

Trade Union Revitalization: how do renewal processes impact identity in the movement?

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The trade union movement has been put under considerable pressure the past thirty years. The trend is global: trade unions' political influence and bargaining power have been pushed back as a result from globalization, and membership numbers have plummeted. As a response to the development, numerous attempts to "revitalize" the trade union movement have been employed. Scholars of industrial relations have taken an interest in these revitalization processes and analyzed the strategies to reverse the trend. However, the research field has taken less an interest in the internal changes that such renewal processes imply for the unions, a gap in our knowledge about trade unions that this paper aims to fill. More specifically, the paper aims to investigate how self-perceptions changed as a result from a thorough renewal process in the Swedish trade union formerly known as SKTF (*Svenska kommunaltjänstemannaförbundet*), nowadays *Vision*.

In order to capture self-perceptions I examine the internal educations of SKTF. There are several good reasons for focusing on educations when analyzing identity: organizations' educational settings constitute the forum where members – new and old – are taught the aim of the organization and how to act as organization members, this is the arena in which values are discussed and ideological schooling takes place. Consequently, material used in such educations *should* express identity and culture of the organization, and if we want to study how renewal processes impact self-perceptions, this is a good material to use. I analyze the internal educations of SKTF during the time period 1970-2015.