

**Data Management and Analysis Group**

**Trade union membership in  
London**

**An analysis of Labour Force Survey data (Autumn 2001)**

**DMAG Briefing 2003/18  
June 2003**

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## Summary of key findings

*All findings relate to employees resident in London in Autumn 2001:*

- One in four (25 per cent) of all Londoners employed are members of a trade union. This is low relative to the UK average of 29 per cent.
- Public sector workers are far more likely than private sector employees to be union members. Union density rates for Londoners working in the public sector are 56 per cent - four times higher than the rate for private sector employees (14 per cent).
- Union density rates are highest in the public administration, education and health sector (49 per cent) and lowest in the sectors dominated by private sector employers such as wholesale and retail distribution (eight per cent) and the finance and business sector (11 per cent).
- The longer someone has been employed the more likely they are to be a trade union member. Density rates range from only 11 per cent for those who have been employed for less than 6 months compared with 50 per cent for those who have been with the same employer for more than 20 years.
- Union density is lowest for Londoners who are employed in small workplaces with less than 25 employees. In these workplaces, union density averages 13 per cent compared with 30 per cent for larger workplaces.
- Union membership is relatively low for those who work part-time (18 per cent), particularly those employed in the private sector (ten per cent). Employees working on a temporary basis also have low rates of union membership - 15 per cent of those in 'non-permanent' employment were union members compared with 26 per cent of permanent employees. Most temporary workers who are union members are those working on fixed contracts in the public sector.
- Across the major occupational groups, those in professional occupations are the most likely to be union members (38 per cent) and those working in sales and customer service are the least likely to be unionised (11 per cent).
- Across all age groups, young people are the least likely to be union members - 11 per cent of 16-24 year olds were union members compared with 34 per cent of 50-54 year olds.
- Union density rates are higher for London's disabled workers (32 per cent) than non-disabled workers (24 per cent).
- Union density rates are around the same for men (24 per cent) and women (25 per cent). Similarly, density rates for London's BME employees are quite close (26 per cent) to those of White employees (24 per cent). However, gender and ethnic differences do emerge when analysis is carried out for public and private sector employees and for part and full-timers. Many of the gender and ethnic differences identified largely reflect the employment and occupational profiles of each group.
- The analysis demonstrates that while a wide range of factors are associated with union membership, it is where people work and the nature of the work they do that best explain differences in union membership levels.

## 1. Introduction and definitions

- 1.1 This Briefing presents information about levels of trade union membership in London. The aim of the analysis is to identify the key factors that are associated with union membership. To do this, the analysis brings together data on the individual, workplace and job-related characteristics of London's union members.
- 1.2 The analysis is based on data drawn from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) which is carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The LFS collects a wide range of information about the type of work people do and specifically asks whether people belong to a trade union. ONS carry out regular analysis of trade union membership at a national level<sup>1</sup>, but very little data is published regionally. This Briefing aims to fill that gap by providing data for London that will complement published statistics.

### Content

- 1.3 The report covers:
- Regional rates of union membership
  - Union density<sup>2</sup> in the public and private sector
  - Union density by industry and occupation
  - Union density by size of workplace
  - Union density by duration of employment
  - Union density by part-time/full-time status
  - Union density by nature of employment
  - Union density by age, gender, ethnicity and disability
  - Union density among disabled and non-disabled people
  - Union density by qualifications
- 1.4 The remainder of this section provides background about the LFS. Section 2 presents the key findings and analysis. A set of key data tables for reference purposes are provided in Appendix 1.

### Background about this analysis and the Labour Force Survey

- 1.5 The analysis has been carried out by the GLA's Data Management and Analysis Group (DMAG), using LFS data supplied by ONS. The analysis is based on the Quarterly Labour Force Survey dataset for Autumn 2001 (as the question on trade union membership is only asked during this quarter). Most data presented relate to people who live in London.
- 1.6 The LFS is the largest regular household survey carried out on a continuous basis by ONS. Individuals are interviewed in their homes or on the telephone and asked a wide range of questions about their social and economic circumstances. LFS data are grossed up and weighted to be representative of the general population. All LFS data in this report are grossed up to pre-2001 Census population totals. This means LFS data are not entirely consistent with recently released 2001 Census data and are likely to be revised in the future. However, the key findings that emerge from this analysis are unlikely to be significantly affected by these revisions. For more on this issue and for more background about the Labour Force Survey see Appendix 2.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Trade union membership: an analysis of data from the Autumn 2001 LFS, July 2002, Labour Market Trends (Office for National Statistics)

<sup>2</sup> Union density rates are the number of trade union members expressed as a percentage of the relevant group.

### **Health warnings and reliability of LFS estimates**

- 1.7 As the LFS is based on a sample of the population, all data produced are survey estimates rather than exact counts and are subject to a degree of sampling variability. This can presents problems for measuring the characteristics of small sub-groups within the population such as individual ethnic groups or for smaller geographical areas within London. This means the LFS is limited in terms of how much detail it can offer. Appendix 2 provides more detail on sampling issues.

### **Other sources of data on trade union membership**

- 1.8 Administrative data on trade union membership is available via the *Annual Report of the Certification Office* for Trade Unions and Employers Associations. These are based on regular administrative returns. These data provide good information on numbers of trade union members but less detail on the individual and workplace characteristics of members. So for the purposes of profiling union members, LFS emerges as one of the best sources.

## 2. Key findings

All data relate to the survey period September–November 2001.

### The Labour Force Survey question on trade union membership

- 2.1 As part of the Labour Force Survey interview, all people in employment are asked: “Are you a member of a trade union or staff association”. The responses to this question are the basis of all LFS estimates of trade union membership rates.

### Union density percentages

- 2.2 To compare rates of union membership across groups, ‘union density’ percentages are presented. These are straightforward percentages which relate to the proportion of employees (in the relevant group) who said they were a member of a trade union or staff association.

### Estimates of numbers of trade union members

- 2.3 In Autumn 2001, it is estimated that around 820,000 Londoners in employment were trade union members, accounting for 23 per cent of all those in employment. Most union members are employees – 25 per cent of all employees are union members compared with 15 per cent of the self-employed.

**Figure 1. Trade union membership estimates, Autumn 2001**

Greater London residents aged 16+

	Number of union members	Union density rate
<b>All in employment</b>	<b>820,000</b>	<b>23%</b>
Employees	745,000	25%
Self-employed	75,000	15%

Source: GLA calculations based on Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Autumn 2001).

Notes: In line with ONS convention, missing data/non-responses have been allocated pro-rata according to the responses of those who did answer the question. For more about the methodology behind these estimates see Appendix 2.

- 2.4 LFS estimates of the number of trade union members are generally lower than numbers from administrative sources (ie Certification Officer reports). This is partly due to the fact that LFS estimates exclude union members not in work such as retired union members or those who are unemployed.
- 2.5 The remainder of this report focuses on employees and profiles the key characteristics of those who are trade union members. Profiling employees enables a good like for like comparison between groups and also provides statistics comparable with ONS work on UK trade union members. All analysis that follows relates to people aged 16+ who are employees and excludes unpaid family workers, the armed forces, self-employed and those on college based schemes.
- 2.6 The analysis explores to what extent workplace, employment and individual characteristics are associated with union membership. See Appendix 1 for a summary of the data tables underpinning the analysis.

### **Union density rates by region of residence and workplace**

- 2.7 Compared with the rest of the UK, Londoners have relatively low levels of union membership. Union density rates were 25 per cent for Londoners compared with 29 per cent nationally. Rates were highest in Merseyside and Northern Ireland (both 40 per cent).
- 2.8 The LFS also records where people work, so rates can also be calculated for region of workplace. Union density rates for employees who work in London are similar to those for residents at 26 per cent, but this ranges from 20 per cent for workers in Central London<sup>3</sup> up to 29 per cent for those working across Outer London. The lower union membership rates in London are largely driven by relatively low rates for private sector employees (14 per cent compared with 19 per cent across the UK).

### **Union density in the public and private sector**

- 2.9 One of the key factors associated with union density rates is whether people work in the private<sup>4</sup> or public sector. Public sector workers are far more likely than private sector employees to be union members. Union density rates for Londoners working in the public sector were 56 per cent – four times higher than the density rate for those in the private sector (14 per cent). 60 per cent of those who work in central government/civil service and 58 per cent of those in local government are trade union members. Density rates for Londoners working in the NHS stand at around 52 per cent.
- 2.10 It is important to bear in mind that the private sector is far larger than the public sector in terms of the number of workers it employs. In London, 78 per cent of residents are employed by private sector employers<sup>5</sup>. This means that while density rates are low in the private sector, its sheer size means that union members in the private sector still account for 41 per cent of all London's union members. Across the UK private sector employees account for 47 per cent of all union members.

### **Union density by industry**

- 2.11 Figure 2 shows union density rates for Londoners by industry group. The sector with the highest union density is the 'public administration, education and health sector' – where 49 per cent of employees are union members. This reflects the fact that the majority of employees in this sector work for public sector employers. Within the sector, union density is 56 per cent for those employed by public sector employers compared with 24 per cent for those working for private sector employers. The latter group is likely to include employees providing public services but who are working for private contractors.
- 2.12 Sectors dominated by private sector employers tend to have quite low levels of unionisation. For example, union density rates for employees in the wholesale and retail distribution sector average only eight per cent. Similarly, union density rates in the finance and business sector are 11 per cent. The LFS sample for union members working in the hotels and restaurants sector was too small to produce a reliable estimate for that sector, but in itself, this is indicative of the fact that rates of union membership were very low.

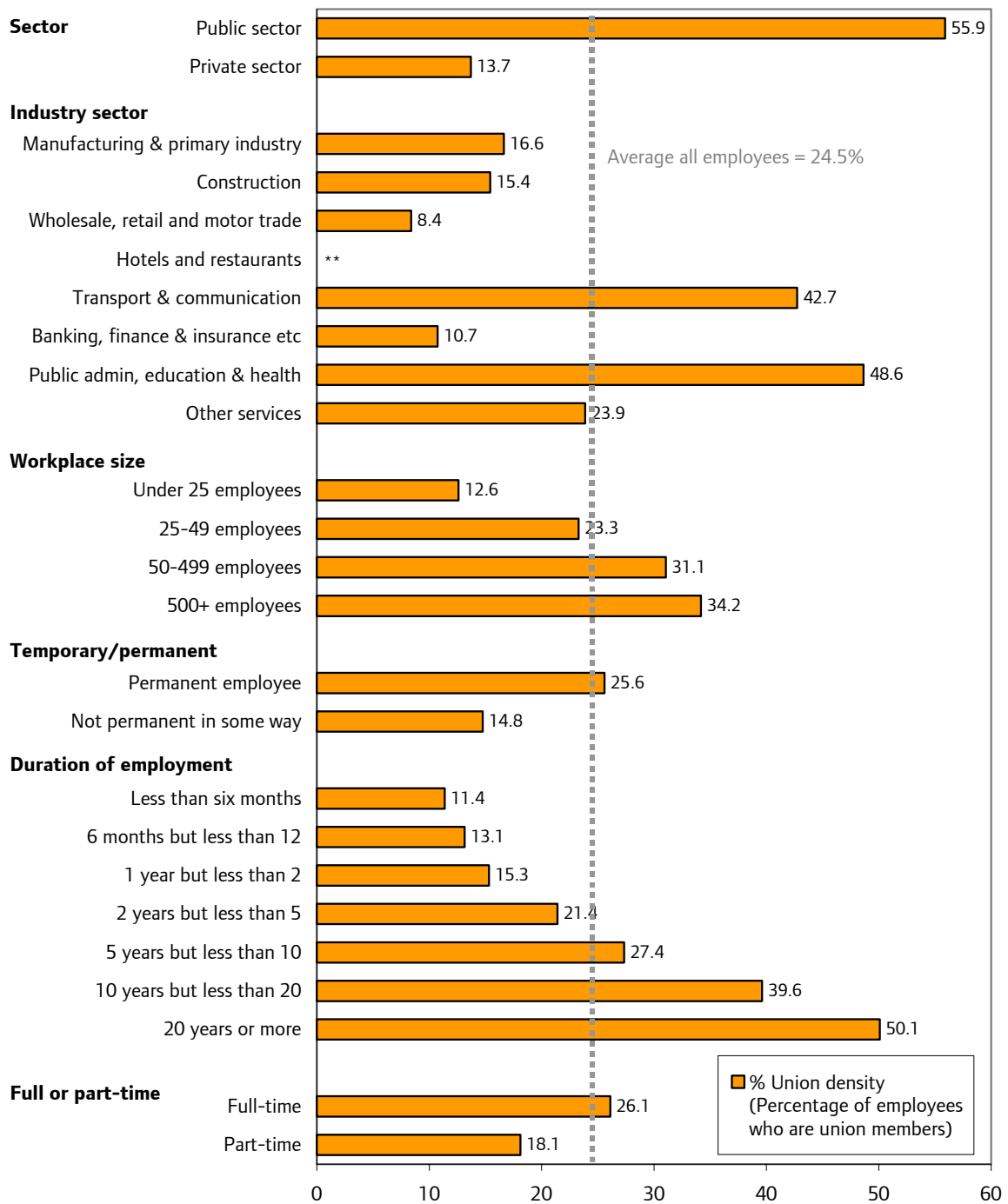
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<sup>3</sup>Central London is defined as the area within the bounds of the main London British Rail termini.

<sup>4</sup>The Labour Force Survey definition of private sector includes the voluntary sector. For more on LFS definitions of public and private sector, refer to Appendix 2.

<sup>5</sup>DMAG Briefing 2003/17 on Public sector employment in London 2001/02

**Figure 2. Union density by workplace and employment characteristics**  
 Employees aged 16+, Greater London residents, Autumn 2001



Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Autumn 2001

\*\* Sample size too small for a reliable estimate

2.13 Levels of unionisation are relatively high within the transport and communication sector (43 per cent). This sector includes those: working in the rail industry, post office and telecommunications workers and bus workers – all groups with a strong history of union representation, particularly pre-privatisation. Some 16 per cent of workers in this sector remain in the public sector<sup>6</sup>, union density among this group averages 75 per cent – more than twice as high as the density rate for private sector employees (35 per cent) employed in the sector.

### **Duration of employment**

2.14 The length of time a person has been working for their current employer is strongly associated with union density rates. The longer someone has been employed the more likely they are to be a trade union member (See Figure 2). Density rates range from only 11 per cent for those who have been employed for less than six months compared with 50 per cent for those who have been with the same employer for more than 20 years.

2.15 This pattern is the same in both the public and private sector but union density rates are generally higher among public sector workers for all lengths of employment. Of those who had been with their employer for less than six months, density rates were 31 per cent for those in the public sector compared with just seven per cent for those in the private sector. Similarly, for those employees who had been with their current employer for 20 years or more, density rates were 33 per cent in the private sector and 77 per cent for those in the public sector.

### **Size of workplace**

2.16 Union density is higher for Londoners who are employed in workplaces with 25 or more employees. In these workplaces union density averages around 30 per cent compared with 13 per cent for workplaces with less than 25 employees. Density is highest for very large workplaces with more than 500 employees (34 per cent).

### **Patterns of working**

2.17 Trade union membership is less prevalent among those who work part-time compared with those working full-time (18 per cent compared with 26 per cent). Union membership among part-timers in the private sector is very low at only ten per cent, compared with 38 per cent of public sector part-timers.

2.18 Union membership is low for workers who are employed on a temporary basis (ie non-permanent employees). On LFS, the definition of 'non-permanent' workers include those working on fixed contracts, seasonal workers, casual workers and agency workers. Union density rates for those Londoners employed on a permanent basis average 26 per cent compared with 15 per cent for those employed on a temporary basis. Most temporary workers who are union members are those working on fixed contracts for public sector employers.

2.19 Union members are more likely than non-members to work on a flexi-time<sup>7</sup> basis. Here the term 'flexi-time' covers those respondents who said that 'flexi-time or flexible working hours' was part of their agreed working arrangement. Of all those who work flexi-time, 38 per cent are union members compared with 23 per cent for those workers not on flexi-time. This is linked to the high density rates in the public sector where

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<sup>6</sup> DMAG Briefing 2003/17 – Public sector employment in London, 2001/02

<sup>7</sup> For statistics on flexible working in the public sector, refer to DMAG Briefing 2003/17 on 'Public sector employment in London 2001/02'

flexible working is more prevalent. Across all sectors, 16 per cent of union members work flexi-time compared with nine per cent of non-union members.

### **Union density by occupation**

- 2.20 Occupation also has an important bearing on trade union membership. Across the major occupational groups, those in professional occupations are the most likely to be union members (38 per cent). This group includes teaching and health professionals and has a higher than average proportion of public sector workers (37 per cent of workers in this occupational group work in the public sector<sup>8</sup>).
- 2.21 Other groups with higher than average union density rates include those in associate professional occupations (includes health and social welfare occupations); plant and machine operatives and those in personal service occupations (all 31 per cent).
- 2.22 Those working in sales and customer service are the least likely to be union members with an average of 11 per cent union density. Density rates are also low for those in 'managerial and senior official' occupations (14 per cent). This is driven by low density rates for managers/senior officials in the private sector – nine per cent of this group were union members compared with 55 per cent of public sector managers.

### **Union density by age of employees**

- 2.23 Young workers are less likely than older workers to be union members. For example the union density rate is 11 per cent for 16–24 year olds and 34 per cent for 50–54 year olds. This is related to the fact older workers are more likely to have been with their current employer for longer. This pattern is the same in both the public and private sector, though density levels are much higher for public sector workers.

### **Union density by gender**

- 2.24 Union density rates are similar for men and women. 24 per cent of London's male employees are union members compared with 25 per cent of female employees. However, if we consider density rates by gender in more detail, some differences emerge between groups.

**Table 1. Union density rates (%) by gender, Greater London, 2001**

	All	Private sector	Public sector	Full-time	Part-time	% working in the public sector
Persons	24.5	13.7	55.9	26.1	18.1	21.9
Men	23.9	15.3	59.8	25.2	11.7	15.3
Women	25.2	11.5	53.2	27.5	20.3	30.4

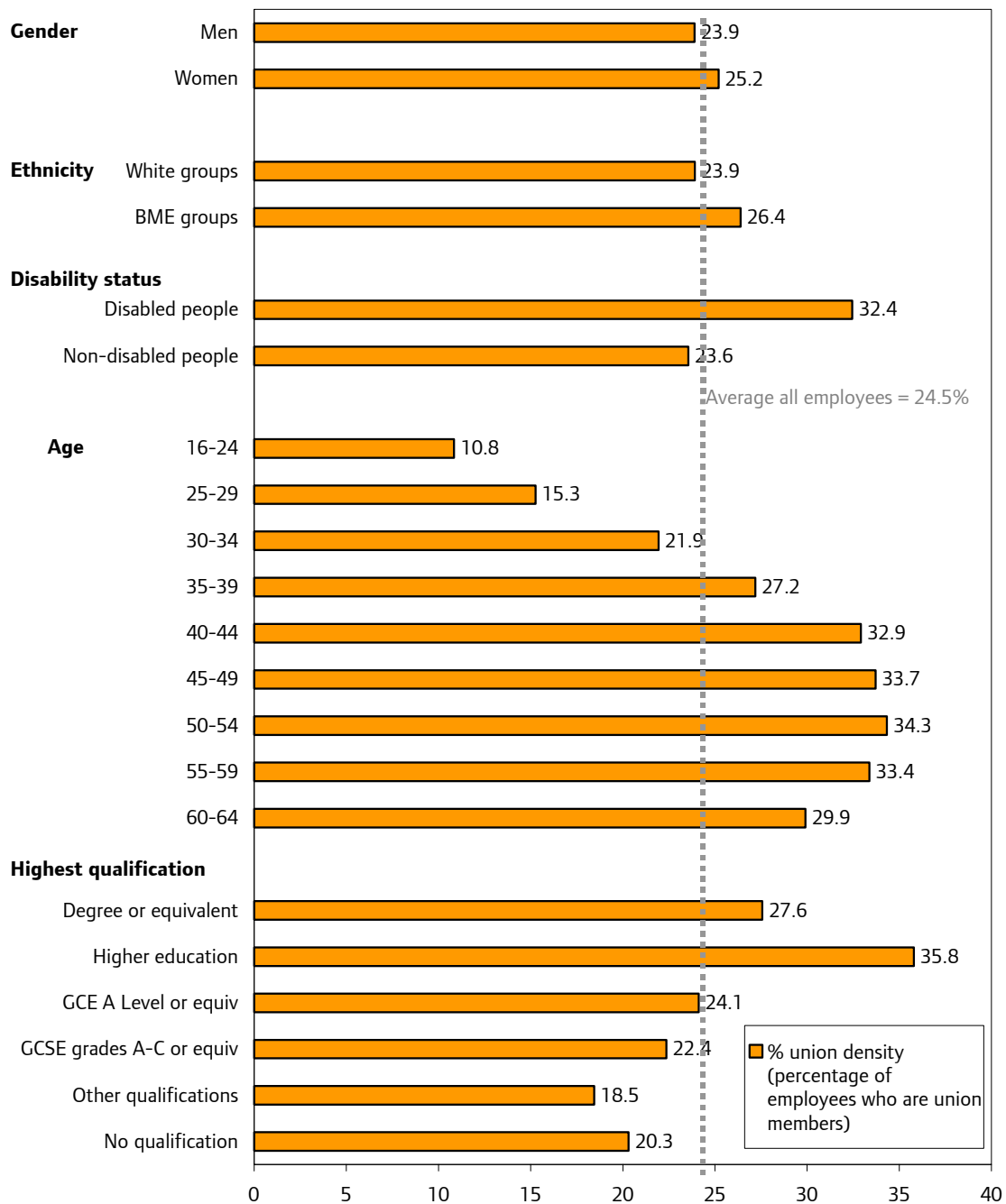
Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Autumn 2001)

- 2.25 Overall, women have similar density rates to men, but within both the private and public sectors, the rate of union membership is actually lower for women than men. 12 per cent of women working in the private sector are union members compared with 15 per cent of men. Similarly, in the public sector, 53 per cent of women are union members compared with 59 per cent of men. The reason the overall density rates for women and men are similar, is because of the high numbers of women working in the public sector. In volume terms, women make up 60 per cent of all public sector workers<sup>8</sup>, and because union membership is much higher in the public sector, this heavily influences the overall union density rates.

<sup>8</sup> DMAG Briefing 2003/17 – Public sector employment in London, 2001/02

2.26 Male part-timers have noticeably low rates of union membership (12 per cent) compared with women working part-time (20 per cent). The LFS sample within this group was too small to investigate much further, though it is highly likely this reflects low union density rates for men working in the private sector (as this is where most of London’s men who work part-time are employed).

**Figure 3. Union density by individual characteristics**  
 Employees aged 16+, Greater London residents, Autumn 2001



Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Autumn 2001

### **Union density by ethnic group**

- 2.27 Trade union membership rates among London's BME<sup>9</sup> employees (26 per cent) are similar to those for White employees (24 per cent). Within the BME group, rates are highest for Black workers (29 per cent), reflecting their propensity to work in the public sector.
- 2.28 Consistent with the general picture, union density rates are much lower for BME workers in the private sector. 15 per cent of BME workers in the private sector are union members compared with 55 per cent of BME workers in the public sector. These rates are very similar to the density rates for White workers (13 per cent and 56 per cent respectively).
- 2.29 Analysis of union density for full-time and part-time BME workers reveals a big gap between rates - 30 per cent of full-time BME workers are union members compared with only 13 per cent of part-time BME workers. This difference is much larger than the gap between full and part-time workers for White groups (25 per cent and 20 per cent). The low union density rates among BME workers who work part-time is probably driven by low density rates among those in the private sector, particularly among men. BME men are twice as likely to work part-time as White men and most work in the private sector.
- 2.30 The analysis also shows that BME women generally have higher levels of union density than BME men (29 per cent compared with 24 per cent). This is explained by the fact that BME women are far more likely than men to work in the public sector which is better unionised. Within the public sector, male BME employees actually have higher union membership levels than BME women (59 per cent compared with 53 per cent) Across the private sector, rates are similar for BME men and women.

### **Union density by disability**

- 2.31 Union density rates are higher for disabled workers than non-disabled workers. One third (32 per cent) of London's disabled employees are union members compared with a quarter (24 per cent) of non-disabled Londoners. Rates remain relatively high for disabled workers in both the public and private sector and when analysed by gender.
- 2.32 Almost two thirds (64 per cent) of disabled employees in the public sector were union members compared with 55 per cent of non-disabled employees. In the private sector, where union density rates are generally lower, 20 per cent of disabled employees were unionised compared with 13 per cent of non-disabled employees.
- 2.33 Disabled workers have an older age profile than non-disabled workers and also tend to stay in their jobs for longer. These are both factors which are interrelated and linked to higher levels of trade union membership. To control for this, it is possible to produce union density rates standardised for age (ie what the rates for disabled and non-disabled employees would be if their age structure was the same as that of the population as a whole). These standardised rates are 30 per cent for disabled employees and 24 per cent for non-disabled people. These rates are similar to the non-standardised rates (32 and 24 per cent) though the gap is slightly reduced. This means once the difference in age profile is accounted for, disabled workers still have higher union membership rates.

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<sup>9</sup> The LFS ethnic group classification used here is new LFS interim ethnicity classification, which is broadly based on the new 2001 census ethnic classification. In this context, the term BME (Black and minority ethnic group) includes all those whose ethnicity was not White (ie 'White British' or 'Other White').

### **Union density by qualifications**

- 2.34 Figure 3 shows union density rates by the highest level of qualification employees hold. In general, employees with higher level educational qualifications have higher union density rates. The group with qualifications above A-level standard but below degree level have the highest union density rate at 36 per cent. This group includes those with professional nursing and some teaching qualifications – those typically associated with public sector occupations. Union density rates are relatively low for workers with no qualifications (20 per cent).
- 2.35 In general, men and women are equally likely to be trade union members, but there are significant differences between men and women depending on their qualifications level. In general, women with higher level qualifications (above A-level) are much more likely to be union members compared with men. For example, one third (33 per cent) of women with degree level qualifications were union members compared with 23 per cent of men. The same is true for women with other higher qualifications, in this group 46 per cent of women were union members compared with 24 per cent of similarly qualified men. The opposite pattern emerges for workers with lower level or no qualifications – where women generally have lower levels of union density than men. This could be reflecting – in part - the gender differences between the types of occupations and qualifications that men and women hold.

### **Conclusions**

- 2.36 The analysis demonstrates that while a wide range of factors are associated with union membership, it is where people work and the nature of that work that emerge as the predominant factors linked with unionisation rates.
- 2.37 Groups of workers most likely to be unionised include: public sector employees, those in professional occupations, those who have been in their job for a long time and those working in certain industry sectors (ie public administration, education & health and transport and communications). Groups least likely to be unionised are those working in the private sector, particularly those working for small businesses, those working part-time, those working on a temporary basis and those working in certain industry sectors (ie wholesale, retail, hotels & catering and finance & business).
- 2.38 The analysis has also shown that the individual characteristics of employees such as their age, ethnic group, gender, disability or qualifications also have some bearing on union membership. However, it is difficult to be conclusive about why this is. Many factors are inextricably linked with each other, and some differences in union membership rates are largely reflecting the differing occupational and employment profiles of respective groups. However, in other cases, the individual characteristics, in themselves, may also be driving density rates. For instance, it is possible that those who are more vulnerable to discrimination in the workplace may be more likely to join unions. This might help explain the higher rates of unionisation among some groups such as disabled workers.
- 2.39 The key findings and patterns identified here in relation to Londoners mirror the national analysis of union membership carried out by ONS. The only key difference is that levels of union membership are slightly lower for Londoners, particularly for those working in the private sector.
- 2.40 For more information about this report, please contact Lorna Spence in the GLA's Data Management and Analysis group on 020 7983 4658

### 3. Appendices

#### Appendix 1: Key reference tables

##### A1. Union density by key characteristics, Greater London, Autumn 2001

<i>Base: Employees<sup>1</sup> aged 16+ who are resident in Greater London</i>	% Union density <sup>2</sup>		% Union density <sup>2</sup>
<b>All employees</b>	24.5	<b>Work in public or private sector</b>	
		Private	13.7
<b>Gender</b>		Public	55.9
Male	23.9	<b>Type of organisation</b>	
Female	25.2	Public company, plc	19.0
<b>Age bands</b>		Nationalised industry etc	67.4
16-24	10.8	Central government/civil service	59.9
25-29	15.3	Local govt. or council (inc police/schools etc)	57.7
30-34	21.9	Universities and other grant funded education	51.7
35-39	27.2	Health authority or NHS trust	52.0
40-44	32.9	Charity, voluntary org etc	30.3
45-49	33.7	Other kind of organisation	36.4
50-54	34.3	<b>Industry</b>	
55-59	33.4	Manufacturing & primary industries	16.6
60-64	29.9	Construction	15.4
<b>Current disability<sup>3</sup></b>		Wholesale, retail & motor trade	8.4
Disabled people	32.4	Hotels & restaurants	**
Non-disabled people	23.6	Transport, storage & communication	42.7
<b>Highest qualification obtained</b>		Financial intermediation	13.6
Degree or equivalent	27.6	Real estate, renting & business activities	9.5
Other higher education	35.8	Public administration & defence	55.4
GCE A Level or equivalent	24.1	Education	52.0
GCSE grades A-C or equivalent	22.4	Health & social work	41.4
Other qualifications	18.5	Other community, social & personal	25.3
No qualification	20.3	<b>Major occupation group</b>	
<b>Length of time with current employer</b>		Managers and senior officials	13.9
Less than 6 months	11.4	Professional occupations	38.2
6 months but less than 12	13.1	Associate professional and technical	30.6
1 year but less than 2	15.3	Administrative and secretarial	20.1
2 years but less than 5	21.4	Skilled trades occupations	28.9
5 years but less than 10	27.4	Personal service occupations	31.3
10 years but less than 20	39.6	Sales and customer service occupations	10.5
20 years or more	50.1	Process, plant and machine operatives	31.0
		Elementary occupations	21.3

Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Autumn 2001)

Notes: The LFS is a sample survey and data presented are estimates not precise measures and are subject to a degree of sampling variability. Particularly unreliable data have been suppressed and are denoted by asterisks (\*\*)

1 - The analysis relates to employees and excludes the following groups: the self-employed, armed forces, those on college based government supported training and unpaid family workers.

2 - Union density refers to the percentage of people who said they were a member of a trade union or staff association

3 - In the LFS, disabled people include those who meet either the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) and/or the LFS work limiting definition of disability.

## A2. Union density rates by individual characteristics, Greater London Autumn 2001

Base: Employees <sup>1</sup> aged 16+ who are resident in Greater London	% Union density rates <sup>2</sup>				
	All	Private sector	Public sector	Males	Females
<b>All employees</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>55.9</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>25.2</b>
<b>Age</b>					
16-24	10.8	7.0	37.5	11.2	10.5
25-29	15.3	8.0	50.1	14.7	15.9
30-34	21.9	13.5	54.3	20.0	24.6
35-39	27.2	16.2	56.9	23.2	32.3
40-44	32.9	18.6	61.8	32.7	33.1
45-49	33.7	20.9	56.0	33.7	33.8
50-54	34.3	20.8	62.7	37.8	31.2
55-59	33.4	14.9	63.4	30.4	36.2
60-64	29.9	**	52.0	37.4	**
<b>Ethnicity<sup>3</sup></b>					
White groups	23.9	13.2	56.2	23.8	24.1
BME groups	26.4	15.4	55.0	24.3	28.7
<b>Disability<sup>4</sup></b>					
Disabled people	32.4	19.9	64.4	35.5	29.1
Non-disabled people	23.6	13.0	54.8	22.5	24.7
<b>Highest qualification level</b>					
Degree or equivalent	27.6	11.6	62.1	23.2	33.1
Other higher education	35.8	16.7	63.0	23.7	46.2
GCE A Level or equivalent	24.1	16.1	52.7	28.2	18.0
GCSE grades A-C or equivalent	22.4	14.9	49.1	24.6	20.7
Other qualifications	18.5	12.7	44.2	20.0	16.7
No qualification	20.3	13.2	49.2	22.5	17.6

Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Autumn 2001)

Notes: The LFS is a sample survey and data presented are estimates not precise measures and are subject to a degree of sampling variability. Particularly unreliable data have been suppressed and are denoted by asterisks (\*\*)

1 - The analysis relates to employees and excludes the following groups: the self-employed, armed forces, those on college based government supported training and unpaid family workers.

2 - Union density refers to the percentage of people who said they were a member of a trade union or staff association

3 - The LFS ethnic group classification used here is new LFS interim ethnicity classification, which is broadly based on the new 2001 census ethnic classification. In this table, the term BME (Black and minority ethnic group) includes all those whose ethnicity was not White (ie 'White British' or 'Other White').

4 - In the LFS, disabled people include those who meet either the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) and/or the LFS work limiting definition of disability.

### A3. Union density rates by employment characteristics, Greater London Autumn 2001

				% Union density <sup>2</sup>	
	All	Private sector	Public sector	Males	Females
Base: Employees <sup>1</sup> aged 16+ who are resident in Greater London					
<b>All employees</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>55.9</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>25.2</b>
<b>Workplace size (no. of employees)</b>					
Under 25	12.6	7.8	43.9	12.0	13.3
25-49	23.3	12.3	55.0	19.2	27.5
50-499	31.1	18.0	60.6	31.6	30.5
500+	34.2	20.9	56.3	34.1	34.3
<b>Full-time/part-time employee</b>					
Full-time	26.1	14.6	61.1	25.2	27.5
Part-time	18.1	9.8	38.2	11.7	20.3
<b>Temporary or permanent employees</b>					
Permanent employee	25.6	14.1	59.8	24.9	26.4
Not permanent in some way	14.8	9.9	24.6	14.5	15.0
<b>Industry sector employed in:</b>					
A-E Manufacturing & primary industry	16.6	16.8	**	20.9	**
F: Construction	15.4	13.4	**	16.6	**
G-H: Distribution, hotels & restaurants	7.7	7.6	**	5.4	10.6
I: Transport & communication	42.7	34.8	74.6	47.5	29.1
J-K: Banking, finance & insurance etc	10.7	9.4	44.2	11.5	9.7
L-N: Public admin, education & health	48.6	24.4	56.0	54.8	45.9
O-Q: Other services	23.9	11.5	55.8	29.1	17.9
<b>Occupation</b>					
Managers and senior officials	13.9	8.8	54.9	13.4	15.0
Professional occupations	38.2	14.6	66.8	28.6	49.3
Associate professional and technical	30.6	15.6	64.5	28.1	33.3
Administrative & secretarial	20.1	8.9	43.7	25.9	17.9
Skilled trades occupations	28.9	25.2	**	28.5	**
Personal service occupations	31.3	15.5	47.6	43.4	27.5
Sales and customer service occupations	10.5	10.2	**	**	12.7
Process, plant and machine operatives	31.0	29.3	**	34.9	**
Elementary occupations	21.3	14.6	44.0	24.5	16.4
<b>Length of time with employer</b>					
Less than 6 months	11.4	6.7	31.3	10.3	12.4
6 months but less than 12	13.1	8.0	37.7	12.2	14.2
1 year but less than 2	15.3	9.0	43.3	14.8	15.9
2 years but less than 5	21.4	12.0	53.4	20.3	22.8
5 years but less than 10	27.4	16.2	58.1	24.8	30.2
10 years but less than 20	39.6	22.8	66.2	39.0	40.3
20 years or more	50.1	32.6	77.0	48.9	52.0
<b>Works flexi-time</b>					
Yes	37.9	17.9	59.9	38.9	37.1
No	23.0	13.4	54.9	22.4	23.6

Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Autumn 2001)

Notes: The LFS is a sample survey and data presented are estimates not precise measures and are subject to a degree of sampling variability. Particularly unreliable data have been suppressed and are denoted by asterisks (\*\*)

1 - The analysis relates to employees and excludes the following groups: the self-employed, armed forces, those on college based government supported training and unpaid family workers.

2 - Union density refers to the percentage of people who said they were a member of a trade union or staff association

**A4. Union density by ethnicity & employment characteristics, Greater London 2001**

Base: Employees<sup>1</sup> aged 16+ who are resident in Greater London

		Union density (%) <sup>2</sup>		
		All ethnic groups	White	BME groups
<b>All employees</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>26.4</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	23.9	23.8	24.3
	Female	25.2	24.1	28.7
<b>Full-time/part-time</b>	Full-time	26.1	24.8	30.3
	Part-time	18.1	20.0	12.9
<b>Private/public sector</b>	Private & voluntary	13.7	13.2	15.4
	Public	55.9	56.2	55.0
<b>Private &amp; voluntary sector</b>	Males	15.3	15.2	15.6
	Females	11.5	10.4	15.0
	Full-time	14.6	13.8	17.6
	Part-time	9.8	10.4	**
<b>Public sector</b>	Males	59.8	60.1	58.6
	Females	53.2	53.5	52.6
	Full-time	61.1	61.3	60.5
	Part-time	38.2	40.3	**
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Public company, plc	19.0	21.1	**
	Nationalised industry etc	67.4	64.6	**
	Central government/civil service	59.9	61.1	56.8
	Local govt. or council (inc police/schools)	57.7	59.2	51.7
	Universities & other grant funded education	51.7	51.6	**
	Health authority or NHS trust	52.0	49.3	56.6
	Charity, voluntary org etc	30.3	30.4	**
<b>Major occupation group</b>	Managers and senior officials	13.9	14.1	13.1
	Professional occupations	38.2	38.1	38.4
	Associate professional and technical	30.6	28.9	37.5
	Administrative and secretarial	20.1	17.4	28.8
	Skilled trades occupations	28.9	29.0	28.5
	Personal service occupations	31.3	31.8	29.9
	Sales and customer service occupations	10.5	10.9	**
	Process, plant and machine operatives	31.0	30.6	31.9
	Elementary occupations	21.3	21.1	21.6
<b>Industry</b>	Manufacturing & primary industries	16.6	16.9	**
	Construction	15.4	14.3	**
	Wholesale, retail & motor trade	8.4	7.4	**
	Hotels & restaurants	**	**	**
	Transport, storage & communication	42.7	41.5	45.8
	Financial intermediation	13.6	12.7	**
	Real estate, renting & business activities	9.5	8.8	12.5
	Public administration & defence	55.4	55.3	55.5
	Education	51.9	52.4	48.5
	Health & social work	41.4	39.2	46.3
	Other community, social & personal	25.3	26.1	**

Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Autumn 2001)

Notes: The LFS is a sample survey and data presented are estimates not precise measures and are subject to a degree of sampling variability. Particularly unreliable data have been suppressed and are denoted by asterisks (\*\*)

1 - The analysis relates to employees and excludes the following groups: the self-employed, armed forces, those on college based government supported training and unpaid family workers.

2 - Union density refers to the percentage of people who said they were a member of a trade union or staff association.

### A5. Trade union density by ethnic group and sector, Greater London, Autumn 2001

<i>Base: Employees<sup>1</sup> aged 16+ who are resident in Greater London</i>	Union density (%) <sup>2</sup>		
	All sectors	Private & voluntary sector	Public sector
<b>All employees</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>55.9</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>56.2</b>
British	25.3	14.1	57.1
Other White	15.5	8.2	47.8
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>55.9</b>
Indian	29.8	20.5	60.0
Pakistani	**	**	**
Bangladeshi	**	**	**
Other Asian	25.8	**	**
<b>Black or Black British</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>54.3</b>
Black Caribbean	30.6	14.8	58.4
Black African	28.3	**	50.2
Other Black	**	**	**
<b>Other groups</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>54.9</b>
Mixed groups	**	**	**
Chinese	**	**	**
Other ethnic groups	21.4	**	**
<i>All BME groups</i>	<i>26.4</i>	<i>15.4</i>	<i>55.0</i>

Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Autumn 2001)

Notes: The LFS is a sample survey and data presented are estimates not precise measures and are subject to a degree of sampling variability. Particularly unreliable data have been suppressed and are denoted by asterisks (\*\*)

1 - The analysis relates to employees and excludes the following groups: the self-employed, armed forces, those on college based government supported training and unpaid family workers.

2 - Union density refers to the percentage of people (in the relevant group) who said they were a member of a trade union or staff association

**A6. Union density by region - workplace and residence basis, Autumn 2001***Base: Employees<sup>1</sup> aged 16+ (UK)*

	% Union density <sup>2</sup>		% Union density <sup>2</sup>
<b>Region of residence</b>		<b>Region of workplace</b>	
<b>UK</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>UK</b>	<b>29.1</b>
North East	38.8	North East	39.2
North West	33.0	North West	32.4
Merseyside	40.6	Merseyside	43.0
Yorkshire & Humberside	30.9	Yorkshire & Humberside	31.0
East Midlands	28.0	East Midlands	28.0
West Midlands	30.1	West Midlands	30.2
Eastern	23.3	Eastern	22.7
<b>London</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>London</b>	<b>25.5</b>
South East	22.1	South East	21.5
South West	26.1	South West	26.2
Wales	38.7	Wales	38.8
Scotland	35.2	Scotland	35.0
Northern Ireland	40.3	Northern Ireland	40.4
<b>Sub-region (residence)</b>		<b>Sub-region (workplace)</b>	
Tyne and Wear	40.0	Tyne and Wear	39.7
Rest of North East	37.9	Rest of North East	38.7
Greater Manchester	32.7	Greater Manchester	33.0
Merseyside	40.6	Merseyside	43.0
Rest of North West	33.3	Rest of North West	31.8
South Yorkshire	32.5	South Yorkshire	32.6
West Yorkshire	29.4	West Yorkshire	29.8
Rest of Yorkshire & Humberside	31.5	Rest of Yorkshire and Humberside	31.3
East Midlands	28.0	East Midlands	28.0
West Midlands Metropolitan County	31.3	West Midlands and Met. County	32.3
Rest of West Midlands	29.0	Rest of West Midlands	27.9
East of England	23.3	East of England	22.7
<b>Inner London</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>Inner London</b>	<b>22.9</b>
Central London	**	Central London	19.5
Rest of Inner London	**	Rest of Inner London	27.3
<b>Outer London</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>Outer London</b>	<b>29.3</b>
South East	22.1	South East	21.5
South West	26.1	South West	26.2
Wales	38.7	Wales	38.8
Strathclyde	39.1	Strathclyde	39.3
Rest of Scotland	32.4	Rest of Scotland	32.0
Northern Ireland	40.3	Northern Ireland	40.4

Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Autumn 2001)

Notes: The LFS is a sample survey and data presented are estimates not precise measures and as subject to a degree of sampling variability. \*\* estimates not available for these areas.

1 - The analysis relates to employees and excludes the following groups: the self-employed, armed forces, those on college based government supported training and unpaid family workers.

2 - Union density refers to the percentage of people (in the relevant group) who said they were a member of a trade union or staff association

## Appendix 2: The Labour Force Survey – Technical notes and Glossary

### Introduction

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and is one of the largest regular household surveys in the UK. The LFS is carried out on a quarterly basis and collects a range of data about the economic circumstances of individuals. The Labour Force Survey is residence-based and mainly provides data about those who live in an area. Some limited data is available on a workplace basis.

### Quarterly LFS datasets

The quarterly LFS collects information from around 60,000 households in the UK each quarter. Each quarter's sample is made up of five "waves" of around 12,000 households. This Briefing is based on the Autumn 2001 quarterly Labour Force Survey database as the question on trade union membership is only asked in this quarter.

The Autumn 2001 database includes records for around 107,000 people aged 16 and over across the UK, of these 11,000 are resident in Greater London. The Autumn 2001 dataset covers the period September to November 2001.

### Non-response on the trade union question and London estimates

Each household in the LFS is in the sample for five consecutive quarters. For the small number of households which were not contactable in the quarter (other than the first) their responses from the previous quarter are usually brought forward. Where this is not possible (ie in the case of the trade union question that is not asked every quarter) a 'does not apply' response is recorded. There are also cases where the respondent was interviewed in the quarter but gave no answer (Either because they did not know or refused to answer).

To produce estimates of numbers of trade union members, it is necessary to impute the answers of the non-respondents. To produce London estimates (as presented in Figure 1 in this Briefing) the GLA have followed ONS convention on this issue. This means treating both cases of non-response in the same way and allocating them pro-rata according to those who did answer the question.

### Reliability of data and 95% confidence intervals

As the LFS is a sample survey, all estimates are subject to sampling variability. In general, the smaller the estimate the greater the margin of error as a proportion of the estimate. As a result, current ONS advice is generally not to publish estimates below suppression thresholds (around 10,000, but varies depending on the dataset/geographical area/variable in question). However, users should be aware, that even for estimates above suppression thresholds, there can still be a high margin of error associated with estimates. In this analysis, the GLA has suppressed all data estimates (from the quarterly dataset) below 12,000 due to poor reliability.

The degree of variability attached to an estimate is often expressed through '95% confidence intervals'. These allow us to take a view, based on statistical probability theory, about how close an estimate is likely to be to the true population value. For example, if the actual number of people who were ILO unemployed in London was 248,000 – and we were estimating this figure from the quarterly LFS dataset – then 95 times out of 100, the LFS estimate of the size of that group would fall in the range of 224,000 to 272,000 (ie  $\pm 24,000$  or  $\pm 10\%$ )<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Example based on published Dec-Feb 2003 quarterly LFS estimate for London (Labour Market Statistics, April 2003, ONS press release, page 11)

**LFS population totals**

The population totals which underpin the LFS for London differ from other population data presented within ONS and within the GLA. There are a number of reasons for this. LFS data relate mainly to those living in private households and exclude many groups living in communal establishments who are usually included on official population estimates (eg the mid-year estimates from ONS). So even though LFS sample estimates on the LFS databases are grossed up using official population estimates and projections (published by ONS), the LFS totals presented are usually slightly lower than the official mid-year estimates. LFS totals are also usually lower than the GLA's own demographic estimates, which include those living in communal establishments.

However, this situation has changed recently in light of the early 2001 Census results. These results led to the official estimates for 2001 population being revised downwards<sup>11</sup>. To confuse matters further, LFS datasets have not yet been revised to take this into account. This means the LFS estimates presented here on employees are based on population totals now slightly higher than official totals.

**Population estimates for London:****Estimates used prior to 2001 census**

ONS mid-year estimate 2000	7.375m
LFS population (private households) – annual database 2000/01	7.280m
LFS population (private households) – annual database 2001/02	7.379m

**Estimates based on 2001 census results**

Census day population - April 2001	7.172m
<i>Census day private household population</i>	7.079m
ONS mid-year estimate 2001	7.188m

So to summarise, all estimates presented in this report are based on LFS data grossed up to pre-2001 census population totals. ONS are not planning to revise local LFS databases till late 2003.

The implications of all of this are that estimates presented in figure one may be revised downwards in the future and density rates may change slightly. However, the key findings that emerge from this analysis are unlikely to be significantly affected by these revisions. It is recognised that base totals will change marginally but the changes are unlikely to impact significantly on rates and percentages.

**LFS Glossary of key terms used in this report:****Disabled people and disability definitions**

The focus of and number of questions in the health and disability module of the Labour Force Survey changed in spring 1997 to reflect the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995. As a result, two main definitions of disability are usually referred to in the LFS: DDA disabled and work-limiting disabled. People can qualify as disabled on both definitions or just one. Those who meet the criteria for either (or both – as is often the case) current DDA or

<sup>11</sup> ONS will be retrospectively revising mid-year population estimates from 1991-2000 in February 2003.

work-limiting definitions of disability are defined as having a *current long-term disability*. A recent DMAG briefing on disabled people in the labour market explains this in more detail (DMAG briefing 2003/1).

### **Employment**

People aged 16 or over who did some paid work in the reference week (whether as an employee or self-employed); those who had a job that they were temporarily away from (eg on holiday); those on government supported training and employment programmes; and those doing unpaid family work (ie working in family business).

### **Ethnic groups**

Ethnic groups are defined using the National Statistics interim standard classification of ethnic groups. People interviewed are asked to classify their own ethnic origin by means of the question "To which of these groups do you consider you belong? White, Mixed, Asian or Asian British, Black or Black British, Chinese or Other ethnic group. All respondents are then asked supplementary questions according to their initial answer. Respondents to the 'Other' categories are recoded into the appropriate category according to the 2001 Census of Population schema. The final categories presented are broadly similar to those used in the 2001 Census (though there is no separate 'White Irish' category).

### **Full-time/part-time**

The LFS classification of employees as part-time or full-time is generally on the basis of self-assessment. People on government-supported training and employment programme who are at college in the survey reference week are classified, by convention, as part-time.

### **Occupation (SOC 2000)**

The classification of respondents' occupation are based on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC), introduced in June 2000. This replaces the old SOC 1990. Detail on the SOC categories can be found on the ONS website at the following link: [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods\\_quality/classifications.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/classifications.asp)

### **Industry (SIC 1992).**

The classification of industry sector is based on the Standard Industrial Classification 1992. Detail on SIC categories can be found at the ONS website at the following link: [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods\\_quality/classifications.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/classifications.asp)

### **Public/private sector**

On LFS, the public sector is defined as that owned, funded or run by central or local government. This includes the following sectors: central government/civil service; local government (including LEA schools/colleges, police, fire); nationalised industry/state corporations; other educational establishments (university, other grant funded education establishment, includes 'opted out' schools); health authority or NHS trusts; other kinds of public organisations. The private sector includes private companies and the voluntary sector. More detail on definitions of public and private sector employees can be found in DMAG Briefing 2003/17 on 'Public sector employment in London – An analysis of LFS data 2001/02'.

More detail on all definitions can be provided on request.

## Regular briefings and data from GLA Data Management and Analysis Group

DMAG has instituted a new series of publications, covering all aspects of DMAG work.

*DMAG Briefings* will now incorporate the Census Information Notes (CIN) and Population Advice Notes (PAN). The traditional content of both series will still appear regularly.

The latest DMAG Briefings are:

DMAG 2003/1	Disabled people and the labour market	Lorna Spence
DMAG 2003/2	2001 Borough Demographic Profiles	Baljit Bains/ Iryna Pylypchuk
DMAG 2003/3	2002 Round of Demographic Projections	John Hollis/ Baljit Bains
DMAG 2003/4	Greater London Demographic Review: 2001	Baljit Bains/ Iryna Pylypchuk
DMAG 2003/5	Census Information Note CIN 2003-1	Eileen Howes
DMAG 2003/6	Third country nationals living in London 2000/01	Lorna Spence
DMAG 2003/7	2001 Census Key Statistics: Initial summary of results	Eileen Howes
DMAG 2003/8	2001 Census Key Statistics: Household variables	John Hollis
DMAG 2003/10	Household Forecasts based on 2001 Census Key Statistics	John Hollis
DMAG 2003/11	2001 Census: Copyright and Licensing for Census users	Rachel Leeser/ Hywel Davies
DMAG 2003/12	Women and the Labour Market	Lorna Spence
DMAG 2003/13	2001 Census Key Statistics: Means of travel to work	Eileen Howes
DMAG 2003/14	2001 Census Key Statistics: People, Families and Households	Rachel Leeser
DMAG 2003/15	Census Information Note CIN 2003-2	Eileen Howes
DMAG 2003/16	2001 Census Key Statistics: Health Indicators	Gareth Piggott

If you would like copies of previous briefings, please contact Jackie Maguire at the Data Management and Analysis Group – see Contact page.

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