Non-unionised young workers and organising the unorganised

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Abstract.

Young workers are poorly unionised and concentrated in low-waged, poorly organised industries. There is little evidence that young workers are any less pre-disposed towards unions than their older counterparts. However, most research on youth and unionisation is attitudinal, with little evidence on the kinds of problems they face and how they respond. Our paper contributes to providing evidence. After summarising approaches to explaining young workers' low unionisation, we draw on findings from a British survey conducted in 2004 of 501 low-paid, unorganised workers in Britain. This explored the problems encountered at work, the types of resolution workers sought, their propensity to action and their attitudes to unions. Our paper focuses on young workers, subdivided into two groups: those between 16 to 21 years and those aged between 22 and 29 years. We find both commonalities and contrasts between these age-groups in terms of typical workplace, types of problems encountered, responses to them, including collective action, views on trade union support and likelihood to join as a result of grievances. We find that the older group is more active individually and collectively towards resolving problems at work, but both youth groups are as keen, or more so, on trade union help, than the wider sample.

Key Words.
Workplace, problems, action, collectivist, age-group, attitudes.

Introduction

Young workers are poorly unionised. They are concentrated in low-waged, poorly organised industries. They are also among the most vulnerable to economic downturn. In the EU27 in 2009, 19.8 per cent of young workers (15-24 years) compared to 9 per cent of the total workforce were unemployed (eurostat 2009). Increasing their unionisation would improve their protection at work, assist the survival of an aging trade union membership, and encourage 'active citizenship' among young people in the interests of social inclusion, as put forward by the European Commission (CEC 2007b).

Trade union density has declined in both the Anglo-American countries (namely, the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, the UK and Canada) and in Europe in recent

decades (Fairbrother and Yates 2003, Fulton, 2007) with the highest rate of decline in Europe (except for the last decade in the UK) among young workers (Serrano Pascual and Waddington 2000). However, there is little evidence in the available attitude data that young workers are any less pre-disposed towards unions than their older counterparts. Research on the formers' lower union density confirms that the industries and workplaces in which young workers are concentrated are relatively hard – or costly – for unions to organise (Serrano Pascual and Waddington 2000: 27, Haynes et al. 2005: 99). Among the constraints to unionisation are relatively high rates of 'job shift' and short job tenure among young workers. For New Zealand, Haynes et al. (2005) find that young workers have no less a demand for 'union voice' than older workers, but show a higher propensity to use 'exit' as the means of 'resolving' problems encountered at work. While they appear more 'instrumental' towards union utility than older workers, British studies nonetheless find that seeking unions to help with problems at work is the major rationale for joining (Waddington and Whitston 1997, Charlwood 2002, 2003).

Most research on unionisation propensity is attitudinal. Lacking is evidence on how workers respond to real 'problems' at work, and how this relates to their desire for collective representation. Focusing on Britain, our paper contributes to filling this gap. The first section summarises the types of explanation that have been advanced to explain young workers' relatively low union density. Subsequent sections present findings from the Unrepresented Workers Survey (URWS) of 501 low-paid, unorganised workers in Britain conducted in 2004. This explored the problems encountered at work, the types of resolution workers sought, their propensity to action and their attitudes to unions (Pollert and Charlwood 2008, 2009).

The URWS defined young workers as those between 16 and 29 and sub-divided them into two groups: 16 to 21 year olds and those aged between 22 and 29 years. Some studies focus on 15 to 24 year olds, or subdivide them between 15 to 18 and 19 to 24 year old cohorts (Loughlin and Barling 2001). The European Commission presents data on 15 to 24 year olds in the labour market (CEC 2008) and discusses young workers as those in the 15 to 29 years age range (CEC 2007a). Its analysis of the young who are *neither in employment nor in education and training* (the NEET) gives particular attention to 19 to 29 year olds (CEC 2007b). Freeman and Diamond (2003)

used a number of large-scale survey data sets to compare the attitudes to unions in Britain of workers up to 29 years and those over 30 years. Our research is thus comparable to other studies in terms of age-bands, but it further explores differences between the two 'young' age cohorts and between these and the survey participants as a whole.

Explanations for Young Workers' Low Union Membership

Trade union membership across Europe and the 'old' industrialised countries has declined to varying extents. Anti-union government policies are partially responsible for the reductions in some countries. In the UK and New Zealand reform of labour law curtailed the 'closed shop'. Whilst the Labour government in the UK (re)introduced a statutory union recognition procedure in 1999, it remains complex and did not repeal the bulk of the legislation restricting trade unions and industrial action that predecessor Conservative governments enacted over the 1980s and early 1990s. Moreover, anti-union consultants have increasingly been used to thwart workers and unions which attempt to utilise recognition legislation (Logan 2008). And while the UK government also enacted new individual employment rights from 1997, many EU in origin, without effective means of enforcement, these can amount to 'paper tigers, missing in tooth and claw' (Pollert 2007).

Visser's (2006:46) evidence for the early 2000s showed union membership for the 16 to 24 age group was half or less of total union membership in most West European countries. In the UK in 2009 union density among 16 to 24 year olds was a third of the all-employee average; 9.4 per cent compared to 27.4 per cent. That is to say that while 16 to 24 year olds were 14.4 per cent of all employees, union members among them were only 4.8 per cent of the union membership total. In the decade to 2009 union density fell for all age groups except the 55 to 59 and 65 years and above ranges (Table 1). However, in this period the decline was most pronounced among employees in the mid-age range (35 to 44 years) according to Achur's (2010) analysis of Labour Force Survey (LFS) data.

Insert Table 1 here

Despite the varying national labour markets for young people, for both Europe and the Anglo-American world there have been three main types of explanation for young workers' relatively low union density. The problem has been seen to lie with young workers, their work and labour market location, and/or unions' approach to their recruitment; the explanations are not mutually exclusive (Serrano Pascual and Waddington 2000, Haynes et al. 2005).

Young workers themselves

Included in the first type of explanation is the idea that there has been an inter-generational shift in attitudes; young people today are more antipathetic to trade unions than previous generations, or at least are less inclined to perceive value in their services. The survey evidence in Britain (Freeman and Diamond, 2003), Canada and the US (Gomez et al. 2002, Bryson et al. 2005) and New Zealand (Haynes et al. 2005), however, provides little support for this 'cohort' change. Indeed, Haynes et al. conclude that 'the specialist industrial relations literature is increasingly driving us to the view that younger workers are more favourably disposed to unions and union joining than their older counterparts' (2005: 97).

Research suggests that young people at the outset are essentially 'black boxes' or 'blank slates' regarding unions, their preferences unformed and malleable, their knowledge of unions minimal in the transition from education to the workplace. Freeman and Diamond find age differences in attitudes towards unions in the UK are modest. Young people have a slightly more positive orientation to unions. The key point is that 'they have little knowledge of unions before they take jobs and so their response to unions depends critically on their actual workplace experiences' (2003: 30). Gomez et al. observe for Canada that 'as workers age they appear to have a weaker preference for unions to deal with workplace issues' (a conclusion our own research does not support), but more widely, they are influenced by 'close relations' beyond the workplace (family, friends), which interact with prevailing norms at the workplace (2002: 539). Like other analysts, they attribute lower union density among young workers in comparison to older not to age, but to the former's employment concentration in workplaces and private service industry sectors that are poorly unionised..

Young people's labour market position

Activity, employment and unemployment rates

Economic activity and employment rates among 15 to 24 year olds are lower than the working population as a whole in the EU-27 (European Commission 2008: 218, Maier (2007:10). This is partly explained by their retention in full-time education and training. However, youth unemployment (the unemployed as a proportion of the population aged 15 to 24), is twice that for the working age population as a whole. Class, gender and ethnicity are integral dimensions to labour market opportunities and young women are over-represented among the economically inactive and unemployed in the EU (European Commission 2007b: 4). Those of third-country (migrant) family background and early school-leavers are over-represented among 19 to 29 year olds who are NEET (Maier 2007). Young people's evident greater vulnerability to unemployment is partially the result of, but also a contribution towards, poor union protection, since transitions between employment and unemployed make them harder to organise. In addition to problems of recession, young people are prone to transitions between education, employment, unemployment and withdrawal from the labour market, and such transitions are becoming increasingly fragmented and protracted (CEC 2007a: 40-2; Fenton and Dermott 2006; Bradley and Devadason, 2008). The transient nature of mainly part-time and temporary jobs associated with this labour market instability poses challenges to union organising strategies (Heery and Abbott, 2000, Peck and Theodore, 2007: 172) This instability is also typically associated with the particular sectors in which young people typically work.

Industry and Occupational Composition of Employment

Employed youth aged 15 to 29 years are highly concentrated in certain sectors. In 2006 they were 37 per cent of the workforce (those aged 15 to 64 years) in hotels and restaurants, 29 percent of wholesale and retail trade, and a quarter of construction (Table 2). In Britain in 2004, two-fifths (38 per cent) of the 4.5 million 16 to 25 year olds

with jobs were employed in distribution, hotels and restaurants and they were a third (31 per cent) of the industry group's total workforce (TUC 2004: 9-11). These sectors typically use 'flexible' (agency, temporary and part-time) workers, and there is an overlap between the young and migrant workers which has been addressed in union organising strategies (McKay 2009, Fitzgerald and Hardy 2010). There was a small increase among young workers in professional and technical jobs between 2000 and 2006, yet relegation to low skilled service, retail and elementary jobs also increased (CEC 2007a: 44-45).

While the European Commission attributes this to increasing disadvantages for the poorly educationally qualified in a 'knowledge economy' (CEC 2007b: 5), Goos and Manning (2007) make a different diagnosis for the UK economy. Although it is distinctive in being more 'lightly regulated' than in most EU-15 Member States and service sector jobs are a higher proportion of the total than in many of the EU-27, there has been a pattern of job polarization over the past quarter century. The employment shares of the highest- and lowest-wage occupations have risen as routine jobs in the middle have been automated away (or off-shored). The non-routine tasks that make up the jobs in the low-wage end have been little affected by technology. There remains strong demand for workers without formal qualifications and large supply. Yet some among these workers may have been disadvantaged by competition from higher-qualified counterparts, now obliged to accept 'lousier jobs' (Ibid. 128), or as employers inflate the minimal educational qualifications required for the lowest-level occupations.

Young people are thus disadvantaged by their crowding at the lower end, or 'poor' quality jobs, in certain sectors. These jobs are typified too by short-term, insecure contractual terms.

Insert Table 2 here

Non-standard Employment

Relatively high proportions of young workers have 'non-standard' work. In the EU-27 in 2006, 25 per cent of 15 to 24 year olds had part-time work compared to 13 per cent of those aged 25 to 29 and 16 per cent of those in the 30 to 54 year age range. Women

are over-represented among part-time workers in all age bands. The recorded incidence of involuntary part-time work – held for want of being able to obtain full-time – was relatively high among 15 to 24 year olds: 33 per cent among all in part-time work in this age group (Maier 2007).

The rate of temporary employment for the whole working age population varies widely between EU Member States. Overall in 2006, however, two-fifths of workers aged 15 to 24 had fixed term contracts compared to one fifth of those aged 25 to 29 and a tenth in the 30 to 54 age range (Maier 2007). Haynes et al. (2005) highlight the obstacles to union organising of high 'churn' that occurs in the young employee population. Job change is known to be more common among young workers than older, and most common among those in their first years after leaving full-time education. The pattern is long-established. In the UK (as abroad) it has been analysed in terms of both 'job experimentation' and response to problems encountered at work (Fenton and Dermott 2006). In the 1970s Ashton and Field (1976) argued the latter was most typical of young workers whose class and educational background restricted their labour market options to un-skilled or semi-skilled *career-less* jobs. Bradley and Devadason (2008) found it is becoming a more common response among 'high qualified' young workers, who find their employment opportunities are limited, to work that lacks intrinsic interest or meaning, career progression or adequate financial reward. In this case a lengthened and more fractured transition from education to employment is being propelled by employment restructuring.

Union Strategies

The industry and occupational distribution of young workers, in workplaces and sectors that unions find hard to organise is one part of the explanation for low youth union density. In the UK, unions have not neglected recruitment in private service industries. In retail, USDAW is a principal example (and see Dribbusch, 2005). However, Freeman and Diamond point out that young workers' union density is lower than their older colleagues within unionised workplaces. Hence they detect inefficiency in unions' approach to recruitment and union organising among young workers, as do Waddington and Kerr (2002). Unions have attempted to make themselves look 'youth centred', for

example in changing the union image highlighting an agenda appropriate for young people and offering cheaper subscription rates (Serrano Pascual and Waddington 2000: 34). Yet research indicates that the most successful strategies are those simply appealing to the young as *workers*. Surveys consistently find a main reason given for non membership among non union members – of all ages – in unionised workplaces is 'never having been asked to join'. Analysing the data for New Zealand, however, Haynes et al. (2005) argue that the high 'churn' rate in the young employed provides a stronger explanation than inadequate union strategies for their low union membership.

While these explanations for young people's low union density provide one level of analysis, until recently there has been little survey evidence on behaviour and attitudes in the context of real workplace experiences which might predispose to unionisation. Given that the most common reason workers join a trade union is to provide help with problems at work, this paper provides evidence on the concrete problems young workers experience, and their responses to these. Crucially we identify willingness to challenge problems, both individually and collectively, and provide insight into the most basic dimension of trade unionism, often forgotten in recent attitude survey based debate, namely *collective* identity which may lead to collective action. The British Workplace Representation and Participation Survey (BWRPS) affords some opportunity to probe, by asking workers whether their preference for representation on a number of workplace issues is a trade union or 'a group of fellow workers' (see Gospel and Willman, 2003: 158). However, the perspective does not address collective consciousness, identity and action, which are essential to collective mobilization (Kelly 1998). Finally, unlike other surveys of non-unionised and young workers' attitudes towards trade unions, weoffer evidence of how such attitudes might be shaped by concrete experiences of problems at work.

The Unrepresented Worker Survey and Young Workers

Our evidence is based on the Unrepresented Worker Survey (URWS), which was conducted in 2004 among a regionally representative sample of 501 low-paid, non-

unionised workers with problems at work.[1] The study aimed to identify the nature of problems, responses to them, and outcomes to attempts to resolve them. As noted, the survey differentiated between young workers aged 16-21 years (hereafter Group A) and those between 22 and 29 years (Group B). Group A comprised 9 per cent and Group B 17 per cent of URWS respondents (47 and 84 respectively in absolute numbers). Comparison of the URWS with the 2004 Labour Force Survey (LFS), and the low-paid non-unionised within it provides an insight into who experiences problems at work. However, as a note of caution, a difficulty with the data is that those below 25 (which includes Group A) were under-represented compared with the low-paid, non-unionised in the labour force, whileother age-groups had a similar presence, except for those aged 45-54, who were over-represented (Pollert and Charlwood, 2009:347).

The labour maket position and low unionisation of young workers suggests the young are likely to be more, not less prone to problems at work than other workers. Their under-representation in the URWS may be a function of the telephone survey methodology. Sampling may have under-recorded the youngest, who are more dependent on mobile phones, or because in telephone surveys older adults in the household are usually called first (personal communication, January 2008, IFF Research). Young workers' briefer exposure to employment may mean they are less likely to participate in a survey about 'problems' at work, even though the questionnaire used the 'softer' terminology of 'concerns, difficulties or problems' to capture a range of subjective definitions (Pollert and Charlwood, 2008: 72 – 74). A further factor may be their short exposure to employers. Secondary analysis of the 2004 British Workplace Employment Relations Survey found that the longer workers are exposed to their employer, which may be associated with age,,the lower their trust in management (Nichols et al. 2009: 248) and hence, arguably,, the greater their awareness of 'problems'. High trust was associated with short length of service (less than a year) and

[1] The terms 'unrepresented' is used to include the non-unionised (94 per cent of the sample) and the 6 per cent who were union members, but without recognition or representation at their workplace.Low-pay was defined as earnings below median pay, calculated as the weighted average of gross median earnings for 2001, 2002 and 2003 (Labour Force Survey). This is because a threshold had to apply to a job in the last 3 years and the survey was conducted in 2004. The question was asked in hourly, weekly and annual terms and calculated for part-time workers. For example the median wage calculated was £425 per week for London and the South East and £341 for the rest of the country.

age was a factor among the young (less than 21 years). It could be that both age and tenure are operating in the under-representation of group A in the URWS.

A consequence of small survey numbers for the young is that the data did not support statistical significance testing on differences between the young and the wider sample,or between groups A and B. Nevertheless, we provide descriptive statistics as an indication of differentiated patterns of problems and behaviour among young workers.

Young Workers and demographic characteristics in the URWS.

. Overall, the URWS sample was female dominated – 61 per cent women – a feature explicable by the greater likelihood that women are low paid, but possibly also because they experience more problems.. Group A had the same gender distribution, but group B was 46 percent male compared with the average 39 per cent: the reasons are unclear. Low-paid, non-unionised black and minority workers (BME) appear at greater than average risk of having problems: they were 9 per cent of the URWS, but 6.4 per cent among the low-paid unorganised in the labour force. Young BME were even more at risk than the wider sample: group A was 19 per cent BME and group B 13 per cent.

Twenty-two per cent of the URWS was educated to degree level compared to 13 per cent in the comparable LFS cohort, which indicates that disadvantage in the labour market is not associated with low qualifications alone..This becomes even clearer when we focus on youth with problems at work. Predictably, because of youth, only 11 per cent of group A was educated to degree level. Yet the proportion of Group A with higher secondary education (A level GCSE/NVQ 3) was higher than in the URWS sample as a whole: 34 per cent compared to 24 per cent. For basic education (O level GCSE/NVQ 2) the proportions were 45 per cent and 22 per cent, respectively. Group B contained 45 per cent graduates, a proportion twice as high as the average for the whole sample and for all other age groups. It is possible that higher education is associated with greater awareness of problems. It is also plausible that complex transitions between jobs in a labour market for the highly qualified create their own difficulties (Bradley and Devadason, 2008).

Young workers, workplace and working patterns and unionisation in the URWS.

Youth in the URWS was concentrated in those industry sectors noted as typifying young workers' employment. Seventy two per cent of group A and 75 per cent of B worked in the private sector compared to 64 per cent of the whole sample. Group A workers were the most bunched in some industries. Nine per cent of the whole sample, they comprised: 24 per cent of all those in hotels and restaurants; 21 per cent of those in wholesale and retail; and 13 per cent of those in construction. Group B had a similar industry distribution to the wider sample, although were more concentrated in real estate, renting and business activities (17 per cent) than the average (9 per cent). Put another way, 40 per cent of group A worked in wholesale and retail industries compared with 18 per cent of the whole sample, but only 15 per cent of group B. Seventeen per cent of group A were in the hotels and restaurants industry, compared to10 per cent of group B and 7 percent of the whole URWS sample.

Two-fifths (42 per cent) of all URWS participants, and similar percentages of both young age groups worked in small workplaces with fewer than 25 employees. The proportion for the wider British workforce was 17 per cent in 2004 (Kersley et al. 2006: 14).[3] The prevalence of small workplaces in the URWS may help explain the relatively poor availability of conflict resolution procedures, reported by only 62 per cent of respondents compared to 96 per cent of employees in the British workforce (Kersley et al. 2006: 213). The young among the URWS were especially disadvantaged; only 49 per cent of group A and 54 per cent of group B had grievance procedures. Similarly, while 60 per cent of the URWS reported regular consultation between workers and managers at their work, only 51 per cent of young workers A and 55 per cent of group B did so.

As previously discussed, analyses of young workers' poor unionisation identify 'non-standard' contractual conditions as contributing to difficulties in organising. The URWS youth, especially the youngest among them, demonstrated precisely such

[3] The published figures for the 2004 Workplace Relations Survey (WERS) cover workplaces with over 10 employees. If smaller workplaces were included, as in the URWS, the total percentage would be slightly higher (Pollert and Charlwood, 2008: 30-32).

factors. Group A was over twice as likely to work part-time as the URWS average (51 per cent compared with 24 per cent), and to be on non-permanent contracts (23 per cent compared to 11 per cent of the full sample). Group B was less likely than the URWS average to work part-time (19 percent), which is arguably associated with its wider sectoral dispersal. Yet temporary contracts were over-represented (15 per cent).

The literature on non-unionisation and young workers also discusses high turnover. Labour market churn was high among the URWS as a whole: 48 per cent were in their job for less than a year when they experienced their main problems. For groups A and B the proportions were even higher at 79 per cent and 56 per cent respectively. This could indicate that most problems are encountered early on and that by the time workers have been in their jobs for longer these 'problems' are either ironed out or accepted as 'part of the job'. Short service length was a characteristic of the URWS and yet while only a minority (42 per cent) had left the job in which they were trying to resolve problems, the proportion was 64 per cent among Group A[4]. High 'exit' as a response to problems has been noted as a difficulty in unionising the young (Haynes et al. 2005). Group B were closer to the whole sample average (49 per cent), which suggests a greater propensity to deal with, rather than exit from, problems. Table 3 shows how turnover decreased with age.

Insert Table 3 here

Turnover is problematic for unions. Low pay, however, provides a campaigning and organising opening. Young workers were among the lowest paid in the sample. Nine per cent of the URWS, Group A accounted for 23 percent of the lowest paid quartile and 57 percent were in the lowest pay quartile, which dipped below the national minimum wage even for 16 and 17 year olds[5]. Again, there is a contrast with group B, which was close to the sample average; 27 percent were in the lower quartile.

[4] One cannot deduce from the URWS whether exit was in response to problems, or whether it only indicated high turnover without a specific reason. However, subsequent analysis shows, the high exit rates were associated with lack of successful resolution to problems at work (as opposed to representing 'job experimentation' in a process of 'career-building').

[5]Hourly pay referred to the job with the problem, which could be any one experienced in the previous 3 years. Median pay for the sample was £5.77 per hour. Pay quartiles were: Band 1: £1.97-£4.92; Band 2: £4.93-£5.76; Band 3: £5.77-£7.20; Band 4: £7.21-£12.00.The UK National Minimum Wage for adults over 21 was: £4.84 in 2004,

To summarise, the youngest workers in the URWS tended to be concentrated in sectors typical of young workers in general in the labour force (retail, hospitality), to have part-time and temporary contracts and to be very low paid. Their older counterparts were less sectorally concentrated, less likely to work part-time but more prone to be temporary, and more likely be paid at similar levels to the URWS. Both groups tended to work in workplaces with few institutional procedures for grievance resolution or worker consultation. Group A demonstrated higher exit than group B.

Finally, previous exposure to unions among the young workers in the URWS was almost non-existent. Fifty-eight per cent of all respondents had never been union members, but this rose to 94 per cent among the youngest group A and 81 per cent of group B.

Problems at Work: Young Workers' Experiences

Problem areas

The URWS probed actual problems at work rather than potential issues for which they desire representation, as in the BWRPS (Gospel and Willman, 2003). This provides unions with a further indication of concrete problems experienced by young, non-unionised workers. Similar percentages of young workers to the whole sample had problems in most areas. However, problems in respect to taking time off and working hours were more marked for the young (Table 4).

Insert Table 4 here

Differences were also apparent between the two youth groups. Group B was the most prone to suffer problems with opportunities, job security, contract or job description, health and safety and discrimination. Group A had a lower tendency to have problems in health and safety, opportunities, job description and workload. However, they were 20 per cent of the total with problems in taking time off and 16 per cent of those with

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£4.50 in 2003, £4.20 in 2002 and £4.10 in 2001. For young workers (18-21) it was £4.10 in 2004, £3.80 in 2003, £3.60 in 2002 and £3.50 in 2001. In 2004 it was £3.00 for 16-17 year olds.

discrimination and job security problems (including threat of being sacked or actual dismissal).

Disaggregating *pay grievances* showed group A had a particular problem with *not being paid for overtime* (35 per cent compared to 27 per cent among all survey participants). Group B had exceptional difficulties with *not getting holiday pay:* 33 compared to 18 per cent[6].of all URWS and 6 per cent of the youngest group A who were perhaps unaware of their rights. Group B cited not getting *sick pay* more frequently than average: 27 per cent, compared to 17 per cent (and 12 per cent of group A). The youngest group, on the other hand, volunteered the new category of '*pay too low/not enough for type of job'*: 12 per cent reported this compared to 5 per cent of all those with pay problems.

Among *problems with work relations* the largest category for all was *stress* (70 per cent), which rose to 80 per cent in group B, contrasting with 47 per cent among group A. The latter were far more prone to *management taking advantage or bullying"* (73 per cent), a problem experienced by 63 per cent of group B and 55 per cent for all respondents. In *problems with workload,* young workers resembled the 70 per cent of the URWS who reported *'too much work without enough time'*, followed by 57 per cent stating *'management took advantage of willingness to work hard.'* Among *working hours* grievances group A suffered more than the URWS average from *unpredictable hours* (69 per cent compared to 51 per cent) and *working more hours than agreed* (85 per cent compared to 45 per cent). Such demands are typical of the distributive and hospitality industries sectors (e.g. Ehrenreich, 2001, Wright and Pollert 2006).

Job security problems entailed *'a fear that you might lose your job (e.g. be made redundant)'* for 59 per cent of the URWS, a similar proportion for group B but 11 per cent for group A. Insecurity was of a different kind for the young: fear of *unfair dismissal*, occurred for 44 per cent of group A, 35 per cent of group B, but dropped to 29 per cent of the URWS with a security problem. And while 15 per cent of those with security problems had actually been dismissed, this was so for 33 and 26 per cent for young

[6] Percentages refer to those experiencing a particular problem area, such as pay, rather than the whole of Group A or B.

workers A and B respectively. The rates for older workers (above 30 years) declined to between 11 and 13 per cent.

Young workers were similarly affected by the most cited grievance in *contract or job description problems* - lack of formal or written contract (44 per cent) – a high percentage, considering this is illegal after 2 months' employment. However, young workers were especially vulnerable to being asked to do tasks which were not specified in their contract or job description: 61 cent of group A and 52 per cent of group B compared to 41 per cent for the URWS. The youngest workers A were also twice as likely as the whole sample (just over a third) to report finding their pay or conditions were different from those agreed in the contract, and the associated problem of the job description containing things which were not mentioned at the job interview.

Over half the *problems with health and safety* (reported by over a quarter of group B) centred around an unsafe or dangerous working environment, inadequate health and safety training, and managerial negligence. A further 42 per cent reported being asked to do unsafe or dangerous tasks. Two issues dominated *problems with taking time off* for all respondents: holidays (46 per cent) and sickness leave of absence (44 per cent). The latter was especially acute for group A at 60 per cent. Finally, while there was generally low reporting of *problems with discrimination,* age discrimination was the most frequently cited (28 per cent), followed by sex (20 per cent), disability (11 per cent), race (8 per cent) and religion (3 per cent). While age discrimination is often associated with older workers, a striking 100 per cent of group A reporting discrimination referred to this. Age again rose to prominence for those over fifty years (59 per cent reported it) confirming that it occurs at either end of the age spectrum of working people.

In summary, age-related analysis of work problems points to differences between those above and below 29 years and between those aged above and below 22 years. The youngest suffered from a narrower range of problems, although within these, from extreme forms – management bullying, pay being too low, exclusion from sick- and holiday pay, and age discrimination. Young workers between 22 and 29 years reported diverse problems.

The URWS showed variation in *number* as well as *type* of problems (Table 5). Group A were more likely than Group B to report one or two problems in the screened job (71 per cent and 53 per cent respectively). Group B were more likely than all other age groups to report four or five problems. Analysis showed that the more problems experienced, the greater was the likelihood of action to attempt resolution (Pollert and Charlwood, 2009: 351). From this we might expect group B to take more action than their younger counterparts and that whether this is individual or collective, it may provide union organising potential.

Insert Table 5 here

Action and Reaction to Problems

There were contrasts in problems experienced and a number of contrasts between age groups A and B in terms of responses to them. Workers were asked whether they felt their problem(s) infringed their rights. Fifty five per cent of all URWS and of Group B participants did but the proportion fell to 47 per cent among group A. This suggests sense of injustice regarding 'problems' increases with the experience and possibly knowledge of the world of work and the labour market (c.f., Nichols et al., 2009), although length of service in this survey relates only to tenure in the 'problem job' (lowest for young workers). The survey proceeded to probe first whether respondents took advice on their main problem and next, whether they took action to resolve it.

Advice

Almost three quarters of group B (74 per cent, 62 respondents) had sought advice, a higher percentage than the 61 per cent of the whole sample. The proportion fell to 55 per cent among group A (26 people), which suggests greater reticence or passivity. Workers presented a similar pattern of advice-seeking, although the young were less likely than the whole sample to seek managers: 37 per cent of the URWS sought a senior manager, but only 27 and 29 per cent of group A and B respectively did (7 and 18 respondents), and 31 per cent of the URWS sought their line manager, but only 23

and 27 per cent respectively of groups A and B did so (6 and 17 people). Around a third sought colleagues at work (33 per cent of the URWS, and 31 and 37 per cent respectively of groups A and B (8 and 23 people) and around a fifth approached family and friends outside work – although this rose to a third for group B.Thirteen per cent of the URWS went to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) – 12 per cent of group A, and 16 per cent of group B (3 and 10 respondents). Five per cent in total sought a union (16 people in the whole URWS) but none in group A and just 3 per cent (2 people) of group B did.

Between a fifth and a quarter used the advice of managers. Group A, however, showed lower reliance on senior managers' advice and heavier dependence on advice from friends at work - 28 per cent, compared with 17 per cent of the wider sample and Group B counterparts. The importance of peer support and approval may be even more salient for the young than for older workers, a matter relevant for union organising. Interestingly, only minorities (either of the young or of the entire URWS) found obtaining advice 'easy' (a third), or very easy (a fifth).

The pattern of advice to the young emphasised informality and underplayed using formal procedure to an even greater extent than for survey participants as a whole. Most workers in the URWS were advised to try to resolve matters with their line managers (57 per cent). This rose to 69 per cent of Group A and while 23 per cent of the whole sample was advised to use the formal grievance procedure, this fell to 15 per cent of all young workers.

Action

A striking finding of the URWS was respondents' willingness to confront problems, with 86 per cent taking some action to resolve them. The proportion was lower among group A, but was still three-quarters. Group B was extremely active: 90 per cent took action and only those aged 50 and over had a similarly high propensity.

Insert Table 6 here

Table 6 shows that ‘action’ followed a similar pattern to seeking ‘advice’. Most workers tried to resolve their grievances informally with managers and few used the formal complaints procedures, which broadly followed the advice given. But importantly for a perspective on unions as institutions which harness collectivity, a further striking finding for ‘individualised’ workers was that almost a quarter tried to resolve matters collectively, with group B far more collectivist (as well as active) than group A. This primarily took the form of discussing what to do, although there were also group delegations to managers and group meetings. The youngest, however, were twice as likely to use friends and family (17 per cent compared with an all-respondent average of 8 per cent), and less likely to take every other form of action, apart from approaching their line-managers. Group B attempted diverse tactics, including seeking senior managers and going to a CAB, with broadly similar responses in other respects to the wider sample.

Conclusions to problems

The third major finding of the URWS was the very low success rate of resolution to problems (Pollert and Charlwood 2009: 352). Forty-seven per cent of those who took some kind of action(s) to resolve their problems had no conclusion. This was even worse for young workers. As Table 7 indicates, 60 and 54 per cent of groups A and B respectively had no results. Age and achieving an outcome are clearly related: 41 per cent of those 40 years and over had no result, rising to 53 per cent for those younger than this. However, there is some suggestion of a U-shape in lack of success. The ‘no conclusion’ outcome fell to 39 per cent for the 40 to 49 year age range but rose to 43 per cent for the 50 years and older age group. It appears that the young and old are most vulnerable to being ignored or suppressed.

Insert Table 7 here

Among the minority with an outcome to action, half the total and of group A were satisfied, but only 32 per cent of group B (Table 8). In total, 16 per cent of the URWS

had a satisfactory conclusion to their problem, but for group A this fell to 11 per cent and for group B to 12 per cent.

Insert Table 8 here

The evidence shows that individual action to resolve workplace grievances among the low paid, non-unionised, achieves little and for the young may be a crushing defeat. To what extent do young, non-unionised workers feel collective representation might help them?

Collectivism and Attitudes to Trade Unions

Much of the literature on young workers and trade unions focuses on attitudinal surveys (Freeman and Diamond, 2003). However, collective identity is ultimately the basis for union organisation. We therefore use the URWS to explore both collective identity and attitudes towards trade unions among the young unorganised, in the context of experiencing problems at work.

Workplace Collective Identity

Asked if they felt that their problems were shared among others at work, 75 per cent of URWS participants replied in the affirmative. The proportions for groups A and B were 70 and 74 per cent. Of interest is the extent to which such consciousness of shared experience was associated with collective action (Kelly, 1998). Overall, three quarters of those with an awareness of collective problems discussed with others what to do or did something together about them. This proportion of collective actors fell to 67 per cent of group A but increased to 87 per cent of group B. There are thus, apparently, age differences in what people do about shared identities, the youngest holding back somewhat from translating this into collective action but the ‘older young’ being more active even than the whole sample average. Part of the explanation may lie in the workplace, with Group B working across a more diverse range of industries and less confined to the hard-to-organise transient labour markets and ‘non-standard’ contracts

than group A. Yet the most obvious explanation lies in longer involvement in the world of work among group B, and a learning experience that exit and different jobs are not necessarily solutions to problems at work which repeat themselves.

Young workers, then, are differentiated in terms of collective behaviour, although less so in terms of shared identity. Group B were more actively collectivist than their younger counterparts and than even the general sample when faced with workplace problems. Why they should be *more* active than the average is interesting: possibly youth bestows boldness. Group A are less inured to the world of work: when faced with problems, they are less spontaneously collective, and more reliant on friends and family to provide support.

Among those who had attempted group action, young workers had similar outcomes to the whole. Two thirds said that their problems were not solved after group action, and a third said they were. Evidently collective action among the URWS was not very effective, but neither was it completely futile – especially in the context of the generally poor outcome to any action. Were spontaneous collective action among those who attempted it entirely successful, workers might regard unions as redundant. But this was not so. It is to the subject of attitudes towards trade union that enquiry now turns.

Trade Union Experience and Attitudes

As noted, most URWS respondents, and young workers in particular, had never been union members (Table 9). Just 6 per cent of all URWS participants and 2 per cent of young workers A and B were union members at the time of their problems – remaining 'unrepresented' in that their union was not recognised at their workplace. The 40 to 49 years age group had the highest union membership (12 per cent) at the time of the problems. While 34 per cent of the whole sample had been union members before their 'problem' job, this was so for only 4 per cent of group A, increasing to 17 per cent of group B and increasing with age, with 55 per cent of workers over fifty being previous union members.

Insert Table 9 here

A key question in the literature on non-unionism is why people do not join. For young workers the emerging explanation is that it is lack of knowledge about trade unions, not anti-unionism (Freeman and Diamond, 2003: 36). The URWS supports this: asked why they had not joined a union, a quarter of group A 'never members' explained that they 'didn't know much about trade unions and what they do' compared to 14 per cent of the total. Young workers B were closer to the norm (Table 10). Another confirmation of the 'blank slate' for unionism among the young found elsewhere is that 9 per cent of group A said they 'never thought about it' (compared to a 3 per cent average). Eleven per cent of group A and 9 per cent of group B said they were 'unsure' (the average was 5 per cent).

The major explanation for never joining a union, cited by 34 per cent of all URWS participants, was 'never having worked in a workplace where a trade union existed'. Broadly, the older the worker, the more likely they were to offer this explanation. The same pattern applies to the second major explanation: 27 per cent of all respondents, 23 per cent of the youngest and 37 per cent of those 50 years and over, said they 'never felt the need to join a trade union'. Older workers will have been in one or several workplaces for longer than young ones, and were more likely to explain their non-unionism in terms of their work experience, rather than in terms of ignorance. Beyond these age differences, there was overall almost no evidence of hostility to unions. Of comfort to unions is also the finding that no respondents reported as a reason for not joining a union preference for dealing with management on their own.

These finding broadly confirm wider research that it is neither anti-unionism, nor individualism, that underlie non-unionism in general or among young workers (Freeman and Diamond, 2003: 39). The other explanation given is not being approached by or asked to join a union. This was the response for 6 per cent of the whole URWS sample and 9 percent of the youngest. Although these figures are not high, they need to be contextualised within the other questions which reveal lack of experience of, and exposure to unions.

Insert Table 10 here

Attitude towards unions and propensity to join

Attitudes to unions were first explored in terms of perceived utility: *would unions have helped resolve the grievances*? Half of all URWS respondents felt that they would, and there was no difference between 'previous' and 'never' members. The proportion was higher among young workers (57 and 55 per cent of groups A and B respectively) and, interestingly, highest for those between 30 and 39 years (63 percent) (Table 11).

Insert Table 11 here

While this is encouraging for unions, it is striking that the young, especially group A, are more likely to be unsure – a finding congruent with their greater ignorance.

The next question is whether respondents *would join a union as a result of their problems*. The literature on desire for unionisation among unorganised workers highlights the difference between general or abstract positive views, from a concrete decision to join a union (Bryson, 2003: 5). It suggests the concept of 'frustrated demand', where the costs (financial, but also personal) of joining outweigh the benefits. The URWS findings on the question, 'Has your experience of your problems made you want to become a member of a trade union?' confirms that fewer workers (40 per cent) actually said that they wanted to join than stated that a union would have helped (52 per cent). Six per cent were unsure.

As Table 12 indicates, there was a difference between previous members, who were more likely to report they would join, and 'never-members', who were far less likely (48 and 35 per cent respectively). This partially supports Charlwood's analysis of non-unionized workers in the 1998 British Social Attitudes survey, which found a relationship between previous membership and willingness to join a union (2003: 63). In respect to age, in the URWS there is a major contrast between the two youth age groups. The youngest group A (noted above for the highest level of 'never unionism') had a slightly below-average desire for joining a union (37 per cent).

Insert Table 12 here

The fact that 17 per cent of group A were unsure, compared to an average 6 per cent, again reinforces the thesis that it is the 'blank slate' about trade unions that deters union joining, rather than opposition. However, while 'never membership' was high (81 per cent) among 22 to 29 year olds, this group B was more pro-union than the average: 49 per cent would join and only 44 per cent would not, a similar pattern to the next older 30 to 39 year age group. Charlwood (2002) found that younger workers in Britain were more likely to desire unionisation despite lower levels of union membership. The URWS suggests this, but for 'older' young workers.

Older URWS workers (40 years and above) were less likely to express desire to join a union –a third did so – although they had greater levels of previous union membership. This lends some support to Gomez et al.'s (2002) finding for Canadian workers that attitudes towards unions become more 'set' with age – or experience. Charlwood's (2002: 483) analysis of British data shows the likelihood of previous union experience increasing willingness to join is mediated by perceived union utility. In other words, the responses of older URWS participants suggest negative experiences of unions in the past.

Among all URWS who did not want to join a trade union, the largest group (15 per cent) said this was because they felt their problem was not of a type which a union could help. Young workers B had a similar likelihood (17 per cent), but not group A (5 per cent). The youngest again expressed lack of knowledge: 10 and 6 per cent for groups A and B respectively (compared to an average 3 per cent) stated that they 'did not know which union to join or how to join'. However, young and older workers were equally likely, at 10 per cent, to say they did not want to join a union because they felt that 'unions can't/don't do much'. There is thus a mixture of lack of knowledge (greater for the youngest) and lack of belief in union utility. Yet these are not large percentages and most age groups were spread across a range of issues offered for not wishing to join, associated with anxiety or belief that the nature of the job, workplace or contractual conditions were inappropriate for a union (Pollert and Charlwood, 2008: 56). What could

be more worrying for unions is that 19 per cent of group A stated as a reason for not joining that they did not want to be represented by a union, compared with 7 per cent in general and 6 per cent of group B.

Workers were asked a range of questions on broad views of unions. Earlier factor analysis revealed that respondents overall were narrowly pro-union (Pollert and Charlwood, 2008: 53). As regards the first statement, 'Unions make a real difference to workers'; young worker groups A and B had similar views to the wider sample although slightly higher proportions among them gave the response 'don't know'. Young workers were as or, in the case of group B, more likely than the average to disagree with the proposition that 'Unions are too weak to make a difference to workers at work'. In apparent contradiction to the question on union utility to help resolve problems actually experienced, the responses to the statement, 'If I have problem at work, I prefer dealing with management myself than have a union represent me', suggested considerable individualism. Among all URWS 64 per cent agreed and group A did not differ greatly. However, a third of young workers B disagreed and fewer agreed (55 per cent).

This emerging picture of group B being relatively more pro-union is further confirmed by responses to the statement, 'I don't like unions in general'. Seventy-three per cent disagreed, above the average 70 percent, and substantially more than group A's 64 per cent. However, only 4 per cent of group A agreed with the statement, 11 per cent did 'not-know' (twice the average), and 15 per cent were neutral. The pattern of group A's neutrality and evident lack of information, and group B's favourable views on unions holds for other statements (Table 13).

Insert Table 13 here

Conclusions

This paper provides evidence on the types of problems young, non-unionised workers face at work, and what they do about them. While survey numbers for the young are too small to indicate statistical significance, the data offer insights into the relationship between the concrete experience of problems, collective identity and action in response,

and view on unions. The evidence from the URWS supports wider research which has found that young workers are not anti-union, and may if anything, be marginally more pro-union than older workers. However, it reveals important differences among young workers. The youngest, below 22 years, conform to the 'blank slate' characterised by Freeman and Diamond (2003: 36, 50): they are uninformed, and are more likely to have no opinions. By contrast, the older age-group of 22-29 years, is relatively pro-union compared to the average for the non-unionised: 30-39 years olds are equally positive but the 'older young' are more pro-union than those over forty. Group B's relatively positive views were shown to include a more collectivist practice than the average for the low paid, non-unionised, in attempting group action to resolve workplace problems. The youngest cohort A had collective identity in terms of shared problems, but was less predisposed to take this further. In general, they were more passive about problems, relied more heavily on friends and family for support, and had a higher quit rate – characteristics long noted for young workers, and inimical to unionisation.

Particular labour market location also shapes experience. The youngest are more concentrated in private service industries and in part-time, temporary jobs and are vulnerable to specific problems – bullying, low pay, unpaid sickness and holiday pay. Yet despite a greater tendency to respond to these by exit, they have a high degree of collective identification around shared problems. Unions need to tap into collective identity. Above all, they need to be visible and accessible, to overcome widespread ignorance about them.

Older young workers, with greater experience in employment, show different labour market characteristics. They are more widely spread across sectors. Their problems, too, are more diffuse than their younger counterparts. They are more active in trying to resolve grievances, more collectivist in practice, and more pro-union. These more mature young are very positive about union utility to help them at work, and show a strong predilection to join, despite high 'never-membership' levels. They offer a major opportunity for union recruitment.

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Tables

Table 1. Trade Union Density (among Employees) by Age, UK, 1999 and 2009

	1999	2009
All Employees	29.7	27.4
16 to 19	5.4	4.1
20 to 24	14.3	11.8
25 to 29	23.7	20.9
30 to 34	28.9	24.1
35 to 39	33.0	27.6
40 to 44	37.1	30.5
45 to 49	40.7	36.1
50 to 54	37.9	37.6
55 to 59	35.3	39.0
60 to 64	31.3	30.2
65 to 69	13.6	16.5
Over 70	*	12.6

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics, in Achur (2010:24)

Table 2: Youth employment intensity by industry sector, EU-27 2006

Industry sector	Youth (15-29 years) as % of employment
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	18.2
Mining and quarrying	12.9
Manufacturing	21.9
Electricity, gas and water supply	14.3
Construction	25.0
Wholesale and retail trade	29.1
Hotels and restaurants	36.6
Transport and communications	18.3
Financial intermediation	21.8
Real estate and business activities	23.4
Public administration	16.3
Education	14.5
Health and social work	17.8
Community, social & other activities	24.2
Total: all sectors	**22.2**

Source: CEC Employment in Europe 2007: Table 11 page 45

Table 3: URWS, Age Groups and Exit (whether screened job current or previous job) by age, percentages

	Total	Under 22 years	22 to 29 years	30 to 39 years	40 to 49 years	50 years or older

		Group A	Group B			
N =	***501***	*47*	*84*	*113*	*123*	*132*
Age group as % total	**100**	9.3	16.7	22.5	24.5	26.3
Screened job is current job %	**58**	36	51	56	61	70
Screen job is previous job %	**42**	64	49	45	39	30

Screened job is the job screened for 'problems' - the job to which the survey questioning referred

Table 4: Percentage of URWS with the following problems in one job

	All	Under 22 years Group A	22 to 29 years Group B
N=	*501*	*47*	*84*
Pay	36.1	36	36
Work relations, such as stress or bullying	34.3	32	30
Workload	28.5	19	24
Working hours	25.3	28	30
Job Security	24.8	19	27
Contract/job description	22.8	21	27
Health and Safety	21.8	6	26
Taking time-off	21.8	30	30
Opportunities	20.4	15	30
Discrimination	15.2	15	20

Results rounded to one decimal place. * = statistically significant at the 10 percent.
Multiple answers, columns do not add up to 100%.

Table 5: Number of problems experienced in screened job, by age, percentages

Number of problems	All	Age Groups				
		Under 22 years Group A	22 to 29 years Group B	30 to 39 years	40 to 49 years	50 years and older
N =	*501*	*47*	*84*	*113*	*123*	*132*
1	42	45	32	40	41	48
2	21	26	21	18	19	24
3	13	11	13	14	14	13
4	9	9	14	9	7	8
5	8	6	12	5	11	4
6	3	2	2	7	3	2
7	2	2	4	3	2	2

Table 6: Types of action taken, whole sample and young workers, percentages

Type of Action	All	22 years or less Group A	22 to 29 years Group B
N=	*501*	*47*	*84*
Informal approach to line manager	69	68	76
Informal approach to senior manager	43	38	46
Joined together with other workers	24	15	26
Used formal complaints procedure	12	2	14
Went to Citizen's Advice Bureau	9	6	13
Sought help from friends or family	8	17	7
Sought help from a trade union	6	2	4
Approach to co-workers responsible for the problem	5	0	7
Began Employment Tribunal Proceedings	2	0	2

Table 7: Outcomes to action by age (base: all who took action, 429), percentages

	All	Age Group						
		Under 22 years Group A	22 to 29 years Group B	30 to 39 years	40 to 49 years	50 years or older	Less than 40 years	40 years or older
N=	*429*	*35*	*76*	*94*	*104*	*119*	*205*	*223*
Yes	38	29	41	35	40	38	36	39
No	47	60	54	50	39	43	53	41
Negotiations ongoing	12	6	3	14	14	17	8	16
Unsure	3	6	3	1	6	3	2	4

Table 8: Satisfaction with outcome (base: all with outcome to actions,162), percentages

	All	Age Group				
		Under 22 years	22 to 29 years	30 to 39 years	40 to 49 years	50 years or older

		Group A	Group B			
N=	*162*	*10*	*31*	*33*	*42*	*45*
Not satisfied	23	30	29	24	24	18
Neither	25	20	29	33	19	22
Satisfied	49	50	32	42	55	60
Unsure	2	-	10	-	2	-

Table 9: Union membership experience and age (N = 501), percentages.

		Age Group						
Union membership	**All**	**Under 22 years Group A**	**22 to 29 years Group B**	**30 to 39 years**	**40 to 49 years**	**50 years or older**	**Less than 40 years**	**40 years or older**
Yes - at time of problem	6	2	2	4	12	7	3	9
Yes - but not at time of problem	34	4	17	26	44	55	18	49
No - never	58	94	81	67	42	39	77	40

Table 10: Reasons for never joining, by age (Base: all those who have never joined a union, 292), percentages.

		Age						
	All	**Under 22 years Group A**	**22 to 29 years Group B**	**30-39 years**	**40-49 years**	**50 or older**	**Less than 40**	**40 or more**
N=	*292*	*44*	*68*	*76*	*52*	*51*	*188*	*103*
I have never worked in a workplace where a trade union existed	34	18	28	37	52	31	29	42
Joining a trade union may have caused trouble with my employer	1	-	1	3	2	-	2	1
I have never felt the need to join a trade union	27	23	24	25	27	37	24	32
I don't know much about trade unions and what they do	14	25	16	17	6	4	19	5
Unions are too weak to make a difference for workers at work	2	5	3	1	-	2	3	1
I prefer talking directly to management myself	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wasn't asked/ approached/ given the opportunity/ didn't know	6	9	6	7	4	6	7	5

how to go about it (new code)								
Never thought about it (new code)	3	9	3	1	2	2	4	2
Unsure	5	11	9	4	-	2	7	1

Table 11: Percentage of respondents who believed a union could have helped their problem (Base: all those not in union at time of problem, 465)

Would a union have helped resolve the problem?	All	Age Group				
		Under 22 Group A	22 to 29 Group B	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 or older
N =	*465*	*46*	*82*	*106*	*106*	*123*
Yes	52	57	55	63	41	51
No	37	22	30	31	51	40
Unsure	10	22	15	6	8	9

Table 12: Percentage of respondents who would join a union as a result of their problems (Base: all those not in union at time of problems, 465)

Would you join a union as a result of your problems?	All	Union membership background			Age				
		Yes - but not at time of problem	No - never	Member now but not at time of problem	Under 22 Group A	22-29 Group B	30-39	40-49	50 or older
N =	*465*	*172*	*292*	*23*	*46*	*82*	*106*	*106*	*123*
Yes	40	48	35	87	37	49	49	32	34
No	54	49	57	13	46	44	48	60	63
Unsure	6	3	8	-	17	7	3	8	2

Table 13: Attitudes towards trade unions, all URWS and young workers, percentages

	All URWS (n=501)				Young Workers Group A (n=47)				Young Workers Group B (n=84)			
	Neither	Don't know	Disagree	Agree	Neither	Don't know	Disagree	Agree	Neither	Don't know	Disagree	Agree
1. Unions make a real difference to workers	9	5	17	68	9	9	13	64	5	7	19	65
2. Unions are too weak to make a difference to workers at work	10	5	57	26	11	13	60	11	5	4	65	24
3. If I have problem at work, I prefer dealing with management myself than have a union represent me	8	3	22	64	13	6	13	62	8	2	30	55
4. I don't like unions in general	9	5	70	14	15	11	64	4	10	6	73	11
5. Unions are concerned with employers interests rather than workers	8	6	66	18	13	9	62	11	2	5	71	19
6. Unions tend to be militant	10	9	53	29	15	21	47	9	8	11	57	20
7. I don't like the existing union(s) at my workplaces	10	6	21	9	13	6	15	11	7	8	25	5

Note: Responses do not add up to 100% because of omitted column 'not applicable'. This is usually a very small percentage (1-2%) except in the last question, about 'existing union in your workplace'. Here it was not applicable to 54% of the sample and 55% of each younger age group.