






ALL TOGETHER FOR STRONGER UNIONS



UNIONS ARE UNITING BEHIND the TUC's All Together for Public Services campaign to defend public services against the coalition government's cuts programme.

This leaflet describes how unions can use the campaign to strengthen their membership and their organisation by running recruitment drives and inspiring existing members to put themselves at the centre of community and workplace activity against the cuts.

Now is the time for unions to:

-  **maximise union membership in the workplace and branch**
-  **increase the number of activists**
-  **get more members involved in the union's campaign activity.**

WHAT IS A STRONG WORKPLACE UNION?

“Talking to non-members in the context of the cuts programme can be an effective way of getting them to think again about joining the union.”

To run effective campaigns, workplace and branch union organisation must be as strong as possible. Indicators of a strong workplace union are:

- 👉 **the vast majority of employees are in their appropriate union**
- 👉 **there are union reps in all sections of the workplace and branch**
- 👉 **members get involved in union activities**
- 👉 **there is regular and effective communication between the union, its members and the workforce in general.**

Three steps to building a stronger workplace union

TEST THE STRENGTH OF THE UNION by mapping union membership in the workplace and branch.

ASK NON-MEMBERS TO JOIN THE UNION using the All Together for Public Services campaign as an opportunity to speak to them.

MOTIVATE MEMBERS to get more involved in the union by using campaign activity as a chance to increase activism.

Test the strength of the union

Before any campaign starts it is a good idea to test the strength of the union across all relevant parts of the workplace or branch. A good way to do this is to create a workplace or branch map that will help you to identify where the union is strong and where you might need to concentrate your resources. Including the following information on your map will help you to assess the strength of the union:

- 👉 **number of members**
- 👉 **number of potential members**
- 👉 **number and location of reps and activists**
- 👉 **employees whose jobs or terms and conditions may be under threat.**

Ask non-members to join the union

Research conducted for the TUC indicates that there are around three million non-members working in unionised workplaces and that two million of these have never been asked to join.

Talking to non-members in the context of the cuts programme can be an effective way of getting them to think again about joining the union.

Don't assume that they will automatically join. They may be fearful of about getting involved or apathetic.



Some may even assume that because they haven't joined up before their interest might not be welcome. The reality is that unions need them as much as they are going to need the union.

ASK them if they have concerns about their terms and conditions, their pensions or job security.

ASK if they've heard about the AllTogether campaign – and whether they'd like to get involved. Use the key arguments on page 4.

TALK TO THEM about how the best way to defend their job or their terms and conditions is to join up with the union and join in the campaign.

Consider producing a leaflet specifically for non-members (with an application form attached of course) or even running a workplace meeting for them on the All Together campaign.

Do something union – get members active

Having the majority – or even all – of the workforce in the union is a good start for an effective campaign. The next step is to ensure the union's membership is as active as possible. This means creating as many opportunities as possible for members to get involved. Follow these simple rules:

1. **Ask them! Don't assume they'll offer!**
2. **Be realistic about what you ask them to do – even the smallest tasks help spread the union's campaign message.**
3. **If they say no, rather than pushing them, ask if there's any reason for their reluctance.**

There are lots of things that members can do as part of a high-profile, effective campaign. Here are **TEN**:

1. **Attend a rally or a meeting.**
2. **Bring other colleagues to a meeting.**
3. **Provide information for a 'map' of the union's strengths and weaknesses.**
4. **Give out a union leaflet.**
5. **Talk about the union's campaign and arguments against the cuts to their friends and colleagues.**
6. **Get friends and colleagues to complete a survey or petition about the cuts.**
7. **Ask people they know to join the union.**
8. **Keep a union noticeboard up to date.**
9. **Write to their MP.**
10. **Promote the union's campaign to defend public services in their community.**

KEY ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE CUTS

"In February 2010, 66 senior economists wrote to the Financial Times saying that cuts will damage the UK's fragile economy."

Published by the TUC.
For more information about the All Together campaign visit
www.tuc.org.uk/alltogether

THE CUTS WILL DAMAGE PUBLIC SERVICES

Jobs and skills that are vital to the effective delivery of quality public services will be lost.

Increased workloads and reduced resources for the staff that remain will damage service delivery.

An increased role for the private sector will reduce accountability and is no guarantee of reduced costs and increased efficiency.

THE CUTS ARE UNFAIR

Public sector workers and those who use and rely on public services the most DIDN'T cause the financial crisis and the recession that followed.

The cuts will hit the poorest and most vulnerable far harder than the wealthiest despite promises that this wouldn't happen.

Anyone earning £20,000 per year and below faces a significant blow to their income and to the services they use.

THE CUTS WILL HURT THE PRIVATE SECTOR TOO

Of every £1 spent on the public sector, 38p goes back into the private sector through buying goods and services.

Local business will be hit as public sector workers reduce spending because of redundancies and pay freezes.

THE CUTS WON'T WORK

Rather than reviving the economy and cutting the deficit, the cuts could damage the recovery.

In February 2010, 66 senior economists wrote to the Financial Times saying that cuts will damage the UK's fragile economy.

Ireland is facing the possibility of a 'double-dip' recession after its government cut public spending whilst the economy was still weak.

THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE

The deficit can be reduced over a longer period of time and reduction should begin when the economy is stronger.

Fairer taxation will address the deficit both more fairly and cracking down on tax avoidance by wealthy individuals and companies could bring in up to £25bn per year.

The banks – who caused the crisis in the first place – could contribute billions per year through a small 'Robin Hood' tax on transactions.