



# Trade union membership 2003–2008

Introduction

Membership figures

Relative size of organisations

Membership by gender

Issues related to union density

Annexes

This report is available in electronic format only.

*This report examines trade union membership in the European Union and Norway over the period 2003–2008. It looks at the number of trade union members, the relative size of the main organisations and the breakdown of membership by gender, as well as issues related to trade union density.*

## **Introduction**

The membership of trade unions – both in absolute terms and as a proportion of their potential constituency among workers – is an issue of major interest to industrial relations practitioners and researchers. The size and representativeness of trade unions are key factors in national industrial relations systems, as are the relative membership figures of the different trade union organisations.

However, trade union membership figures are a difficult subject area and sometimes contentious, for example in countries such as France, Portugal and Slovenia. Given the importance of the size of their membership in many aspects of their dealings with employers and public bodies, as well as in their treatment in comparison with other unions, trade unions are in some cases quite sensitive about their membership figures. It is also a subject field featuring numerous methodological and conceptual problems – for instance, how trade unions and union membership are defined and how the data are gathered. Such issues make the examination of national trade union membership figures problematic, and the difficulties are magnified when an international comparison is attempted.

This report provides data about trade union membership over the period 2003–2008 in the current 27 EU Member States (EU27) and Norway. The membership figures provided are those made available from national sources – usually the trade union organisations themselves – and reported by the [European Industrial Relations Observatory \(EIRO\)](#) centres in each country. No attempt has been made to assess their accuracy or to harmonise them (although see below under ‘Issues related to union density’) – this should be borne in mind when reading the information provided.

After looking at the overall trade union membership figures and trends over the period 2003–2008, the report examines some aspects of the complicated issue of trade union density. It does not attempt to provide any kind of definitive statistics on density, but focuses mainly on some of the problems in calculation.

This report is available in electronic format only.

## Membership figures

### Methodology

Table 1 outlines for each of the 28 countries examined, to the extent that data are available:

- the number of trade union members represented by each of the top-level, ‘peak’ trade union organisations – that is, confederations, federations and other trade union bodies (referred to as trade union ‘centres’ below) to which lower-level trade union organisations (such as sectoral, occupational, regional and workplace organisations) are affiliated, but which themselves are not affiliated to any higher-level organisation at national level;
- a combined membership figure for all ‘other’ trade unions not affiliated to any trade union centres;
- a total membership figure, produced by adding the figures for the national trade union centres and the ‘other’ unions.

Figures are given for 2003 and 2008, where possible, or, if not, for the nearest available year (data for 2008, in particular, are not yet available for some of the countries under examination).

The variety of national situations and the patchy nature of data mean that it has not always been possible to completely follow this methodology. Moreover, the notes regarding each country should be read carefully.

In some countries, no figures or estimates are available for the membership of trade unions outside the main confederations and trade union centres listed in Table 1. The total union membership figures given are thus likely to fall short of giving a complete picture. This problem is particularly significant in countries where the ‘other’ trade unions are thought to have a relatively substantial membership, as appears to be the case in Italy and Luxembourg. In Belgium, Estonia and Finland, the ‘other’ trade unions not included in the total membership figures seem to be relatively minor, so the overall membership figures for these countries are probably not far short of the figures provided. The problem of the existence of trade unions for which no membership figures are available outside the main union centres appears to be inexistent or negligible in Austria, Greece, Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania. The total number of trade union members is relatively reliable for those countries where membership figures or estimates are available for the ‘other’ trade unions outside the national union centres – Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic (2008 only), Denmark, Germany (2008 only), Ireland (2008 only), Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain (2008 only), Sweden and the UK.

Due to the lack of data on the membership level of significant trade union centres and ‘other’ trade unions, no total membership figure is given for France in 2003 or 2008, for the Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland and Spain in 2003, and for Luxembourg in 2008.

The data provided in Table 1 are in most cases directly self-reported by the trade unions themselves. In some cases, the information is from a central official register or authority, as in Cyprus, Malta and the UK (total membership figures), while national statistical services are the data source in Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden (‘other’ trade unions), and official censuses in Bulgaria. In the absence of reliable self-reported or official data, the figures for Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia are based on the work of researchers. In some cases (see the notes to Table 1 in Annex 1), the figures given – especially for ‘other’ unions – are estimates by the EIRO national centres.

**Table 1: Trade union membership figures, 2003–2008**

Country	Confederations, trade union centres and 'other' unions	2003*	2008**	Change over period
<b>Austria</b>	ÖGB	1,385,200	1,247,795	-9.9%
	Total	1,385,200	1,247,795	-9.9%
<b>Belgium</b>	CSC/ACV	1,563,935	1,635,579	+4.6%
	FGTB/ABVV	1,141,380	1,248,500	+9.4%
	CGSLB/ACLVB	204,526	225,733	+10.4%
	Total	2,909,841	3,109,812	+6.8%
<b>Bulgaria</b>	CITUB	393,191	328,232	-16.5%
	CL Podkrepa	106,309	91,738	-13.7%
	Promyana	58,613	50,000	-14.7%
	Others	10,000	6,000	-40.0%
	Total	568,113	475,970	-16.2%
<b>Cyprus</b>	PEO	74,646	81,473	+9.1%
	SEK	71,980	71,574	-0.6%
	DEOK	7,903	8,807	+11.4%
	POAS	206	164	-20.4%
	Others	39,948	43,834	+9.7%
	Total	194,683	205,852	+5.7%
<b>Czech Republic</b>	ČMKOS	611,000	520,000	-14.9%
	ASO	170,000	210,000	+23.5%
	KUK	59,000	42,000	-28.8%
	OS ČMS	15,000	10,000	-33.3%
	KOK	9,000	5,000	-44.4%
	Others	n.d.	150,000	-
	Total	-	937,000	-
<b>Denmark</b>	LO	1,197,000	1,017,000	-15.0%
	FTF	362,300	359,300	-0.8%
	AC	178,500	174,100	-2.5%
	LH	76,500	76,200	-0.4%
	Others	76,400	202,100	+164.5%
	Total	1,890,700	1,828,700	-3.3%

<b>Estonia</b>	EAKL	47,460	39,185	-17.4%
	TALO	16,536	13,009	-21.3%
	Total	63,996	52,194	-18.4%
<b>Finland</b>	SAK	1,057,000	1,046,445	-1.0%
	STTK	601,000	640,000	+6.5%
	AKAVA	449,000	540,000	+20.3%
	Total	2,107,000	2,226,445	+5.7%
<b>France</b>	CFDT	n.d.	808,720	-
	CGT-FO	n.d.	800,000	-
	CGT	n.d.	711,000	-
	UNSA	n.d.	360,000	-
	FSU	n.d.	163,000	-
	CFTC	n.d.	132,000	-
	CFE-CC	130,000	n.d.	-
	Solidaires	n.d.	90,000	-
<b>Germany</b>	DGB	7,363,147	6,371,475	-13.5%
	dbb	1,257,983	1,280,802	+1.8%
	CGB	307,000	278,412	-9.3%
	Others	n.d.	270,000	-
	Total	-	8,200,689	-
<b>Greece</b>	GSEE	450,160	472,304	+4.9%
	ADEDY	289,125	311,202	+7.6%
	Total	739,285	783,506	+6.0%
<b>Hungary</b>	SZEF	270,000	225,000	-16.7%
	MSZOSZ	240,000	205,000	-14.6%
	ASZSZ	120,000	120,000	0.0
	LIGA	100,000	100,644	+0.6%
	ÉSzt	85,000	85,000	0.0
	MOSZ	51,472	50,360	-2.2%
	Total	866,472	786,004	-9.3%
<b>Ireland</b>	ICTU	543,882	602,035	+10.7%
	Others	n.d.	30,000	-
	Total	-	632,035	-

<b>Italy</b>	Cgil	5,458,710	5,604,741	+2.7%
	Cisl	4,078,663	4,304,050	+5.5%
	Uil	1,697,214	1,810,904	+6.7%
	Total	11,234,587	11,719,695	+4.3%
<b>Latvia</b>	LBAS	179,614	151,222	-15.8%
	Total	179,614	151,222	-15.8%
<b>Lithuania</b>	LPSK	113,384	90,000	-20.6%
	LDF	17,000	23,000	+35.3%
	LPS 'Solidarumas'	52,000	7,200	-86.2%
	Total	182,384	120,200	-34.1%
<b>Luxembourg</b>	CGT-L	61,000	66,000	+8.2%
	LCGB	40,000	n.d.	-
	CGFP	24,200	27,300	+12.8%
	ALEBA/UEP-NGL-SNEP	20,000	20,000	0.0
	Total	145,200	-	-
<b>Malta</b>	CMTU	35,819	37,842	+5.6%
	Others	50,242	46,505	-7.4%
	Total	86,061	84,347	-2.0%
<b>Netherlands</b>	FNV	1,205,200	1,192,000	-1.1%
	CNV	355,500	333,900	-6.1%
	MHP	169,100	169,200	+0.6%
	Others	190,900	202,900	+6.3%
	Total	1,920,700	1,898,000	-1.2%
<b>Norway</b>	LO	838,749	844,438	+0.7%
	Unio	232,016	274,175	+18.2%
	YS	201,552	209,334	+3.9%
	Akademikerne	132,756	137,250	+3.4%
	Others	103,339	111,058	+7.5%
	Total	1,508,412	1,576,255	+4.5%
<b>Poland</b>	NSZZ Solidarność	695,762	854,204	+22.8%
	OPZZ	666,772	763,633	+14.5%
	FZZ	231,920	134,968	-41.8%
	Others	521,821	23,087	-95.6%

	Total	2,116,275	1,775,892	-16.1%
<b>Portugal</b>	CGTP	525,000	537,000	+2.3%
	UGT	205,000	210,000	+2.4%
	USI	14,000	15,000	+7.1%
	CGSI	5,000	5,000	0.0
	Others	87,000	87,000	0.0
	Total	836,000	854,000	+2.2%
<b>Romania</b>	CNSLR Frăția	800,000	800,000	0.0
	Cartel Alfa	325,000	400,000	+23.1%
	BNS	375,000	375,000	0.0
	CSDR	345,000	345,000	0.0
	CSN Meridian	170,000	170,000	0.0
	Others	20,000	30,000	+50.0%
	Total	2,035,000	2,120,000	+4.2%
<b>Slovakia</b>	KOZ SR	553,860	365,541	-34.0%
	NKOS	13,000	12,000	-7.7%
	KUK	1,500	1,000	-33.3%
	Others	7,000	500	-92.9%
	Total	575,360	379,041	-34.1%
<b>Slovenia</b>	ZSSS	187,500	192,200	+2.5%
	KSJSS	0	73,725	-
	KNSS	17,500	19,000	+8.6%
	Pergam	17,500	19,000	+8.6%
	Konfederacija '90	12,500	14,000	+12.0%
	Solidarnost	3,000	3,100	+3.3%
	Alternativa	3,000	3,100	+3.3%
	Others	124,000	50,275	-59.5%
	Total	365,000	374,400	+2.6%
<b>Spain</b>	CC.OO	956,713	1,141,321	+19.3%
	UGT	810,000	810,000	0.0
	USO	104,893	121,389	+15.7%
	ELA/STV	n.d.	109,318	-
	CGT	100,000	100,000	0.0

	Others	n.d.	320,000	-
	Total	-	2,602,028	-
<b>Sweden</b>	LO	1,638,600	1,442,300	-12.0%
	TCO	1,276,000	1,175,300	-7.9%
	SACO	556,000	588,300	+5.8%
	Others	89,000	112,500	+26.4%
	Total	3,559,600	3,318,400	-6.8%
<b>UK</b>	TUC	6,672,815	6,471,030	-3.0%
	Others	714,440	965,245	+35.1%
	Total	7,387,255	7,436,275	+0.7%

Notes: \* Except for: Portugal – 2001; France (CFE-CGC), Ireland (ICTU) – 2002; Bulgaria (Promyana), Czech Republic, Denmark (LH and ‘others’), Greece, Hungary (MOSZ), Poland – 2004; Estonia (TALO) – 2005.

\*\* Except for: Cyprus, France (CGT), Portugal – 2006; Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia (EAKL), France (CFDT) Germany (CGB), Greece (GSEE), Hungary (LIGA), Italy, Latvia (LBAS), Norway, Poland, Sweden (LO), UK (TUC) – 2007.

*n.d.* = no data available. The full names of all trade union confederations and organisations are provided in Annex 1.

The data in Table 1 should be read in conjunction with the notes in Annex 2.

Source: EIRO

## Trends in trade union membership

Total national membership figures are available for both 2003 and 2008 (or the nearest years for which data are available) for 22 out of 28 countries – see the figure below. Of these, 10 countries recorded an overall increase in trade union membership and 12 countries an overall decrease. It should be noted that these figures, of course, are not the same as increases or decreases in trade union density (see below in the section on ‘Issues related to trade union density’).

The countries registering an increase in trade union membership were Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and the UK. While full data are not available, it seems likely that Ireland and Spain also fit into this category. The largest percentage increases were recorded in Belgium (6.8%), Greece (6%), Cyprus (5.7%) and Finland (5.7%).

The countries registering a decline in trade union membership were Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia and Sweden. While full data are not available, it seems likely that Germany also fits into this category. The largest percentage decreases were recorded in Lithuania (34.1%), Slovakia (34.1%), Estonia (18.4%), Bulgaria (16.2%) and Poland (16.1%).

Aggregate trade union membership across the 22 countries for which full data are available for both the years 2003 and 2008 remained almost stable between these years, with a decline of only 0.4%. In the 10 EU Member States concerned that were part of the EU before the enlargement of 1 May 2004 (EU15) and Norway, a slight rise in trade union membership of 1.4% was recorded over this period. By contrast, in the 11 new Member States (NMS) concerned that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 (NMS12), a decline in union membership of 9.8% was registered.



For 17 countries – Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden and the UK – changes in total trade union membership over the period 2003–2008 can be compared with data on changes over the period 1993–2003 collected by EIRO in a previous report ([TN0403105U](#)). In those countries where trade union membership had increased between 1993 and 2003, the trend in union membership was diversified over the period 2003–2008: it intensified in Belgium and Finland, while continuing relatively steadily in Cyprus, Italy and Portugal, and it was reversed in Denmark, Malta, the Netherlands and Norway. In those countries where union membership had declined over the period 1993–2003, the trend in membership was also diversified between 2003 and 2008: it accelerated in Austria and Sweden, continued relatively steadily in Latvia and Slovakia, slowed in Bulgaria and Poland, and was reversed in Greece and the UK.

Data are available on membership changes over the 2003–2008 for 97 out of the 112 trade union confederations and centres or sets of ‘other’ trade unions examined. Membership increased in 47 cases, fell in 39 cases and remained at the same level in 11 cases. Among the organisations that experienced particularly high rates of membership increase (20% and over) were the Czech Republic’s Association of Independent Trade Unions ([Asociace samostatných odborů, ASO](#)), Finland’s Confederation of Unions for Academic Professionals ([Akateemisten Toimihenkilöiden Keskusjärjestö, AKAVA](#)), the Lithuanian Labour Federation ([Lietuvos darbo federacija, LDF](#)) and Romania’s National Trade Union Confederation Cartel Alfa ([Confederația Națională Sindicală Cartel Alfa, Cartel Alfa](#)). The ‘other’ trade unions grew notably in Denmark, Romania, Sweden and the UK. Substantial decreases in membership, of 40% and more, were registered by the Christian Trade Union Coalition ([Křesťanská odborová koalice, KOK](#)) in the Czech Republic, the Lithuanian Trade Union ‘Solidarumas’ ([Lietuvos profesinė sąjunga ‘Solidarumas’, LPS ‘Solidarumas’](#)) and the Trade Unions Forum ([Forum Związków Zawodowych, FZZ](#)) in Poland, and by some ‘other’ trade unions in Bulgaria, Slovakia and Slovenia.

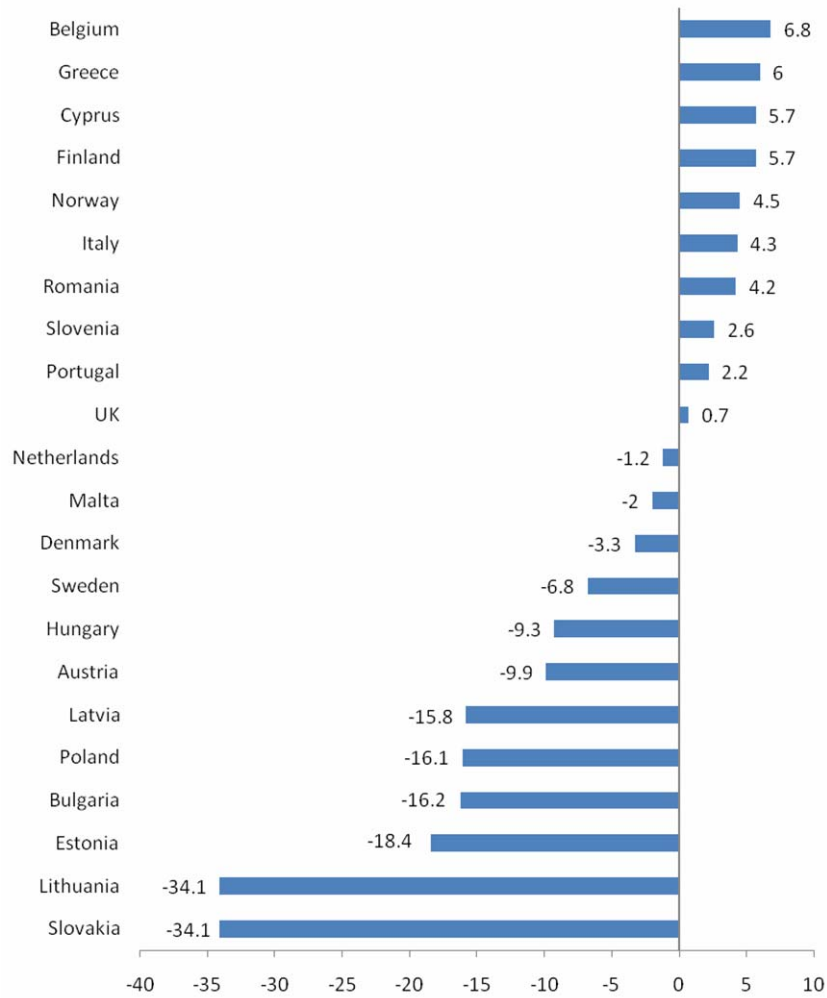
Of 48 trade union centres and sets of ‘other’ trade unions examined in the EU15 and Norway, some 30 trade union organisations recorded a growth rate between 2003 and 2008, while 13 of these union bodies decreased in size and five maintained their size. By contrast, of 49 trade union centres and sets of ‘other’ trade unions examined in the NMS12, only 17 trade union organisations grew in size, while 26 of these union bodies reduced in size and six remained stable.

Overall membership for all 97 trade union centres and sets of ‘other’ trade unions, for which data are available, declined by about 1.9% over the 2003–2008 period. In the EU15 and Norway, the decline in union membership stood at about 0.4%, while in the NMS it amounted to around 10.6%.

The total membership of all trade union organisations examined stood in 2008 at a little over 58 million workers.

The general picture can be summarised as follows. Membership of all trade union centres and sets of ‘other’ unions as well as overall national membership levels seems to be rising in Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Romania and (probably) Spain. In Cyprus, Finland, Slovenia and the UK, overall union membership is increasing but some organisations are losing members. Membership of all trade union centres and sets of ‘other’ unions as well as overall national membership levels seem to be declining in Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Slovakia. In the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands and Sweden, overall union membership is decreasing, but some organisations (generally smaller ones, but not in all cases) are bucking the trend.

*Change in total trade union membership, 2003–2008 (%)*



**Change in total trade union membership, 2003–2008 (%)**

Note: Not all changes refer to the exact 2003–2008 period – see Table 1 for details.

Source: EIRO

## Relative size of organisations

In Austria and Latvia, a single trade union centre represents all, or virtually all, union members. Otherwise, in all of the other countries considered, there are multiple organisations and their relative size is an important issue. Table 2 below indicates the proportion of total trade union members represented by each trade union centre considered and by ‘other’ trade unions, where data are available – as noted above, information on some or all ‘other’ trade unions is not available for some countries, and the proportions given are of totals that exclude their members. This aspect is significant in Italy and Luxembourg, and to a lesser extent in Belgium, Estonia and Finland.

Apart from Austria and Latvia, there is also a single national trade union centre or confederation in Ireland, Malta and the UK, although in these countries there are a number of ‘other’ trade unions present. The great majority of union members are represented by the sole trade union centre in Ireland (95.3% in 2008) and the UK (87% in 2008). Malta is different, in that the only trade union confederation, the [Confederation of Malta Trade Unions \(CMTU\)](#), represents just 44.9% of trade union members, with an unaffiliated trade union, the [General Workers’ Union \(GWU\)](#), having more members than CMTU and representing almost half of the overall total trade union members.

The 23 other countries (22 EU Member States and Norway) examined have multiple trade union centres and in many cases a number of ‘other’ trade unions. There are so many different configurations of trade unions in these countries that it is almost impossible to categorise them. In some countries, there are two or more trade union centres that each essentially seek to organise all (or almost all) categories of workers, and the divisions between them are – or at least were originally – mainly on political and religious grounds. In some central and eastern European countries (CEECs), the main ‘political’ division is between new trade unions created after or during the fall of the old state-socialist system in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and former state-dominated trade unions that have reformed themselves in the new context. Another basic approach is for trade union centres to organise different categories of workers – blue-collar, white-collar, or professional, academic or managerial – rather than compete for the same ones; however, the demarcation lines may become blurred over time. Similarly, in some countries a distinction may exist between separate trade union centres organising the private and public sectors – or private law employees and civil servants.

A relatively clear ‘competitive’ situation between trade union centres of differing ideological backgrounds (although these original divisions may no longer be relevant in some cases) exists in Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Spain. In some of these countries, specific trade union centres exist that focus on public sector workers (such as in Hungary, Luxembourg and Slovenia), white-collar staff (such as in Luxembourg) or managerial staff (such as in France and the Netherlands). In some countries, there is one trade union centre that is clearly larger than the others: this is the case of Bulgaria (where the largest centre, the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria ([Конфедерация на независимите синдикати в България, CITUB](#)), represented 69% of all union members in 2008), the Czech Republic (the Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions ([Českomoravská konfederace odborových svazů, ČMKOS](#)) with 55.5%), Lithuania (the Lithuanian Trade Union Confederation ([Lietuvos profesinių sąjungų konfederacija, LPSK](#)) with 74.9%), the Netherlands (the Dutch Trade Union Federation ([Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging, FNV](#)) with 62.8%) and Portugal (the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers ([Confederação Geral de Trabalhadores Portugueses, CGTP](#)) with 62.9%)

One trade union centre in Belgium also represents a majority of all trade union members, the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions ([Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens/Algemeen Christelĳk Vakverbond, CSC/ACV](#)) with 52.6% of union members, but the second-largest centre is also substantial in size, the Belgian General Federation of Labour ([Fédération Générale du Travail de Belgique/Algemeen Belgisch Vakverbond, FGTB/ABVV](#)) with 40.1%. In Slovenia, the largest centre, the Union of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia ([Zveza svobodnih sindikatov Slovenije, ZSSS](#)), represents just over half of all union members, over 30 percentage points ahead of the second largest trade union centre, the Confederation of Public Sector Trade Unions ([Konfederacija sindikatov javnega sektorja Slovenije, KSJSS](#)), with each of the five remaining trade union centres representing no more than around 5% of union members.

In the other countries in this category, there is less difference in size between the main trade union centres, with none of them holding a majority position in the country. In Cyprus, Hungary and Poland, the two largest trade union centres are closely matched (within about five percentage points of each other) and relatively far ahead of their rivals. In Italy, Luxembourg, Romania and Spain, the largest union centre (while still not in a majority position) is further ahead of its nearest rival (over 10 percentage points). The greatest spread of trade union membership is found in Hungary and Romania, where no single organisation represents more than about 40% of all trade union members, but four or more trade union centres represent more than 10%. An even wider spread appears to apply in France, but full data are not available.

Germany is a variant of this model, with two confederations competing for most workers and one restricted to civil servants. However, the larger general trade union centre, the German Federation of Trade Unions ([Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, DGB](#)) is 23 times larger than its rival, the Christian Trade Union Federation of Germany ([Christlicher Gewerkschaftsbund, CGB](#)). Germany thus probably fits more naturally in the ‘one dominant union centre’ group alongside Ireland, Malta and the UK. This is even more true of Slovakia, where the largest trade union centre, the Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic ([Konfederácia odborových zväzov Slovenskej republiky, KOZ SR](#)), represents the vast majority of trade union members (96.4%) and faces only small rivals.

In the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, trade unions essentially divide along occupational grounds, with separate trade union centres for blue-collar, white-collar and professional or academic workers, as well as for managerial staff in Denmark and Sweden; however, the demarcation lines may vary between countries. In all of these cases, the larger blue-collar trade union centres represent over 40% of all trade union members, varying between 55.6% (in 2008) in Denmark for the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions ([Landsorganisationen i Danmark, LO](#)) and 43.5% in Sweden for the Swedish Trade Union Confederation ([Landsorganisationen, LO](#)). The second largest trade union centres are those for white-collar workers in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, notably: the Confederation of Salaried Employees and Civil Servants in Denmark ([Funktionærernes og Tjenestemændenes Fællesråd, FTF](#)) representing 19.6% of trade union members; the Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees ([Toimihenkilökeskusjärjestö, STTK](#)) representing 28.7% of union members; and the Swedish Confederation for Professional Employees ([Tjänstemännens Centralorganisation, TCO](#)) representing 35.4% of union members. Professional and academic trade union centres are in second place in Norway, where two such organisations exist – the Confederation of Unions for Professionals ([Hovedorganisasjonen for universitets- og høyskoleutdannede, Unio](#)) and the Federation of Norwegian Professional Associations ([Akademikerne](#)) – representing 26.1% of trade union members between them in 2008. In comparison, professional and academic trade union centres are in third place in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, including: the Danish Confederation of Professional Organisations ([Akademikernes Centralorganisation, AC](#)) representing 9.5% of union members, the Finnish confederation AKAVA representing 24.3% and

the Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations ([Sveriges akademikers centralorganisation, SACO](#)) representing 17.7%. In all four cases, there are also a number of ‘other’ trade unions. The basic divide between Estonia’s two main trade union centres seems to be along the lines of blue-collar/white-collar workers, with the Estonian Trade Union Confederation ([Eesti Ametiühingute Keskliit, EAKL](#)) representing blue-collar workers being about three times larger than the white-collar Estonian Employees’ Unions’ Confederation ([Teenistujate Ametiliitude Keskorganisatsioon, TALO](#)).

In Greece, there are two trade union centres, with one, the Greek General Confederation of Labour ([Γενική Συνομοσπονδία Εργατών Ελλάδας GSEE](#)), organising in the private and broader public sector and the other, the Greek Confederation of Public Servants ([Ανώτατη Διοίκηση Ενώσεων Δημοσίων Υπαλλήλων, ADEDY](#)), among public servants. The former is about 50% larger than the latter.

As already mentioned, ‘other’ trade unions exist outside the main union centres in most countries under examination in this study. Where data are available, ‘other’ unions represented in 2008: under 1% of all trade union members in Slovakia; 1%–5% in Bulgaria, Germany, Ireland, Poland, Romania and Spain; 5%–10% in Norway; 10%–20% in the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and the UK; and over 20% in Cyprus and Malta.

With regard to changes in the relative membership of trade unions over the period 2003–2008, clear shifts of five percentage points or over (not accounted for by statistical changes, as in Poland) occurred only in: Denmark, where the blue-collar centre, LO, lost ground, mainly to ‘other’ trade unions; Lithuania, where the two largest union centres, LPSK and LDF, became increasingly dominant; and Slovenia, where a new union centre, KSJSS, formerly grouped ‘other’ trade unions. A number of less dramatic, but longer-term, trends can be observed, especially when also considering the data for 1993–2003 ([TN0403105U](#)), where available. In all four Nordic countries, where trade unions are divided along occupational lines, blue-collar centres have been losing ground, with corresponding increases in the share of white-collar and/or professional centres (especially the latter). The largest trade union centres have been increasing their share of total membership in countries such as Cyprus, Estonia and Malta, but losing ground to varying degrees in countries such as Belgium, Germany, Greece and Italy.

**Table 2: Total national trade union membership, by national confederations, trade union centres and 'other' unions, 2003–2008**

Country	Confederations, trade union centres and 'other' unions	2003*	2008**	Change over period
<b>Austria</b>	ÖGB	100%	100%	0.0
<b>Belgium</b>	CSC/ACV	53.7%	52.6%	-1.1
	FGTB/ABVV	39.2%	40.1%	+0.9
	CGSLB/ACLVB	7.0%	7.3%	+0.3
<b>Bulgaria</b>	CITUB	69.2%	69.0%	-0.2
	CL Podkrepa	18.7%	19.3%	+0.6
	Promyana	10.5%	10.5%	0.0
	Others	1.8%	1.3%	-0.5
<b>Cyprus</b>	PEO	38.3%	39.6%	+1.3
	SEK	37.0%	34.8%	-2.2
	DEOK	4.1%	4.3%	+0.2
	POAS	0.1%	0.1%	-0.0
	Others	20.5%	21.3%	-
<b>Czech Republic</b>	ČMKOS	n.d.	55.5%	-
	ASO	n.d.	22.4%	-
	KUK	n.d.	4.5%	-
	OS ČMS	n.d.	1.1%	-
	KOK	n.d.	0.5%	-
	Others	n.d.	16.0%	-
<b>Denmark</b>	LO	63.3%	55.6%	-7.7
	FTF	19.2%	19.6%	+0.4
	AC	9.4%	9.5%	+0.1
	LH	4.0%	4.2%	+0.2
	Others	4.0%	11.1%	+7.1
<b>Estonia</b>	EAKL	74.2%	75.1%	+0.9
	TALO	25.8%	24.9%	-0.9
<b>Finland</b>	SAK	50.2%	47.0%	-3.2
	STTK	28.5%	28.7%	+0.2
	AKAVA	21.3%	24.3%	+3.0

<b>Germany</b>	DGB	n.d.	77.7%	-
	dbb	n.d.	15.6%	-
	CGB	n.d.	3.4%	-
	Others	n.d.	3.3%	-
<b>Greece</b>	GSEE	60.9%	60.3%	-0.6
	ADEDY	39.1%	39.7%	+0.6
<b>Hungary</b>	SZEF	31.1%	28.6%	-2.5
	MSZOSZ	27.7%	26.1%	-1.6
	ASZSZ	13.8%	15.3%	+1.5
	LIGA	11.5%	12.8%	+1.3
	ÉSzt	9.8%	10.8%	+1.0
	MOSZ	5.9%	6.4%	+0.5
<b>Ireland</b>	ICTU	n.d.	95.3%	-
	Others	n.d.	4.7%	-
<b>Italy</b>	Cgil	48.6%	47.8%	-0.8
	Cisl	36.3%	36.7%	+0.4
	Uil	15.1%	15.5%	+0.4
<b>Latvia</b>	LBAS	100%	100%	0.0
<b>Lithuania</b>	LPSK	62.2%	74.9%	+12.7
	LDF	9.3%	19.1%	+9.8
	LPS 'Solidarumas'	28.5%	6.0%	-22.5
<b>Luxembourg</b>	CGT-L	42.0%	n.d.	-
	LCGB	27.5%	n.d.	-
	CGFP	16.7%	n.d.	-
	ALEBA/UEP-NGL-SNEP	13.8%	n.d.	-
<b>Malta</b>	CMTU	41.6%	44.9%	+3.3
	Others	58.4%	55.1%	-3.3
<b>Netherlands</b>	FNV	62.7%	62.8%	+0.1
	CNV	18.5%	17.6%	-0.9
	MHP	8.8%	8.9%	+0.1
	Others	9.9%	10.7%	+0.8
<b>Norway</b>	LO	55.6%	53.6%	-2.0
	Unio	15.4%	17.4%	+2.0

	YS	13.4%	13.3%	-0.1
	Akademikerne	8.8%	8.7%	-0.1
	Others	6.9%	7.0%	+0.1
<b>Poland</b>	NSZZ Solidarność	32.9%	48.1%	+15.2
	OPZZ	31.5%	43.0%	+11.5
	FZZ	11.0%	7.6%	-3.4
	Others	24.7%	1.3%	-23.4
<b>Portugal</b>	CGTP	62.8%	62.9%	+0.1
	UGT	24.5%	24.6%	+0.1
	USI	1.7%	1.8%	+0.1
	CGSI	0.6%	0.6%	0.0
	Others	10.4%	10.2%	-0.2
<b>Romania</b>	CNSLR Frăția	39.3%	37.8%	-1.5
	Cartel Alfa	16.0%	18.9%	+2.9
	BNS	18.4%	17.7%	-0.7
	CSDR	17.0%	16.3%	-0.7
	CSN Meridian	8.4%	8.0%	-0.4
	Others	1.0%	1.4%	+0.4
<b>Slovakia</b>	KOZ SR	96.3%	96.4%	+0.1
	NKOS	2.3%	3.2%	+0.9
	KUK	0.3%	0.3%	0.0
	Others	1.2%	0.1%	-1.1
<b>Slovenia</b>	ZSSS	51.4%	51.3%	-0.1
	KSJSS	-	19.7%	+19.7
	KNSS	4.8%	5.1%	+0.3
	Pergam	4.8%	5.1%	+0.3
	Konfederacija '90	3.4%	3.7%	+0.3
	Solidarnost	0.8%	0.8%	0.0
	Alternativa	0.8%	0.8%	0.0
	Others	34.0%	13.4%	-20.6
<b>Spain</b>	CC.OO	n.d.	43.9%	-
	UGT	n.d.	31.1%	-
	USO	n.d.	4.7%	-



	ELA/STV	n.d.	4.2%	-
	CGT	n.d.	3.8%	-
	Others	n.d.	12.3%	-
<b>Sweden</b>	LO	46.0%	43.5%	-2.5
	TCO	35.8%	35.4%	-0.4
	SACO	15.6%	17.7%	+2.1
	Others	2.5%	3.4%	+0.9
<b>UK</b>	TUC	90.3%	87.0%	-3.3
	Others	9.7%	13.0%	+3.3

*Notes: \* Except for: Portugal – 2001; Bulgaria (Promyana), Denmark (LH and 'others'), Greece, Hungary (MOSZ), Poland – 2004; Estonia (TALO) – 2005.*

*\*\* Except for: Cyprus, Portugal – 2006; Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia (EAKL), Germany (CGB), Greece (GSEE), Hungary (LIGA), Italy, Latvia (LBAS), Norway, Poland, Sweden (LO), UK (TUC) – 2007.*

*The data in Table 2 are based on those in Table 1, and therefore the same notes apply (see Annex 2). Due to rounding, national totals do not always equal 100%. n.d. = no data available.*

*Source: EIRO*

## Membership by gender

Information on the gender division of total trade union membership in 2003 and 2008 is provided in Table 3 below. No such data are available for France, Greece, Italy, Romania and Spain, while figures are available for only some organisations in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and the UK. Data are not available for both years 2003 and 2008 in some cases. For some countries, total national figures are given which exclude some organisations for which no data are available, if these organisations are relatively minor.

Data are available on the gender composition of 64 trade union centres or sets of ‘other’ unions (out of 112). Looking at the most recent year for which information is available, in only 19 cases (around 30%) do women outnumber men in terms of union membership. In the Nordic countries, where trade union centres are based on occupational categories, women make up a majority of members of Denmark’s white-collar FTF, Finland’s white-collar STTK and professional/academic AKAVA, Norway’s professional/academic Unio and the white-collar Confederation of Vocational Unions ([Yrkesorganisasjonenes Sentralforbund](#), [YS](#)), and Sweden’s white-collar TCO and professional/academic SACO. Women are also in the majority in almost all trade union centres in the three Baltic states, of which Estonia’s white-collar TALO is the most female-dominated centre for which information is available, with women making up 80% of the membership. The other instances are: a minor trade union centre and ‘other’ unions (mainly public sector and banking organisations) in Cyprus; the public sector Trade Unions’ Cooperation Forum ([Szakszervezetek Együttműködési Fóruma](#), [SZEF](#)) and two smaller union centres in Hungary; Poland’s Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union ‘Solidarnosc’ ([Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy ‘Solidarnosc’](#), [NSZZ Solidarnosc](#)); and a minor union centre in Slovakia.

In the other 45 cases, men make up the majority of trade union members: 50%–55% in 11 cases; 56%–60% in 14 cases; 61%–65% in five cases; 66%–70% in eight cases; and 71% and over in seven cases. The most male-dominated trade union organisations, with over three quarters of their membership made up of men, are the Democratic Labour Federation of Cyprus ([Δημοκρατική Εργατική Ομοσπονδία Κύπρου](#), [DEOK](#)) with 86.7%, followed by Hungary’s Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions ([Független Szakszervezetek Demokratikus Ligája](#), [LIGA](#)) and Alliance of Autonomous Trade Unions ([Autonóm Szakszervezetek Szövetsége](#), [ASZSZ](#)), Denmark’s Organisation of Managerial and Executive Staff ([Ledernes Hovedorganisation](#), [LH](#)), ‘other’ unions (made up principally of GWU) in Malta, and ‘other’ unions in Norway. Outside the Baltic countries and Poland, all general union centres seeking to organise all or most categories of employees have a majority of male members.

Aggregating the figures for all of the trade union centres and sets of ‘other’ unions for which data are available, women make up about 43% of all members and men around 57%. The average proportion of women in trade unions in the EU15 and Norway is slightly lower (by about one percentage point). By contrast, women make up a slight majority (a little over 51%) of trade union members in the NMS union centres and sets of ‘other’ unions.

Approximate total figures for national gender breakdown of union membership are available for 21 out of the 28 countries examined. In the latest year for which data are available, women represent the majority of trade union members in eight countries: Latvia (68%), Estonia (64.1%), Poland (59.2%), Lithuania (56.3%), Finland (54.7%), Norway (52.1%), Sweden (51.5%) and Denmark (50.5%). In some countries, union membership approaches gender parity with men in a majority of up to 55%; this is the case in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland and

Slovenia. However, men make up two thirds or more of all trade union members in Austria, Germany, Malta and the Netherlands.

In most union centres and countries for which data are available for both 2003 and 2008, women are making up an increasing proportion of trade union members, most notably so in Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Malta and the Netherlands. In countries such as Norway and Sweden, the trend varies between union centres. The main exceptions to the overall upward trend in women's share of union membership are a number of CEECs, such as Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovakia, where their membership share has been declining.

Women's generally increasing share of trade union membership suggests that their membership is tending to hold up better than men's in union organisations that are decreasing in size, and that they are making up a greater proportion of growth in organisations that are expanding. Looking at those organisations for which the relevant data are available that have lost members over the period 2003–2008, the decline in male membership in absolute numerical terms has outstripped the decline in female membership at, for example, Austria's ÖGB, Denmark's LO, Germany's DGB, Slovakia's KOZ SR and the UK's [Trades Union Congress \(TUC\)](#). Within a general context of declining trade union membership, the number of female members has increased at Denmark's FTF, AC and LH, Latvia's Free Trade Union Confederation ([Latvijas Brīvo Arodbiedrību savienība, LBAS](#)) and the Netherlands' Trade Union Federation ([Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging, FNV](#)) and Christian Trade Union Federation ([Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond, CNV](#)). In growing organisations – such as Belgium's CSC/ACV, Finland's STTK and AKAVA, Germany's Federation of Career Public Servants ([Deutscher Beamtenbund und Tarifunion, dbb](#)), Lithuania's LDF, Malta's CMTU, the Netherlands' Federation of Managerial and Professional Staff ([Vakcentrale voor middengroepen en hoger personeel, MHP](#)), Norway's Confederation of Trade Unions ([Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LO](#)), Unio and Akademikerne, and Sweden's SACO – women have accounted for a clear majority (or in cases such as STTK, MHP and LO for all) of this growth.

This trend is not, however, universal. Decreases in female union membership in absolute terms have exceeded decreases in male membership in a number of central and eastern European trade union centres, such as in Bulgaria's CITUB and Confederation of Labour Podkrepa ([Страница на КТ Подкрепа, CL Podkrepa](#)), Estonia's EAKL and TALO, most Hungarian union centres and Lithuania's LPSK, as well as in Finland's Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions ([Suomen Ammattiliittojen Keskusjärjestö, SAK](#)) and Sweden's LO and TCO. Male members have contributed more to trade union growth than female members in Norway's YS and Portugal's General Workers' Union ([União Geral de Trabalhadores, UGT](#)).

**Table 3: Trade union members, by gender, 2003–2008 (%)**

Country	Confederations, trade union centres and 'other' unions	2003*		2008*	
		Women	Men	Women	Men
Austria	ÖGB	33.2%	66.8%	33.3%	66.7%
	Total	33.2%	66.8%	33.3%	66.7%
Belgium	CSC/ACV	42.0%	58.0%	44.0%	56.0%
	FGTB/ABVV	35.0%	65.0%	n.d.	n.d.
	CGSLB/ACLVB	40.0%	60.0%	n.d.	n.d.
	Total	39.1%	60.9%	-	-

<b>Bulgaria</b>	CITUB	51.0%	49.0%	48.0%	52.0%
	CL Podkrepa	45.0%	55.0%	43.0%	57.0%
	Total (excluding Promyana and 'others')	49.7%	50.3%	46.9%	53.1%
<b>Cyprus</b>	PEO	30.2%	69.8%	30.5%	69.5%
	SEK	36.7%	63.3%	37.2%	62.8%
	DEOK	13.2%	86.8%	13.3%	86.7%
	POAS	49.0%	51.0%	52.4%	47.6%
	Others	51.3%	48.7%	54.9%	45.1%
	Total	36.3%	63.7%	37.3%	62.7%
<b>Czech Republic</b>	ČMKOS	n.d.	n.d.	47.0%	53.0%
	KUK	n.d.	n.d.	35.0%	65.0%
	OS ČMS	n.d.	n.d.	40.0%	60.0%
	KOK	n.d.	n.d.	30.0%	70.0%
	Total (excluding ASO and 'others')	-	-	45.9%	54.1%
<b>Denmark</b>	LO	48.8%	51.2%	49.1%	50.9%
	FTF	67.1%	32.9%	68.9%	31.1%
	AC	37.9%	62.1%	42.8%	57.2%
	LH	19.1%	80.9%	21.9%	78.1%
	Others	28.1%	71.9%	42.3%	57.7%
	Total	49.2%	50.8%	50.5%	49.5%
<b>Estonia</b>	EAKL	58.4%	41.6%	58.8%	41.2%
	TALO	80.0%	20.0%	80.0%	20.0%
	Total	64.0%	36.0%	64.1%	35.9%
<b>Finland</b>	SAK	46.4%	53.6%	46.2%	53.8%
	STTK	68.0%	32.0%	70.0%	30.0%
	AKAVA	49.1%	50.9%	53.0%	47.0%
	Total	53.1%	46.9%	54.7%	45.3%
<b>Germany</b>	DGB	32.0%	68.0%	32.0%	68.0%
	dbb	30.3%	69.7%	31.1%	68.9%
	Total (excluding CGB and 'others')	31.8%	68.2%	31.8%	68.2%
<b>Hungary</b>	SZEF	70.0%	30.0%	65.0%	35.0%

	MSZOSZ	48.0%	52.0%	44.0%	56.0%
	ASZSZ	35.0%	65.0%	25.0%	75.0%
	LIGA	30.0%	70.0%	20.0%	80.0%
	ÉSZT	n.d.	n.d.	60.0%	40.0%
	MOSZ	50.3%	49.7%	51.6%	48.4%
	Total	-	-	46.2%	53.8%
<b>Ireland</b>	ICTU	n.d.	n.d.	45.0%	55.0%
	Total (excluding 'others')	-	-	45.0%	55.0%
<b>Latvia</b>	LBAS	54.9%	41.1%	68.0%	32.0%
	Total	58.9%	41.1%	68.0%	32.0%
<b>Lithuania</b>	LPSK	64.2%	35.8%	58.1%	41.9%
	LDF	43.5%	56.5%	52.6%	47.4%
	LPS 'Solidarumas'	46.0%	54.0%	46.0%	54.0%
	Total	57.1%	42.9%	56.3%	43.7%
<b>Luxembourg</b>	CGFP	n.d.	n.d.	40.8%	59.2%
	ALEBA	n.d.	n.d.	48.1%	51.9%
<b>Malta</b>	CMTU	36.3%	63.7%	41.0%	59.0%
	Others	20.8%	79.2%	21.9%	78.1%
	Total	27.3%	72.7%	30.5%	69.5%
<b>Netherlands</b>	FNV	29.3%	70.7%	32.1%	67.9%
	CNV	26.9%	73.1%	29.7%	70.3%
	MHP	21.6%	78.3%	33.7%	66.3%
	Others	39.3%	60.7%	41.1%	58.9%
	Total	29.2%	70.8%	32.8%	67.2%
<b>Norway</b>	LO	49.3%	50.7%	49.9%	50.1%
	Unio	76.3%	23.7%	74.8%	25.2%
	YS	57.5%	42.5%	56.5%	43.5%
	Akademikerne	33.6%	66.4%	36.5%	63.5%
	Others	n.d.	n.d.	24.5%	75.5%
	Total	-	-	52.1%	47.9%
<b>Poland</b>	NSZZ Solidarność	n.d.	n.d.	71.8%	28.2%
	OPZZ	n.d.	n.d.	49.4%	50.6%
	FZZ	n.d.	n.d.	34.6%	65.4%

	Total (excluding 'others')	-	-	59.2%	40.8%
<b>Portugal</b>	UGT	41.5%	58.5%	41.4%	58.6%
<b>Slovakia</b>	KOZ SR	42.3%	57.7%	41.9%	58.1%
	NKOS	45.0%	55.0%	40.0%	60.0%
	KUK	53.3%	46.7%	60.0%	40.0%
	Others	21.4%	78.6%	40.0%	60.0%
	Total	42.1%	57.9%	41.9%	58.1%
<b>Slovenia</b>	Total	49.7%	50.3%	49.9%	50.1%
<b>Sweden</b>	LO	47.3%	52.7%	46.0%	54.0%
	TCO	61.6%	38.4%	61.4%	38.6%
	SACO	51.4%	48.6%	52.6%	47.4%
	Others	19.3%	80.7%	26.3%	73.7%
	Total	52.0%	48.0%	51.5%	48.5%
<b>UK</b>	TUC	44.7%	55.3%	44.7%	55.3%
	Total (excluding 'others')	44.7%	55.3%	44.7%	55.3%

Notes: \* Except for: Portugal (UGT) – 2001; Norway (YS) – 2002; Austria, Denmark (LH and 'others'), Hungary (MOSZ) – 2004; Estonia (TALO), Latvia – 2005.

\*\* Except for: Austria, Cyprus, Portugal (UGT) – 2006; Belgium (CSC/ACV), Estonia (EAKL), Hungary (LIGA), Latvia, Norway, Poland, Sweden, UK – 2007.

The data should be read in conjunction with the notes in Annex 3. n.d. = no data available.

Source: EIRO

## Issues related to union density

For purposes of international comparison, data on the absolute number of trade union members are of limited value. Such comparisons require a measure of trade union density – that is, union membership as a proportion of the eligible workforce. However, calculating trade union density is a very problematic field of labour statistics, as outlined below.

### ‘Crude’ density figures

There are two sides of the trade union density equation – trade union membership and the eligible workforce. Using the total membership figures as shown in Table 1 as the measure of trade union membership and the number of employees as defined in national labour force surveys as the measure of the eligible workforce, very basic and crude density figures can be produced for all but one (France) of the 28 countries considered. In 2008, or the most recent year for which data are available, these density figures are as follows:

- over 90% in Finland;
- 80%–89% in Belgium and Sweden;
- 70%–79% in Denmark and Norway;
- 60%–69% in Italy;
- 50%–59% in Cyprus, Luxembourg and Malta;
- 40%–49% in Romania;
- 30%–39% in Austria, Ireland and Slovenia;
- 20%–29% in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal and the UK;
- 10%–19% in Latvia, Poland, Slovakia and Spain;
- below 10% in Estonia and Lithuania.

Across all countries, the average unweighted trade union density stood at around 39%, varying from about 49% in the EU15 and Norway to some 27% in the NMS. Weighting the figures for the size of national workforces produces an overall density of about 35%–36% in the EU15 and Norway, and 23% in the NMS.

For most countries examined, the latest figures produced by this crude calculation method can be compared with data for 2003 (or the nearest year), revealing a clear downward trend in trade union density across Europe. Of the 24 countries for which the relevant information is available, all but two – Belgium and Greece – experienced a decline in density between 2003 and 2008. The following countries recorded a decline in union density of: over 10 percentage points in Slovakia and Sweden; five to 10 points in Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Malta; one to five points in Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Slovenia; and under one percentage point in Portugal, Romania, Spain and the UK. While trade union density is still decreasing in the CEECs, the rate of decline has slowed considerably in most cases when compared with the previous period 1993–2003 ([TN0403105U](#)).

In countries – apart from Belgium and Greece – where absolute trade union membership rose over the period 2003–2008, union density declined because the absolute number of employees rose by more – as in Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and

the UK. Trade union membership fell while employee numbers grew in Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Slovakia and Sweden.

Still using this crude calculation method, sufficient data are available to produce separate union density rates for women and men for a number of countries. In 2008 (or the nearest year for which data are available), trade union density among women was higher than among men in half of the 20 countries examined for which a calculation can be made – Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Slovenia and Sweden. The greatest differentials (over nine percentage points) were found in Finland, Latvia and Norway. Male trade union density exceeded female union density in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Germany, Ireland, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovakia and the UK. The greatest differentials (over 15 percentage points) were found in Austria, Belgium and Cyprus.

These trade union density figures are given merely as a very rough indication. The following sections highlight the problems in the calculation on the two sides of the density equation – the ‘eligible workforce’ and trade union membership.

### **Eligible workforce**

There are a number of uncertainties and problems in assessing the ‘eligible’ workforce for trade union membership.

The crude density figures given above are based on figures for the total number of employees, as measured in national labour force surveys. There are no guarantees that they are calculated in the same way in every country, or include the same categories of people.

Including only employees in the eligible workforce may also be problematic. In some countries, trade unions have long organised self-employed workers in occupations such as journalism, the performing arts, construction and road transport. More recently, some trade unions have been seeking to organise workers in new forms of employment, where the boundary between dependent employment and self-employment is blurred. This includes ‘economically dependent workers’ – workers who are formally self-employed but depend on a single employer for their income (for further details of trade union representation of self-employed workers, see the Eurofound comparative report on [Self-employed workers: industrial relations and working conditions](#)). It might be argued that, at least in some countries and economic sectors, such groups could be included in the workforce eligible for trade union membership, but this is impossible to quantify without extensive data.

A further issue is that the workers making up the ‘eligible workforce’ should, logically, only be those who are entitled to join a trade union. In some countries, certain categories of employees are not allowed by law to be trade union members. There appear to be no such restrictions in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. However, groups excluded from potential union membership in other countries include: members of the armed forces in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and the UK (in practice, as there is no union to join); some or all police officers in Cyprus, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Portugal and the UK (in practice); judges, magistrates and public prosecutors in Spain; firefighters and some civil servants in Latvia; and ‘members of legislative bodies, executives, leaders of public administration, leaders and clerks at socioeconomic and political units’ in Romania.

Where information is available on the number of such excluded employees, the unions’ potential constituency is reduced slightly (by under 2%) in Slovakia, Portugal, the UK and Spain, by a little more in Romania (around 2.5%) and Malta (about 5%), and quite considerably in Latvia (10%). There may also be other restrictions on trade unions’ potential membership. For example, in



Poland, where the basic trade union structures are at company level, a minimum of 10 people are required to establish these union organisations, thus essentially excluding from membership those workers (more than 20% of the national total) in companies with fewer than 10 employees. Trade union density in these countries is therefore likely to be higher (taking into account only this factor) than the crude estimates given in this review. However, similar information is not available for all countries where some employees are excluded from trade union membership, making it impossible to correct all union density figures in this way.

## Trade union membership

With regard to the trade union membership side of the density equation, a first problem is that, as already mentioned, the total national union membership figures given in Table 1 and used in the crude density calculations are not always complete, as data for some smaller organisations are missing in some countries (for example, in Italy). Thus, trade union membership and density may be higher than indicated in some countries.

Secondly, most of the membership figures that have been used in this review are directly or indirectly self-reported figures by the trade unions themselves, which entails problems. These problems are clearly outlined in the [Technical notes – Industrial relations indicators](#) of the *World Labour Report 1997–1998* by the [International Labour Organization \(ILO\)](#): ‘Self-reporting of membership reflects different administrative and political practices and may yield incomparable and unreliable results. Unions may have reasons to overstate or understate their membership figures in reports to the press, public agencies, political parties, employers or competitors. They may apply different norms regarding who is to be considered as a member in good standing and may be slow to remove those who have left or no longer pay their contributions. Unions may include people who no longer consider themselves as members. Comparison with survey data suggests that some overstatement in reported membership is general but, in most cases, small’ (ILO, November 2002).

The notes to Table 1 highlight some of the differences between trade union organisations in calculating membership figures in countries such as Belgium, Greece and Sweden.

The third and most serious problem relates to the status of trade union members. If trade union density is measured against the number of employees, then logically only those members who are employees should be included in the union membership side of the equation. However, many trade unions include in their membership – and membership figures – people who are retired, unemployed, students or not economically active in some other way.

Table 4 provides the information available regarding this point. No data are available for Cyprus, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain and the UK, while only partial data or estimates are available in many cases. However, it is clear that a substantial proportion of many unions’ members are not in employment: 20% and upwards in Austria, Finland, Germany, Italy and Norway, as well as in Belgium’s CSC/ACV; and 10%–20% in Denmark, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden, and in Malta’s GWU. Italy is a particularly notable case, with almost half of the total membership of the three main trade union confederations comprising retired members.

Data are not available on this issue for all countries or all trade unions, so an overall correction of the crude density figures for non-active members is not possible. However, a rough calculation at least is possible for 13 countries. Correcting only for non-economically active trade union members (and not for other factors such as employees eligible to join a union) reduces density by over 10 percentage points or more in countries such as Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and especially Italy (where the ‘crude’ density is almost halved). The reduction is also quite substantial (over five percentage points) in Austria and Germany.

The inclusion in trade union membership figures of members who are not in employment, along with other problems in self-reported membership data, are likely to be an important factor in the disparity sometimes found between trade unions' own membership figures and those based on labour force surveys, which include only people in employment. For example, labour force survey data indicate lower levels of membership than unions' self-reported data in countries such as Estonia, Ireland and Sweden, as seen in the notes to Table 1 (see Annex 2).

**Table 4: Data on trade union members who are not in employment**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Trade union members who are not in employment, such as retired or unemployed people, or students (%)</b>
<b>Austria</b>	No official data available. Estimated for ÖGB at about 20% in 2003 and 2008.
<b>Belgium</b>	No official data available. Estimated at 33% for 2003 and 2008, based on data from ACV/CSC.
<b>Bulgaria</b>	No data available, but only a few retired people are thought to remain members of company trade union organisations.
<b>Czech Republic</b>	No official data available. Estimated, based on trade union data, at about 7.5%.
<b>Denmark</b>	No official data available. Estimated at 16%–17% in 2003 and 18%–19% in 2008.
<b>Estonia</b>	Based on trade union data, about 3% of union members in 2003 and 5% in 2007 were inactive – this excludes unemployed people, but data indicate that the proportion of unemployed trade union members is marginal. The proportion of non-working union members varies from 2%–3% for EAKL to 10% for TALO.
<b>Finland</b>	According to information from the confederations, in 2003, 25% of union members were not in employment; the proportion was 25% for SAK, 21% for STTK and 30% for AKAVA. In 2008, the overall proportion of union members not in employment stood again at 25%–28% for SAK, 17% for STTK and 29% for AKAVA.
<b>Germany</b>	No official data available. Estimated at 22% for 2003.
<b>Greece</b>	Of GSEE members, an estimated 9% were retired in 2007. GSEE has few unemployed members and ADEDY none. Students are not trade union members.
<b>Hungary</b>	No official data available. Estimated at 10%–15% in 2007.
<b>Italy</b>	According to trade union data, 50% of Cgil, Cisl and Uil members were not in employment (mainly retired) in 2003 and 49% in 2008.
<b>Latvia</b>	According to LBAS, 6% of its members were not in employment in 2003 and 6.1% in 2008.
<b>Luxembourg</b>	According to the trade unions concerned, about 19% of CGFP members and 8% of ALEBA members were not in employment in 2008. The figure was estimated at 18% for OGB-L and LCGB in 2003.

<b>Malta</b>	Proportion of members not in employment estimated at 13% in 2003 and 15% in 2008, based on figures for GWU (which covered 52%–55% of total union membership in this period).
<b>Netherlands</b>	About 15% of trade union members were not in employment in 2001, the last year for which data were collected by Statistics Netherlands ( <a href="#">Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek</a> , <a href="#">CBS</a> ).
<b>Norway</b>	No official data available. Estimated, based on trade union data, at about 25.5% in 2003 and 26% in 2007.
<b>Slovakia</b>	According to KOZ SR data, 13.2% of its members were retired in 2003, and the proportion of total membership not in employment was estimated at up to 20%. In 2008, about 7% of its members were retired, and the total not in employment was estimated at up to 8%–9%.
<b>Slovenia</b>	No official data available. Estimated at under 1% for all trade unions.
<b>Sweden</b>	Based on LO data, an estimated 15% of its members were retired or students in 2007, although no information is available on the number of unemployed members. Based on TCO data, an estimated 18.5% of its members were retired or students in 2007, while about 3% of union members were unemployed.

Source: EIRO

## Annexes

### Annex 1

#### National trade union confederations and organisations

<b>Austria</b>	Austrian Trade Union Federation ( <a href="#">Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund, ÖGB</a> )
<b>Belgium</b>	Confederation of Christian Trade Unions ( <a href="#">Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens/Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond, CSC/ACV</a> ) Belgian General Federation of Labour ( <a href="#">Fédération Générale du Travail de Belgique/Algemeen Belgisch Vakverbond, FGTB/ABVV</a> ) Federation of Liberal Trade Unions of Belgium ( <a href="#">Centrale Générale des Syndicaux Libéraux de Belgique/Algemene Centrale der Liberale Vakbonden van België, CGSLB/ACLVB</a> )
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria ( <a href="#">Конфедерация на независимите синдикати в България, CITUB</a> ) Confederation of Labour <a href="#">Подкрепа</a> ( <a href="#">Страница на КТ Подкрепа, CL Podkrepa</a> ) Promyana Trade Union ( <a href="#">Съюз На Синдикатите 'Промяна', Promyana</a> )
<b>Cyprus</b>	Pancyprian Federation of Labour ( <a href="#">Παγκύπρια Εργατική Ομοσπονδία, ΡΕΟ</a> ) Cyprus Workers' Confederation ( <a href="#">Συνομοσπονδία Εργαζομένων Κύπρου, SEK</a> ) Democratic Labour Federation of Cyprus ( <a href="#">Δημοκρατική Εργατική Ομοσπονδία Κύπρου, DEOK</a> ) Pancyprian Federation of Independent Trade Unions ( <a href="#">Παγκύπρια Ομοσπονδία Ανεξάρτητων Συντεχνιών, POAS</a> )
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions ( <a href="#">Českomoravská konfederace odborových svazů, ČMKOS</a> ) Association of Independent Trade Unions ( <a href="#">Asociace samostatných odborů, ASO</a> ) Art and Culture Confederation ( <a href="#">Konfederace umění a kultury, KUK</a> ) Trade Union Association of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia ( <a href="#">Odborové sdružení Čech, Moravy a Slezska, OS ČMS</a> ) Christian Trade Union Coalition ( <a href="#">Křesťanská odborová koalice, KOK</a> )
<b>Denmark</b>	Danish Confederation of Trade Unions ( <a href="#">Landsorganisationen i Danmark, LO</a> ) Confederation of Salaried Employees and Civil Servants in Denmark ( <a href="#">Funktionærernes og Tjenestemændenes Fællesråd, FTF</a> ) Danish Confederation of Professional Organisations ( <a href="#">Akademikernes</a> )

	<p>Centralorganisation, <a href="#">AC</a>)</p> <p>Organisation of Managerial and Executive Staff in Denmark (<a href="#">Ledernes Hovedorganisation, LH</a>)</p>
<b>Estonia</b>	<p>Estonian Trade Union Confederation (<a href="#">Eesti Ametiühingute Keskliit, EAKL</a>)</p> <p>Estonian Employees' Unions' Confederation (<a href="#">Teenistujate Ametiliitude Keskorganisatsioon, TALO</a>)</p>
<b>Finland</b>	<p>Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (<a href="#">Suomen Ammattiliittojen Keskusjärjestö, SAK</a>)</p> <p>Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees (<a href="#">Toimihenkilökeskusjärjestö, STTK</a>)</p> <p>Confederation of Unions for Academic Professionals in Finland (<a href="#">Akateemisten Toimihenkilöiden Keskusjärjestö, AKAVA</a>)</p>
<b>France</b>	<p>French Democratic Confederation of Labour (<a href="#">Confédération française démocratique du travail, CFDT</a>)</p> <p>General Confederation of Labour–Force Ouvrière (<a href="#">Confédération générale du travail-Force Ouvrière, CGT-FO</a>)</p> <p>General Confederation of Labour (<a href="#">Confédération générale du travail, CGT</a>)</p> <p>National Federation of Independent Unions (<a href="#">Union nationale des syndicats autonomes, UNSA</a>)</p> <p>Unitary Union Federation (<a href="#">Fédération syndicale unitaire, FSU</a>)</p> <p>French Christian Workers' Confederation (<a href="#">Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens, CFTC</a>)</p> <p>French Confederation of Professional and Managerial Staff-General Confederation of Professional and Managerial Staff (<a href="#">Confédération française de l'encadrement-Confédération générale des cadres, CFE-CGC</a>)</p> <p>Solidarity Federation of Independent Trade Unions (<a href="#">Union syndicale Solidaires, Solidaires</a>)</p>
<b>Germany</b>	<p>German Federation of Trade Unions (<a href="#">Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, DGB</a>)</p> <p>German Civil Service Association (<a href="#">Deutscher Beamtenbund und Tarifunion, dbb</a>)</p> <p>Christian Trade Union Federation of Germany (<a href="#">Christlicher Gewerkschaftsbund, CGB</a>)</p>
<b>Greece</b>	<p>Greek General Confederation of Labour (<a href="#">Γενική Συνομοσπονδία Εργατών Ελλάδας, GSEE</a>)</p> <p>Greek Confederation of Public Servants (<a href="#">Ανώτατη Διοίκηση Ενώσεων Δημοσίων Υπαλλήλων, ADEDY</a>)</p>
<b>Hungary</b>	<p>Trade Unions' Cooperation Forum (<a href="#">Szakszervezetek Együttműködési Fóruma, SZEF</a>)</p> <p>National Association of Hungarian Trade Unions (<a href="#">Magyar Szakszervezetek</a>)</p>

	<p>Országos Szövetsége, <a href="#">MSZOSZ</a>)</p> <p>Alliance of Autonomous Trade Unions (Autonóm Szakszervezetek Szövetsége, <a href="#">ASZSZ</a>)</p> <p>Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions (Független Szakszervezetek Demokratikus Ligája, <a href="#">LIGA</a>)</p> <p>Confederation of Unions of Professionals (Értelmiségi Szakszervezeti Tömörülés, <a href="#">ÉSZT</a>)</p> <p>National Federation of Workers' Councils (Munkástanácsok Országos Szövetsége, <a href="#">MOSZ</a>)</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	Irish Congress of Trade Unions ( <a href="#">ICTU</a> )
<b>Italy</b>	<p>General Confederation of Italian Workers (Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro, <a href="#">Cgil</a>)</p> <p>Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions (Confederazione Italiana Sindacato Lavoratori, <a href="#">Cisl</a>)</p> <p>Union of Italian Workers (Unione Italiana del Lavoro, <a href="#">Uil</a>)</p>
<b>Latvia</b>	Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia (Latvijas Brīvo Arodbiedrību savienība, <a href="#">LBAS</a> )
<b>Lithuania</b>	<p>Lithuanian Trade Union Confederation (Lietuvos profesinių sąjungų konfederacija, <a href="#">LPSK</a>)</p> <p>Lithuanian Labour Federation (Lietuvos darbo federacija, <a href="#">LDF</a>)</p> <p>Lithuanian Trade Union 'Solidarumas' (Lietuvos profesinė sąjunga 'Solidarumas', <a href="#">LPS 'Solidarumas'</a>)</p>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	<p>General Confederation of Labour of Luxembourg (Confédération Générale du Travail de Luxembourg, CGT-L) – made up of the Luxembourg Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (Onafhängege Gewerkschafts-Bond Lëtzebuerg, <a href="#">OGB-L</a>) and the Federation of Luxembourg Railway and Transport Workers and Civil Servants (Fédération des cheminots, fonctionnaires et employés publics, travailleurs du transport, Luxembourg, <a href="#">FNCTTFEL</a>)</p> <p>Luxembourg Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (Lëtzebuenger Chrëschtliche Gewerkschafts-Bond, <a href="#">LCGB</a>)</p> <p>General Public Sector Confederation (Confédération générale de la fonction publique, <a href="#">CGFP</a>)</p> <p>Luxembourg Association of Banking and Insurance Staff (Associations luxembourgeoise des employés de banque et d'assurances, <a href="#">ALEBA</a>)/Union of Private Sector White-Collar Employees (Union des employés privés, UEP) – including the Neutral Union of Luxembourg Workers (Neutral Gewerkschaft Luxembourg, <a href="#">NGL</a>) and the National Union of Private Sector White-Collar Employees (Syndicat national des employés privés, SNEP) (ALEBA/UEP-NGL-SNEP)</p>
<b>Malta</b>	Confederation of Malta Trade Unions ( <a href="#">CMTU</a> )
<b>Netherlands</b>	Dutch Trade Union Federation (Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging,

	<p><a href="#">FNV</a>)</p> <p>Christian Trade Union Federation (<a href="#">Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond, CNV</a>)</p> <p>Federation of Managerial and Professional Staff (<a href="#">Vakcentrale voor middengroepen en hoger personeel, MHP</a>)</p>
<b>Norway</b>	<p>Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (<a href="#">Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LO</a>)</p> <p>Confederation of Unions for Professionals (<a href="#">Hovedorganisasjonen for universitets- og høyskoleutdannede, Unio</a>)</p> <p>Confederation of Vocational Unions (<a href="#">Yrkesorganisasjonenes Sentralforbund, YS</a>)</p> <p>Federation of Norwegian Professional Associations (<a href="#">Akademikerne</a>)</p>
<b>Poland</b>	<p>Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union ‘Solidarność’ (<a href="#">Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy ‘Solidarność’, NSZZ Solidarność</a>)</p> <p>All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions (<a href="#">Ogólnopolskie Porozumienie Związków Zawodowych, OPZZ</a>)</p> <p>Trade Unions Forum (<a href="#">Forum Związków Zawodowych, FZZ</a>)</p>
<b>Portugal</b>	<p>General Confederation of Portuguese Workers (<a href="#">Confederação Geral de Trabalhadores Portugueses, CGTP</a>)</p> <p>General Workers’ Union (<a href="#">União Geral de Trabalhadores, UGT</a>)</p> <p>Confederation of Independent Unions (<a href="#">União dos Sindicatos Independentes, USI</a>)</p> <p>General Independent Union Confederation (<a href="#">Confederação Geral de Sindicatos Independentes, CGSI</a>)</p>
<b>Romania</b>	<p>National Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Romania ‘Brotherhood’ (<a href="#">Confederația Națională a Sindicatelor Libere din România Frăția, CNSLR Frăția</a>)</p> <p>National Trade Union Confederation Cartel Alfa (<a href="#">Confederația Națională Sindicală Cartel Alfa, Cartel Alfa</a>)</p> <p>National Trade Union Bloc (<a href="#">Blocul Național Sindical, BNS</a>)</p> <p>Democratic Trade Union Confederation of Romania (<a href="#">Confederația Sindicatelor Democratice din România, CSDR</a>)</p> <p>National Trade Union Confederation Meridian (<a href="#">Confederatia Sindicală Națională Meridian, CSN Meridian</a>)</p>
<b>Slovakia</b>	<p>Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic (<a href="#">Konfederácia odborových zväzov Slovenskej republiky, KOZ SR</a>)</p> <p>Independent Christian Trade Union of Slovakia (<a href="#">Nezávislé kresťanské odbory Slovenska, NKOS</a>)</p> <p>Confederation of Art and Cultural Workers (<a href="#">Konfederácia pracovníkov umenia a kultúry, KUK</a>)</p>

<b>Slovenia</b>	<p>Union of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia (<a href="#">Zveza svobodnih sindikatov Slovenije</a>, <a href="#">ZSSS</a>)</p> <p>Confederation of Public Sector Trade Unions (<a href="#">Konfederacija sindikatov javnega sektorja Slovenije</a>, <a href="#">KSJSS</a>)</p> <p>Confederation of Trade Unions of Slovenia Pergam (<a href="#">Konfederacija sindikatov Pergam Slovenije</a>, <a href="#">Pergam</a>)</p> <p>KNSS – Independence, the Confederation of New Trade Unions of Slovenia (<a href="#">KNSS – Neodvisnost</a>, <a href="#">Konfederacija novih sindikatov Slovenije</a>, KNSS)</p> <p>Confederation of Trade Unions '90 of Slovenia (<a href="#">Konfederacija sindikatov '90 Slovenije</a>, <a href="#">Konfederacija '90</a>)</p> <p>Workers' Trade Union of Slovenia – Solidarity (<a href="#">Sindikat delavcev Slovenije – Solidarnost</a>, Solidarnost)</p> <p>Slovene Union of Trade Unions-Alternativa (<a href="#">Slovenska Zveza Sindikatov-Alternativa</a>, Alternativa)</p>
<b>Spain</b>	<p>Trade Union Confederation of Workers' Commissions (<a href="#">Comisiones Obreras</a>, <a href="#">CC.OO</a>)</p> <p>General Workers' Confederation (<a href="#">Unión General de Trabajadores</a>, <a href="#">UGT</a>)</p> <p>Workers' Trade Unionist Confederation (<a href="#">Unión Sindical Obrera</a>, <a href="#">USO</a>)</p> <p>Basque Workers' Solidarity (<a href="#">Eusko Langileen Alkartasuna/Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos</a>, <a href="#">ELA/STV</a>)</p> <p>General Confederation of Workers (<a href="#">Confederación General del Trabajo</a>, <a href="#">CGT</a>)</p>
<b>Sweden</b>	<p>Swedish Trade Union Confederation (<a href="#">Landsorganisationen i Sverige</a>, <a href="#">LO</a>)</p> <p>Swedish Confederation for Professional Employees (<a href="#">Tjänstemännens Centralorganisation</a>, <a href="#">TCO</a>)</p> <p>Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations (<a href="#">Sveriges akademikers centralorganisation</a>, <a href="#">SACO</a>)</p>
<b>UK</b>	<p><a href="#">Trades Union Congress</a> (<a href="#">TUC</a>)</p>

## Annex 2

The data in Table 1 should be read in conjunction with the following notes.

- **Austria:** ÖGB is the sole trade union centre in the country and virtually all trade union members belong to its affiliated organisations. The 'total' figure can be assumed to be essentially complete. The data are self-reported by ÖGB.
- **Belgium:** The great majority of trade union members belong to the affiliates of the three trade union centres listed. However, there are some relatively small organisations outside these three centres – such as the National Confederation of Managerial Staff, ([Confédération Nationale des Cadres/Nationale Confederatie voor Kaderleden](#), [CNC/NCK](#)) – for which no membership information is available. The 'total' membership figure can be assumed to be close to being complete, but slightly below the actual level. The data are self-reported by trade unions. FGTB/ABVV and CGSLB/ACLVB apply a 'coefficient' (currently 0.8703) to



their raw membership data, reducing them by some 13%, to take account of seasonal fluctuations and other factors. These corrected figures are given in Table 1. However, CSC/ACV no longer follows this practice and publishes uncorrected figures, which are provided in Table 1.

- **Bulgaria:** As well as the three trade union centres listed by name, an overall estimated membership figure is available for the ‘other’ trade unions (mainly police and firefighters’ unions, small occupational unions and minor centres, notably the [Association of Democratic Trade Unions](#) and [National Trade Union](#)). The ‘total’ figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. Data for CITUB, CL Podkrepa and Promyana (2004) are from official censuses carried out by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy ([Министерство на труда и социалната политика, MLSP](#)). The Promyana figure for 2008 is self-reported. Figures for ‘other’ unions are estimates. In 2008, self-reported membership of CITUB was 291,771 (figure excludes some non-fee-paying members) and self-reported membership of CL Podkrepa was 153,000 members.
- **Cyprus:** As well as the four trade union centres listed by name, an overall membership figure is available for the ‘other’ trade unions – these notably include trade unions representing governmental employees, of which the largest is the Pancyprian Public Employees Trade Union ([Παγκύπρια Συντεχνία Δημοσίων Υπαλλήλων, PASYDY](#)), and the Cyprus Union of Bank Employees ([Ενωση Τραπεζικών Υπαλλήλων Κύπρου, ΕΤΥΚ](#)). The ‘total’ figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. The data are from the Trade Union Register of the Department of Labour Relations at the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance ([Υπουργείου Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων, MLSI](#)).
- **Czech Republic:** As well as the five trade union centres listed by name, an overall estimated membership figure is available for ‘other’ unions, but only for 2008. The ‘total’ figure for 2008 can be assumed to be reasonably complete. The data are self-reported by the named trade union centres (estimates in the cases of OS ČMS and KOK). There are no accurate data available on the membership of ‘other’ unions, and the figure given is a trade union estimate.
- **Denmark:** As well as the four trade union centres listed by name, an overall membership figure is available for the ‘other’ trade unions. The ‘total’ figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. The data are from Statistics Denmark ([Danmarks Statistik](#)), except for FTF (2003), which is a self-reported figure.
- **Estonia:** Most trade union members belong to the affiliates of the two trade union centres listed. However, there are some organisations outside these centres – such as the Confederation of Estonian Food and Landworkers’ Unions ([Eesti Toiduainete-ja Maatöötajate Keskliit, ETMK](#)), which was reported to have some 4,000 members in 2006 – for which no combined membership information is available. The ‘total’ membership figure can be assumed to be somewhat low (although Labour Force Survey data suggest overall trade union membership at 60,095 workers in 2003 and 45,357 workers in 2007, which is lower than the combined membership total reported by EAKL and TALO). The data are self-reported by trade unions.
- **Finland:** The great majority of trade union members belong to affiliates of the three trade union centres listed. There are a few minor organisations outside these centres for which no combined membership information is available. The ‘total’ figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete, if slightly low. The data are self-reported by trade unions.
- **France:** All of the figures are self-reported on the trade union centres’ websites, with the exception of CGT-FO, for which the figure is that on which its subscriptions to the [International Trade Union Confederation](#) (ITUC) are based; the CFDT figure represents the

number of members paying eight monthly subscriptions a year. Membership figures are a highly contested subject in France – for example, a 2007 study funded partly by the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Employment ([Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Industrie et de l'Emploi, MINEFI](#)) assessed the trade union centres' actual memberships at 525,000 members for CGT, 450,000 for CFDT, 310,000 for CGT-FO, 135,000 for UNSA, 120,000 for FSU, 105,000 for CFTC, 80,000 for CFE-CGC and 80,000 for Solidaires (Andolfatto, D. and Labbé, D., *Les syndiqués en France 1990–2006*, Grenoble-Nancy, IEP-Pacte-Irénée, 2007).

- **Germany:** As well as the three trade union centres listed by name, an overall estimated membership figure is available, although only for 2008, for the 'other' trade unions – calculated by the Institute for Economic and Social Research ([Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaftliches Institut, WSI](#)) within the Hans-Böckler Foundation ([Hans-Böckler Stiftung](#)) and covering trade unions known to be signatory to collective agreements. The 'total' membership figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. The data for the listed trade union centres are self-reported by unions.
- **Greece:** The great majority of trade union members belong to the affiliates of the two trade union centres listed. The 'total' figure can be assumed to be essentially complete. The data are self-reported by trade unions. The GSEE figures refer to members entitled to vote in union elections (in 2007, GSEE reported 870,415 registered members and 599,234 paid-up members).
- **Hungary:** The great majority of trade union members belong to the affiliates of the six trade union centres listed. The 'total' figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete, although possibly slightly low. The figures are self-reported by trade unions, including estimates in some cases.
- **Ireland:** An estimate is available for the membership of the few trade unions not affiliated to the sole national trade union centre, ICTU, which are principally the [National Bus and Rail Union \(NBRU\)](#), the [Psychiatric Nurses Association \(PNA\)](#) and organisations representing police and defence staff, although only for 2008. The 'total' membership figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. ICTU data are self-reported and refer to members of affiliated trade unions in the Republic of Ireland only (membership in Northern Ireland stood at 231,451 workers in 2008). Household survey data from the [Central Statistics Office \(CSO\)](#) put total union membership at 550,600 workers in the second quarter of 2003 and 551,700 workers in the second quarter of 2007.
- **Italy:** As well as the three trade union centres listed by name, which are the largest, there are a number of other relatively substantial trade union organisations for which no membership information is available. These include the General Union of Labour ([Unione generale del lavoro, Ugl](#)), the Italian Confederation of Autonomous Workers' Unions ([Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Autonomi Lavoratori, Cisl](#)), the General Confederation of Autonomous Workers' Unions ([Confederazione Generale dei Sindacati Autonomi dei Lavoratori, Confsal](#)), the Unitary Confederation of Basic Unions ([Confederazione Unitaria di Base, Cub](#)) and the 'Padanian' Trade Union ([Sindacato Padano, Sin.pa](#)). The 'total' membership figure can thus not be assumed to be complete. The data are self-reported by trade unions.
- **Latvia:** LBAS is the sole trade union centre in the country and the great majority of union members belong to its affiliated organisations. The 'total' membership figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. The data are from LBAS.
- **Lithuania:** The great majority of trade union members belong to affiliates of the three trade union centres listed. However, there are a few organisations outside these centres for which no combined membership information is available. The 'total' membership figure can be

assumed to be reasonably complete, if slightly low. The data are self-reported by trade unions.

- **Luxembourg:** The majority of trade union members belong to the affiliates of the four trade union centres listed, although there are other organisations for which no membership information is available, notably the General Federation of Local Authority Employees (*Fédération générale de la fonction communale*, [FGFC](#)) and the Christian Transport Workers' Federation (*Fédération Chrétienne du Personnel des Transports-Syndicat Professionnel des Cheminots Luxembourgeois*, [FCPT-Syprolux](#)). The 'total' membership figure given for 2003 can be assumed to be low. No data are available for LCGB (the second-largest trade union centre) for 2008, so no attempt is made to give a total membership figure for that year. The data is self-reported by trade unions, relying on information on the unions' websites for 2008 in the cases of OGB-L and ALEBA/UEP-NGL-SNEP.
- **Malta:** As well as the trade union centre listed by name – CMTU, Malta's only trade union confederation – an overall membership figure is available for the 'other' trade unions; the 'other' unions figure principally includes the *General Workers' Union (GWU)*, whose membership (47,254 workers in 2003 and 41,343 workers in 2008) exceeds that of CMTU. The 'total' membership figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. The data are from the Department of Industrial and Employment Relations. The CMTU figures for 2003 and 2008 exclude a minor affiliated trade union that did not submit data on time. The 'other' unions figure for 2003 excludes eight minor trade unions that did not submit data on time, while the figure for 2008 excludes two minor trade unions that did not submit data on time.
- **Netherlands:** As well as the three trade union centres listed by name, an overall membership figure is available for the 'other' trade unions. The 'total' membership figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. The data are from the Statistics Netherlands (*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*, [CBS](#)).
- **Norway:** As well as the four trade union centres listed by name, an overall membership figure is available for the 'other' trade unions. The 'total' membership figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. Unio was known as the Confederation of Higher Education Unions (*Utdanningsgruppenes Hovedorganisasjon*, UHO) in 2003. The data are from Statistics Norway (*Statistisk sentralbyrå*).
- **Poland:** As well as the three trade union centres listed by name, an overall estimated membership figure is available for the 'other' trade unions. In the absence of accurate official or self-reported statistics, the data are calculated mainly on the basis of surveys by the Public Opinion Research Centre (*Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej*, [CBOS](#)) and are problematic in several respects. The 2004 figures greatly overestimate the membership of 'other' trade unions and underestimate the membership of the named union centres (as individual trade union members are often not aware of the affiliation of the workplace unions to which they belong); therefore, the figures are particularly inaccurate. The 2007 data from CBOS have been combined with the findings of the 'Working Poles 2007' research project and are likely to be more reliable.
- **Portugal:** As well as the four trade union centres listed by name, an estimated overall membership figure is available for the 'other' trade unions. In the absence of accurate official or self-reported data, the figures are calculated largely on the basis of official data on election results in individual trade unions and a set of other reliable sources; they represent realistic estimates in the cases of CGTP and UGT. The figures for CGSI and 'other' trade unions are rougher estimates. 'Other' trade unions include about 40 unions with some 40,000 members that cooperate on a regular basis with CGTP; some of these 'other' trade unions are affiliated

to CGTP sectoral federations, but not CGTP, while others are part of union coalitions led by CGTP unions.

- **Romania:** As well as the five trade union centres listed by name, an overall estimated membership figure is available for the ‘other’ trade unions. The ‘total’ membership figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. In the absence of accurate official or self-reported data, the figures are estimates calculated by the EIRO national centre in Romania.
- **Slovakia:** As well as the three trade union centres listed by name, an overall estimated membership figure is available for the ‘other’ trade unions. The ‘total’ membership figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. The data for KOZ SR and NKOS are self-reported, while the figures for KUK and ‘others’ are estimates. The ‘others’ figure for 2003 represents the Metalurgy Workers’ Trade Union ([Odborový zväz Metalurg](#), [OZ Metalurg](#)), which subsequently joined KOZ SR.
- **Slovenia:** No reliable data are available from trade unions or from national sources, apart for KSJSS. The figures given (mid-range used when range given) are estimates calculated on the basis of data from: the [European Commission’s Industrial Relations in Europe 2002](#) report; [Determinants of Union Membership in 18 EU Countries: Evidence from Micro Data, 2002/03](#) (Schnabel, C. and Wagner, J., Discussion Paper No. 1464, Institute for the Study of Labour, Bonn, 2005); and [Eurostat Labour Force Surveys](#). KSJSS did not exist in 2003, being created in 2006.
- **Spain:** As well as the five trade union centres listed by name, an overall membership figure is available for the ‘other’ trade unions, although only for 2008. The ‘total’ membership figure for 2008 can be assumed to be reasonably complete. The data are self-reported by trade unions.
- **Sweden:** As well as the three trade union centres listed by name, an overall membership figure is available for the ‘other’ trade unions – notably the Association of Management and Professional Staff ([Sveriges chefsorganisation](#), [Ledarna](#)), which reported 66,500 active members in 2003 and 74,200 members in 2008, and the Swedish Workers’ Central Organisation ([Svenska Arbetares Centralorganisation](#), [SAC](#)). The ‘total’ membership figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. The data are self-reported by trade unions except those for ‘other’ trade unions, which are based on Statistics Sweden ([Statistiska Centralbyrån](#), [SCB](#)) Labour Force Surveys and include only employed members; the totals for ‘other’ trade unions also include survey respondents who did not specify the union to which they belonged. The figures for LO include active and unemployed members and exclude retired members, while some LO-affiliated unions include students and some exclude them. The figures for TCO and SACO include active, retired and student members. Statistics Sweden Labour Force Survey data put: LO’s membership at 1,460,000 workers in 2003 and 1,287,600 workers in 2007; TCO’s at 1,031,000 workers in 2003 and 947,400 workers in 2007; and SACO’s at 404,000 employees in 2003 and 459,300 employees in 2007.
- **UK:** As well as the trade union centre listed by name – the TUC which is the UK’s only trade union confederation – an overall estimated membership figure is available for ‘other’ trade unions. The ‘total’ membership figure can be assumed to be reasonably complete. Data for the TUC are self-reported. The ‘total’ membership figure is based on the trade union membership statistics issued by the [Department for Business, Innovation and Skills \(BIS\)](#); the figure for ‘other’ trade unions represents the difference between the TUC and total figures.

### **Annex 3**

The sources of the data, and the accompanying notes, are as for Table 1 (see Annex 2 above), except as follows:

- **Bulgaria:** the figures are from the trade unions concerned.
- **Czech Republic:** the figures are from the trade unions concerned and represent estimates.
- **Denmark:** the figures for LO are estimates.
- **Hungary:** the figures for SZEF, MSZOSZ and ÉSZT are estimates.
- **Norway:** the figures for YS and ‘other’ trade unions are estimates.
- **Portugal:** the figures are estimates.
- **Slovakia:** the figures for KUK and ‘other’ trade unions are estimates.
- **Slovenia:** the figures are estimates.
- **Sweden:** the figures are from Statistics Sweden Labour Force Surveys and include only employed members.

Mark Carley, SPIRE Associates/IRRU, University of Warwick

EF/09/74