



# **Awareness on the Role of Labor Rights and Trade Unions among Armenian Youth**

The research was carried out in the second half of 2009 in all regions/marzes of Republic of Armenia among 1205 respondents.

The report has been prepared with support of the OSCE Office in Yerevan. The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

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## SUMMARY

This research demonstrated that:

- most respondents did not have sufficient *knowledge* on elementary labor rights;
- the young people participating in the survey were well aware of *legal mechanisms to defend* labor rights in Armenia, but less than 1/4 of them were ready to apply them. The majority prefers to settle labor conflicts through other means;
- the recognition of the role trade unions can play is low, only 5.6% of those interviewed indicated trade unions as a means for defending labor rights;
- the level of youth awareness about trade unions is generally low. This is mainly due to the fact that only a small part of youth is involved in trade union structures. Only 5% of the respondents identified themselves as members of trade unions.

Against this background, it is necessary to carry out activities to improve the awareness on the role, functions and regulations of trade unions, for example through TV and internet. The following activities to get more youth engaged in the trade unions were defined - that the trade unions publicly are seen as:

- more actively defending the labor rights of their members;
- contributing to the improvement of working conditions of their members;
- a key player in the negotiation of salaries, not only taking into account the interests of the employer, but also those of the employee providing for reasonable wage agreements.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This research on the awareness on the role of labor rights and trade unions among Armenian youth was carried out by the APR Group Department of the “Free Public” Law-Protective Youth NGO with financial support from the OSCE Office in Yerevan. During the research, the “Free Public” NGO cooperated with the OSCE Office in Yerevan, the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia (CTUA) and the Standing Youth Committee of the Council of the CTUA.

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## DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH

### **The goals of the research were to:**

- Assess the level of understanding among youth (aged between 18 and 30) about labor rights and the role of trade unions in promoting and protecting the labor rights of youth.
- Demonstrate ways to improve the awareness of labor rights and the role of trade unions among youth.
- To show how youth membership in the trade unions can be increased.

**In terms of the level of understanding of labor rights among youth, we attempted to** find out what kind of labor relations exist between young people and employers and the character of labor conflicts – what causes them and how they are and should be settled.

**Regarding the level of youth involvement in the trade unions, we looked at** the level of participation of youth in trade unions, the awareness among youth on the role of trade unions and their functions and the attitude of youth toward trade unions. We also investigated the preferred information sources among youth in order to understand how youth can be targeted with information about labor rights and the role of trade unions to defend those rights.

The population for the research was young people of all regions of Armenia, aged 18-30, which according to (data from the Passport and Visa Department of RA Police) made up 664518 in 2008. 1205 respondents were interviewed during the period August 14 - 30 of 2009 **using** face-to-face interviewing. The reliability interval of the research was 95% with a margin of error of 3.22%. The results of the research were analyzed using MS Excel and SPSS software. We utilized multi-level stratified quote sampling according to age and gender with following steps:

### **1. First step**

In order to ensure the representativeness of collected data during the first step all 11 marzes of Armenia were included in the research.

## **2. Second step**

During the second step it was decided to conduct stratification of populated areas according to the principle of size of enfranchised population taking into account their distance from the regional (marz) centers. According to this 3 point types of survey were defined:

1. Regional centers with population of more than 30000.
2. Regional towns, which are geographically located between the center and periphery of the marz with population of 10000 - 29000.
3. Periphery, geographically located at a high distance from the center of the marz with a population of less than 10000.

## **3. Third step**

Next step defined preliminary size of sampling (1205) among all points of survey in proportion to the size (number of population aged from 18 - 30) in each point of the survey. As a result 33 interviewing points were selected.

## **4. Fourth step**

As a fourth step households were selected according to the route method.

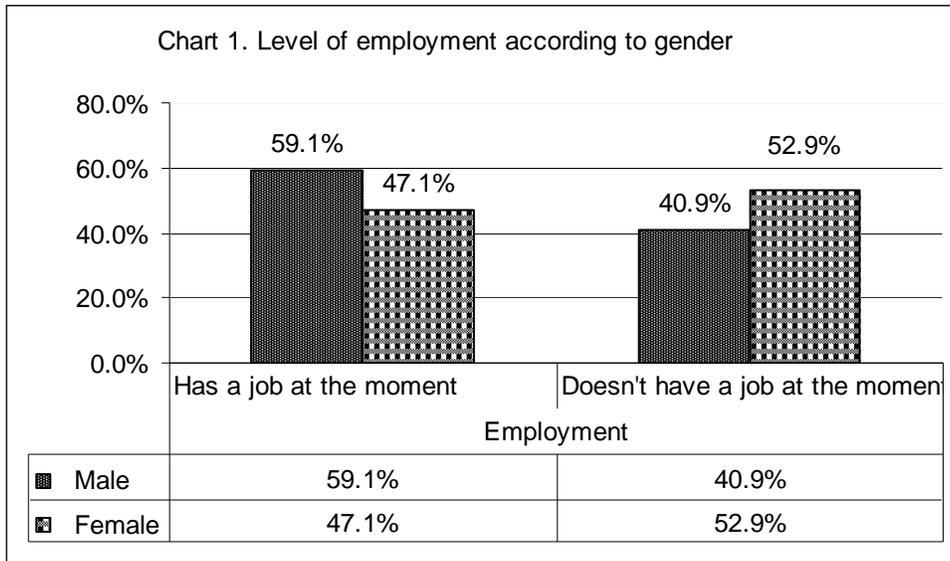
## **5. Fifth step**

Selection of respondents was carried out in accordance with defined gender and age quotas. In the selected household each interviewer conducted only one interview with one respondent.

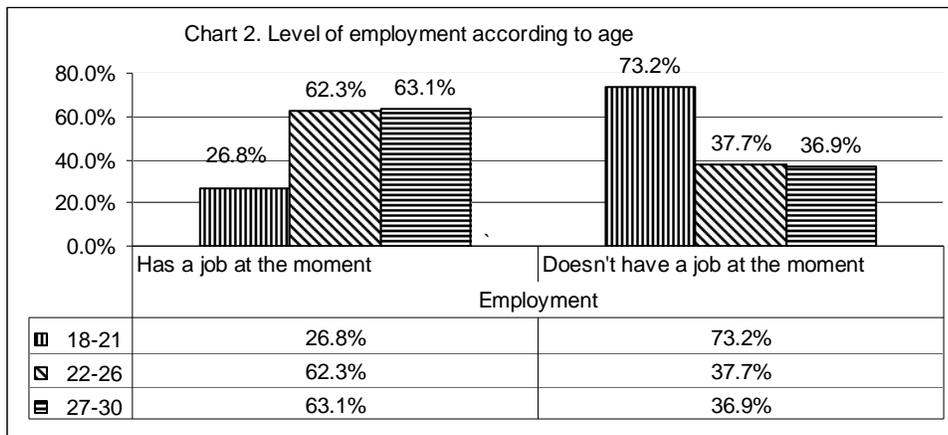
# 1. LABOR RELATIONS

## 1.1. Labor Agreement

As a result of the research the level of employment among youth was revealed. According to our survey, 52.9% of the youth interviewed stated that they were employed<sup>1</sup>. As shown in chart 1, the level of unemployment was higher among women compared to men.



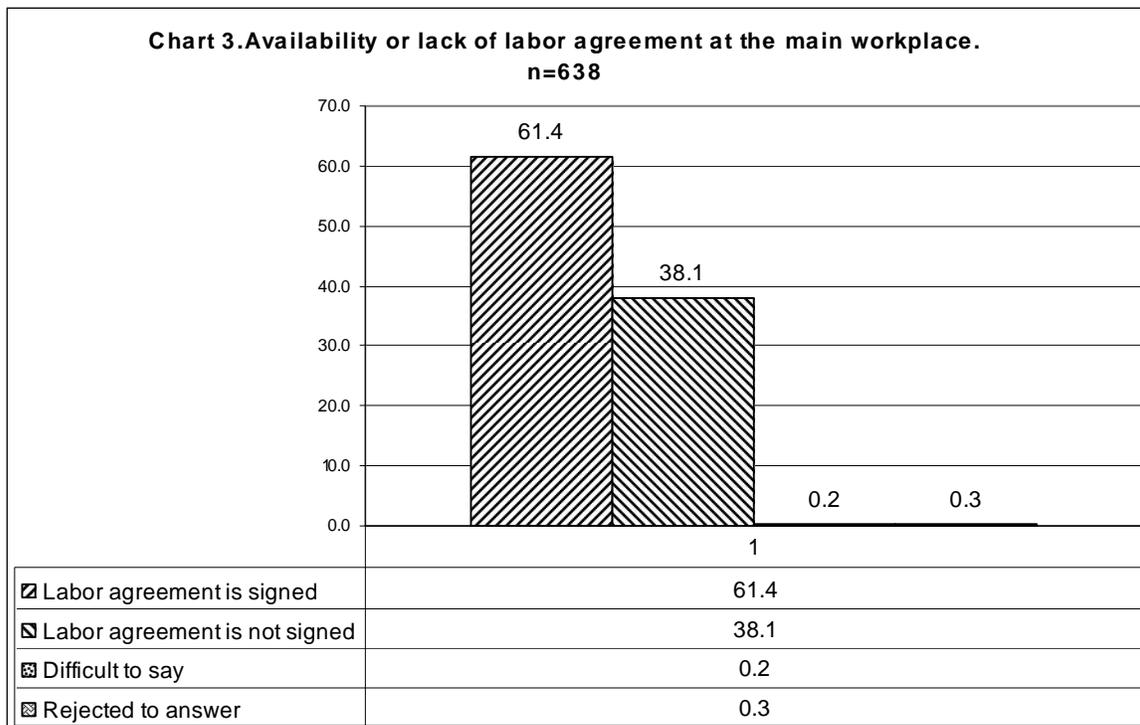
The majority of unemployed are young people from 18 to 21. This can be explained by the fact that youth from this age group still study at the university or serve in the army, do not possess work experience or that they have not managed to find a job.



<sup>1</sup> In the given research the term “unemployment” was based upon the perception of whether the respondents qualified themselves as employed or unemployed.

If we study the given data by regional aspect, we can see that there are marzes in Armenia where the number of unemployed youth exceeds the number of employed youth. Among those regions we find Ararat, Lori, and Shirak, which may be explained by the more difficult social-economic situation of those regions compared to other regions of Armenia.

Analysis of the data illustrated some of the reasons for unemployment. 45% of youth could not find a job, 6.3% had been dismissed, 4.8% were unemployed due to the closing of their workplace, while 26.5% had not yet looked for a job. It is worth mentioning that this last group can be divided into subgroups. That included youth still studying at universities (16%) and respondents who did not want to work (9.2%). A considerable part of this last subgroup are female representatives which can be *explained by a common-held attitude that women should not engage in work and take care of domestic chores only.*



Among the youth stating that they were employed, 61.4% had a signed agreement with their employer while 38.1% are working without an agreement.<sup>2</sup> In most marzes the number of young employees with a labor agreement exceeds the number of those who work “informally”<sup>3</sup>. The only marz where the number of employees without a labor agreement exceeds the number of those with an agreement is Armavir.

<sup>2</sup> Only answers of respondents possessing a job during the research are presented. (n=638)

<sup>3</sup> People whose labor relations are not regulated by any normative act and whose business is not registered in the statistics.

**Table 1.** Forms of labor relations and spheres of employment<sup>4</sup>

		Availability or lack of labor agreement at workplace.		
		Labor agreement is signed	Labor agreement is not signed	Rejected to answer on availability or lack of labor agreement at workplace.
Sphere of employment	Industry	46.7%	<b>53.3%</b>	
	Construction	40.7%	<b>59.3%</b>	
	Agriculture	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%
	Trade	44.4%	<b>55.6%</b>	
	Healthcare	87.9%	12.1%	
	Science, education	87.2%	12.8%	
	Culture, sport	65.0%	35.0%	
	Armed forces	90.7%	9.3%	
	Tax and custom services	100.0%		
	Financial-Banking system	100.0%		
	Justice system	100.0%		
	Service delivery	39.3%	<b>60.7%</b>	
	Communication, transport	76.5%	23.5%	
	Power engineering	87.5%	12.5%	
	Politics	75.0%	25.0%	
	NGOs	83.3%	16.7%	
	Mass Media	76.9%	23.1%	
Management	84.2%	15.8%		
Information technologies	77.8%	22.2%		

In Table 1 it can be seen that the main spheres of informal employment are service delivery (60.7%), construction (59.3%), trade (55.9%) and industry (53.3%). In the finance and banking sector, tax and customs, as well as in the judicial system the research did not identify any informal employees.

## 1.2. Labor Conflicts and Means of Settlement

Among the respondents, 33.1% had been in conflict with their employer while 65.3% had not had such an experience during the last year.

**Table 2.** Labor conflicts mostly arose in the following spheres:

		Had conflicts with the employer during the last year.	Did not have conflicts with the employer during the last year.	Difficult to answer.
Sphere of employment	Industry	46.7%	53.3%	
	Construction	20.4%	77.8%	1.9%

<sup>4</sup> Only answers of respondents possessing a job during the research are presented.

Agriculture	37.5%	50.0%	12.5%
Trade	30.2%	68.3%	1.6%
Healthcare	30.3%	69.7%	
Science, education	42.6%	57.4%	
Culture, sport	50.0%	50.0%	
Armed forces	25.6%	72.1%	2.3%
Tax and custom services	28.6%	71.4%	
Financial-Banking system	41.7%	58.3%	
Justice system	33.3%	66.7%	
Service delivery	34.4%	64.8%	0.8%
Communication, transport	41.2%	52.9%	5.9%
Power engineering	25.0%	62.5%	12.5%
Politics	25.0%	75.0%	
NGOs	66.7%	33.3%	
Mass Media	38.5%	61.5%	
Management	23.7%	76.3%	
Information technologies	11.1%	88.9%	

The reasons of labor conflicts between youth and employers are the following: salary rate (44.4%), working conditions (35.8%), unfair allocation of promotion opportunities (6.3%) and delay of paying salary (3.3%), as a reason for labor conflicts respondents mentioned the following: violation of labor agreement by employer (26.1%), tense relations with the staff (19.5%) and lack of labor agreement with employer (6.8%)<sup>5</sup>.

Most young employees settled their conflicts individually through negotiations with the employer (50.9%), 8% were dismissed and 18.3% got adapted to the situation, 3% settled their conflicts through friends and relatives and only 1.5% applied to trade unions. It is interesting that 27.1% of respondents resigned from their jobs. We do not exclude that this number can include the well-known mechanism that the employee was suggested by the employer to resign based on their own application as a way to settle the conflict.

It is interesting that young employees tend to prefer to settle their future conflicts with the employer in the same way. 79.4% prefer to negotiate with the employer, 23% will resign from their job in case of conflict with the employer, 16.3% will apply to their friends and relatives, 14.9% to courts and 7.6% will try to settle their conflicts through the Labor State Inspection<sup>6</sup>.

As a result of above mentioned factors, 60.3% of the respondents think that employees can defend their rights and interests. Coming back to above mentioned figures it is worth stating that preference is given to informal means of defending their labor rights.

<sup>5</sup> Respondents were able to make up to 3 selections; therefore the percentage sum exceeds 100%. n=399

<sup>6</sup> Respondents were able to make up to 3 selections; therefore the percentage sum exceeds 100%. n=1205

In this context it is interesting to clarify whether youth are aware of the legal methods of defending their rights. In reply to the question “In your view, what kind of legal means of defending labor rights do exist in Armenia?”<sup>7</sup>, 32.1% mentioned the court system as a legal method of defending their rights, 22.3%, the Human Rights Defender’s Office, 13.2% the State Labor Inspection, 8.5% human rights NGOs and 5.6% - trade unions. For 18.7% of the respondents it was difficult to say and only 26.6% mentioned that Armenia lacked this system of defense of own labor rights through legal means.

If we try to interconnect these and previous questions (“How did you settle conflicts with the employer?” and “If you have conflicts with the employer how would you settle them?”) we see that awareness on legal methods of conflict settlement is not sufficient to use them as a tool for settling labor conflicts. The reasons are following:

- lack of awareness on the similar experience in the field of labor rights,
- distrust in the state structures
- fear of the employer, or employers,
- legal nihilism<sup>8</sup>.

A separate block of the research was devoted to collective methods of defending labor rights, particularly the collective agreement. 25.2% of respondents noted that they knew what collective agreements mean. But additional questions showed that most of the respondents did not have a clear idea what collective agreements imply. Answers were distributed in the following way:

- A collective agreement is a written agreement between the employer and the trade union, which regulates labor relations between employers and employees - 25,9%.
- A collective labor agreement is the basis for regulating labor relations - 86,5%.
- The content of a collective agreement is developed by the employer and trade unions on the basis of equal representation - 17.4%<sup>9</sup>.

Among the respondents, only 28.5% had a signed collective in their work place<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Respondents were able to make up to 5 selections; therefore the percentage sum exceeds 100%. n=1205

<sup>8</sup> **Legal Nihilism** – rejection of rights as a social institute, as well as the system of rules of behavior which can successfully regulate interrelations among people. Such type of nihilism means that people do not take legal rules into account when making decisions which bars the effective development of a functioning legal system.

<sup>9</sup> These questions were given to respondents who mentioned that they knew what the collective agreement meant. n=304

<sup>10</sup> These questions were given to respondents who mentioned that they knew what the collective agreement meant. n=304

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## **2. AWARENESS ON THE GENERAL PROVISIONS OF LABOR RIGHTS**

To define the general picture of youth awareness about labor rights, questions on the duration of the working day, salary rate and vacation were asked. Of the respondents, 49.8% were aware that the duration of the working day, according to the law, is 40 hours per week, while 29.6% were aware that the salary should be paid no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the next month. On vacation, 63.7% knew that the duration of the vacation according to the law is 28 calendar days. Thus we can conclude that about half of the respondents had sufficient knowledge about their primary labor rights.

### 3. YOUNG EMPLOYEES AND TRADE UNIONS

As a result of the research it became clear that only 5% of the interviewed youth were members of trade unions<sup>11</sup>. This is a low figure if we take into account that today’s trade unions face two main challenges: generational change and modernization.

Trade unions involve the lowest number of young people employed in the spheres of trade, constructions, service delivery where the number of informal employees is the highest. Thus only 19.6% of members of trade unions are from the sphere of trade, 18.4% service delivery and 8.6% in the construction sphere.

In this context it is interesting to see what the reasons for youth to become members of trade unions are.

**Table 3.** Reasons for membership of trade unions by gender<sup>12</sup>

Reasons for membership of trade unions	Answers by gender		Total
	Male	Female	
I am a member of a trade union by habit	18.5%	25.9%	44.4%
Trade unions defend employee's rights and interests	14.8%	14.8%	29.6%
The trade union can help me in difficult situations	5.6%	11.1%	16,7%
Do not want to differ from others	9.3%	3.7%	13.0%
The trade union supports improved financial conditions	9.3%	3.7%	13,0%
I am obliged	3.7%	9.3%	13.0%
Make me aware of the company's activities through the trade union	3.7%	3.7%	7,4%
Helps to defend my interests through cooperation	0%	3.7%	3,7%
Nothing keeps them in the trade union, my resignation is a matter of time	1.9%	0%	1.9%

Thus the reasons for membership of trade unions can be divided into three groups:

1. A group with “strong” motives for trade union membership, whose members are well aware of the trade union’s role and meaning.
2. A group with “weak” motives of trade union membership, whose members mainly expect financial aid from the trade union
3. A group with “zero” motives of trade union membership, whose members will sooner or later suspend their membership.

<sup>11</sup> Respondents were asked the following question “Are you a member of trade union?”

<sup>12</sup> The research of reasons trade union membership was conducted among respondents who were members of trade unions. Respondents could make up to 3 selections and therefore the total sum of answers exceeds 100%. n=54

From the table we can see that the so-called group with “strong” motives is the smallest one. We can conclude that if trade unions do not try to change the strategy of their activities and can not make cadre and internal system changes making them attractive for young employees, they may lose their role and meaning within modern civil society. Proof for the above mentioned comment is the answers that young trade union members mentioned as a reason for suspending their membership:

- ineffective operation of the primary organization (50%);
- negative attitude towards the trade union (25.9%);
- negative attitude towards the head of trade union (11.1%);
- application of administrative and financial penalties by the employer (9.3%);
- if they quit their job thus losing their membership to trade unions (9.3%)<sup>13</sup>.

Thus we can see in the answers that the issue of effective functioning of the trade unions within our society still remains open today.

**Table 4.** Reasons for low level of trade union membership<sup>14</sup>

Do not know that a trade union is functioning	52,0%
Can myself settle my labor issues	18,4%
Do not trust trade unions	10,4%
Do not know whether a trade union is functioning in the company	8,2%
Do not work	3,3%
The trade union does not carry out its functions	3,2%
Difficult to say	1,8%
Do not know what a trade union is	1,7%
Other	1,0%

<sup>13</sup> The research of reasons for low level of trade union membership was conducted among respondents who were members of trade unions. Respondents could make up to 3 selections and therefore the total sum of answers exceeds 100%. n=54

<sup>14</sup> The research of reasons for low level of trade union membership was conducted among respondents who weren't yet members of trade unions at the moment of interview. Respondents could make up to 3 selections and therefore the total sum of answers exceeds 100%. n=1151

## 4. YOUTH EXPECTATIONS

In the context of the above mentioned tables it is interesting to study what youth expects from trade unions. These expectations mainly coincide with the functions of the trade unions, which makes it easier for trade unions to develop their strategy. Answers are given below<sup>15</sup>

- increase of low salary (52.2%),
- appointment to a job (39%),
- improvement of working conditions (31.7%),
- regulation of salary delays (26.6%),
- preventing terminations of employment (21%),,
- preventing intimidations by employer (19.7%),
- increase of the level of knowledge on labor rights (18.3%),
- increase of the level of knowledge on defending own labor rights (16.6%),
- social insurance issues (9.2%),
- support to the fair allocation of promotions (7.7%)<sup>16</sup>.

In terms of what the respondents considered important in life<sup>17</sup> 54.4% answered family and children, 53.8% health, 25.8% opportunity for self-expression, 23.8% friends and social life, 18.7% morality, 17.8% career and luck, 14.8% intellectual development, 13.9% sense of responsibility, 11% love, romantic relations, 9% hard work, 8.5% position within society, 7.5% independence, freedom, 5.4% decency, 5.2% self-confidence.

**Table 5.** Important issues in youth life by gender<sup>18</sup>

Respondents considered important in life	Answers by gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Family and children	25.9%	28.5%	54.4%
Health	24.8%	29.0%	53.8%
Opportunity for self-expression	8.4%	17.4%	25.8%

<sup>15</sup> Respondents answered to the following question: “In your opinion, which are 3 primary issues trade union should address for young employees?” Respondents could make up to 3 selections and therefore the total sum of answers exceeds 100%. n=1205

<sup>16</sup> Respondents could make up to 3 selections and therefore the total sum of answers exceeds 100%. n=1205

<sup>17</sup> Respondents answered to the following question: “Which is the most important thing in your life?” Respondents could make up to 3 selections and therefore the total sum of answers exceeds 100%.

<sup>18</sup> Respondents answered to the following question: “Which is the most important thing in your life?” Respondents could make up to 3 selections and therefore the total sum of answers exceeds 100%.

Friends and social life	17.9%	5.9%	23.8%
Morality	7.3%	11.4%	18.7%
Career and luck	9.2%	8.6%	17.8%
Intellectual development	5.1%	9.7%	14.8%
Sense of responsibility	6.2%	7.7%	13.9%
Love, romantic relations	5.5%	5.5%	11.0%
Hard work	5.7%	3.3%	9.0%
Position within society	4.6%	3.9%	8.5%
Independence, freedom	3.3%	4.1%	7.5%
Decency	2.7%	2.7%	5.4%
Self-confidence	2.2%	3.0%	5.2%

It was interesting to find out what is important in the life of young people besides the financial factor. Moreover, the outcome of this section of the research could become a hint for employers to increase the motivation of employees and for trade unions to be a basis for the development of strategy to involve young people.

Thus, in reply to the question “Besides the material factor which is the most important thing in your work?” youth mentioned communication with colleagues (61.2%), career (36.6%), opportunity to express their own opinion (32.4%), employees supporting each other (26.9%), accredited responsibility (25.6%), prestige (18.5%), opportunity to do everything oneself (16.3%), opportunity to initiate activities (12.4%), means of promotion (6.9%), being in the center of attention (5.1%), managerial work (6.6%), availability of simple tasks (4.6%)<sup>19</sup>.

Answering the question on what problems exist in our society young people mostly mentioned issues of social character, particularly unemployment (54.4%), increase of prices of everyday use products (50%), low salaries (33.9%), corruption, bribery (31.6%), increase of communal expenses (29%), increase of social inequality (28.7%), decrease of the morality in society (16.3%), external threats to state security (11%), increase of street crime (10.4%), armed conflicts (4.5%)<sup>20</sup>.

While analyzing the answers on who can contribute to the improvement of the socio-economic situation in Armenia, the majority of youth hopes for the state structures to do so which is proof of a passive approach to civic activity. Thus, 65.4% expected the Government to contribute to the improvement of the socio-economic situation, 37.8% Parliament 20.2% businessmen, 17.6% local self-government bodies, 14.4% no one, 10.4% law enforcement bodies, 7.2% NGOs, church, 5.4% mass media, 4.2% armed forces, and 3.7% trade unions.

<sup>19</sup> Respondents answered to the following question: “Besides the financial factor which is the most important thing in your work?” Respondents could make up to 3 selections and therefore the total sum of answers exceeds 100%.

<sup>20</sup> Respondents answered to the following question: “Which issues of our society are you anxious the most?” Respondents could make up to 3 selections and therefore the total sum of answers exceeds 100%.

## 5. PREFERRED SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR YOUTH

This section of the research shows the information sources that youth trust. This section of the research can become a basis for the development of communications strategies with youth by the trade unions and as a result providing youth with more effective information about labor rights and the role of trade unions. *It is worth mentioning that trust in a certain information source is conditioned by the accessibility of that source (i.e. not all radio and TV stations are accessible in every part of Armenia).*

**Table 6.** Information sources (Which information sources do you trust most?)

TV	40,2%
Internet	20,1%
Radio	8,4%
Newspapers, magazines	5,1%
Friends, relatives	13,5%
No one	12,0%
People	0,2%
Difficult to say	0,7%
Total	100%

TV (40.2%) and internet (20.1%) are considered to be the most reliable sources of information among youth. If we study Table 6, it is interesting that TV and internet, as the most reliable sources of information are almost on the same level (accordingly 30.5% and 32.7%) among youth living in Yerevan. Table 7 shows the confidence in information sources according to marzes.

**Table 7.** Confidence in information sources according to marzes.

		Confidence in information sources							
		TV	Internet	Radio	Newspapers, magazines	Friends, relatives	No one	People	Difficult to say
Marz	Yerevan	30.5%	32.7%	7.5%	6.1%	11.9%	10.2%	0.3%	0.8%
	Aragasotn	57.9%	10.5%	12.3%		17.5%			1.8%
	Ararat	45.7%	15.2%	9.5%	5.7%	10.5%	13.3%		
	Armavir	44.4%	9.3%	8.3%	2.8%	19.4%	14.8%		0.9%
	Gegharkunik	45.3%	12.6%	14.7%	10.5%	4.2%	12.6%		
	Lori	51.7%	12.9%	1.7%	2.6%	13.8%	16.4%		0.9%
	Kotayk	38.8%	19.0%	14.0%	4.1%	11.6%	12.4%		
	Shirak	52.7%	17.3%	0.9%	6.4%	15.5%	6.4%	0.9%	
	Syunik	27.8%	7.4%	9.3%	3.7%	20.4%	31.5%		
	Vayats Dzor	24.0%	28.0%	8.0%		24.0%	16.0%		
Tavush	30.2%	22.6%	13.2%	5.7%	18.9%	5.7%		3.8%	

## 5.1. Reliable sources of information among youth according to their names

Name of reliable information sources among youth (Please specify the name of the information source which information sources you trust the most.).

**Table 8. TV**<sup>21</sup>

Shant TV	37.8%
Armenia TV	25.6%
H 1 (Armenian Public Television)	24.6%
ORT	2.7%
GALA TV	2.5%
other regional broadcasted TVs	1.7%
other Yerevan broadcasted TVs	1.7%
Arm News (Euro News)	1.2%
Russian TVs	1.2%
difficult to say	1.0%
Total	100%

**Table 9. Internet**<sup>22</sup>

Difficult to say	31.0%
google.am	11.6%
mail.ru	9.1%
other Armenian web-sites	8.7%
tert.am	8.7%
a1plus.am	8.7%
other Russian web-sites	5.8%
odnoklassniki.ru	3.3%
azatutyun.am	2.9%
yahoo.com	2.5%
youtube.com	2.5%
aravot.am	2.5%
yandex.ru	1.7%
iragir.am	1.2%
Total	100%

**Table 10. Radio**<sup>23</sup>

Radio Liberty	54.5%
Armenian Public Radio	11.9%
Difficult to say	10.9%
Radio Avrora	5.0%
other radio stations	5.0%
Radio Yerevan	5.0%

<sup>21</sup> Respondents answered to the following question: “Please specify the name of the information source which information sources you trust the most.” n=484

<sup>22</sup> Respondents answered to the following question: “Please specify the name of the information source which information sources you trust the most.” n=242

<sup>23</sup> Respondents answered to the following question: “Please specify the name of the information source which information sources you trust the most.” n=101

Radio HAY	4.0%
Radio FM 107	2.0%
Radio Van	2.0%
Total	100%

**Table 11.** Newspapers, magazines<sup>24</sup>

Haykakan Zhamanak	16.4%
Aravot	11.5%
Iravunk	11.5%
other newspapers	9.8%
difficult to say	8.2%
other entertainment newspapers	8.2%
"Hingshabti" newspaper	6.6%
Eter	6.6%
AZG	4.9%
Chorrord Ishkhanutyun	3.3%
Shrjapat	3.3%
168 zham	3.3%
Zhamanak Yerevan	3.3%
Yerkir	3.3%
Total	100%

Summarizing the above tables we can note that the most reliable sources of information are:

- TV, in particular Shant TV (37.8%), Armenia TV (25.6%) and H1 (Armenian Public Television) (24.6%),
- Internet. However 31% of respondents who preferred this source of information could not mention any names, 11.6% mentioned [www.google.am](http://www.google.am), 9.7% [www.mail.ru](http://www.mail.ru), 8.7% [www.tert.am](http://www.tert.am), 8.7% [www.a1plus.am](http://www.a1plus.am).
- Radio where the leader is Radio Liberty - 54.5%, Armenian Public Radio - 11.9%, Radio Aurora and Radio Yerevan - 5%, 10.9% could not mention the names of any radio stations.
- Press, particularly “Haykakan Zhamanak” 16.4%, Aravot 11.5%, and Iravunk 11.5%.

<sup>24</sup> Respondents answered to the following question: “Please specify the name of the information source which information sources you trust the most.” n=61

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## 6. CONCLUSION

Taking into account the results of the research we can state that:

- Recently developed new employment spheres (for example IT and marketing) involve mainly young employees, but at present the trade unions are not active in these sectors<sup>25</sup>.
- The passive style of activities of the trade unions becomes a ground for political parties and NGOs which from time to time use complaints of employees from different spheres (mostly service delivery) for earning political dividends for their own short term plans.
- Low level of awareness on trade unions among youth, as well as the low level of (conscious) youth membership to trade unions leads to a situation when trade unions cannot appropriately react to demand and expectations of young employees.
- Less than half of the youth interviewed has a sufficient picture of their primary labor rights and only a small part knows about the methods of collective defense of labor rights. There is legal nihilism among youth which threatens the effective implementation of reform in the sphere of labor rights.

Judging from the outcomes of the research, the majority of young citizens put the following issues as responsibilities of the trade unions:

- improvement of working conditions,
- struggle against intimidation by the employer,
- improvement of knowledge on labor rights,
- regulation of salary delays,
- prevention of groundless dismissals,
- raise of low salary,
- settlement of employment problem.

Thus, active members of trade unions should implement active awareness raising activities to clarify the following issues:

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<sup>25</sup> Here the following logic applies: today's young person is the representative of tomorrow's middle age group, who habitually will not become a member of trade union and will not be able to pass his trade union experience to the coming generation.

- What kind of support can a member of trade unions expect if his/her labor rights are violated, conflicts arise with the employer in cases of getting injured, removed from office or other circumstances?
- What benefits will the employee have in case of collective agreement in his/her workplace?
- Which benefits will active members of trade unions have?

The current situation may be changed with a systematized and integrated approach. That means that **all** trade union structures (starting with primary organizations and ending up with the CTUA) should **systematically** carry out the following activities:

- work with employees of enterprises, which still do not have trade union structures,
- conduct active awareness raising campaigns to improve awareness on labor rights and the role of trade unions not only among members of trade unions, but also among employees,
- initiate activities jointly with the members of social partnership with a view to decrease the level of legal nihilism particularly among youth,
- increase the level of responsibility among the leadership of trade unions to involve more members in the trade unions,
- increase the prestige of trade unions.

The last point can be achieved only in case the previous four points are implemented and information is delivered to broader classes of the society, especially youth through reliable and accessible sources.

Summing up the outcomes of the research we suggest using the following aspects in the development of strategy on work with youth:

1. Projects on increasing the awareness level on labor rights among youth should be developed and implemented.
2. Heads of primary organizations of trade unions should work in the direction of so called “conscious trade union membership” through periodical assistance to young employees.
3. Special sections and articles in collective agreements should be formed aimed at defending the social and labor rights of youth.
4. Activities should be reinforced directed at the image of trade unions through making them more attractive for youth and demonstrate how they defend the social, labor, legal, everyday and other rights of youth.
5. Periodical conferences, seminars, round-tables, meetings, discussions and other similar activities

should be organized.

6. Activities should be organized aimed at the organization of entertainment activities for young trade union members (sport events, competitions etc).

The above-mentioned suggestions do not entirely involve all aspects of the youth strategy of trade unions, but the CTUA should take them into account and implement them.

It is obvious that it is necessary to conduct similar periodical integrated research as a result of which changes of youth demands and interests can be seen, which will enable the trade unions to act according to the demands of the times.

Thus, the top priority of the trade union is: either to continue its passive survival and reduce its staff, or to clearly carry out its functions thus increasing its role in the social life and become the sustainable guarantor of the state-employer-employee triangle.

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