

## 2 Trade union membership

The autumn quarter Labour Force Survey (LFS) provides data on trade union membership in the UK, and on employees whose pay was affected by collective agreements. **Table 1** shows that the figures for 2002 changed little from 2001, and these changes are not statistically significant.

- 1 In autumn 2002, 7.3 million people in employment were trade union members in the UK.
- 1 Union members as a proportion of all in employment (union density) stood at 27 per cent. Among employees the figure was slightly higher at 29 per cent.
- 1 There were 8.7 million employees whose pay was affected by collective agreements, which is 36 per cent of all employees.

**Table 2** shows the proportion of employees who were union members by sex, age and whether they worked full or part-time.

- 1 In 2002, trade union density for both men and women was 29 per cent.
- 1 Union density was higher among older employees. Over a third of those aged 50 and over were union members compared with a quarter of those aged 25 to 34.
- 1 The proportion of full-time employees belonging to a trade union stood at 32 per cent, compared with 21 per cent for those working part-time.

**Table 3** shows the proportion of employees who are union members by government office region and country, and by whether they worked full or part-time.

- 1 Union density ranged from 21 per cent in the South East to 41 per cent in Northern Ireland.
- 1 For all regions full-time employees had a greater union density than those working part-time.

**Table 1** Trade union membership and coverage of collective agreements; United Kingdom; autumn quarters 2001 and 2002, not seasonally adjusted

	Union membership			Employees whose pay is covered by collective agreements <sup>b</sup>	
	Number <sup>a</sup> (000s)	Union density (%)		Number (000s)	Per cent
		All in employment <sup>a</sup>	Employees <sup>b</sup>		
2001	7,330	26.8	29.1	8,630	35.7
2002	7,340	26.6	29.0	8,700	35.6

Source: Labour Force Survey  
 a Includes all those in employment, excluding members of the armed forces, unpaid family workers, and those on college-based schemes.  
 b Includes all employees except for members of the armed forces.  
 Note: For technical notes see red box below.

**Table 2** Union density by sex, age and type of employment;<sup>a</sup> United Kingdom; autumn 2002

	Full-time	Part-time	Per cent
			All
<b>All over 16 years</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>29</b>
16 to 24 years	14	5	11
25 to 34 years	25	22	25
35 to 49 years	38	28	36
50 years and over	40	24	35
<b>Men over 16 years</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>29</b>
16 to 24 years	14	5	12
25 to 34 years	24	*	23
35 to 49 years	36	22	36
50 years and over	38	19	36
<b>Women over 16 years</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>
16 to 24 years	14	5	10
25 to 34 years	27	24	26
35 to 49 years	41	28	35
50 years and over	42	25	33

a Includes all employees except for members of the armed forces.  
 \* Sample size too small for reliable estimate.  
 Note: For technical notes see red box below.

Source: Labour Force Survey

**Table 3** Union density by government office region or country and type of employment;<sup>a</sup> United Kingdom; autumn 2002

	Full-time	Part-time	Per cent
			All
United Kingdom	32	21	29
Great Britain	31	21	29
England	30	20	28
North East	43	26	38
North West	38	22	34
Yorkshire and the Humber	35	25	32
East Midlands	32	20	28
West Midlands	33	21	30
East	24	18	23
London	26	19	25
South East	23	16	21
South West	30	18	26
Wales	44	28	40
Scotland	37	27	34
Northern Ireland	43	32	41

a Includes all employees except for members of the armed forces.  
 Note: For technical notes see red box below.

Source: Labour Force Survey

### Trade union membership estimates

Trade Union estimates for 2002 are published as interim revised LFS estimates consistent with the 2001 Census (see [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/methodology\\_by\\_theme/downloads/interim\\_reweighting\\_methodology\\_article.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/methodology_by_theme/downloads/interim_reweighting_methodology_article.pdf)). These figures are in line with the latest interim population figures, and are subject to revision when final population estimates become available later this year. Interim estimates have been rounded to the nearest 10,000. Those who did not report their union status or were not contactable in the autumn quarter have been allocated on a pro-rata basis.

A full feature article will follow early in 2004. More detailed information, including administrative data from the Certification Officer for Trade Unions and Employers' Association can be found at <http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/emar/trade.htm>.