



STATISTICAL PRESS RELEASE

TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP 2010

A National Statistics publication, '*Trade Union Membership 2010*' was published at 9:30am on Thursday 28th April 2011 by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). The report, which uses information taken from the Labour Force Survey for the fourth quarter 2010, had the following key findings:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 2002 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- Notes to Editors

1. “Trade Union Membership 2010” is available only on the internet and together with earlier reports can be downloaded as PDF file from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills’ website:
<http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/employment-matters/research/trade-union-stats>
2. The publication presents estimates of trade union density from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) based on the fourth quarter 2010.
3. An annual question on trade union membership was introduced into the LFS in 1989. The question has been asked in the final quarter every year since 1992.
4. The Certification Officer for Trade Unions and Employers’ Associations provides a second source of data on trade union membership, which goes back to 1975. In addition, data from 1892 to 1974 from the former Department of Employment has been included. Data is available from the Certification Officer website at <http://www.certoffice.org>
5. The statistics in Trade Union Membership 2010 are National Statistics. This means they comply with the UK Statistics Authority standards.
6. The UK Statistics Authority is an independent body operating at arm’s length from government as a non-ministerial department, directly accountable to Parliament. It was established on 1 April 2008 by the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. For more information about National Statistics and the UKSA please go to <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>
7. Next publication: It is expected that “Trade Union Membership 2011” will be published in April 2012.