145	-1.4	-156	-1.3
<b>Women</b>				
1995	3,198	29.7	3,267	27.8
1999	3,232	28.4	3,324	27.0
2000	3,367	29.1	3,465	27.7
2001	3,352	28.6	3,432	27.2
2002	3,420	29.0	3,511	27.6
2003	3,504	29.6	3,603	28.0
2004	3,498	29.2	3,593	27.6
2005	3,582	29.6	3,660	27.9
2006	3,591	29.6	3,710	28.1
2007	3,625	29.6	3,728	27.9
2008	3,599	29.3	3,697	27.6
2009	3,593	29.5	3,709	27.8
2010	3,560	29.4	3,666	27.5
Change from 1995	362	-0.3	399	-0.3
Change from 2009	-33	-0.1	-43	-0.3

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

<sup>a</sup> Year on year changes are subject to rounding error.

## 1.2 Trade union density and membership levels, Great Britain, 1995 to 2010<sup>a</sup>

Thousands and per cent, not seasonally adjusted

People	Employees		In employment	
	Members ('000's)	Density (per cent)	Members ('000's)	Density (per cent)
1995	6,904	32.2	7,192	28.6
1999	6,765	29.5	7,081	26.9
2000	6,892	29.5	7,185	27.0
2001	6,802	29.0	7,099	26.5
2002	6,769	28.5	7,038	26.0
2003	6,883	29.1	7,207	26.4
2004	6,816	28.5	7,092	25.8
2005	6,804	28.3	7,104	25.6
2006	6,769	28.0	7,095	25.4
2007	6,747	27.6	7,065	25.0
2008	6,647	27.2	6,975	24.7
2009	6,460	27.0	6,780	24.4
2010	6,310	26.3	6,616	23.7
Change from 1995	-594	-5.9	-576	-4.9
Change from 2009	-150	-0.7	-164	-0.7
<b>Men</b>				
1995	3,811	34.8	4,030	29.6
1999	3,635	30.7	3,861	27.1
2000	3,635	30.2	3,829	26.6
2001	3,572	29.6	3,788	26.2
2002	3,474	28.4	3,655	24.9
2003	3,499	28.9	3,726	25.2
2004	3,441	28.1	3,624	24.4
2005	3,356	27.3	3,579	23.9
2006	3,317	26.7	3,527	23.3
2007	3,252	26.1	3,468	22.7
2008	3,181	25.5	3,413	22.4
2009	3,011	25.0	3,219	21.8
2010	2,875	23.6	3,078	20.5
Change from 1995	-936	-11.2	-952	-9.1
Change from 2009	-136	-1.4	-141	-1.3
<b>Women</b>				
1995	3,093	29.5	3,162	27.6
1999	3,129	28.2	3,220	26.8
2000	3,257	28.8	3,356	27.5
2001	3,230	28.3	3,311	26.9
2002	3,295	28.6	3,383	27.2
2003	3,383	29.3	3,481	27.7
2004	3,375	28.9	3,467	27.4
2005	3,448	29.3	3,525	27.6
2006	3,452	29.2	3,568	27.7
2007	3,496	29.3	3,597	27.7
2008	3,466	29.0	3,562	27.4
2009	3,449	29.1	3,561	27.4
2010	3,435	29.2	3,538	27.3
Change from 1995	342	-0.3	376	-0.3
Change from 2009	-14	0.1	-23	-0.1

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

<sup>a</sup> Year on year changes are subject to rounding error.

## 1.3 Trade union density by sector, 1995 to 2010<sup>a</sup>

Per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	United Kingdom			Great Britain		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
<b>Private sector</b>						
1995	21.4	26.3	15.4	21.3	26.1	15.3
1999	19.0	22.9	13.9	18.9	22.8	13.8
2000	18.8	22.3	14.1	18.7	22.1	14.1
2001	18.4	21.9	13.9	18.3	21.7	13.7
2002	17.7	21.0	13.4	17.6	20.9	13.3
2003	18.2	21.0	14.4	18.1	21.0	14.3
2004	17.3	20.6	12.8	17.1	20.5	12.7
2005	16.9	19.5	13.4	16.8	19.3	13.4
2006	16.5	19.1	13.1	16.4	19.0	12.9
2007	16.1	18.5	12.8	15.9	18.3	12.8
2008	15.5	17.6	12.7	15.4	17.6	12.6
2009	15.1	17.2	12.4	14.9	16.9	12.2
2010	14.2	15.9	11.9	15.7	14.0	11.8
Change from 1995	-7.2	-10.4	-3.5	-5.6	-12.1	-3.5
Change from 2009	-0.9	-1.3	-0.5	0.8	-2.9	-0.4
<b>Public sector</b>						
1995	61.3	67.9	57.0	61.1	67.9	56.8
1999	59.9	66.3	56.3	59.8	66.2	56.2
2000	60.3	65.7	57.3	60.1	65.5	56.9
2001	59.7	66.3	56.2	59.4	66.1	55.8
2002	59.8	63.7	57.7	59.3	63.2	57.2
2003	59.4	64.6	56.7	59.2	64.4	56.4
2004	58.7	61.9	57.1	58.4	61.6	56.7
2005	58.2	60.6	56.9	57.7	60.4	56.3
2006	58.7	61.0	57.5	58.3	60.6	57.1
2007	59.0	61.3	57.8	58.6	60.9	57.5
2008	57.1	58.7	56.3	56.8	58.5	55.8
2009	56.6	56.2	56.8	56.3	56.0	56.4
2010	56.3	54.9	57.0	56.0	54.7	56.7
Change from 1995	-5.0	-13.0	0.0	-5.1	-13.2	-0.1
Change from 2009	-0.3	-1.3	0.2	-0.3	-1.3	0.3

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

<sup>a</sup> Year on year changes are subject to rounding error.

## 1.4 Trade union membership levels by sector, 1995 to 2010<sup>a</sup>

Thousands, not seasonally adjusted

	United Kingdom			Great Britain		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
<b>Private sector</b>						
1995	3,397	2,320	1,077	3,308	2,260	1,048
1999	3,313	2,270	1,043	3,223	2,211	1,012
2000	3,309	2,240	1,069	3,216	2,173	1,043
2001	3,278	2,220	1,058	3,175	2,152	1,023
2002	3,191	2,164	1,027	3,099	2,103	996
2003	3,214	2,127	1,087	3,130	2,073	1,056
2004	3,057	2,095	961	2,967	2,035	932
2005	2,996	1,980	1,017	2,906	1,917	989
2006	2,970	1,974	996	2,876	1,917	959
2007	2,914	1,926	988	2,823	1,863	960
2008	2,787	1,816	971	2,708	1,767	941
2009	2,612	1,687	926	2,510	1,623	887
2010	2,467	1,583	884	2,378	1,526	852
Change from 1995	-930	-737	-193	-930	-734	-196
Change from 2009	-145	-104	-42	-132	-97	-35
<b>Public sector</b>						
1995	3,728	1,607	2,121	3,596	1,551	2,045
1999	3,668	1,479	2,189	3,542	1,425	2,117
2000	3,811	1,513	2,298	3,676	1,462	2,214
2001	3,768	1,473	2,294	3,627	1,420	2,207
2002	3,834	1,440	2,394	3,670	1,371	2,299
2003	3,901	1,484	2,418	3,753	1,426	2,327
2004	4,005	1,468	2,537	3,849	1,406	2,443
2005	4,060	1,495	2,565	3,898	1,440	2,458
2006	4,051	1,456	2,595	3,893	1,400	2,493
2007	4,091	1,453	2,638	3,925	1,389	2,536
2008	4,091	1,463	2,628	3,939	1,414	2,525
2009	4,102	1,435	2,667	3,951	1,388	2,562
2010	4,068	1,393	2,676	3,932	1,349	2,583
Change from 1995	340	-214	555	336	-202	538
Change from 2009	-34	-42	9	-19	-39	21

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

<sup>a</sup> Year on year changes are subject to rounding error.

## 1.5 Trade union membership, 1892 to 2008/09

Thousands

Trade union members		Trade union members	
1892	1,576	1951	9,535
1893	1,559	1952	9,588
1894	1,530	1953	9,527
1895	1,504	1954	9,566
1896	1,608	1955	9,741
1897	1,731	1956	9,778
1898	1,752	1957	9,829
1899	1,911	1958	9,639
1900	2,022	1959	9,623
1901	2,025	1960	9,835
1902	2,013	1961	9,916
1903	1,994	1962	10,014
1904	1,967	1963	10,067
1905	1,997	1964	10,218
1906	2,210	1965	10,325
1907	2,513	1966	10,259
1908	2,485	1967	10,191
1909	2,477	1968	10,193
1910	2,565	1969	10,472
1911	3,139	1970	11,179
1912	3,416	1971	11,128
1913	4,135	1972	11,350
1914	4,145	1973	11,444
1915	4,359	1974	11,755
1916	4,644	1974	11,044
1917	5,499	1975	11,656
1918	6,533	1976	12,133
1919	7,926	1977	12,719
1920	8,348	1978	13,054
1921	6,633	1979	13,212
1922	5,625	1980	12,636
1923	5,429	1981	12,311
1924	5,544	1982	11,744
1925	5,506	1983	11,300
1926	5,219	1984	10,774
1927	4,919	1985	10,819
1928	4,806	1986	10,598
1929	4,858	1987	10,480
1930	4,842	1988	10,387
1931	4,624	1989	10,044
1932	4,444	1990	9,810
1933	4,392	1991	9,489
1934	4,590	1992	8,929
1935	4,867	1993	8,666
1936	5,295	1994	8,231
1937	5,842	1995	8,031
1938	6,053	1996	7,938
1939	6,298	1997	7,801
1940	6,613	1998	7,852
1941	7,165	1999-2000	7,898
1942	7,867	2000-2001	7,779
1943	8,174	2001-2002	7,751
1944	8,087	2002-2003	7,736
1945	7,875	2003-2004	7,559
1946	8,803	2004-2005	7,473
1947	9,145	2005-2006	7,603
1948	9,362	2006-2007	7,628
1949	9,318	2007-2008	7,656
1950	9,289	2008-2009	7,388

Source: 1892-1974 - Department of Employment Statistics Division; 1974-2008/09 - Certification Office  
 See Annex A for more detail on this series, and page 24 of CO's latest report at  
[http://www.certoffice.org/Publications/Annual-Reports/annual-reports/2010\\_full-report-for-website.aspx](http://www.certoffice.org/Publications/Annual-Reports/annual-reports/2010_full-report-for-website.aspx)

## 2.1 Trade union density by gender, full/ part time and permanent/ temporary status, 2010

Per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	All	Gender		Full-time / part-time status		Permanent / temporary jobs	
		Male	Female	Full-time	Part-time	Permanent	Temporary
<b>All employees</b>	26.6	23.8	29.4	28.6	21.2	27.2	17.3
<b>Age bands</b>							
16 to 24	9.6	9.2	9.9	10.0	7.2	12.8	4.9
25 to 34	21.0	17.7	24.7	21.3	17.0	21.5	18.6
35 to 49	30.9	27.5	34.3	31.3	23.4	32.0	27.6
50 plus	33.4	31.3	35.4	33.9	24.6	37.2	25.7
<b>Sector</b>							
Private	14.2	15.9	11.9	14.6	7.4	16.2	8.6
Public	56.3	54.9	57.0	58.4	32.8	61.1	45.9
<b>Occupation</b>							
Managers and senior officials	15.1	12.6	19.7	15.0	19.2	15.3	13.2
Professional occupations	43.7	31.5	57.3	44.3	37.7	42.5	48.9
Associate professional and technical occupations	40.2	34.4	45.3	40.9	26.0	39.6	42.4
Administrative and secretarial occupations	21.0	24.5	20.0	21.8	8.4	23.6	16.8
Skilled trade occupations	21.8	22.1	19.0	22.3	*	23.0	*
Personal service occupations	30.6	29.2	30.9	31.5	21.5	33.8	26.7
Sales and customer service occupations	12.9	11.8	13.5	13.8	1.4	16.2	*
Process, plant and machine operatives	28.6	30.3	16.2	29.7	12.5	30.5	11.2
Elementary occupations	18.3	20.7	15.5	19.9	3.9	25.6	10.7
<b>Industry</b>							
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mining & quarrying	20.8	21.9	*	21.0	*	22.4	*
Manufacturing	19.8	22.3	11.3	20.1	*	21.1	*
Electricity, gas, steam & air conditioning supply	43.7	45.5	37.6	45.5	*	46.1	*
Water supply, sewerage, waste & remediation activities	33.1	34.6	*	34.5	*	34.8	*
Construction	14.5	15.5	9.4	14.9	*	15.4	*
Wholesale, retail trade and motor repair	11.8	11.1	12.5	12.2	3.4	12.9	*
Transport and storage	41.8	45.4	30.1	43.8	6.5	45.5	*
Accommodation & food service	3.8	2.4	4.9	3.9	2.6	4.6	*
Information & communication	12.8	13.5	11.2	13.3	*	13.3	*
Financial & insurance activities	17.4	13.1	22.4	17.9	3.9	16.0	*
Real estate activities	14.1	12.9	14.9	15.0	*	15.8	*
Professional & administrative services	10.4	11.2	9.3	10.5	8.4	10.8	8.7
Public administration and defence	51.6	53.9	49.4	53.1	24.1	53.4	44.0
Education	52.3	50.9	52.8	54.3	36.6	60.5	39.7
Human health & social work	41.4	39.8	41.8	42.3	27.4	45.7	34.2
Other services	14.9	17.9	12.5	15.2	13.1	17.9	10.1

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

## 2.2 Trade union density – Personal, work and job characteristics, 2010

Per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	All	Gender		Full-time / part-time status	
		Male	Female	Full-time	Part-time
<b>All Employees</b>	26.6	23.8	29.4	28.6	21.2
<b>Workplace size</b>					
Less than 50	17.1	13.2	20.6	18.8	13.9
50 or more	35.3	32.5	38.5	36.0	32.6
<b>Ethnic group</b>					
White	27.0	24.3	29.7	29.1	21.7
Mixed	23.9	17.4	29.2	24.0	*
Asian or Asian British	20.2	16.9	24.7	23.7	11.3
Black or Black British	29.8	27.1	32.3	31.8	23.9
Chinese and other ethnic groups	16.1	15.1	17.4	16.4	*
<b>Nationality</b>					
UK, British	27.2	24.6	29.9	29.5	21.6
Other	21.3	18.0	25.0	22.5	17.4
<b>Country of Birth</b>					
UK	27.5	24.8	30.2	29.8	21.6
Other	20.3	17.4	23.5	21.2	17.4
<b>Managerial status</b>					
Manager	27.7	21.1	37.3	27.3	30.8
Foreman or supervisor	34.4	29.6	39.5	35.0	31.9
Not manager or supervisor	24.7	24.0	25.3	28.0	18.9
<b>Flexible working status</b>					
Flexible working pattern	34.5	31.5	37.0	36.3	28.7
Not flexible working pattern	42.5	39.8	44.0	48.7	33.2
Home workers	10.6	14.8	7.3	14.8	*
<b>Highest qualification</b>					
Degree or equivalent	33.6	25.2	42.0	33.1	35.5
Higher Education	37.6	29.6	43.7	38.5	35.3
GCE A Level or equiv	24.3	25.7	22.2	27.6	15.4
GCSE grades A-C or equiv	20.7	20.3	20.9	23.4	15.4
Other qualifications	20.2	20.4	20.0	22.1	15.1
No qualification	16.7	17.7	15.6	20.7	10.7
<b>Dependent children</b>					
No dependent children	26.6	23.7	29.6	28.6	19.9
Dependent child under six	23.8	20.7	27.4	23.9	23.6
Dependent child six or over	27.5	25.2	29.7	30.7	22.1
<b>Disability</b>					
Disabled	32.0	29.8	34.0	36.1	24.3
Not disabled	25.6	22.8	28.5	27.4	20.4
<b>Length of service</b>					
Less than one year	10.0	9.0	11.1	11.5	7.6
One to two years	15.0	13.5	16.5	17.4	10.4
Two to five years	19.2	17.0	21.4	20.5	15.7
Five to ten years	28.9	26.0	31.9	30.3	24.9
Ten to twenty years	36.9	30.7	42.7	37.6	35.0
Twenty years or more	51.4	47.8	55.8	53.3	44.9
<b>Permanent or temporary status</b>					
Permanent	27.2	24.5	30.0	29.1	21.9
Temporary	17.3	13.0	21.0	18.9	15.8
<b>Weekly earnings in main job</b>					
Less than £250	13.6	8.2	15.9	13.3	13.8
£250 to £499	28.7	23.8	34.4	26.3	47.2
£500 to £999	38.5	32.4	49.5	38.3	43.6
£1000 and above	19.5	17.4	28.6	19.6	*

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.



### 3.1 Trade union density by nation and region, 2000 to 2010

Per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Nation</b>												
England	30.8	28.4	27.8	27.3	28.1	27.5	27.3	26.8	26.6	26.1	26.1	25.2
Wales	44.3	39.8	39.0	39.7	37.2	37.3	34.2	35.8	37.3	37.3	35.4	34.5
Scotland	38.9	34.8	35.3	34.2	34.4	33.0	34.0	34.4	32.6	32.8	31.8	32.3
Northern Ireland	42.3	38.4	40.7	41.7	39.5	39.7	40.9	39.6	39.8	35.7	39.9	35.7
<b>Regions</b>												
North East	43.1	40.2	40.6	38.7	37.4	36.8	36.5	38.6	35.7	35.4	35.7	32.8
North West	38.9	35.9	34.3	33.5	33.8	34.8	32.9	34.2	34.2	32.1	32.1	31.4
Yorkshire and The Humber	34.3	32.7	31.7	32.0	32.9	30.0	30.5	28.4	30.0	29.6	28.7	28.0
East Midlands	31.7	30.6	28.3	27.1	28.4	26.9	28.6	26.7	26.8	26.8	26.4	26.1
West Midlands	32.8	29.7	29.9	30.1	29.8	28.2	29.6	28.2	28.0	26.5	28.1	27.1
East of England	25.4	23.7	23.0	22.4	24.4	24.8	23.7	23.3	22.3	22.0	22.8	22.7
London	29.7	23.8	24.2	24.2	25.4	24.9	24.3	24.7	24.2	23.7	21.5	21.5
South East	23.2	22.7	22.7	21.5	21.6	22.6	21.7	21.4	21.0	21.5	21.9	21.3
South West	27.6	26.7	26.0	25.9	27.3	25.4	26.5	24.7	24.7	24.9	26.0	23.3

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

### 3.2 Trade union membership by nation and region, 2000 to 2010<sup>a</sup>

Thousands

	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Nation</b>												
England	5,703	5,731	5,661	5,601	5,735	5,662	5,671	5,593	5,607	5,504	5,381	5,217
Wales	434	425	408	437	420	430	392	408	426	424	386	389
Scotland	766	736	733	731	728	724	742	768	719	724	693	704
Northern Ireland	221	228	243	256	233	246	252	253	257	231	254	225
<b>Regions</b>												
North East	401	386	398	374	373	367	366	392	371	357	362	330
North West	974	974	926	919	937	971	912	956	955	885	864	851
Yorkshire and The Humber	648	657	631	650	681	624	645	596	638	626	589	574
East Midlands	525	529	498	486	510	485	532	496	493	512	490	469
West Midlands	666	635	648	659	635	614	648	608	616	570	589	567
East of England	526	551	538	514	567	576	553	533	533	527	530	530
London	761	689	718	727	742	733	711	737	734	730	652	669
South East	724	781	783	740	738	777	757	754	745	770	761	739
South West	479	528	522	532	553	516	546	522	523	527	544	488

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

<sup>a</sup> Membership levels are based on the methodology as described in Annex A.

### 3.3

### Trade union density by major occupation groups, 2003 to 2010

	Per cent, not seasonally adjusted							
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>All employees</b>								
Managers and senior officials	19.2	18.6	18.7	16.8	17.4	17.1	16.5	15.1
Professional occupations	48.3	48.5	48.3	46.8	47.1	44.3	44.9	43.7
Associate professional and technical occupations	44.0	42.4	41.5	42.7	41.5	39.6	40.2	40.2
Administrative and secretarial occupations	24.4	23.6	24.1	23.6	22.8	23.1	22.5	21.0
Skilled trade occupations	27.3	25.8	24.2	23.8	24.7	23.3	22.2	21.8
Personal service occupations	29.7	30.0	29.9	30.4	30.4	30.6	30.8	30.6
Sales and customer service occupations	12.3	12.6	11.6	12.7	12.2	13.2	13.1	12.9
Process, plant and machine operatives	34.7	34.6	34.3	33.3	29.9	31.9	30.7	28.6
Elementary occupations	21.9	21.0	20.4	20.4	20.3	19.2	19.1	18.3
<b>Male</b>								
Managers and senior officials	17.4	17.0	16.7	15.1	15.9	15.1	15.0	12.6
Professional occupations	38.3	37.7	37.9	36.0	37.2	32.8	33.7	31.5
Associate professional and technical occupations	38.3	38.6	35.7	37.0	35.5	34.2	33.6	34.4
Administrative and secretarial occupations	30.1	28.6	30.6	28.6	27.9	29.8	27.3	24.5
Skilled trade occupations	27.9	26.5	24.0	24.4	25.4	23.9	22.6	22.1
Personal service occupations	39.3	35.3	38.4	36.8	33.8	32.1	30.5	29.2
Sales and customer service occupations	10.2	11.0	8.7	11.8	8.9	12.4	11.6	11.8
Process, plant and machine operatives	36.4	37.0	35.6	34.5	30.9	32.9	32.0	30.3
Elementary occupations	26.2	24.9	24.1	24.1	22.6	21.9	22.3	20.7
<b>Female</b>								
Managers and senior officials	22.7	21.9	22.3	20.1	20.1	20.8	19.1	19.7
Professional occupations	61.0	61.6	60.7	59.9	59.0	57.9	58.3	57.3
Associate professional and technical occupations	49.5	46.0	46.8	47.8	46.7	44.7	46.0	45.3
Administrative and secretarial occupations	23.0	22.4	22.3	22.3	21.4	21.3	21.1	20.0
Skilled trade occupations	21.7	18.5	26.0	16.8	16.5	16.6	17.9	19.0
Personal service occupations	27.9	29.0	28.4	29.2	29.7	30.4	30.8	30.9
Sales and customer service occupations	13.2	13.3	12.8	13.1	13.7	13.6	13.8	13.5
Process, plant and machine operatives	26.3	21.2	25.7	26.2	22.8	25.0	21.0	16.2
Elementary occupations	17.0	16.3	16.2	16.0	17.4	16.0	15.5	15.5

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

## 3.4 Trade union density by industry<sup>1</sup>, 2005 to 2010

	Per cent, not seasonally adjusted						
	1995	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>All employees</b>							
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	8.0	*	10.2	9.2	8.1	*	*
Mining & quarrying	35.5	21.2	23.4	22.8	18.6	18.0	20.8
Manufacturing	32.8	25.3	22.5	22.1	20.7	21.2	19.8
Electricity, gas, steam & air conditioning supply	71.9	50.8	50.9	48.7	45.7	47.6	43.7
Water supply, sewerage, waste & remediation activities	57.5	37.8	44.6	38.8	32.9	34.7	33.1
Construction	30.4	16.3	17.6	17.0	17.0	14.6	14.5
Wholesale, retail trade and motor repair	11.0	10.8	11.1	11.3	11.9	12.4	11.8
Transport and storage	50.7	44.6	43.9	43.4	42.5	43.3	41.8
Accommodation & food service	7.9	4.2	5.6	4.9	5.4	3.9	3.8
Information & communication	25.5	17.2	17.3	17.5	14.6	12.9	12.8
Financial & insurance activities	37.3	24.9	24.0	22.3	20.9	20.5	17.4
Real estate activities	*	*	6.8	8.3	6.8	17.4	14.1
Professional & administrative services	10.6	9.2	9.2	9.3	9.0	11.6	10.4
Public administration and defence	59.1	56.5	57.1	56.8	55.8	52.2	51.6
Education	55.6	55.5	55.0	55.3	54.0	53.1	52.3
Human health & social work	48.3	43.9	43.6	43.7	41.0	41.9	41.4
Other services	18.7	15.4	16.9	15.5	16.5	14.8	14.9
<b>Male</b>							
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	*	*	10.7	*	*	*	*
Mining & quarrying	38.7	23.8	25.4	24.7	19.9	19.7	21.9
Manufacturing	36.6	28.0	25.3	25.2	23.6	24.6	22.3
Electricity, gas, steam & air conditioning supply	78.2	54.5	58.3	52.3	48.1	51.9	45.5
Water supply, sewerage, waste & remediation activities	67.0	39.1	49.8	41.0	34.9	36.9	34.6
Construction	32.0	16.6	18.1	16.9	16.6	14.9	15.5
Wholesale, retail trade and motor repair	9.5	10.3	10.8	10.4	11.4	12.6	11.1
Transport and storage	55.3	48.1	47.2	46.1	45.7	44.8	45.4
Accommodation & food service	7.2	*	5.0	3.3	5.5	3.1	2.4
Information & communication	29.1	17.6	17.8	19.6	15.6	13.6	13.5
Financial & insurance activities	35.0	20.0	20.8	17.7	15.8	15.2	13.1
Real estate activities	*	*	*	*	*	22.4	12.9
Professional & administrative services	14.3	11.2	10.9	10.8	9.7	13.4	11.2
Public administration and defence	63.7	57.5	58.6	60.3	58.9	54.1	53.9
Education	67.6	59.0	58.2	59.6	54.6	51.8	50.9
Human health & social work	53.6	48.6	46.2	43.1	41.2	42.7	39.8
Other services	23.2	19.9	20.9	18.4	20.5	16.3	17.9
<b>Female</b>							
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mining & quarrying	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Manufacturing	22.6	16.4	13.7	12.5	12.0	10.7	11.3
Electricity, gas, steam & air conditioning supply	*	*	31.8	38.7	37.5	35.7	37.6
Water supply, sewerage, waste & remediation activities	*	*	27.8	30.4	*	*	*
Construction	24.2	15.2	15.4	17.2	18.5	13.1	9.4
Wholesale, retail trade and motor repair	12.3	11.2	11.3	12.1	12.4	12.2	12.5
Transport and storage	32.9	31.6	32.6	33.8	32.1	37.7	30.1
Accommodation & food service	8.3	5.3	6.0	6.2	5.2	4.6	4.9
Information & communication	19.0	16.3	16.2	13.0	12.3	11.3	11.2
Financial & insurance activities	39.3	29.4	27.1	27.2	25.8	25.7	22.4
Real estate activities	*	*	*	*	*	13.6	14.9
Professional & administrative services	7.3	7.1	7.4	7.8	8.3	9.5	9.3
Public administration and defence	54.2	55.5	55.8	53.6	52.9	50.5	49.4

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

1. Based on Standard Industrial Classification 2007.

## 3.5 Trade union density by sex and age groups, 2000 to 2010

Per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>All employees</b>												
16 to 19	6.4	5.4	5.3	4.9	5.2	3.9	3.3	5.2	3.8	4.3	4.1	4.0
20 to 24	19.3	14.3	14.3	13.5	14.0	13.5	13.2	13.1	12.9	12.2	11.8	12.0
25 to 29	28.4	23.1	22.6	22.0	22.4	22.7	21.8	21.9	19.6	20.2	20.9	19.6
30 to 34	33.2	28.2	28.0	26.7	28.5	26.8	26.9	24.7	25.1	24.9	24.1	22.5
35 to 39	37.1	33.5	31.5	32.3	32.5	31.0	29.3	28.9	30.0	27.4	27.6	27.0
40 to 44	39.6	37.2	36.4	35.9	36.1	34.6	35.0	35.2	33.4	33.2	30.5	31.1
45 to 49	41.2	40.3	39.3	39.7	38.8	39.9	37.7	37.7	36.9	35.4	36.1	34.1
50 to 54	39.6	38.5	39.4	39.0	39.8	39.3	40.6	39.9	39.1	38.4	37.6	37.6
55 to 59	38.6	36.7	35.9	34.8	35.4	36.2	37.5	36.4	38.5	38.2	39.0	37.1
60 to 64	30.2	30.7	32.0	28.7	30.6	28.4	27.5	28.4	30.1	28.9	30.2	28.2
65 to 69	7.5	14.4	10.2	14.6	13.3	8.8	15.6	15.3	12.9	19.2	16.5	13.7
Over 70	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9.3	7.9	12.6	7.3
<b>Male</b>												
16 to 19	6.8	7.0	7.0	6.1	6.4	5.3	4.0	7.0	4.7	5.4	5.3	4.8
20 to 24	20.1	15.1	14.1	13.3	13.1	13.4	13.0	13.2	11.8	13.0	12.3	11.0
25 to 29	28.0	22.5	20.5	20.6	20.8	20.5	18.8	20.1	17.0	17.1	17.7	17.1
30 to 34	34.3	26.4	27.3	24.8	26.1	24.9	23.3	21.1	21.6	21.8	20.1	18.2
35 to 39	39.5	34.1	31.9	30.7	32.2	29.7	28.2	27.4	28.5	24.2	24.2	24.2
40 to 44	45.9	38.1	37.4	37.8	35.8	34.5	33.8	33.8	31.1	31.1	28.0	27.0
45 to 49	45.9	42.5	41.3	40.3	38.5	41.4	37.7	36.1	35.8	33.1	34.2	31.0
50 to 54	45.1	39.7	41.2	40.2	41.5	38.4	41.7	39.1	37.9	36.4	35.8	34.9
55 to 59	42.4	39.8	39.2	36.2	37.7	38.2	38.3	36.1	39.4	38.5	37.3	35.6
60 to 64	32.8	32.6	34.6	29.5	33.7	30.4	27.8	29.0	31.1	30.6	30.7	28.1
65 to 69	9.0	16.9	11.6	13.2	10.9	10.2	14.5	15.2	9.5	17.0	13.0	10.7
Over 70	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9.5	7.4	13.6	8.4
<b>Female</b>												
16 to 19	6.0	3.9	3.6	3.7	4.1	2.7	2.7	3.5	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.3
20 to 24	18.4	13.5	14.6	13.7	15.0	13.5	13.3	13.0	14.1	11.4	11.2	13.2
25 to 29	28.7	23.7	24.7	23.5	24.3	25.1	25.1	23.9	22.5	23.7	24.5	22.3
30 to 34	32.0	30.1	28.8	28.7	31.0	28.8	31.1	28.6	29.0	28.2	28.4	27.4
35 to 39	34.6	32.9	31.1	34.0	32.7	32.5	30.5	30.6	31.6	30.7	31.1	30.0
40 to 44	33.6	36.2	35.4	34.1	36.4	34.7	36.2	36.7	35.7	35.3	33.0	35.1
45 to 49	36.8	38.3	37.4	39.1	39.0	38.4	37.6	39.2	38.0	37.5	37.8	37.0
50 to 54	34.3	37.2	37.8	37.7	38.3	40.2	39.7	40.7	40.2	40.2	39.1	40.0
55 to 59	34.8	33.3	32.4	33.4	33.0	34.3	36.7	36.8	37.6	37.9	40.5	38.5
60 to 64	26.1	27.9	28.3	27.6	26.3	25.5	27.2	27.6	28.8	26.6	29.6	28.4
65 to 69	6.1	11.6	8.5	16.1	15.8	7.0	16.8	15.5	16.9	22.0	20.0	16.8
Over 70	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9.0	8.6	11.4	5.9

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

## 4.1 Trade union presence and collective agreement coverage, 1996 to 2010

Per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	Trade unions present in workplace <sup>1</sup>	Employee's pay affected by collective agreement <sup>2,3</sup>
<b>All employees</b>		
1996	50.2	37.0
1997	49.1	36.0
1998	47.8	35.4
1999	48.4	36.1
2000	48.9	36.4
2001	48.2	35.5
2002	48.0	35.2
2003	48.4	35.5
2004	47.6	34.7
2005	47.7	34.9
2006	47.0	33.3
2007	46.6	34.6
2008	46.7	33.6
2009	46.6	32.7
2010	46.1	30.8
<b>Private sector</b>		
1996	35.5	23.2
1997	34.5	22.0
1998	33.4	21.7
1999	34.5	23.0
2000	34.9	22.5
2001	34.0	21.9
2002	33.6	21.1
2003	34.1	21.9
2004	32.6	20.5
2005	32.4	20.6
2006	31.7	19.6
2007	31.5	20.0
2008	30.6	18.7
2009	30.2	17.8
2010	29.6	16.8
<b>Public sector</b>		
1996	89.7	74.4
1997	89.5	74.9
1998	89.4	75.1
1999	87.8	72.7
2000	87.8	74.2
2001	88.1	72.6
2002	88.2	73.6
2003	87.2	71.6
2004	86.8	71.2
2005	86.4	70.9
2006	86.7	69.0
2007	86.2	72.0
2008	86.9	70.5
2009	85.8	68.1
2010	85.7	64.5

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

1. Defined as the proportion of employees whose workplace has a union present

2. The proportion of employees whose pay and conditions are agreed in negotiations between the employer and a trade union.

3. Prior to 1999 questionnaire was routed differently – see Annex A for explanation

## 4.2 Trade union presence and collective agreement coverage, 2010

Per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	Union density	Trade unions present in workplace	Employee's pay affected by collective agreement
<b>All employees</b>	26.6	46.1	30.8
<b>Sector</b>			
Private	14.2	29.6	16.8
Public	56.3	85.7	64.5
<b>Industry<sup>1</sup></b>			
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	*	8.5	*
Mining & quarrying	20.8	40.7	21.5
Manufacturing	19.8	40.7	24.1
Electricity, gas, steam & air conditioning supply	43.7	77.1	54.7
Water supply, sewerage, waste & remediation activities	33.1	57.2	41.7
Construction	14.5	27.3	17.7
Wholesale, retail trade and motor repair	11.8	27.3	15.6
Transport and storage	41.8	61.5	49.4
Accommodation & food service	3.8	10.0	5.4
Information & communication	12.8	29.4	16.4
Financial & insurance activities	17.4	42.3	27.8
Real estate activities	14.1	34.0	19.3
Professional & administrative services	10.4	22.5	12.3
Public administration and defence	51.6	82.9	67.3
Education	52.3	81.2	56.3
Human health & social work	41.4	63.4	40.1
Other services	14.9	27.8	18.9
<b>Workplace size</b>			
Less than 50	17.1	27.5	17.7
50 or more	35.3	63.2	42.9
<b>Nation</b>			
England	25.2	45.1	29.3
Wales	34.5	54.8	38.6
Scotland	32.3	51.7	37.3
Northern Ireland	35.7	44.4	42.4
<b>Region</b>			
North East	32.8	51.8	31.8
North West	31.4	50.9	34.6
Yorkshire and the Humber	28.0	50.5	34.4
East Midlands	26.1	47.7	31.7
West Midlands	27.1	45.9	31.4
East of England	22.7	41.2	26.8
London	21.5	40.9	24.8
South East	21.3	40.5	24.5
South West	23.3	44.5	29.8

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

1. Based on Standard Industrial Classification 2007.

## 4.3 Collective agreement coverage, 2010

Per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	All	Full-time / part-time status		Permanent/ temporary job	
		Full-time	Part-time	Permanent	Temporary
<b>All employees</b>	30.8	32.4	26.5	31.1	25.7
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	28.8	30.2	18.5	29.2	21.6
Female	32.9	36.0	28.7	33.1	29.0
<b>Union membership</b>					
Member	70.9	72.4	65.4	71.4	59.1
Non-member	15.5	15.5	15.4	15.3	17.7
<b>Sector</b>					
Private	16.8	18.7	11.4	17.2	10.7
Public	64.5	67.7	57.0	65.8	48.7
<b>Workplace size</b>					
Less than 50	17.7	18.9	15.5	17.8	16.4
50 or more	42.9	42.6	44.5	43.4	34.4
<b>Industry<sup>1</sup></b>					
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	*	*	*	*	*
Mining & quarrying	21.5	23.4	*	22.5	*
Manufacturing	24.1	25.7	7.1	24.5	15.1
Electricity, gas, steam & air conditioning supply	54.7	55.6	*	55.5	*
Water supply, sewerage, waste & remediation activities	41.7	43.0	*	43.0	*
Construction	17.7	18.7	*	17.8	*
Wholesale, retail trade and motor repair	15.6	14.8	17.0	16.0	7.2
Transport and storage	49.4	52.1	33.7	50.8	23.3
Accommodation & food service	5.4	6.1	4.7	5.6	2.2
Information & communication	16.4	16.9	*	16.3	*
Financial & insurance activities	27.8	25.9	37.6	28.0	17.9
Real estate activities	19.3	22.3	*	20.3	*
Professional & administrative services	12.3	13.1	9.8	12.4	11.3
Public administration and defence	67.3	67.7	65.4	68.4	44.8
Education	56.3	60.2	49.6	57.0	50.2
Human health & social work	40.1	44.3	33.1	40.6	31.6
Other services	18.9	21.1	15.4	18.8	20.4

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

1. Based on Standard Industrial Classification 2007.

## 5.1 Average hourly earnings (in £s) by union status, 1995 to 2010

	Not seasonally adjusted			
	All	Trade union membership		Trade union wage premium (%)
		Member	Non-member	
<b>All employees</b>				
1995	7.11	8.27	6.57	25.9
1999	8.22	9.15	7.87	16.3
2000	8.77	9.64	8.30	16.2
2001	9.31	10.25	8.89	15.3
2002	9.59	10.72	9.09	17.9
2003	9.93	11.03	9.36	17.9
2004	10.23	11.38	9.75	16.7
2005	10.74	11.94	10.28	16.2
2006	11.15	12.39	10.65	16.3
2007	11.51	12.74	11.02	15.6
2008	12.02	13.07	11.62	12.5
2009	12.30	13.60	11.80	15.3
2010	12.50	14.00	12.00	16.7
Change from 1995	5.39	5.73	5.43	
Change from 2009	0.20	0.40	0.20	
% change from 2009	1.6	2.9	1.7	
<b>Private sector</b>				
1995	6.72	7.52	6.52	15.3
1999	7.93	8.44	7.87	7.2
2000	8.47	8.77	8.30	5.6
2001	9.06	9.40	8.95	4.9
2002	9.25	9.75	9.08	7.5
2003	9.57	10.09	9.40	7.3
2004	9.81	10.33	9.74	6.1
2005	10.33	10.89	10.24	6.4
2006	10.83	11.60	10.67	8.8
2007	11.16	11.85	11.03	7.4
2008	11.62	11.86	11.58	2.4
2009	11.90	12.40	11.80	5.1
2010	12.00	12.70	11.90	6.7
Change from 1995	5.28	5.18	5.38	
Change from 2009	0.10	0.30	0.10	
% change from 2009	0.8	2.4	0.8	
<b>Public sector</b>				
1995	8.13	8.98	6.89	30.4
1999	9.07	9.78	7.87	24.2
2000	9.64	10.44	8.25	26.5
2001	10.06	10.98	8.58	27.9
2002	10.55	11.55	9.17	26.0
2003	10.92	11.82	9.19	28.6
2004	11.37	12.22	9.87	23.8
2005	11.81	12.72	10.51	21.0
2006	12.04	13.01	10.64	22.3
2007	12.44	13.41	10.97	22.2
2008	13.05	13.92	11.87	17.3
2009	13.40	14.40	12.10	19.0
2010	13.80	14.90	12.30	21.1
Change from 1995	5.67	5.92	5.41	
Change from 2009	0.40	0.50	0.20	
% change from 2009	3.0	3.5	1.7	

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.



## 5.2 Characteristics of union members and non-members, 2010

Per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	Union members	Non-members	All employees
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	45.4	52.6	50.8
Female	54.6	47.4	49.2
<b>Sector</b>			
Private	37.6	82.4	71.3
Public	62.4	17.6	28.7
<b>Full-time/part-time</b>			
Full-time	77.9	70.2	73.0
Part-time	22.1	29.8	27.0
<b>Age bands</b>			
16 to 24	4.8	16.4	14.2
25 to 34	17.5	23.8	23.2
35 to 49	43.1	34.8	36.7
50 plus	34.7	25.0	25.9
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
White	92.7	90.7	90.6
Mixed	0.6	0.7	0.7
Asian or Asian British	3.4	4.8	4.7
Black or Black British	2.4	2.1	2.3
Chinese and other ethnic groups	0.9	1.7	1.7
<b>Nationality</b>			
UK	95.3	91.1	91.7
Other	4.7	8.9	8.3
<b>Country of Birth</b>			
UK	90.4	86.2	86.7
Other	9.6	13.8	13.3
<b>Disability</b>			
Disabled	18.5	14.2	14.8
Not disabled	81.5	85.8	85.2
<b>Highest qualification</b>			
Degree or equivalent	35.1	25.2	27.6
Other higher education	15.2	9.2	10.7
A-level or equivalent	21.3	24.1	23.3
GCSE grades A-C or equivalent	16.4	22.9	21.2
Other qualifications	8.1	11.6	11.0
No qualification	3.9	7.0	6.2
<b>Length of service</b>			
Less than one year	5.7	18.5	15.0
One to two years	5.3	10.8	9.8
Two to five years	17.4	26.5	24.7
Five to ten years	23.1	20.5	21.2
Ten to twenty years	25.4	15.7	17.8
Twenty years or more	23.2	8.0	11.4
<b>Workplace size</b>			
Less than 50	30.3	53.6	47.6
50 or more	69.7	46.4	52.4

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

## 5.2 Characteristics of union members and non-members, 2010 *(continued)*

Per cent, not seasonally adjusted

	Union members	Non-members	All employees
<b>Occupation</b>			
Managers and senior officials	8.7	17.7	15.2
Professional occupations	23.8	11.1	14.1
Associate professional and technical occupations	21.7	11.7	14.4
Administrative and secretarial occupations	9.7	13.2	12.1
Skilled trade occupations	6.1	8.0	7.6
Personal service occupations	10.6	8.7	9.3
Sales and customer service occupations	4.0	9.7	8.3
Process, plant and machine operatives	6.9	6.2	6.4
Elementary occupations	8.4	13.6	12.5
<b>Industry<sup>1</sup></b>			
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	*	*	*
Mining & quarrying	0.3	0.4	0.4
Manufacturing	8.1	11.9	10.9
Electricity, gas, steam & air conditioning supply	1.2	0.6	0.7
Water supply, sewerage, waste & remediation activities	1.0	0.7	0.8
Construction	2.9	6.3	5.5
Wholesale, retail trade and motor repair	6.5	17.6	14.8
Transport and storage	7.5	3.8	4.8
Accommodation & food service	0.7	6.5	5.1
Information & communication	1.7	4.1	3.5
Financial & insurance activities	2.8	4.8	4.4
Real estate activities	0.5	1.2	1.0
Professional & administrative services	3.9	12.1	10.1
Public administration and defence	14.0	4.8	7.1
Education	24.0	7.9	11.7
Human health & social work	22.3	11.4	14.3
Other services	2.5	5.2	4.5

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

1. Based on Standard Industrial Classification 2007.

# Annex A: Technical note

## National Statistics

'National Statistics' is a quality marker applied to the United Kingdom's official statistics outputs. National Statistics are regulated by the UK Statistics Authority, established on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008. All official statistics accredited as 'National Statistics' are compliant with the UK Statistics Authority's 'Code of Practice for Statistics'. For further details on National Statistics please refer to the web link below:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>

## Concepts and definitions

Employee: People who regard themselves as paid wage and salary earners. People with two or more jobs are counted only once.

Employment: The number of people with jobs is measured by the Labour Force Survey and includes people aged 16 or over who did paid work (as an employee or self-employed), those who had a job that they were temporarily away from, those on government-supported training and employment programmes, and those doing unpaid family work.

Labour Force Survey (LFS): The main source for information on the labour market in the United Kingdom. It is a random household survey of approximately 57,000 households conducted every three months by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). As well as private households, the survey includes people living in communal establishments (student halls of residence, National Health Service accommodation, etc). The survey was conducted once every two years between 1973 and 1983 and annually from 1983 until 1991. It has been conducted quarterly since 1992, with a change to calendar quarters from seasonal quarters made in 2006. The LFS is a sample survey and consequently estimates are subject to both sampling and non-sampling error.

Trade union: The Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 defines a trade union as an organisation which consists wholly or mainly of workers of one or more descriptions and whose principal purposes include the regulation of relations between workers and employers or employers' associations.

Trade union member: A person in employment who self-defines that they belong to a trade union or staff association when asked in the Labour Force Survey (for the question please see table below).

Union density: The rate or proportion of employees or those in employment who are a trade union member. Expressed as a percentage.

Union presence: Whether or not a trade union is present within a workplace.

Collective agreement: Whether the pay and conditions of employees are agreed in negotiations between the employer and a trade union.

## Trade union questions in the Labour Force Survey

A question on the LFS on trade union membership has been asked annually since 1989 of all individuals in employment. Questions on trade union presence and recognition were introduced in 1993 and the question on collective agreements was introduced in 1996. The questions relating to trade union membership were reordered and reworded in 1999; these changes affect the time-series for trade union presence and collective agreements.

- The union questions were altered substantially in the 1999 questionnaire. The exact wording and sequence of the questions as they are now and as they were previously are shown below. The following should be noted:
- The wording of the question that asks respondents whether they are a member of a trade union remains the same, only its place in the sequence has changed.
- The question that asks whether any of the people at the respondent's place of work are members of a trade union or staff association is designed to measure trade union presence. The wording, routing and sequence of this question have changed. Previously, it was asked of all in employment; now it is only asked to those who say that they are not union members.
- Before 1999, the question on whether the respondent's pay and conditions were directly affected by collective agreements (TUCOV) was only asked where the respondent first identified unions as being present at the workplace (TUPRES), and then whether or not it was recognised (TUREC). This meant that the number of people whose pay and conditions were affected by collective agreement was an underestimate. For this reason the routing of the question was changed in the 1999 LFS and is now asked of all in employment. Users must therefore be aware that data derived from the TUCOV variable in the 1999 dataset are not directly comparable with those of previous years due to the change in the question's coverage.
- It is possible that some non-sampling error arises in the series of questions on trade unions because of measurement problems. Around a third of the sample are proxy respondents, and the data show that this group are less likely to be union members than those responding on their own behalf.

On the question of coverage of collective agreements, it is known from surveys of employers that only a small proportion of public sector workplaces are not covered, and that these arrangements are generally made at head office level or across many organisations. It is therefore likely that employees who are not union members and who work in small workplaces in the public sector may be unaware that collective bargaining arrangements apply to their organisation. In addition, because sector is self reported in the LFS, there may be a number of respondents wrongly classifying themselves as public sector workers. Consequently there may be a downward bias to this measure.

## A1 Structure of trade union questions in the Labour Force Survey Routing change in 1999

Previous union questions	Current union questions
All in employment: TUPRES At your place of work, are there any unions, staff associations or groups of unions?	All in employment: UNION Are you a member of a trade union or staff association?
If yes: TUREC Is it/are any of them recognised by management for negotiating pay and conditions of employment?	If no: TUPRES Are any of the people at your place of work members of a trade union or staff association?
If yes: TUCOV Are your pay and conditions of employment directly affected by agreements between your employer and any trade union(s) or staff association?	All in employment: TUCOV Are your pay and conditions of employment affected by agreements between your employer and any trade union(s) or staff association?
All in employment: UNION Are you a member of a trade union or staff association?	

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

### Variables in the LFS

Most of the classifications used to place respondents in different categories are based on a direct question relying on the person's self-assessment of their circumstances. Some are based on a combination of more than one question, and others are coded by the ONS based on standard conventions. Details are provided below.

Gender, age and ethnic group are self-defined. Highest qualification is principally based on a question asking individuals to nominate what qualifications they have from a list of 50 categories. These have then been aggregated for the purposes of analysis. The categories for ethnic groups were changed in the LFS from 2001 and are now consistent with those used in the 2001 Census.

With the exception of occupation, all classifications used in this publication are self-defined. In particular, it should be noted that the two aspects of employment status – full-time or part-time, and permanent or temporary – are based on direct questions and do not rely on any set criteria (e.g. number of hours worked). The classification for flexible working status only includes those who work under such arrangements, and the final category of “work mainly at home/same grounds” is taken from a separate question on homeworking.

From 2001, the occupational classifications use the new 2000 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC2000) while prior to 2000 they were based on SOC90. They are assigned by ONS staff based on an open-ended question asking people what was their job, and what did they mainly do in their job. A breakdown by managerial status is also given in this publication and this is obtained from a separate LFS question where manager status is self-defined. In previous years the responses were validated against the occupational codes but from 2001 this is no longer undertaken and the manager status is now wholly self-defined by the respondent. This has resulted in the number of managers defined from this

question in 2001 being significantly different from and not comparable with data from previous years.

The manager and senior officials group in SOC2000 relates to managers who primarily have responsibility for personnel, whereas the self-defined manager variable also includes management responsibility for work-related activities. This accounts for the large difference in the union density levels for the SOC2000 manager and senior officials group and the manager group within managerial status, with the latter being significantly higher. It is noted that the densities for foreman or supervisor and not manager or supervisor are in close agreement with data published in previous years.

Defining the sector in which people work is based on two questions first introduced in 1993. These ask, first, if they worked in a private firm or business, a limited company, or some other kind of organisation; and second, if other, what kind of non-private organisation. Industry is based on respondents' answers to a question about what the firm or organisation for which they worked mainly made or did, and coded using the Standard Industrial Classification of economic activities 1992 (SIC92). Region and whether an individual is an employee are both self-defined variables.

#### Public and private sectors

The LFS defines public sector as that owned, funded or run by central or local government, and the private sector is everything else. Some respondents may not know whether their industry is in the public or private sector and, for certain types of activity, there may be no clear answer and the interviewers are given some guidelines to help sort out some common confusion. From July 2009 Royal Bank of Scotland Group Plc and Lloyds Banking Group plc were classified to the public sector, previously they were in the private sector; and from June 2010 English sixth form colleges are classified to the public sector. However in the microdata sets that are used for the analyses in this publication the sector that a respondent is classified remains as they answered the question, and no adjustments are made to incorporate the reclassifications described above.

#### Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 2007

From 2009, the sectoral breakdown of the LFS data has been collected according to the new Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 2007. From that point onwards, all cases were coded to a new code, even when the respondent's situation had not changed, due to the introduction of SIC 2007. There was no dual coding. The transition to the new classification was accompanied by the implementation of a new automatic coding tool for LFS interviewers. Prior to 2009, industry had been coded manually, using a paper-based SIC 92 volume. To enable users to compile a consistent back series ONS devised a program that maps SIC92 codes onto SIC2007 according to the assumed relationship between the two classifications. The analyses in this publication are based entirely on SIC 2007 for the first time. More details on the ONS timetable for implementation of SIC 2007 across the Labour Market Statistics output are set out in their article which is available at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/article.asp?ID=2341>. In the meantime ONS has undertaken some analysis based on comparing Q4 2008 (the last occasion when SIC92 was used) and Q1 2009 (when SIC 2007 was first used) to assess the impact of implementing SIC 2007 on historical series. This showed that some

adjustments are required to overcome step changes arising from switching from SIC92 to SIC 2007. For example manufacturing sector which is traditionally seen as having large union members showed a contraction of 9 per cent. No attempt has been made to separate out the various different effects on each industry and ONS suggest applying the basic approach of simply scaling the entire back series by the appropriate factor to calculate levels. It should be noted that as trade union density is calculated as a ratio of two levels the effect of scaling cancels out.

### Sample size and standard errors

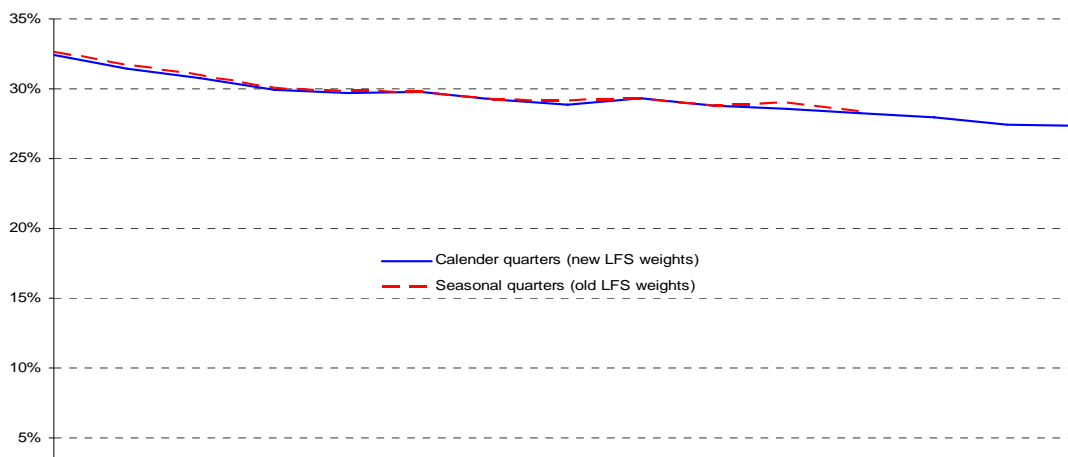
The cell sizes in some tables in this publication are too small to prove reliable and have been marked with an asterisk. In this publication data under 10,000 have not been published because standard errors are likely to be larger than the estimates themselves. Although the ONS has lifted its protocol of not releasing data under 10,000 threshold, it is now the statistician's discretion whether to release anything under this threshold.

As an indication of the standard errors in the trade union estimates, the standard errors around the total employment and employee union densities are likely to be around 0.25 percentage points. Standard errors for union densities by gender are likely to be around 0.5 percentage points. Standard errors for union densities by region are likely to be around one percentage point and standard errors for union densities by region and gender are likely to be around 1.5 percentage points.

### Switch from seasonal to calendar quarters

In 2006, the structure of the Labour Force Survey switched from a seasonal quarter basis to a calendar quarter basis. The last set of published LFS seasonal results covered December 2004 to February 2005. In accordance with European Union regulations, all subsequent quarters have been published on a calendar quarter basis. In 2008, the Office for National Statistics carried out an extensive reweighting programme and all quarterly Labour Force Survey data are now published on a calendar quarter basis back to 1992. This has eliminated the structural break into the trade union membership time series associated with the change from seasonal to calendar quarters.

**Chart A1. Trade union density of UK employees, 1995-2007**



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Chart A1 shows the trade union density of UK employees from 1995 to 2007, as shown in Table 1.1 and trade union density from the previous LFS. The chart gives evidence that the reweighting of historic LFS datasets has not materially changed the trade union densities from those that were previously published.

## Estimating union membership levels

Each household agreeing to take part in the LFS is interviewed on five consecutive quarters (or waves). However, there are cases on subsequent waves when households are not contactable or do not agree to continue taking part so further responses cannot be recorded. When this happens, current data may be imputed by carrying forward answers given by them in the previous interview. However, for questions that do not appear every quarter, as on trade union membership, there is no previous response to carry forward, and a 'does not apply' (DNA) response is therefore recorded.

There are two possible methods of estimating union membership levels. One method relies on calculating an **adjusted weight**, whereby cases with missing data are assumed to have the same distribution as valid responses. Therefore missing data is included in the estimates by allocation of their weight along the same distribution as valid respondents. Unfortunately, due to the restructuring of the LFS to calendar quarters (described earlier) this produced too much missing data in the seasonal quarter series to produce reliable estimates. Information was lost for September in converting seasonal to calendar quarters and no information was available to be brought forward from December. Therefore it was not possible to display a time series with the seasonal quarter series using the adjusted weight method.

In order to mitigate these issues a second method was developed to closely approximate the results from an adjusted weights approach (see Table A2) but also allow a consistent time series with the calendar quarter information to be estimated. It consists of **union density multiplied by the population** (as estimated by the LFS). The method is improved by making the same calculation but by detailed age, gender and regional disaggregations and then aggregating them back up to national and regional levels. Age, gender and region were specifically chosen as they are the basis on which the LFS is weighted (see the Labour Survey User Guide Vol 1.). This approach is further supported by the fact that union density figures, are produced on a valid response basis and do not consider any missing data. Furthermore, union densities show a great deal of robustness under change, for example the recent reweighting of the LFS and the move to a calendar quarter basis (described earlier) had only a small effect on these estimates as shown in Chart A1. These estimates of union membership level are now provided as the headline figures in this publication (see Tables 1.1, 1.2 and 3.2).

To produce trade union membership broken down by public/ private sector a further step was applied. It consists of **union density split by public and private sector multiplied by the union membership population (estimated as above)**. The calculations involved are similar to that of the second method described above apart from the fact that a further breakdown by sector was used.

The table below gives a comparison of the estimates from the two methods between 2006 and 2009 by gender and whether in employment or an employee.



## A2 Estimates of trade union membership levels, United Kingdom, 2006 to 2010

Thousands, not seasonally adjusted

	Employees			In employment		
	Density x Population	Adjusted Weights	Difference	Density x Population	Adjusted Weights	Difference
<b>People</b>						
2006	7,021	6,992	29	7,359	7,315	44
2007	7,005	6,978	27	7,334	7,292	42
2008	6,878	6,857	21	7,219	7,188	31
2009	6,715	6,696	19	7,054	7,017	37
2010	6,536	6,530	6	6,854	6,818	36
<b>Men</b>						
2006	3,430	3,400	30	3,649	3,611	38
2007	3,379	3,355	24	3,606	3,574	32
2008	3,278	3,254	24	3,522	3,487	35
2009	3,121	3,099	22	3,344	3,311	33
2010	2,976	2,967	9	3,188	3,162	26
<b>Women</b>						
2006	3,591	3,591	-	3,710	3,702	8
2007	3,625	3,621	4	3,728	3,716	12
2008	3,599	3,601	-2	3,697	3,697	-
2009	3,593	3,596	-3	3,709	3,704	5
2010	3,560	3,562	-2	3,666	3,654	12

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

### Differences between the LFS and Trade union estimates from administrative data.

Another official source of trade union membership data is provided by the Certification Officer (<http://www.certoffice.org>) and can be seen in Table 1.5. Data collected annually from trade unions by the Certification Officer (CO) provide a long and consistent back series of the number of trade unions and the number of union members. The LFS has a shorter back series, from 1989 onwards, but can provide extensive information on the respondent's individual and workplace characteristics, allowing more detailed analysis.

Data from the LFS is mainly presented from 1992 in this publication since re-weighted micro datasets, in line with post-Census 2001 population estimates, are currently only available from 1992.

There are differences in how the two sources report union membership. For example, the CO membership count includes all members of unions having their head office in Great Britain, including those members in Northern Ireland, the Irish Republic and 'elsewhere abroad'. These figures may also include union members who are unemployed or retired. The LFS asks questions on the union status of all those in employment, thus excluding the unemployed and retired.

The LFS union questions have United Kingdom coverage from 1995 onwards. The LFS estimates the number of individuals who are union members, rather than the individual memberships. Hence those belonging to two unions would appear twice in the CO data, but only once in the LFS data. Also, due to the specific wording of the union question, the LFS, unlike the CO data, could count individuals that were members of a staff association but not of a trade union.

## Annual National Statistic reports

- 1) *Trade Union Membership 2009*, James Achur. April 2010.
- 2) *Trade Union Membership 2008*, Craig Barratt. April 2009.
- 3) *Trade Union Membership 2007*, Sally Mercer and Richard Notley. July 2008.
- 4) *Trade Union Membership 2006*, Heidi Grainger and Martin Crowther. April 2007.
- 5) *Trade Union Membership 2005*, Heidi Grainger
- 6) *Trade Union Membership 2004*, Heidi Grainger, Heather Holt

The BIS Publications Orderline is 0845 015 0010

## Trade union membership articles in Labour Market Trends

- 1) Analysis in brief: *Trade union membership: estimates from the autumn 2003 Labour Force Survey*, by Stephen Hicks and Tom Palmer. March 2004.
- 2) Labour Market Spotlight: *Trade union membership*. July 2003.
- 3) Article: *Trade union membership: an analysis of data from the autumn 2001 LFS*, by Keith Brook. July 2002.
- 4) Article: *Trade union membership 1999-2000: an analysis of data from the Certification Officer and the Labour Force Survey*, by Abby Sneade. September 2001.
- 5) Article: *Trade union membership 1998-99: an analysis of data from the Certification Officer and Labour Force Survey*, by Stephen Hicks. July 2000.
- 6) Article: *Trade union membership and recognition 1997-8: an analysis of data from the Certification Officer and the Labour Force Survey*, by Paul Bland. July 1999

Web link: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=550>