

CHAPTER 1.—LABOUR ORGANIZATIONS.

1. **General.**—In Report No. 2 an outline was given of the method adopted to ascertain the number of members of labour organizations in Australia, and tabulated results up to the end of 1912 were included. From the beginning of 1913 quarterly returns were obtained from a considerable number of trade unions, both as to membership and unemployment, and these were supplemented at the end of each year by special inquiries as to the membership of those unions which, owing to the nature of the callings and industries covered, were unable to furnish quarterly unemployment returns. The following pages show the general situation in regard to the trades union movement in Australia at the present time, and also its development since the year 1919. The recognition of the fact that the affairs of single unions are not disclosed in the published results has assisted in securing complete information, and thanks are again tendered to the Secretaries of Trade Unions for their cordial co-operation in this matter.

The figures published in this chapter cover the years 1919 to 1923, and reference should be made to previous reports for particulars in respect of the years 1912 to 1918.

2. **Trade Unions and Bransche—Number and Membership, 1919 to 1923.**

—The following table gives particulars of the number of separate unions and branches with the number of members at the end of the years 1919 to 1923

Trade Unions—Branches and Membership, 1919 to 1923.

Year.	N S.W.	Vic.	Q'land.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N'thern Territory.	Total.	Aust
NO. OF SEPARATE UNIONS.									
1919	211	100	106	101	112	77	4	771	*394
1920	214	158	115	104	121	81	3	796	*388
1921	213	159	118	108	116	79	3	796	*382
1922	217	169	118	106	117	83	3	813	*387
1923	204	100	119	110	115	87	2	797	*383
NO. OF BRANCHES									
1919	748	411	338	134	161	76	..	1,868	†2,245
1920	371	453	340	139	172	81	..	2,056	†2,464
1921	925	466	344	150	174	83	..	2,141	†2,555
1922	558	452	346	144	189	69	..	2,058	†2,484
1923	763	388	285	78	170	59	..	1,743	†2,157
NO. OF MEMBERS.									
1919	255,809	164,583	97,378	56,879	38,160	13,556	1,221	627,685	626,685
1920	277,519	187,100	103,784	55,058	44,054	15,220	815	684,450	684,450
1921	235,638	105,071	103,786	55,701	45,334	15,842	737	703,009	703,009
1922	284,689	206,251	100,939	55,208	41,495	14,346	70	702,938	702,938
1923	267,299	206,049	109,153	60,786	42,319	14,063	72	693,743	699,743
PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP.									
1920	8.4	13.7	6.6	11.6	15.4	12.3	133.3	9.0	9.0
1921	2.9	4.7	..	10.5	2.9	4.1	19.6	2.7	2.7
1922	19.3	5.1	†2.7	†9.9	†3.7	†9.4	90.5
1923	†6.1	†0.1	8.1	10.1	2.2	†2.0	2.8	†0.5	†0.5

* Allowing for inter-State duplication. The figures represent the number of distinct organizations and inter-State groups of organizations. They do not represent the total number of organizations which are practically independent and self-governing (see remarks below).

† Includes not only branches of separate State unions and sub-branches in each State of inter-State unions, but also head State branches of inter-State unions. ‡ Decrease.

In the table just given, under the heading "Number of Separate Unions," each union represented in a State is counted once only, regardless of the number of branches in that State. In the total number of separate unions in each State (see last column but one), it is obvious that there will be duplication in the case of inter-State and similar unions, since each such union is counted once in each State in which it is represented by a branch. The figures in the last column, therefore, have been obtained by making an adjustment to allow for this duplication.

Except in the last column, "Number of Branches" indicates the number of branches of State head offices, which may, of course, themselves be branches of an inter-State or larger organization. State branches of inter-State or federated unions, as well as sub-branches within a State, are included under the heading "branches" in the last column. The schemes of organization of these inter-State or federated unions vary greatly in character, and the number of separate unions does not, therefore, fairly represent the number of practically independent organizations in Australia. In some of the unions the State organizations are bound together under a system of unification with centralized control, while in others the State units are practically independent and self-governing, the federal bond being loose and existing for one or two specified purposes only.

Moreover, a reduction in the number of unions is not necessarily an indication that no new unions have been formed, for while fresh unions have come into being others have died out or amalgamated.

3. **Trade Unions—Industrial Groups, 1919 to 1923.**—The following table gives the number and membership of trade unions in Australia in industrial groups at the end of the years 1919 to 1923. In Report No. 11 attention was drawn to the fact that the number of unions classified in Group XIV. (Miscellaneous), increased considerably during the period under review, and a correspondingly large increase occurred in the membership of the group. During recent years many associations of employees of public and semi-public bodies have been organized, and such unions are now included in the tabulations. Public Service, municipal, banking and insurance associations, which were not previously recognized, are now registered under the provisions of Commonwealth and State Industrial Arbitration Acts, and are therefore classified as industrial bodies. The inclusion of these organizations is responsible, to a great extent, for the increase in Group XIV.

Trade Unions—Industrial Groups—Australia, 1919 to 1923.

Industrial Groups.	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.	1923.
NUMBER OF UNIONS.					
I. Wood, Furniture, etc.	20	19	19	19	18
II. Engineering, Metal Works, etc.	77	76	75	69	70
III. Food, Drink, Tobacco, etc.	77	71	66	68	64
IV. Clothing, Hats, Boots, etc.	27	26	25	25	21
V. Books, Printing, etc.	29	26	18	17	14
VI. Other Manufacturing	81	84	85	84	79
VII. Building	57	54	57	54	52
VIII. Mining, Quarries, etc.	20	18	19	19	16
IX. Railway and Tramway Services	43	43	49	52	51
X. Other Land Transport	23	22	20	20	11
XI. Shipping, etc.	71	69	70	74	94
XII. Pastoral, Agricultural, etc.	8	9	9	10	18
XIII. Domestic, Hotels etc.	20	23	23	26	26
XIV. Miscellaneous	215	254	260	270	267
Total	771	796	796	813	797

Trade Unions—Industrial Groups—Australia, 1919 to 1923—continued.

Industrial Groups.	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.	1923.
NUMBER OF MEMBERS.					
I. Wood, Furniture, etc.	21,156	23,691	25,541	23,682	24,465
II. Engineering, Metal Works, etc.	40,043	53,870	57,012	53,637	59,032
III. Food, Drink, Tobacco, etc.	46,869	49,447	51,698	54,497	58,663
IV. Clothing, Hats, Boots, etc.	38,820	40,325	42,069	44,540	46,842
V. Books, Printing, etc.	13,259	15,156	15,059	15,341	16,240
VI. Other Manufacturing	34,901	39,710	38,873	37,942	38,554
VII. Building	37,301	40,348	42,244	42,177	40,231
VIII. Mining, Quarries, etc.	40,278	41,777	39,967	38,082	37,063
IX. Railway and Tramway Services	63,183	89,069	88,731	92,152	89,405
X. Other Land Transport	15,903	17,862	16,944	20,376	16,386
XI. Shipping, etc.	48,595	41,668	40,840	41,510	38,006
XII. Pastoral, Agricultural, etc.	96,794	42,923	47,593	43,538	36,584
XIII. Domestic, Hotels, etc.	14,702	19,853	20,442	21,130	20,713
XIV. Miscellaneous	137,378	169,271	175,696	174,434	172,560
Total	627,685	684,450	703,009	702,938	690,743

4. Trade Unions—Numbers and Percentages of Male and Female Members.—(i) States, 1923. The census of 1921 gives the percentage of male and female employees (*i.e.*, persons "in receipt of wages or salary," and persons "unemployed"), 20 years of age and over, on the total male and female population, and by applying these percentages to the estimated total male and female population in 1923, an estimate of the number of adult employees of each sex in that year is obtained.

The following table shows separately for males and females and for each State (a) the number of members of trade unions, (b) the estimated number of employees of each sex 20 years of age and over in all professions, trades, and occupations, and (c) the percentage of the former (a) on the latter (b) at the end of the year 1923. The estimated number of employees includes all persons (over the age specified) in receipt of wages or salary, as well as those unemployed, and therefore embraces a large number of adults who are not eligible for membership of any trade union (such as certain persons employed in professional occupations) as well as others who while eligible for membership so far as the nature of their trade or occupation is concerned do not reside in a locality which is covered by any union devoted to their particular trade or occupation. Moreover, the age at which persons are eligible for membership varies in different unions. The Census results are classified in quinquennial age groups, and age 20 years is taken as approximating to the age of admission to membership.

Trade Unions—Number and Percentage of Male and Female Members, 1923.

Particulars.	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'land.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	Nthn. Territory.	Total.
MALES.								
No. of Members of Unions	241,014	165,368	97,142	54,240	37,537	12,847	72	608,820
Estimated Total No. of Employees 20 years of age and over	457,208	310,532	164,663	101,712	76,190	37,883	1,342	1,140,500
Percentage of Members on Estimated Total No. Employees	52.8	53.3	57.0	53.3	49.3	33.0	5.4	53.0
FEMALES.								
No. of Members of Unions	25,685	40,681	12,011	6,546	4,782	1,218	..	90,923
Estimated Total No. of Employees 20 years of age and over	101,136	93,391	31,600	23,094	14,333	8,358	110	275,081
Percentage of Members on Estimated Total No. Employees	25.4	43.6	34.7	28.3	33.4	14.5	..	33.1

(ii.) *Australia*.—Similar particulars for Australia for the five years 1919 to 1923 are given in the next table.

Trade Unions—Number and Percentages of Male and Female Members—Australia, 1919 to 1923.

Particulars.	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.	1923
MALES.					
No. of Members of Unions	504,262	600,620	622,493	616,886	608,820
Estimated Total No. of Employees 20 years of age and over	1,017,147	1,034,863	1,097,970	1,124,543	1,140,530
Percentage of Members on Estimated Total Number of Employees	55.5	58.6	56.7	54.0	53.0
FEMALES.					
No. of Members of Unions	63,423	77,830	80,516	86,052	90,923
Estimated Total No. of Employees 20 years of age and over	240,807	245,596	264,456	260,967	275,081
Percentage of members on Estimated Total Number of Employees	26.3	31.7	30.4	31.9	33.1

The percentages given for the years 1921 and 1922 differ from those published in previous Reports which are corrected by the application of the 1921 Census results.

The decrease in the percentage of members of trade unions on the total number of male employees is due to the fact that the male membership has decreased during the years 1922 and 1923, while the population and consequently the number of employees have increased.

5. Trade Unions—Classification according to Number of Members, 1919 to 1923.—The following table shows the number and membership of all trade unions in Australia for the years 1919 to 1923 inclusive, classified according to size. In this table inter-State unions are, of course, counted once only:—

Trade Unions—Classification according to Number of Members—Australia, 1919 to 1923.

Classification.	10,000 and over.	5000 and under 10,000.	2000 and under 5000.	1000 and under 2000.	500 and under 1000.	300 and under 500.	200 and under 300.	100 and under 200.	50 and under 100.	Under 50.	Total.
NUMBER OF UNIONS.											
1919 ..	13	13	34	44	52	31	32	62	62	51	394
1920 ..	14	13	41	43	57	20	27	90	54	50	388
1921 ..	15	15	37	41	55	26	30	57	53	53	382
1922 ..	16	14	44	42	42	30	33	53	56	57	387
1923 ..	17	13	41	42	51	36	27	55	47	54	383
MEMBERSHIP.											
1919 ..	292,406	95,400	104,547	64,145	37,083	12,148	7,624	8,392	4,430	1,540	627,635
1920 ..	314,437	101,801	136,587	60,324	40,464	10,751	6,451	8,391	3,763	1,481	634,450
1921 ..	337,683	115,364	120,331	58,775	30,729	10,442	7,213	8,076	3,722	1,674	703,009
1922 ..	338,689	104,299	138,492	57,115	30,834	12,019	8,150	7,602	3,987	1,751	702,938
1923 ..	341,167	100,122	131,796	55,370	37,634	14,162	6,231	8,057	3,432	1,773	690,743
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL MEMBERSHIP.											
1919 ..	46.6	15.2	16.7	10.2	5.9	1.9	1.2	1.3	0.7	0.3	100.0
1920 ..	45.0	14.9	20.0	8.8	5.9	1.6	0.0	1.2	0.6	0.2	100.0
1921 ..	48.0	16.4	17.1	8.4	5.7	1.5	1.0	1.2	0.5	0.2	100.0
1922 ..	48.2	14.8	19.7	8.1	4.4	1.7	1.2	1.1	0.6	0.2	100.0
1923 ..	48.8	14.3	18.8	7.9	5.4	2.0	0.9	1.1	0.5	0.3	100.0

In the last part of the preceding table the percentage which the membership in each group bears to the total membership of all groups is given for the years 1919 to 1923. The tendency towards closer organization is evidenced by the fact that though membership of trade unions has increased since 1912 by 62 per cent., the number and membership of unions having less than 2,000 members have considerably decreased.

6. **Inter-State or Federated Trade Unions.**—The following table gives particulars regarding number and membership of inter-State or federated trade unions having branches in two or more States. The figures include inter-State unions registered under the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act, as well as federated unions which are not so registered:—

Inter-State or Federated Trade Unions—Number and Membership 1919 to 1923.

PARTICULARS.	UNIONS OPERATING IN—					TOTAL
	2 States.	3 States.	4 States	5 States.	*6 States.	
Number of Unions, 1919 ..	16	14	12	17	36	95
" " 1920 ..	15	14	14	16	40	99
" " 1921 ..	17	10	15	19	40	101
" " 1922 ..	10	13	16	15	42	105
" " 1923 ..	20	13	16	19	39	107
Number of Members, 1919 ..	19,323	43,643	51,882	106,430	276,652	497,930
" " 1920 ..	19,494	52,556	53,448	123,258	294,622	543,378
" " 1921 ..	20,787	42,127	60,413	137,585	307,438	568,350
" " 1922 ..	25,291	45,202	65,096	137,351	280,251	562,101
" " 1923 ..	23,698	38,664	80,970	134,057	286,085	562,474

* Certain unions in this group have, in addition to branches in each of the six States, a branch in the Northern Territory.

The number of organizations operating in two or more States has increased from 72 in 1912 to 107 in 1923, and the percentage of the membership of such organizations on the total membership of all organizations has risen from 65 per cent. to 82 per cent. during the same period.

7. **Central Labour Organizations.**—In each of the capital cities, as well as in a number of other industrial centres, delegate organizations, consisting of representatives from a group of trade unions, have been established. Their revenue is raised by means of a per capita tax on the members of each affiliated union. In the majority of the towns where such central organizations exist, most of the local unions are affiliated with the central organization, which is usually known as the Labour or Trades Hall Council, or the Labour Federation. In Western Australia a unified system of organization extends over the industrial centres throughout the State, and there is a provincial branch of the Australian Labour Party, having a central council and executive, and metropolitan and branch district councils, to which the local bodies are affiliated. The central council, on which all district councils are represented, meets periodically. In the other States, however, the organization is not so close, and though provision usually exists in the rules of the central council in the capital city of each State for the organization of district councils, or for the representation on the central council of the local councils in the smaller industrial centres of the State, the councils in each State are, as a matter of fact, independent bodies. The table hereunder gives the number of metropolitan and district or local labour councils, together with the number of unions and branches of unions affiliated therewith, in each State at the end of the years 1919 to 1923.

Central Labour Organizations—Number, and Unions Affiliated, 1919 to 1923.

Particulars.	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'land.	S A.	W.A.	Tas.	N. Ter.	Total.	
No. of Councils	1919 ..	3	5	4	3	10	1	..	26
	1920 ..	3	5	4	3	10	1	..	26
	1921 ..	3	5	3	3	9	1	..	24
	1922 ..	3	5	4	3	9	2	1	27
	1923 ..	3	6	4	3	9	2	1	28
No. of Unions and Branch Unions Affiliated	1919 ..	127	175	50	76	168	19	..	615
	1920 ..	144	183	50	67	181	27	..	652
	1921 ..	126	187	49	74	181	27	..	644
	1922 ..	97	132	74	79	179	33	3	647
	1923 ..	84	132	73	73	174	35	3	624

The figures regarding number of unions do not necessarily represent separate unions, since the branches of a large union may be affiliated with the local trades councils in the several towns in which they are represented.

Between the trade union and the central organization of unions may be classed certain State or district councils, organized on trade lines and composed of delegates from separate unions, the interests of the members of which are closely connected by reason of the occupations of their members, such, for example, as delegate councils of bakers, bread carters and mill employees, or of unions connected directly or indirectly with the iron, steel or brass trades, or with the building trades.

8. **Unions Registered under Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act.**—Under Part V. of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act any association of not less than 100 employees in any industry may be registered.* The following table gives particulars of registered unions at the end of the year 1923. Registered unions include both inter-State associations and associations operating within one State only.

Unions Registered under Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act—Industrial Groups, 1923.

Industrial Group.	No. of Unions.	Membership.	Industrial Group.	No. of Unions.	Membership.
I. Wood, Furniture, etc.	3	24,015	IX. Railway & Tramway Services	6	65,780
II. Engineering, Metal Works, etc.	17	57,288	X. Other Land Transport	3	11,694
III. Food, Drink, Tobacco, etc.	13	45,668	XI. Shipping, etc.	9	33,142
IV. Clothing, Hats, Boots, etc.	4	44,498	XII. Pastoral, Agricultural, etc.	1	†
V. Books, Printing, etc.	2	†	XIII. Domestic, Hotels, etc.	5	15,820
VI. Other Manufacturing	17	35,116	XIV. Miscellaneous	44	195,801
VII. Building	6	40,453			
VIII. Mining, Quarries, etc.	1	†	TOTAL	131	569,274

† Not available for publication separately, included in Group XIV.

The figures in the above table are not comparable with those given in the table in paragraph 6 hereof regarding all inter-State and federated unions. A few federated unions included in the table in paragraph 6 are not registered under the Commonwealth Act, while, on the other hand, a number of purely State organizations registered under the Act are, of course, not included in the table in paragraph 6.

* Under the Arbitration (Public Service) Act an association of less than 100 employees may be registered as an organization, provided that its members comprise at least three-fifths of all persons engaged in that industry in the Service.