



Changing the world
of work for good

Protect the right to strike

(and other campaigns!)

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Women are the trade union movement...and always have been!

- The first motion to the TUC Congress on equal pay was successfully moved by Clementina Black in 1888.
- That same year, Black along with other women organised the Matchsticks strike action of women and girls working at the Bryant and May factory in East London.
- Jayaben Desai led the walkout of 100+ workers at the Grunswick Factory in 1976.

Women are the trade union movement...and always have been!

- Today women make up 57 per cent of trade union membership in the UK
- That is over 3 million women.
- Unison, has a total membership of 1.3 million members, over a million are women.
- Our education unions represent a majority female workforce. Around three quarters of the education workforce are women.
- The TUC has 48 affiliated unions, and women are members in all of them!

Women are leading the industrial action we are seeing

- 75.% of the teaching workforce are women. 69.4% of school leaders are women. 89% of school support staff are women, these are some of the lowest paid workers in education working . [Source: [DfE](#)]
- 54.5% of the civil service are women. [Source: [Cabinet Office](#)]
- 76.7% of 1.3 million NHS staff are women. [Source: [NHS digital](#)]

Black and ethnic minority workers are also overrepresented in key parts of our public services:

- One quarter (25%) of NHS staff are of Black, Asian or another minority ethnicity, compared to 13% of all working-age adults in the UK [Source: [NHS digital](#)]
- 82% of the social care workforce are women and 23% are from a Black, Asian or ethnic minority background

What will the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill do?

This Bill will allow ministers to, by regulation, impose minimum service levels (MSLs) on services in six sectors:

- Health services,
- Education,
- Fire & rescue services,
- Transport services,
- Decommissioning of nuclear installations and management of radioactive waste and spent fuel
- Border security.

Individual workers and their unions could face harsh consequences for falling foul of the rules.

The Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill – Unnecessary, undemocratic and almost certainly illegal

- This legislation is draconian: it could lead to individual workers being sacked for taking part in industrial action that was supported in a democratic process.
- It is counter-productive: the government's own analysis has warned that it could lead to more strikes.
- And it is unnecessary: it is custom and practice for life-and-limb cover to be agreed by unions during industrial disputes. It is an attack on a fundamental human right – the right to strike.

What will the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill do?

- The significant risk of dismissal for workers who wish to speak up about their pay and conditions will do nothing to resolve the current staffing shortages within public services.
- The legislation will be unworkable in practice – according to the government’s own impact assessment - “The large number of employers in the education sector would also likely make minimum service arrangements difficult and very burdensome to implement.”
- It is being rushed through Parliament with huge amounts of detail being left to secondary legislation and yet the government expects the first minimum service regulations could come into force as soon as the summer.
- It hands excessive powers to the Secretary of State to define what services are affected and the level of minimum service to be provided.

Trade union campaigns

- Today is the launch of the TUC Protect the Right to Strike campaign
- There are picket lines up and down the country today supporting industrial action for the NEU, RMT, PCS and UCU
- Protect the right to strike petition has over 250,000 signatures to date
- Post on social media, use the #RightToStrike hashtag. You can download graphics to share on social media here.
- Print out a poster and put it in your window.
- The bill is going to the Lords later in February – this will be a key moment. Keep an eye on tuc.org.uk/protect

Other campaign priorities

- Childcare
- The disproportionate impact of the cost of living crisis on women and other equality groups - Fight for £15
- Universal Credit
- Better parental rights including reform of shared parental leave
- Menopause as a workplace issue
- Relatedly gender sensitive health and safety and recruiting more women H&S reps
- Tackling and preventing sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Gender pay and pensions gaps and extending reporting to ethnicity and disability

The logo consists of the letters 'TUC' in a bold, sans-serif font. Each letter is rendered with a 3D effect, appearing to be made of a translucent material with a white-to-purple gradient. The letters are slightly offset from each other, creating a sense of depth and movement. The 'T' is on the left, 'U' is in the middle, and 'C' is on the right.

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