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Tackling the Training Divide – the union role?

Iain Murray
(Senior Policy Officer, unionlearn, TUC)

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Workplace skills – some key challenges?

- **A long tail of employers that do not train**
  - A third of employers offer no training at all and 37% of all employees (around 8M) receive no training
- **An entrenched training divide**
  - Only 1 in 10 employees without qualifications receive regular job-related training (compared with 4 in 10 employees with a degree). OECD's analysis – "In the UK the intensity of participation is particularly low among persons without upper secondary qualifications"
- **A narrow focus**
  - In the UK the pattern of training that is delivered by employers is of a shorter duration than in most other European countries and often restricted to induction and health & safety issues
  - Too many employers are not utilising the skills of their staff to best effect

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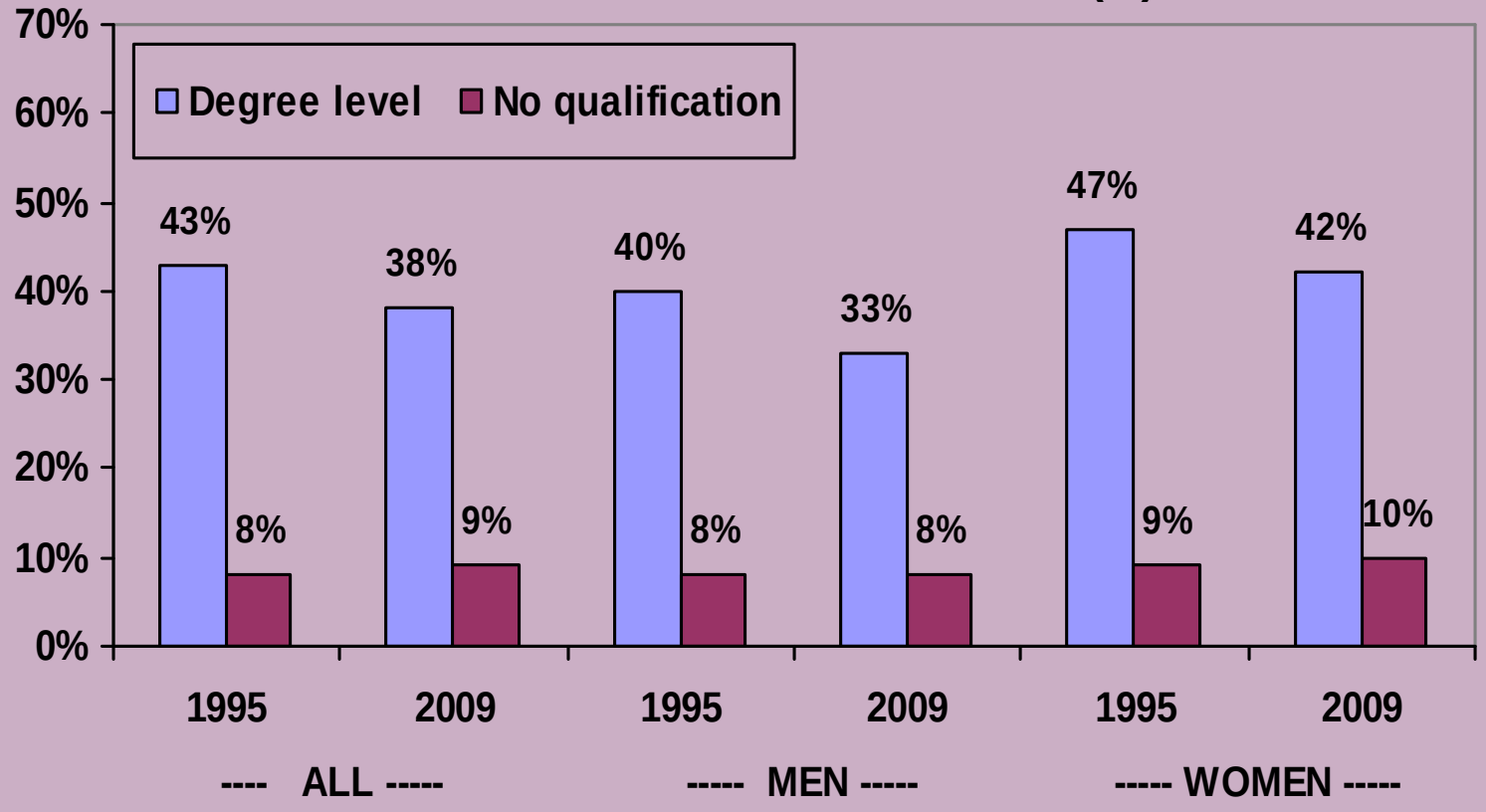
The UK training divide

Employees participating in job-related training by educational attainment, 1995 & 2009 (%)



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The positive "union effect"?

- Union membership and/or working in a unionised environment increases the likelihood of accessing training at work:
  - Employees in unionised workplaces are 8% more likely to receive training
  - Where unions are recognised and also negotiate over training, employees are 24% more likely to have received training

- Plus, union learning reps (ULRs) boost this 'union effect':
  - In workplaces with a ULR network in place, 46% of employees received 5 or more training days in the past year compared to 29% in unionised workplaces without ULRs
  - There is more negotiation over training in unionised workplaces with ULRs (13 percent) compared to unionised workplaces without ULRs (9%)

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The union role

- Union learning representatives
- Negotiating a collective approach in the workplace
- Supporting take-up of key programmes (e.g. apprenticeships, right to request training etc.)
- Articulating employee voice at national, sectoral and regional levels

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Union Learning Representatives

- ULRs – 24,000 trained since 1998
- Learning Agreements and union-led learning centres
- Union Learning Fund - £2M in 1998 and now £15M
- Role of unionlearn

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Supporting a collective approach in the workplace

- Learning Agreements
- Collective bargaining arrangements
- Collective Learning Funds pilots

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Aligning the union role with government programmes

- Apprenticeships and Train to Gain
- Skills Accounts and adult careers service
- Forthcoming Right to Request Training

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Articulating employee voice in the system

- Nationally
  - Government
  - UKCES
- Sectors
- Regions

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More information available at…..

- www.unionlearn.org.uk
- www.tuc.org.uk/skills

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