

Shauna L. Olney

# UNIONS IN A CHANGING WORLD

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS IN  
SELECTED INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE GENEVA



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## ABBREVIATIONS

### TRADE UNION CONFEDERATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations
CGIL	Italian General Confederation of Labour
CISL	Italian Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions
CNV	Confederation of Christian Trade Unions in the Netherlands
DGB	German Confederation of Trade Unions
FNV	Netherlands Trade Union Confederation
LO	Swedish Trade Union Confederation
RENGO	Japanese Trade Union Confederation
TUC	Trades Union Congress (United Kingdom)
UIL	Italian Workers' Union

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# UNIONS IN A CHANGING WORLD

## PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS IN SELECTED INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES

No one can deny that the trade union movement today is facing profound change. But what is the nature and extent of such change, and how can appropriate solutions be found?

This timely book takes as its starting-point 11 monographs from trade union confederations in eight countries (Australia, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States), as well as other sources. From a union perspective, it gives an overview of the difficult process of self-analysis that unions have been undergoing in order to adjust to economic, technological, social and other changes. After setting the general context, the book examines the increasing diversity of the workforce and changing attitudes towards work, and their effects on union membership levels, influence and priorities. It then considers the many external factors affecting membership and even the legitimization of the trade union movement itself. Finally, it discusses unions' internal structures and strategies, including improving efficiency, cooperation with other groups, research, special services, training and public relations. In spite of differing approaches, all agree that unions cannot remain passive. This thought-provoking study offers valuable insights into the adjustment problems of trade unions and the attempts made to overcome them.

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