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## Trade Union

“A trade union is a combination of persons. Whether temporary or permanent, primarily for the purpose of regulating the relations between workers and employers or between workers for imposing restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business and includes the federations of two or more trade unions as per Sec. 2 (6) Trade Unions Act, 1926.

“A Trade Union is an organisation of workers, acting collectively, who seek to protect and promote their mutual interests through collective bargaining”. A trade union is a group of employees who join together to maintain and improve their conditions of employment. The typical activities of trade unions include providing assistance and services to their members, collectively bargaining for better pay and conditions for all workers, working to improve the quality of public services, political campaigning and industrial action.

**Definition:** Labour unions or trade unions are organisations formed by workers from related fields that work for the common interest of its members. They help workers in issues like fairness of pay, good working environment, hours of work and benefits. They represent a cluster of workers and provide a link between the management and workers. The purpose of these unions is to look into the grievances of workers and present a collective voice in front of the management. Hence, it acts as the medium of communication between the workers and management. Regulation of relations, settlement of grievances, raising new demands on behalf of workers, collective bargaining and negotiations are the other key principle functions that these trade unions perform. Most trade unions are independent of employers but have close working relationships with them.

**Trade union**, also called **labour union**, association of workers in a particular trade, industry, or company created for the purpose of securing improvements in pay, benefits, working conditions, or social and political status through collective bargaining.

A trade union is an organisation made up of members (a membership-based organisation) and its membership must be made up mainly of workers.

One of a trade union's main aims is to protect and advance the interests of its members in the workplace.

Most trade unions are independent of any employer. However, trade unions try to develop close working relationships with employers. This can sometimes take the form of a partnership agreement between the employer and the trade union which identifies their common interests and objectives.

Trade unions:

- negotiate agreements with employers on pay and conditions
- discuss major changes to the workplace such as large scale redundancy
- discuss members' concerns with employers
- accompany members in disciplinary and grievance meetings
- provide members with legal and financial advice
- provide education facilities and certain consumer benefits such as discounted insurance

Unions train and organise workplace representatives who help union members with the problems they face at work. Unions have also made thousands of local agreements on issues affecting individual workplaces following consultation, negotiation and bargaining.

They provide support and advice and campaign for better conditions and pay. Unions have brought significant changes to society, including:

- a national minimum wage;
- the abolition of child labour;
- improved worker safety;
- improving living standards by reducing the number of hours in the working week and encouraging a healthy work/life balance;
- improved parental leave;
- equality legislation;
- better protection of migrant workers and a reduction in exploitation;