



Changing the world
of work for good

Organising in the UK

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Some good news...

- In 2019 total membership was up by 91,000 – now 6.44M
- That was the third year in a row that membership had increased
- Membership increased by over 200,000 over last three years
- Membership increased in the PUBLIC sector by 74,000 (now 3.77M) and in the private sector by 17,000 (now 2.67M)
- Small increase in density – 23.5%
- **Increase in membership amongst women of 170,000 – we now have the highest number of women carrying a union card than at any time since 1995 – now 3.69M**

But still need to remember the challenges

- **Increase union membership in the private sector** – because there are currently more than 17 million non-members there and density is just 13%
- **Increase membership and density in unionised workplaces** – because that's the easiest way to increase membership and income
- **Find a new generation of reps that reflect the diversity of the movement** – because over half of our current reps will be gone over the next 10-15 years
- **Increase the number of young workers in unions** – because density amongst 16-24 years olds is abysmal and amongst **members** 24% are aged between 16 and 35 but 40% are aged 50 and over
- **Improve how unions use digital to organise, campaign and communicate** – because unions are behind members and workers in how they use digital

Where unions are – a snapshot from 2019

- Survey of the 20 largest TUC affiliates
- Most unions had a dedicated organising strategy that focused on winning new recognition agreements and building membership in workplace where the union was already recognised.
- In relation to the key challenge of organising young members, the picture was more mixed in relation to dedicated strategies. Just two respondents referred to the existence of a dedicated standalone strategy aimed at recruiting young workers
- On finding new reps – picture was concerning
 - Very few unions knew the age profile of their reps
 - Only one had a stand alone strategy that brought together finding, training and mentoring new activists

Some themes

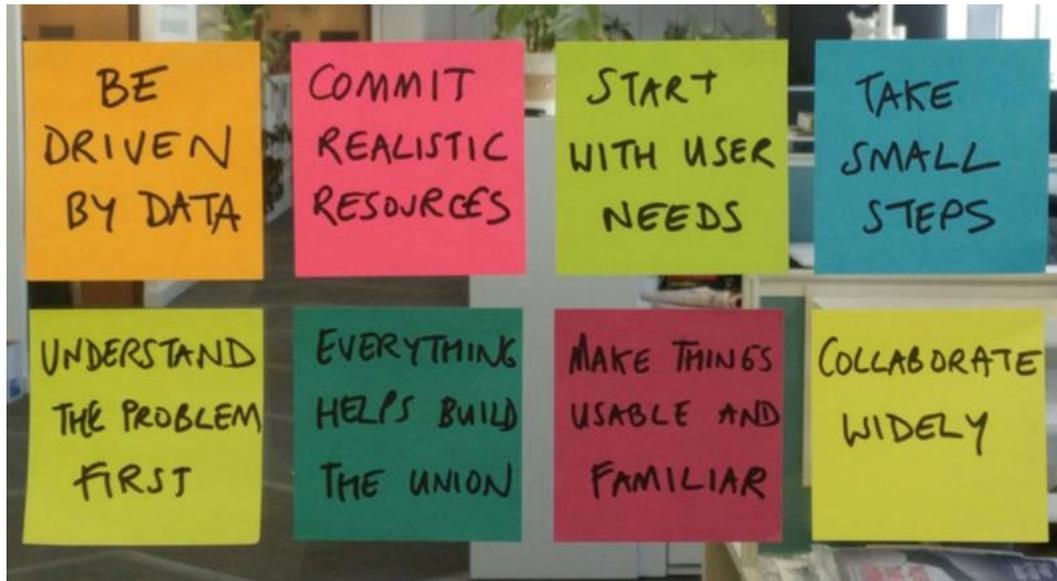
- Digital unions
- Union education as part of organising strategies
- Organising during the pandemic and future strategies

Digital unions

- TUC Digital Lab launched in 2018
- Supporting unions in improving and increasing their use of digital in all areas of operation
- Key areas of activity
 - Established 8 principles for union digital transformation
 - Collaborative network of union officers
 - Digital transformation best practice training
 - Pilot projects with unions
 - TUC Union digital health check – to help unions benchmark their own digital journeys

8 principles of digital transformation

<https://digital.tuc.org.uk/a-digital-lab-for-the-union-movement>



Digital – supporting organising during the pandemic – recruitment, training, campaigning

- On recruitment - back in 2012, 18 unions had a full online joining system. This has now slightly more than doubled to 37.
 - Back in 2012, partial online joining systems were more commonplace. These often involved the requirement to return a paper Direct Debit mandate. There were 10 unions using this approach 2012, compared to just 1 now.
 - 16 unions had no online joining facility at all in 2012, compared to 9 in 2021.
- On training – entire trade union education programme in the UK moved online in a matter of weeks
 - 73 TUC core courses trained 1000 reps
 - 23 webinars attended by 18,000 reps, officers, organisers and activists
 - Four new micro learning sites – accessed by 45,000 reps

Digital – supporting organising during the pandemic – recruitment, training, campaigning

- On campaigning – TUC’s digital campaign platform ‘Megaphone’
 - Allows unions to create online actions at a national, regional and local level.
 - Worked with 18 TUC affiliates on campaigns, been used by 343,000 unique supporters and collected over half a million campaign actions

<https://www.megaphone.org.uk>



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unite the UNION About Us

Sick Pay For All Right now millions of UK workers don't get decent sick pay. And 2 million workers don't qualify for any sick pay at all.



SUPPORTING UNIONS TO WIN

Organising training to reps in workplaces

- A new online course developed by TUC Education
- Consists of seven modules – all focused on building an active member, campaigning workplace union
 - Introduction to organising
 - Mapping your workplace
 - Building the organising team
 - Talking to workers
 - Campaigning
 - Using digital
 - Is your workplace campaign ready?



About organising

Welcome to this course on organising, campaigning and building stronger workplace unions, produced by TUC Education for union reps.

Union organising is all about building the strength of your union in the workplace to win better conditions and improve working life for all.

To organise effectively you'll need five key skills.





Introduction

Overview of the module

This 15 minute module on talking to workers covers:

- what we mean by an 'organising conversation'
- why it's important to have one-to-one organising conversations
- preparing for an organising conversation
- asking open-ended questions
- listening effectively
- recording your organising conversation.



Some outcomes

- Unison reported 90,000 new members in the first five months of May 2020, up 25% on same five months of 2019 – 135% increase in membership in social care – 3 in 10 new members in the private sector
- National Education Union saw its membership increase by 50,000
- Prospect – recruitment in 2020 was twice the rate as in 2019
- PCS - reported an average of 1,800 new members joining every month during 2020 – the fifth consecutive year of record growth

What is it that the TUC (and union centres in general) can do most effectively?

- Hold a mirror up to the movement and ensure that it stays focused on that challenges we face
- Bring unions together on campaigns, developing and sharing best practice, supporting innovation
- Train reps and officers in organising
- Support networks of reps and organisers – H&S, ULRs etc.
- Develop leadership

Looking forward - The TUC Organising Pledge

- Signed by all unions last summer
- TUC and unions obliged to report progress each July
 - *Increasing the number of workers aged under 30 in our movement*
 - *Enthusing thousands of activists from all backgrounds to become new workplace reps, offer them training within the first six months and train every new rep in their first year.*
 - *Working co-operatively as TUC unions to bring trade unionism into new and growing sectors*
 - *Working jointly to eliminate insecure employment, including agreeing and pushing common bargaining agendas across sectors*
 - *Modernising how unions operate, organise, and communicate for a digital-first era*
 - *Driving up union membership in workplaces where we already have recognition agreements with employers*

The logo consists of the letters 'TUC' in a bold, sans-serif font. Each letter is white with a light blue gradient. The 'T' has a horizontal bar that ends in an arrow pointing right. The 'U' has a vertical stem that ends in an arrow pointing up. The 'C' has a vertical stem that ends in an arrow pointing right.

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