EQUALITY SURVEY 2016

Headlines

Participation in UNISON

- Over a quarter (27%) said they were more likely to get more involved in UNISON compared with a year ago.

Workplace Equality Policies and Training

- Nearly one-third of respondents said their employer did not keep them informed about its equality policies.

- Nearly 40% of respondents had had no employer-organised equality training, and less than a quarter had had any such training in the past year.

Discrimination in the workplace

- The survey identified that one in four members had experienced or had witnessed unfair discrimination in their workplace.

- Over 40% of those who did not report an instance of discrimination they had experienced or witnessed cited fear of being picked on or victimised, and well over a third thought the issue would not be taken seriously.

Implementation of reasonable adjustments

- Only 40% of respondents requiring a reasonable adjustment at work said their employer had implemented it in a speedy and satisfactory manner.

Stress at work and mental health wellbeing

- One in five respondents had to take time off due to work related stress.

- Almost a third (31%) of respondents felt they had suffered a mental health issue triggered by work.

- A quarter of respondents had accessed some type of counselling or advice service to deal with stress.
Cost of /standard of living

- Over a quarter of respondents described their standard of living as worse than it was a year ago.
- Almost one in four members have seen an increase in their debts in the last year.

Survey - general comment

Over 4,500 UNISON members working across the different UNISON service groups responded to our on-line survey during a two month period in June / July 2016. The survey was circulated through our activist networks and was also advertised via the UNISON website and through social media.

Despite asking for members only to take part in this survey, 3% of responses were from non-members. These have been filtered out of the results in this report.

It is important to note that not all respondents answered all questions, so where respondents is used throughout, it relates to the number who answered the question.

The results of the survey suggest that a significant proportion of the respondents were drawn from our activist base. The survey was promoted widely through our equality groups’ (Black, disabled, LGBT, women, and young members) networks, and the survey shows that they responded in significant numbers – perhaps unsurprising as the survey was about equality.

Part 1 – Response and respondent characteristics and employment

- Over 4,500 UNISON members responded to this survey.
- A third of respondents identified their earnings as between £17,000 - £30,000 pa
- 45% of respondents were long term members of UNISON with over 11+ years membership of UNISON
- 82% of respondents identified as being White UK
- One in five respondents identified that they were disabled
- Over half of respondents to this survey were 50 years old or older and the smallest response rate (4%) came from members’ aged 16-26 years old, though note that young members make up just under 5% of UNISON membership.
• Nearly half (45%) of all respondents to this survey worked in Local Government, the second highest response rate was from members in the Health Care service group (18%)

• Over a quarter of respondents who worked in the private sector identified as working in the Health Care service group.

Table 1: How long have you been a UNISON member? (4341 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2 years</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11+ years</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Age of respondent (4341 respondents)

- Under 16 years: 3% 
- 16 - 26 years: 0% 
- 27 - 39 years: 4% 
- 40 - 49 years: 52% 
- 50+ years: 25% 
- Prefer not to answer: 2%
Over half of those who responded to this survey were 50 years old or older. Government statistics published in May 2016\(^1\) shows that this age demographic is in-line with the average age of trade unionists recorded by the Labour Force Survey. The LFS showed a steady increase in the age of trade unionists and a growing decline in younger members.

**Table 3: Gender Identity of Respondents (3401 respondents)**

This result broadly reflects union membership, more than two thirds of whom are women.

![Gender Identity Chart](image)

**Table 4: Ethnicity of respondents (3401 respondents)**

This broadly reflects information from the UNISON membership system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Origin</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian UK</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Other</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Other</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black mixed heritage</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White UK</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Other</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other mixed heritage</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Table 5: UNISON subscription (4341 respondents)

Over a third of respondents earned between £17,000 - £30,000 pa.

The ONS calculated average UK salary in tax year 2015/16 as £27,500 pa – therefore our members would fall into the category of ‘low-paid workers’

Table 6: Would you describe yourself as a disabled person (3401 respondents)

Would you describe yourself as a disabled person?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Prefer not to answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Sexual Orientation (3401 respondents)

Would you describe yourself as

- Bisexual: 2%
- Gay: 6%
- Heterosexual/Straight: 4%
- Lesbian: 4%
- Prefer not to answer: 84%

0.6% of respondents identified as being transgender.

Table 8: Would you describe yourself as transgender of having a trans history (3401 respondents)

96% of respondents identified as not being transgender.

3% of respondents identified as having a trans history.

0.6% of respondents identified as being transgender.
Table 9: Which service group do you belong to (4341 respondents)

A majority of members identified as being public sector workers. A small percentage (7%) said that they worked in private sector. When we drilled down to see which service group the private sector members were in, over a quarter of these respondents were in the Health Care service group (27%), followed by Local Government (16%) and Energy (13%).

Table 10: Which sector do you work in? (4341 respondents)

A majority of members identified as being public sector workers. A small percentage (7%) said that they worked in private sector. When we drilled down to see which service group the private sector members were in, over a quarter of these respondents were in the Health Care service group (27%), followed by Local Government (16%) and Energy (13%).
Part 2: Participation in UNISON

- A quarter of respondents were involved with the union at a branch level, with 4% holding a national position or having attended UNISON conferences as a delegate.

- All five equality groups (Black, disabled, LGBT, women and young members) had a strong percentage (over a third) of respondents’ say they were involved or attended national conference.

- Over a quarter (27%) said they were more likely to get more involved in UNISON compared with a year ago.

- Nearly a half (45%) of all members cited pressure of work as the main barrier to becoming more active within the union.

- Over a quarter of members said that the time or day of UNISON meetings and the location of meetings and events was a massive barrier to them becoming more involved in the union.

Table 11: Do you hold any official lay-member UNISON position(s) e.g. steward, workplace rep, branch officer, regional committee member, conference delegate etc.? (3760 respondents)

As expected, the number of respondents active within the union decreased through the different union levels (Branch, Regional and National). A quarter (25%) of respondents said they were active or held a position a branch level with 4% engagement at a national level.
Table 12: What UNISON meetings of activities for our equality groups have you attended in the past year (532 respondents)

This question had the biggest response rate from women members, followed by Black members, disabled and LGBT members and the fewest responses from young members. The data suggests young members are more active within the union structures with over half attending branch and regional activities and over a third attending conference, but the number of young members responding almost certainly gives an unrepresentative picture. Black members and LGBT members said they were attending branch and regional meetings, and 12% said they were participating in national meetings. Disabled members and women members showed greater participation across the different levels of the union levels with 45% of women members participating at regional level and 51% of disabled members attending a regional meeting.
Table 13: Which of the following are barriers to you getting more involved in UNISON? (3585 respondents)

Which of the following are a barrier to you getting more involved in UNISON?

- Pressure of work
- Negative attitude to UNISON of your manager or employer
- Time or day of meetings/events
- Location of meetings/events
- Meetings/events inaccessible to me as a disabled person
- Lack of agreed time-off for trade union activities
- Lack of notice of meetings/events
- Not interested in becoming more active
- Branch not welcoming/encouraging
- Not interested in the meetings/events
- Bullying and/or harassment
- Lack of confidence
- Family circumstances e.g. dependent care needs
- Don't know what is required
- Looks like too big a commitment
- Other (please specify)
Table 14: How likely are you to get involved in UNISON? (3739 responses)

Compared with a year ago, how likely are you to get more involved in UNISON?

- More likely
- No change
- Less likely

64% 27% 10%

Part 3: Workplace Equality Policies and Training

- The survey showed that just one-third of members are kept informed of equality policies.
- The survey highlighted a lack of training on equality issues, with less than a quarter having had any equality training in the last 12 months, and nearly 40% having had no equality training.

Table 15: Have you had any employer-organised training on equality issues (3543 respondents)

Have you had any employer-organised training on equality issues?

- Yes - in the past year
- Yes - between a year ago and three years ago
- Yes - more than three years ago
- No

38% 23% 22% 17%
Table 16: Does your employer keep you informed about its equality policies (3543 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does your employer keep you informed about its equality policies?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part 4: Discrimination in the workplace

- The survey identified that one in four members had experienced or witnessed unfair discrimination in their workplace.
- The survey showed that for those who had witnessed or experienced discrimination this was more likely to have been by a manager (29%), followed by a colleague (22%).
- A significant amount of members identified that they had suffered unfair discrimination due to their trade union role and activities.
- Where discrimination was reported UNISON representation played a key role in getting the issue resolved.
- Unfortunately those members that did not report the discrimination was through fear of being victimised or bullied.
Table 17: Have you been unfairly discriminated against or witnessed someone else being discriminated against in the past year? (3543 respondents)

![Bar graph showing discrimination by type: By a manager, By a colleague, By a service user, By a member of the public.]

Table 18: Reasons behind the discrimination (1427 respondents)

![Bar graph showing percentage of reasons for discrimination.]

If you answered 'yes', was the discrimination because of any of the characteristics below:

- Gender
- Race
- Sexual orientation
- Transgender status/gender identity
- Disability
- Age
- Pregnancy/maternity
- Marriage/civil partnership
- Religion or belief
-因为在friendship/association
- Other (please specify)
Table 19: If you answered ‘yes’ AND you reported it, who did you report it to, and do you think they took appropriate action to deal with this matter? (917 respondents)

There is still a lot of work to do between reporting an incident of discrimination and the incident being dealt with appropriately. UNISON reps came out on top when it came to resolving an issue. Yet still one in six members were left not knowing how their complaint was dealt with.

Table 20: If you did NOT report the discrimination, why not? (849 respondents)
Part 5: Implementation of reasonable adjustments

- Only 40% of disabled members requiring a reasonable adjustment at work said their employer had implemented it in a speedy and satisfactory manner.

Table 21: If you are a disabled person and need reasonable adjustment(s) at work because of an impairment, please tick which is CLOSEST to your own situation (729 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am unable to work/struggle to work because I have not dared to ask for reasonable adjustment(s)</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am unable to work/struggle to work because my employer has failed to implement the reasonable...</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My employer has refused to discuss my need for reasonable adjustment(s)</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My employer has not discussed with me the reasonable adjustment(s) I need, but has agreed to...</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My employer is aware of the reasonable adjustment(s) I need but has not implemented them</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My employer has implemented the reasonable adjustment(s) I need but took longer than needed to...</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My employer has implemented the reasonable adjustment(s) I need in a speedy and satisfactory...</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part 6: Stress at work and mental health wellbeing

- Nearly two thirds of participants felt more stressed than they did 12 months ago.
- One in five respondents had to take time off due to work related stress.
- Almost a third (31%) of members who responded to the survey felt they had suffered a mental health issue triggered by work.
- A quarter of respondents had accessed some type of counselling or advice service to deal with stress.
Table 22: Compared with a year ago, how would you describe the overall level of stress in your job? (3515 respondents)

**Compared with a year ago, how would you describe the overall level of stress in your job?**

- More stressful: 61%
- About the same: 31%
- Less stressful: 6%
- Prefer not to answer: 2%

Table 23: Over the past year, have you had to take time off because of ill health caused by stress at work? (3515 respondents)

**Over the past year, have you had to take time off work because of ill-health caused by stress at work?**

- Yes: 21%
- No: 73%
- Prefer not to answer: 6%
Table 24: Over the past year have you experienced a mental health issue that you believe is mainly triggered by your work? (3515 respondents)

Over the past year have you experienced a mental health issue that you believe is mainly triggered by your work?

- Yes: 31%
- No: 61%
- Prefer not to answer: 9%

Table 25: Have you sought medical advice, counselling or specialist support to help deal with stress at work. (3515 respondents)

Over the past year have you sought medical advice, counselling, or specialist support to help deal with stress at work?

- Yes: 5%
- No: 72%
- Prefer not to answer: 27%
Part 7 - Cost of /standard of living

- Over a quarter of respondents described their standard of living as worse than it was a year ago.

- It is clear that members are feeling the impact of cost increases, with significant numbers citing council tax, food, fuel, travel to work, and health-related expenditure as having increased.

- Our members are having to make choices in order to make ends meet – for example respondents identified they were less likely to have an annual holiday in order to balance their household budget.

- Almost a quarter of respondents have seen an increase in their debts in the last year.

- For respondents in receipt of benefits, 50% of have seen their benefits cut in the last 12 months.

Table 26: Compared with a year ago, how would you describe your standard of living? (3432 respondents)
Table 27: Compared with a year ago, please tell us about your spending on these items (3432 respondents)

Compared with a year ago, please tell us about your spending on these items:

- Spend more than a year ago
- Spend about the same as a year ago
- Spend less than a year ago
- Not applicable

Table 28: Have you had to go without any of the following to help balance your budget (3432 respondents)

Have you had to go without any of the following to help balance your budget?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

Equality Survey 2016 – August 2016
Table 29: Compared with a year ago, how much in debt are you (3432 respondents)

Compared with a year ago, how much in debt are you (how much money do you owe someone or an organisation)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0.0%</th>
<th>10.0%</th>
<th>20.0%</th>
<th>30.0%</th>
<th>40.0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am not in debt now and...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I owe less</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I owe about the same...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I owe more</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 30: Thinking about any (in work) benefits you may receive – how have these changed over the past year (3432 respondents)

Thinking about any financial benefits you may receive e.g. Housing Benefit, Job Seekers Allowance, Disability Benefits etc., how have these changed over the past year?

- I get less in total benefit than a year ago
- I get about the same in total benefit as a year ago
- I get more in total benefit than a year ago
- I was not in receipt of benefit a year ago, and I am not in receipt of any benefits now

- 87%
- 6%
- 6%
- 1%
- 6%