

“Trade unions in Malta: perceptions of members and non-members”

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Trade union membership can provide workers with several benefits. Despite this, trade union membership has not kept up with growing employment. Data from 346 trade union members and non-members were analysed to explore their perceptions of trade unions in Malta.

Quantitative findings revealed significant differences between trade union members and non-members in the measured demographic and work-related variables. In terms of non-members, open-ended questions probed reasons for non-membership. Reasons included those related to employment, concerns about trade unions' principles and values, and questions about the benefits of membership. Factors related to union focus, principles, approach and promotion were highlighted as factors that might make membership attractive. Union members' perceptions of their trade union were also studied. Members commented favourably on their union's past actions, accessibility, power and management. In terms of desired improvements, members described aspects related to communication, members' needs, union capacity and leadership. In light of the findings, recommendations are made on how unions can attract new members while retaining their current members.