

Activating and empowering young members

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GEW Youth

Contents

- Create structures for young members
- Reflect on what young members want
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Structures

GEW Youth (all members under 35)

- Federal youth meets three times a year
- Additional group for student members
- Students and youth have groups in each German state
- Bylaws guarantee youth seats in all committees
- Structures supported by staff to avoid problem of short-term involvement due to temporary nature of youth (university study, teacher training, age...)
- Young members and new members often have the same problems getting involved.
- Youth in education contexts means students, trainees and beginners—age of involvement different from other trade unions

Reflection

- Brochure: Ten building blocks for a moving trade union
 - Suggestions from youth for best practice with new members
- Survey: 7000 members under 35 were asked what keeps them from getting more involved
 - Time, moment in life/career, lack of information

Activate young members

- Two conferences for active members (2016, 2018) bringing upcoming young members together with trade union leadership
 - Workshops on organizational development
- Conferences for and by youth (2012, 2016, 2020)
 - 150 young active members from each state
 - Networking, time to develop papers to influence „grown-ups“
- **Give us time, money and staff support -> Youth do trade union**

Empower young members

- Results of survey:
 - Students are more interested in the politics of trade unionism and will get more involved. Beginners are overwhelmed, 30-somethings have small children
 - Caveat: Students work on weekends! Does their union involvement cost them income?
 - Colleagues need more time to get involved
 - Fewer committees? Paid involvement? Does local involvement require federal knowledge?
 - Colleagues need to know how to get involved
 - Transparent online meeting schedule
 - Personal recruitment is most effective

Empower young (and new) members

- Reflect meeting culture
 - Are times, places, ways of speaking friendly to people who have children? For rank-and-file members who work full time? For people who do not speak union language? (=Acronyms)
- Reflect recruitment and leadership development
 - Are women stuck at the middle leadership level?
 - Is every trade union debate only between old men?

Closing appeal



We are not your children. We are trade unionists now.