

**Welcome to Unifor**



**Connect with Your Union**

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**Welcome to Unifor**

# Welcome to Unifor

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# Welcome to Unifor

## A Letter from National President Jerry Dias

You are now a member of Canada's largest private-sector union. From coast to coast to coast, we represent workers in every sector of the Canadian economy.

With the strength of more than 310,000 members, the union defends your rights at work and challenges the status quo to make your workplaces and communities better and more fair.

Unifor is a social union – this means that our work doesn't stop once we negotiate a contract with your employer. We believe the values of equality, justice, safety and fairness should extend from the workplace to our communities and homes throughout Canada and around the world. Unifor advocates for better health care, access to affordable child care, we fight to protect strong public services and lobby government for progressive, fair trade policies and laws that support good jobs – it's all about putting people before profits.

This is your union! I encourage you to get involved in your Local Union, join a committee and see what your union can do. Together, our union does great things to make a difference but our strength lies in you and every member.

On behalf of the entire Unifor leadership, and the National Executive Board I welcome you to Unifor.

In solidarity,



Jerry Dias





# Who We Are

Unifor is a strong and effective union that works to make sure our members have safer workplaces, secure employment, wages and benefits that provide a decent standard of living, and that dignity and respect is part of every workplace. What we wish for ourselves, we also wish for all workers.

Part of Unifor's strength lies in its team of expert staff across the country that provide services and support to Locals and their members. To service all the diverse needs of Unifor members the union employs professional staff all across the country.

Unifor has staff representatives and national departments in the following areas:

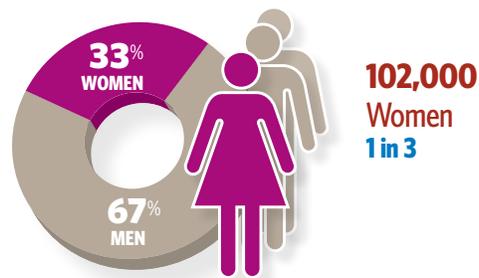
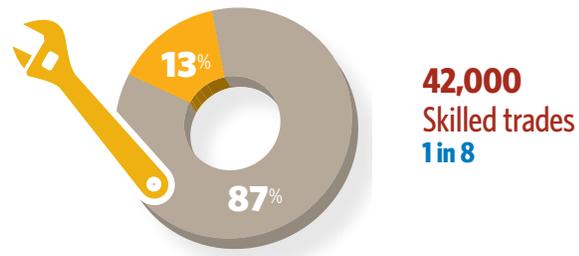
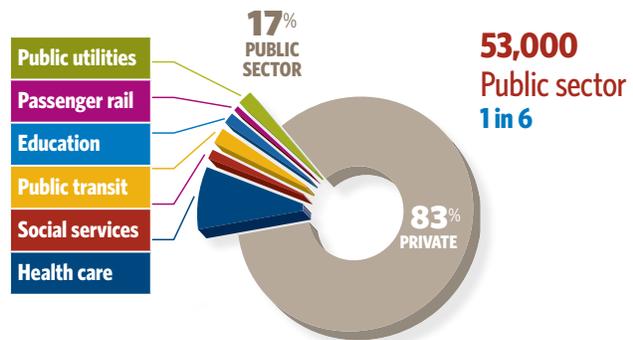
- National Representatives who work directly with Locals during bargaining and grievance-handling, and assist in supporting the needs of members in every Local;
- An in-house legal team to advocate for, and represent members;
- Pensions and benefits experts;
- Industry and sector-specialists and Directors;
- Researchers and economists;
- Communications and government relations teams;
- Adult education trainers and union educators;
- Human rights and health and safety experts;
- Specialists in women's rights and child care initiatives, and much more!

This dedicated team of hundreds of staff members all support our membership.

## UNIFOR by the Numbers

### Member snapshot

(Based on 2015 numbers)



**Total Unifor members**  
**310,000**

# Who We Are

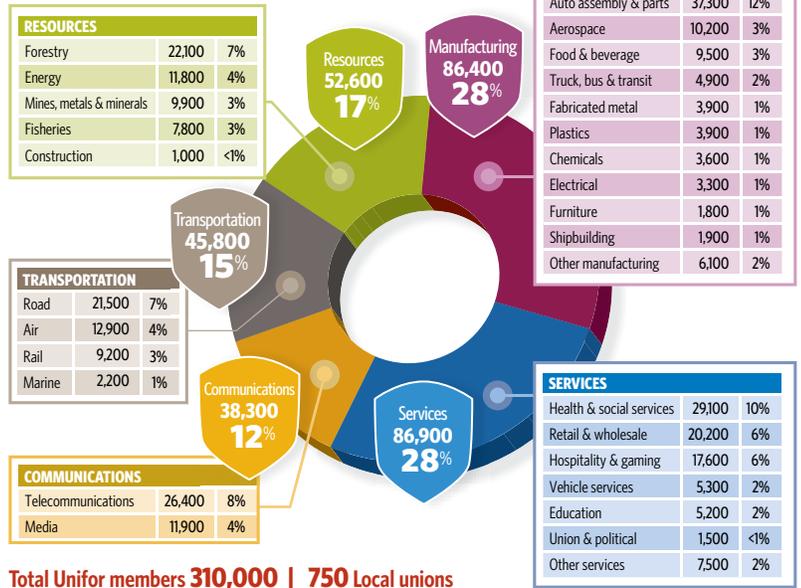
Unifor members work in nearly every sector of the economy. We have members who work in health care, telecommunications and media, in road, rail, air and marine transportation, in resources such as forestry, energy, mining and smelting and fisheries. We have members in construction, manufacturing, auto, and shipbuilding. We also have members who work in education, retail, gaming and hospitality.

All of these workers have one thing in common – they are members of the union! Unifor is more than 310,000 workers in Canada and we are growing every single day!

Our membership is spread across the country and across Canada's most vital economic sectors.

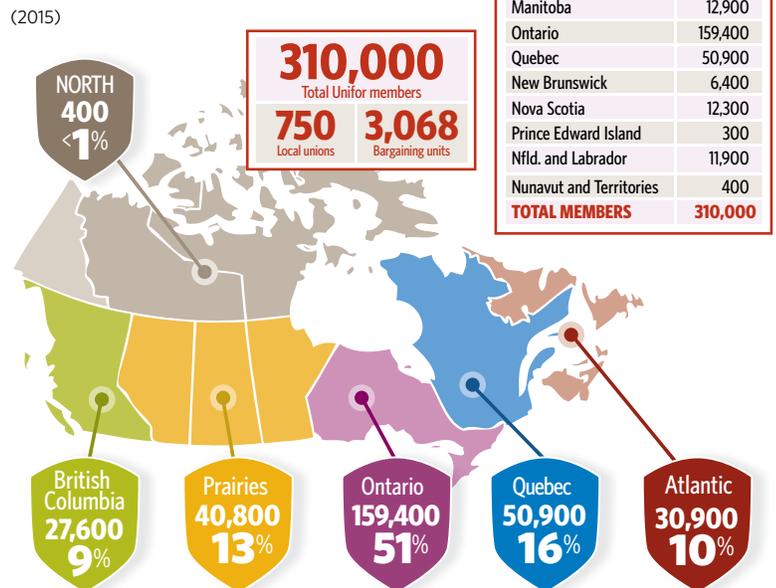
## UNIFOR by the Numbers

### Members by Sector (2015)



## UNIFOR by the Numbers

### Members by Region (2015)



# What We Do

Unifor works hard to make your life better. We bargain with your employer for fair contracts and work toward programs and benefits that workers want and need. We strengthen your voice at work!

Unions fought for many things we now consider basic: the eight-hour workday, weekends, sick days, maternity and parental leave, health and safety laws and more. But we're not done - there's more we can and must do to protect working people and their families.

Unifor is responsible for bargaining progressive programs such as Domestic Violence Leave, the Women's Advocate program, the Social Justice Fund, and more. We're an innovative union with objectives written into our Constitution to ensure equality regardless of race, sex, age, creed, colour, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, political affiliation or place of origin. Unifor is the union for everyone!

## Your Local is Here to:

Address workplace issues or problems, and deal with grievances;

Ensure your rights are upheld and protected;

Enforce the Collective Agreement - every provision and article must be implemented and respected;

Advance safety in the workplace and to stop or prevent discrimination and harassment;

Act as your representative to the employer;

Educate you about your rights and your union;

Provide opportunities to get involved in building the union and participate in political action;

Negotiate a new Collective Agreement to ensure your wages, benefits and rights are strengthened;

Build a stronger labour movement; and much more.

To ensure that your union and your Local can represent you, be sure to speak to your shop steward, local president or any local workplace representative if an issue arises or if you have questions.

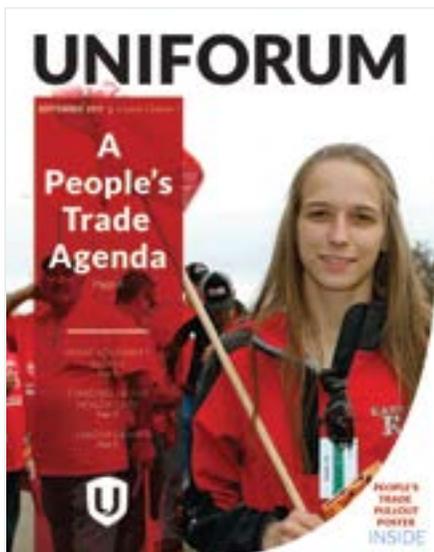
# What We Do

## Stay Connected to Your Union!

To ensure you are informed about events, news and ways to get involved with Unifor sign up for weekly news or the **FREE** magazine that will be delivered right to your household.

Subscribe to our electronic newsletter and free quarterly magazine to get updates on the activities of the union and follow us on social media to see your union in action!

[unifor.org/subscribe](http://unifor.org/subscribe)



# Membership Rights

## Unifor is Your Union and You Have Rights!

An informed and active membership is the foundation of a democratic and dynamic trade union.

Unifor's foremost priority is to advance the interests of its current members and to assist prospective members to organize new bargaining units. In addition, the Union will open its membership to a broader range of working people including those who cannot feasibly organize a bargaining unit.

### Rights and Responsibilities of Members

- Members are entitled to share equally in governing Unifor. Subject to the distinctions and rules set out in the Unifor Constitution, each member in good standing has the right to run for office, to nominate and vote in free and fair elections.
- Members have the right to fully participate in the democratic debate and decisions of the appropriate body or structure of which they are a member or a delegate. All members have the right to free speech including the right to criticize the policies or governance of the union.
- Members have the right to participate in the union free of harassment and the national union shall have an effective anti-harassment policy.
- Members have the right to fair and reasonable consideration of their individual interests and concerns when collective decisions are made.
- Members have the right to a review of any decision which they believe adversely affects them, as set out in the Constitution.
- Members shall uphold the democratic decisions and rules of the union, pay dues and fulfill obligations in the Constitution, and respect the provisions of their freely negotiated collective agreements.
- Members shall support the solidarity and the collective actions of the union in collective bargaining, and in its efforts to protect the jobs of members.
- Any member who is elected or appointed to represent other members or participate in the administration or governance of the union shall defend the Constitution and organizational integrity of the union.

Unions are democratic organizations - you have the right to elect your Local president and other local union and workplace representatives, including your bargaining committee.



# Membership Rights

As a member you also have the final say to vote on your contract after it is negotiated.

Make sure to participate - it's your democratic right as a union member.

Most local unions hold regular monthly meetings that are open to all members to attend. This is a great way to find out what the union is doing and find something that interests you.

Come out to a meeting and get involved with your Local. We are stronger when we work together!

The national union will supply members with a Unifor membership card.

If you do not receive one, request a card today! Email [communications@unifor.org](mailto:communications@unifor.org) to request your card.

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## Dues

Trade unions in Canada play a unique and exceptional role in the progress towards social justice. Only trade unions are self-funding working class organizations which express the interests and hopes of working people and their families. Our work and struggle requires resources; dues payments create the resources we need to move forward.

Every member in your Local pays dues, an amount of money collected to assist in meeting the needs of the Local and the national union. Although you may only see one deduction for union dues on your pay stub, the funds you provide go towards your Local and to the national. As outlined in our Constitution, national union dues will be 0.735 per cent of a worker's regular wages with respect to regularly scheduled hours as defined by the collective agreement in place..

Regional Council or Quebec Council dues are set at 0.0135 per cent.

Local Union dues are fixed at a minimum of the level set at Unifor's Founding Convention. By a majority vote of the members of your Local, a Local Union may set Local Union dues higher or lower, however Local Union dues cannot be reduced to lower than 0.6015 per cent of regular wages.

Funds are important to the union: this is how Unifor has resources to represent and defend members, do vital political action and lobbying work, and fund national union programs.

# Who Represents You

## National Officers

Unifor is democratically led by officers elected from within the membership every three years at a delegate Convention, with the Quebec Director elected by the Quebec Council and affirmed at Convention. The six top officers are responsible for the daily operations of the union, working alongside staff to deliver on member-driven campaigns and initiatives and to lead effective strategies for bargaining and political action.

To ensure our membership is well-represented from coast to coast to coast, in addition to the President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Quebec Director, Unifor has Regional Directors who represent each of the Atlantic, Ontario, and Western regions. Regional directors are also elected by the membership at a delegate Convention. As top officers they are part of the leadership team and are responsible for the hands-on political work of Unifor in their respective regions. See below for more information on who is representing and working for you. Be sure to contact your Regional Director to get involved in campaigns and committees in your area!

To read biographies of our leadership team, visit [unifor.org/leadership](http://unifor.org/leadership).



**Jerry Dias,**  
National President

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**Bob Orr,**  
Secretary-Treasurer

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[@BOBorrUnifor](https://twitter.com/BOBorrUnifor)

**Renaud Gagné,**  
Quebec Director

[renaud.gagne@unifor.org](mailto:renaud.gagne@unifor.org)

[uniforquebec.org](http://uniforquebec.org)

Responsible for members in Quebec



**Lana Payne,**  
Atlantic Regional Director

[lane.payne@unifor.org](mailto:lane.payne@unifor.org)

[@LanaMPayne](https://twitter.com/LanaMPayne)

[unifor.org/atlanticcouncil](http://unifor.org/atlanticcouncil)

Responsible for members in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador



**Naureen Rizvi,**  
Ontario Regional Director

[naureen.rizvi@unifor.org](mailto:naureen.rizvi@unifor.org)

[@NaureenRizvi](https://twitter.com/NaureenRizvi)

[unifor.org/ontariocouncil](http://unifor.org/ontariocouncil)

Responsible for members in Ontario



**Joie Warnock,**  
Western Regional Director

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[@joiewarnock](https://twitter.com/joiewarnock)

[unifor.org/bccouncil](http://unifor.org/bccouncil)

[unifor.org/prairiescouncil](http://unifor.org/prairiescouncil)

Responsible for members in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut



# Who Represents You

## National Executive Board

The National Executive Board brings together the leadership team of Unifor. While representing distinct groups in the Union, all National Executive Board members have the responsibility and duty to advance and protect the interests of the entire membership. The National Executive Board is the highest authority of Unifor between Conventions.

The six elected officers of the union listed above are all members of the National Executive Board, along with:

- Chairpersons of each of the Regional Councils and the Quebec Council (British Columbia, Prairie, Ontario, and Atlantic);
- Elected representative from the National Aboriginal and Workers of Colour Committee;
- Chairperson of the National Council of Retired Workers;
- Chairperson of the National Skilled Trades Council; and
- Elected representatives, Industry Council representatives, selected from nominations by Industry Councils - there shall be a total of one from 11 Industry Councils elected to the Board. Elections are held at Canadian Council every three years.

As with every committee and council of the national union, the National Executive Board aims for a gender-balanced, diverse and regionally representative membership.

To ensure regional balance the Constitution says that members from any one region of the National Union (Atlantic Region, Ontario Region, Western Region and Quebec) shall not hold more than 13 of the 25 seats on the National Executive Board at any one time.

For more information about the governance of your union, its code of ethics and democratic practices, management of dues and the operations of various committees and councils, please refer to the Unifor Constitution online: [unifor.org/constitution](http://unifor.org/constitution).



# Equity Committees

Unifor recognizes the valuable contribution of equity-seeking groups within the union. Aboriginal workers, LGBTQ, workers of colour, women, workers with disabilities, young workers and others, bring to the union inspiration and diversity that makes us a better union.

The union's struggle for justice, equity, respect, and dignity cannot be limited to fighting the bad bosses or pushing the government for legislative changes. It must also include looking internally, within our union, to consider how members are included, represented, and most importantly, how we can create opportunities for equity representation in the leadership and governing bodies of our union.

Our commitment to making our union look like our workplaces and communities means that we always work with equity and inclusion in mind. We strive for gender balance in our leadership and among our National Executive Board members. The union works hard to take direction from our equity committees in adapting our meetings, councils and operations to make Unifor a welcome space for everyone.

Speak to your Local Union representatives about how you can join a local equity committee – or how you can establish a committee in your Local or region! Visit [unifor.org/equity](https://unifor.org/equity) for more information.



# Education Opportunities

Unifor is home to the most sophisticated labour training centre in the country. The Unifor Family Education Centre is located on the tranquil shores of Lake Huron in Port Elgin, Ontario and features programs ranging from health and safety, equity and anti-harassment training to courses like: preparing for collective bargaining, local activism, communicating to members, building leadership and much more.

Courses vary from one day to multi-week and are offered on a rotating schedule through the year. For members who are unable to travel to Port Elgin, or for more convenient and affordable options for Locals, courses are offered in cities across the country as well. If there is a specific course requested or needed that is not being offered locally, trained Discussion Leaders will host a course in your city or town if 15 or more people are interested.

Since 1960, the union has offered a Family Education Program for members and their families. If selected by your Local to attend, the member agrees to give up their vacation time and the national union covers costs for meals and accommodations, and where required, air travel.

During Family Education, adults, both members and their spouse/partner, combine learning and recreational activities and come away from the program with a better understanding of how to integrate trade unionism and social activism in the life of the family and community. Preteens participate in recreational programs run by fully trained child care workers and counselors. Teenagers participate in a specially designed program which recognizes their unique interests but also incorporates the issues of social unionism into their curriculum.

There are many ways to take advantage of the education available to you as a member. For more information about any course, you can contact your Local or write to [education@unifor.org](mailto:education@unifor.org).

Check out the education programs on the Unifor website at [unifor.org/education](http://unifor.org/education).



# Get Involved

## You are the Union.

Every day, many hundreds of rank-and-file members dedicate their time and efforts to building our union and championing causes close to their hearts. There are many ways to get involved, so you can find something that works with your interests and with your work and family life.

Unifor members in communities across Canada organize events for Pride, International Women's Day, Labour Day and many other equity-based or cultural events and social events. There is a family of workers waiting to welcome you at your Local and in your community.

For more information about how to get involved in your Local, contact your Local President.

To find your Local please visit the Unifor website and go to [unifor.org/locals](https://unifor.org/locals).

To ensure that you stay informed and involved in the work of the national union be sure to supply your up-to-date contact information (email and mailing address) to Unifor.

Visit [unifor.org/subscribe](https://unifor.org/subscribe) to stay connected.



# Political Action

Unifor was built to be a political force in Canada. Why, you ask? It is because politics affects every corner of our lives, from the rights we defend and gain for workers and their families, to how members of equity-seeking groups are included, heard and represented in our society, and so much more.

**As a political union, we have already seen what our activism can do.** Where right-wing governments have attempted to slash or sell off the public sector, Unifor has defended good jobs in health care and social services that we all depend on. Where anti-worker politicians have made empty promises to working people, Unifor has shown what their policies will really mean for our communities and our economy. Unifor has been politically active to change governments and together the union makes a difference.

Our voice is a progressive counter-balance to the influence of the rich and of large multi-national companies. While big business is always focused on making a profit – our number one goal is to make sure people are respected and treated fairly. It's about getting a fair share for workers!

Remember, weekends and holidays, same-sex benefits and so many other rights we now consider 'normal' didn't exist until unionized workers demanded them. We've come a long way, but we must still fight for equal pay, for fair wages, for good public health care and child care and for so many other things that will make our communities healthier and stronger.

Unifor is political force. The union is a way to have your voice heard and stand up for everyday working people and their families. To find out more about our activism, write to [politicalaction@unifor.org](mailto:politicalaction@unifor.org).

Take action and check out Unifor campaigns at [unifor.org/action](https://unifor.org/action).



# Social Justice Fund

Unifor is dedicated to improving the lives of workers and their families in Canada and around the world. One way we express that commitment is through our Social Justice Fund.

The Unifor Social Justice Fund (SJF) promotes and supports the role of trade unions and workers' groups around the world in their efforts to strengthen democracy, promote equitable development, and contribute to poverty reduction, social justice and education reform.

The Fund is a registered charity that is governed by the Social Justice Fund Board of Directors (which includes officers of the union as well as prominent Canadians). Funds are negotiated during collective bargaining and come directly from employers, either on a cents-per-hour-per-worker basis, or as a lump sum. In this way, workers show that social justice is a key priority and that by working collectively we can make a difference not only here in Canada, but around the world. Approximately 20 per cent of our SJF monies are used in Canada, complementing the many other initiatives that Unifor and our members support within our borders.

For more information about the SJF check out [unifor.org/sjf](https://unifor.org/sjf).





# Connect with Your Union

Want to know what Unifor is up to? Get instant updates on our social media channels



Facebook.com/  
UniforCanada



Twitter.com/  
UnifortheUnion



Youtube.com/  
UniforCanada



Instagram.com/  
UniforCanada

For regular updates on campaigns, job action, and events, subscribe to our e-newsletter and free quarterly magazine: [unifor.org/subscribe](http://unifor.org/subscribe).

Our website also has lots of information, updated regularly, about upcoming education offerings, regional events, national campaigns along with our latest press releases. You can also use our Find Your Local tool to get the mailing address, phone number and website information for your Local at: [unifor.org/locals](http://unifor.org/locals).

For additional help or information, contact our National Office:

Toll-free 1-800-268-5763

Unifor 205 Placer Court, Toronto, ON M2H 3H9

For more information about all of the departments in Unifor and our member services please visit [unifor.org/contact](http://unifor.org/contact).





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Toll-free 1-800-268-5763 [unifor.org](http://unifor.org)