



# UNIFOR LOCAL UNION

YOUNG WORKERS COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

# Table of Contents

## Section 1

### Local Union Young Workers Committees

Message from the President.....	3
Why Young Workers Committees? .....	4
The Role of Local Union Young Workers Committees .....	5
Building Canada’s Youth Movement .....	6

## Section Two

### Getting Started

Getting Started.....	8
Terms of Reference .....	13
Get Inspired .....	16
Evaluating the Work of Your Committee.....	17
Making Meetings Effective.....	18
Sample Young Workers Committee Meeting Agenda .....	20

## Section Three

### Resources

Unifor Young Workers Committee Resources .....	22
Movies about Workers, Unions and Struggle .....	24
Web Links.....	27

## Section Four

### About Unifor

About Unifor .....	29
--------------------	----

## Section 1

### Local Union Young Workers Committees



**UNIFOR**

Young Workers | Jeunes au travail

# Message from the Unifor President



Unifor was built to be a “union for everyone”, but especially a union for young workers.

Young workers have by-and-large been cut out of the economic equation in Canada. Despite working hard, possessing extraordinary skills, savvy and contributing to our overall economic successes, young people are faced with a future filled with uncertainty and instability – whether it’s lower career earnings, high levels of debt, temporary jobs or no retirement security.

These conditions are chronic and have serious consequences for the social and economic health of Canada both now and in the future.

These are also the same conditions that gave rise to unions in the first place. Economic security has been built by an engaged working class, working together to make gains. That’s still the formula for building a fairer, more just society.

Young workers are the least likely to be in a union. They are the least likely to bargain a collective agreement. Yet, they are the group most willing and wanting to join. Unifor was created to bridge that divide, providing young workers new organizing tools, and a new hope that bad jobs can be made good, and that workers – together – can be better off.

Young workers need unions today more than ever. And unions need young workers more than ever too.

Unions are only as strong as the resolve and determination of their members. That’s no different in Unifor. Our union has a proud and inspirational history, no doubt. But we can’t only look to the past for hope. No organization can sustain itself without looking to the future.

Unifor’s constitution recognizes the vital role young workers must play in our union. Our young workers program aims to provide members (35 years of age and younger) with the confidence and the skills to participate fully in union life. Through local, regional and national committees, I want our young members to be decision-makers; I want them to take ownership and pride in their union; I want Unifor to be responsive to their needs. An engaged young membership base means we are a stronger organization.

I support the work of our young activists across the country and the important contributions they make. They inspire me every day. I hope this handbook proves a useful tool as we work to establish young workers committees in all local unions and build a larger, more vibrant network of activists.

I hope young workers help build Unifor into the union it is destined to become.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerry Dias". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**JERRY DIAS**

# Why Young Workers Committees?

Young workers committees play an important role in local unions across the country.

For many young Unifor members, local committees are an entry point to the union. Young workers committees provide a space for young members to better understand the workings of the union, to discuss issues relevant to them in their workplace and their community and to learn more about the structures and culture of the union.

Young workers committees also act as a "home base" for young members. They can help build the confidence and skills necessary to become active in the local union, attend general union meetings, participate in campaigns, write union newsletter articles and develop relationships with the leadership and other union activists. They also provide an opportunity to work with other progressive organizations to bring about peace, social justice, a healthy, sustainable environment and, more generally, to improve the lives of working people.

Best of all, young workers committees give our young members the chance to ask the 'stupid' questions (that we've all wanted to ask) outside of the larger general membership and unit meetings.

How effective have young workers committees been in developing a more well-informed and active membership base? Well, today some of the most seasoned Unifor activists and leadership are former young workers committee members!



# The Role of Local Union Young Workers Committees

Working with local union leadership, young workers committee members are encouraged to play an active role in their union. Each committee is encouraged to set its own agenda for activism that upholds the integrity of Unifor's constitution and, the union's progressive policies.

Young workers committees can play a number of important roles in local unions, and can focus their attention on all areas of social life, from workplace issues to international politics.

Here are a few basic roles that young workers committees can play:

- Raise the awareness of issues specific to young workers and young people in general with local union leadership and the local union membership;
- Outreach to young members in your workplace, and connect them with the union;
- Advocate on behalf of young workers in the local union and in the community;
- Support the work of other local union standing committees and their campaign efforts, lending expertise and providing fresh insight into issues through a young worker perspective;
- Build links with other progressive-minded and youth groups in the community and across the country, including student groups, youth environmental groups and social service groups.



# Building Canada's Youth Movement: A Core Objective

It is vitally important that the work of Unifor young workers committees help contribute to the strengthening of Canada's broader youth movement.

Young people (especially young workers) are among Canada's most exploited, heavily stigmatized and under-represented demographic groups. For instance, many young workers are exposed to dangerous working conditions, are the most likely to get seriously injured at work, are often paid below average wages and less likely to belong to a union.

Young people are widely dismissed as being apathetic towards general social, economic and political issues – despite the fact that all young people under the age of 18 are completely excluded from voting.

We are generally treated as consumers of popular culture rather than members of an engaged and active citizenship. Young people are more likely to be asked what they think is “hip” and “cool”... instead of being asked what they think is “right” and “wrong”.

The Canadian youth movement serves to give young people a voice in our country's affairs. Today, the youth movement is mobilizing around many key issues including climate change, workplace health and safety, social justice, as well as those issues impacting students.

Unifor local union young workers committees are important structures in the Canadian youth movement, helping to raise the voice of young people.



## Section Two

### Getting Started



**unifor**

Young Workers | Jeunes au travail

# Getting Started

## *Unifor Encourages Young Workers Committees in its Constitution*

Every local union in Unifor should have a young workers committee established, as outlined in Article 15, Section D of the Constitution.

Local union bylaws will further define the role of the local union young workers committee, including any potential funding the local wishes to provide (although funding is not mandated by the Unifor Constitution).

Members interested in forming a young workers committee should approach their local union president or member of the local union executive board, to find out how best to get started. Or, they can contact the National Unifor Young Workers Liaison at: [youngworkers@unifor.org](mailto:youngworkers@unifor.org)

For a step-by-step explanation on how to set up a young workers committee check out the handy fact sheet produced by members of the Unifor Young Workers Network (see next page).

Unifor Constitution: Article 15

### **D: LOCAL UNION COMMITTEES**

1. A Local Union should establish the following Standing Committees:

Constitution and By-Laws

Education

Environment

Recreation

Community Services

Human Rights

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Workers (LGBT)

Aboriginal and Racialized Workers

Workers with Disabilities

Union in Politics

Women's

Young Workers

Health and Safety

2. A Local Union may decide to consolidate Committees or establish additional Committees.

3. Local Union Standing Committee members may be elected or appointed by the Local Union Executive Board.

communicate

educate

mobilize

WORK GOVERNMENT  
youth TALK participation  
UNIONIZE  
HUMAN RIGHTS CONFIDENCE



## How To Start A Local Union Young Workers Committee

Local union young workers committees provide a place from which young workers (age 35 and under) can build the confidence and skills necessary to become active in their local unions and communities. Young workers committees are also important building blocks in forming a stronger young workers movement in Canada.

For many young Unifor members, young workers committees can act as the starting point for getting active in standing committees (e.g. women's, newsletter, human rights, and political action), developing relationships with other activists, and working with other progressive groups to bring about peace, social justice, environmental sustainability and improving the lives of working people.

**Interested in establishing a young workers committee in your local union?  
Here are a few tips to get you started:**

- 1 Talk to your local union president!** Tell him/her that you are interested in starting a committee... you never know, there might already be one set up in your local that you didn't know about!
- 2 Talk to other young workers...** In your workplace or other workplaces in your local union. Find out if they are interested in getting active through a young workers committee.
- 3 Set a date for your first meeting, and PUBLICIZE!** It would be good to set your first meeting alongside other local union standing committee meetings, or general membership meetings for maximum participation (ask your local president for help)! Use your local union newsletter, posters in your workplace and phone calls to get the word out!
- 4 Establish a set of commitments and goals** – what sort of work should your young workers committee focus on? Is it educating other young workers? Is it engaging in community activism? Is it supporting a local youth shelter, or food bank? Or all of the above! Remember, these can change over time... don't take on too much too quickly! It's also important to share the workload among committee members. This gets everyone involved and helps make big tasks seem a lot smaller.
- 5 Spread the word!** Keep looking out for other young activists in your workplace and encourage them to attend young workers committee meetings.

**Need Help?** Call 1-800-268-5763 or email [youngworkers@unifor.org](mailto:youngworkers@unifor.org)



**UNIFOR**

Young Workers | Jeunes au travail

# Getting Started

Young workers committees have a wide range of activities they can participate in. It may be useful to develop a terms of reference for your committee in coordination with the local leadership (see next page for a sample). This way, the goals and objectives (and expectations) of your committee work will be clear.

Let your interests guide you and be sure to encourage participation among all young workers in your local.

It's also important to keep in mind that some of the topics or issues you take on may overlap with the work of other committees, so it's important to communicate and collaborate with them as much as possible!

Here are a few ideas for committee activities:

- Organize an educational course at your local union or for local unions in your community;
- Mobilize committee members to take part in a peaceful demonstration or public rally... maybe even consider organizing one yourself! For some members, this may be the first time they've participated in a public action!
- Organize a trip to a picket line in a show of solidarity for striking workers in your community (they don't have to be members of Unifor);
- Plan a fundraiser for a local charity or progressive cause (maybe a community youth shelter). Make it fun and make it educational! This is another way to build strong community links and promote "social unionism";
- Write an article for your local union newsletter, or the Unifor young workers newsletter (The Echo) on an issue that impacts young workers in your local;
- Organize a social event at your local hall (or another location, with your local's support). Consider screening a movie (like "The Corporation" or "Fahrenheit 9/11"), or inviting a guest speaker (your local president or a national staff representative);
- Make links with a local high school and arrange to talk to students about their rights at work (this is invaluable information that may even save a young worker's life!) Unifor has a great presentation prepared that you can get trained to deliver!



# Getting Started

Being part of a young workers committee carries with it some important responsibilities. We all know that locals develop their own traditions and practices over time, but the following general points will help you build a strong and effective committee.

- ✓ Support the development of young activists in your local;
- ✓ Participate actively in the Unifor Young Workers Network
- ✓ Keep local union leadership in the loop – maintain good communication around ongoing activities and ideas for potential activities. Seek leadership support early;
- ✓ Hold committee meetings on a regular basis;
- ✓ Post meeting notices in advance and encourage attendance;
- ✓ Circulate a meeting agenda;
- ✓ Tell members about the work of the committee – make reports at membership meetings and write in the local newsletter or web page.



# Getting Started



## ***Linking with Other Standing Committees***

Unifor young workers committees can contribute to the vibrancy of local union work by coordinating their activities and working closely with other local union standing committees.

Each local union standing committee plays an important, and unique, role. Education committees will prepare important and useful materials and deliver helpful workshops that can benefit new and young members.

Union in Politics committees will organize interesting events, plan rallies and public activities that can help young members better understand Canada's complex political system and impress upon them the importance of activism.

Women's committees, Pride and Human Rights committees provide invaluable perspective on the fight for equality and social justice among

social groups – which may interest young workers.

At the same time, young workers committees can provide tremendous support and energy to other committees in the same manner. Young workers add a critical (and forward-looking) generational perspective to issues that other committees are dealing with, whether it be issues in the workplace or broader social issues like poverty and climate change.

***Find out who's on the various standing committees in your local by talking to your local union president or visit your local union website! Make a plan to chat with the members of each committee to find out what they are working on and how your young workers committee may be able to help!***



# Draft Terms of Reference

Unifor Local XXX Young Workers Committee  
Terms of Reference – DRAFT

## ***Terms of Reference***

For the establishment and direction of ongoing activities for a local union young workers committee that will operate as a standing committee within the organizational structure of Unifor Local XXX, and bound by the Unifor Local XXX by-laws and the Unifor National Constitution.

*Date: October 9, 2014*

*Prepared for: Unifor Local XXX Executive Board*

*Prepared by: Interim Unifor Local XXX Young Workers Committee members Jane Doe and Raj Singh and Local XXX Vice-President Sarah Black.*

## ***Background***

In 2014, Unifor Local XXX sent 2 delegates to the Unifor National Young Workers Conference held at the union's Family Education Centre in Port Elgin, Ontario. The Local leadership directed the delegates to learn what they could about starting a young workers committee, and then lead the local through the development process (in coordination with the Executive Board) upon their return.

Local XXX has since undertaken a thorough outreach effort aimed at identifying young members in our workplaces, and encouraging their participation in a young workers committee. To date, 5 Local XXX members (35 years old and younger) have expressed interest in participating.

Pending approval of this Terms of Reference by the Local XXX Executive Board, the first young workers committee meeting will be held on November 9, 2014 at the Local Union hall.

This Terms of Reference outlines the objectives, structure, processes and deliverables associated with the work of the Local XXX young worker committee.

## ***Objectives***

The primary objectives of the Unifor Local XXX young workers committee are as follows:

- To promote the work of Unifor, Local XXX and the broader labour movement with fellow young Local XXX members (defined as 35 years of age and younger) on issues, campaigns and other matters;
- To play an active and supporting role in the democratic processes of Unifor and Local XXX, including participation at meetings, voting in local union elections, as well as other means, and to actively encourage fellow young Local XXX members to do the same;
- To actively communicate and engage with each other (as members of the committee) as well as

fellow young Local XXX members on matters relating to the workplace, collective bargaining, campaigns and other matters of the union, and to determine the most appropriate methods of communication with those members;

- To liaise with the Unifor Local XXX Executive Board on a regular basis, to discuss matters relevant to young members of the union;
- To liaise with other Unifor young members through the national Unifor Young Workers Network.

### ***Structure***

The Unifor Local XXX young workers committee will encourage direct participation and will be open to all interested young members.

Members of the Local XXX young workers committee will be appointed by the Local XXX President, in consultation with the local union executive board and young workers committee.

### ***Committee Governance***

The Local XXX young workers committee will elect its own leadership body, made up of the following positions:

- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Recording Secretary

The Chairperson will be responsible for leading the work of the committee, setting meeting agendas, delivering reports to the local executive board and acting as the primary point of contact between the executive board and the young workers committee (among other tasks as deemed necessary/ appropriate by the committee).

The Vice-Chair will take on all roles of the Chairperson, in the event that the Chairperson cannot perform her/his duties.

The Recording Secretary will be responsible for taking detailed minutes of each of the Local XXX young worker committee meetings, keeping a record of those minutes and circulating those minutes to other members of the committee and any other executive board officer or interested member.

### ***Elections***

Similar to the Local XXX Executive Board, the young worker committee Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Recording Secretary will serve for a term of 3 years. Elections for a new Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Recording Secretary will be held, internally, by the appointed members of the young workers committee.

Each member will have one vote in the election, regardless of the number of appointed members that sit on the committee for each of the Local XXX workplaces. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Recording Secretary must each represent a different workplace in the local union, if possible. The elections for the first young worker committee Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Recording

Secretary must happen in the spring of 2014. The elected individuals will serve until the time that Local XXX holds its next local union elections, where a second election for the young workers committee will be held. All subsequent elections will be held in conjunction with local union elections.

No committee member over the age of 35 can hold an elected position on the Local XXX young workers committee. Should any elected member turn 36 during their term, then an election must be held as soon as possible after that members 36<sup>th</sup> birthday to elect a replacement.

Any member of the young worker committee may request the assistance of a Unifor Local XXX Elections Committee officer to assist in organizing the election.

### ***Meeting Times***

The Local XXX young worker committee will meet at minimum 4 times per year. Wherever possible, meetings will be held in coordination with a local union executive board meeting. At that meeting, the Chairperson of the young worker committee will deliver a full report on the committee's activities to the executive board. The committee members may attend that session of the executive board meeting as observers, at the discretion and with permission of the local union executive board.

Committee meetings may be organized via conference call, or by some other remote means (e.g. online video conference) deemed reasonable by both the committee and the local union executive board.

Emergency conference calls may be requested by the Chairperson of the young worker committee, but must be approved by the local union president.

### ***Outcomes***

The following outcomes can be expected from this Local XXX young worker committee:

- To increase the level of activism in campaigns and participation within democratic structures of the union among young members of Local XXX;
- To develop greater capacity among young Local XXX members, through union education, campaign involvement, and other learning vehicles (including regional workshops);
- To build an active and vibrant community of young members in Local XXX, including greater young worker participation at local barbecues, Holiday gatherings and help promote young workers as the face of Local XXX in the broader community;
- To provide constructive critical analysis on workplace and union matters, from a young worker perspective, in the spirit of building a stronger, more relevant, well-informed and vibrant local union.

# Getting Started

## ***Get Inspired! Unifor Young Workers Committee Projects and Activities***

### ***Local 222 young worker FACT SHEETS***

Members of the Unifor Local 222 Young Workers Committee in Oshawa, Ontario helped prepare a series of informative workplace fact sheets geared towards young workers. In coordination with the Unifor National Health, Safety & Environment department, fact sheets focusing on important issues like workplace hazards, climate change and health and safety rights at work were distributed to local members. The fact sheets were later circulated to other Unifor workplaces, and at various community forums, throughout the country!

### ***Local 4005 NEW MEMBER HANDBOOK***

In an effort to encourage more local members (especially younger members) at VIA Rail to get involved in their union and better understand their rights at work, young workers committee members of Local 4005 in Moncton, New Brunswick created a “New Member Handbook.” The handbook, entitled ‘Welcome aboard’ outlines basic practices (like how to file a grievance), explained the fundamental components of the collective agreement, and identified various local union committees that members can participate in.

### ***Local 1285 JOB SHADOW PROGRAM***

Members of the Unifor Local 1285 Young Workers Committee in Bramalea, Ontario developed a local Job Shadow Program. The program connected committee activists with a more senior union representative, enabling that young member to learn about the internal workings and structures of the local union, better understand the issues that local union reps deal with on a day-to-day basis and gain important exposure and insight into union activism.

### ***Local 2200 Heart & Stroke Foundation FUNDRAISER***

Following the death of Brother Steve Sherwood, members of the Local 2200 Young Workers Committee (in coordination with the local’s Leisure Committee) helped organize an annual softball tournament in Steve’s name. Each year, the tournament raises hundreds of dollars for the Heart & Stroke foundation and has become a fixture on the Local 2200 events calendar.

### ***Unifor Quebec Council Annual Dragon Boat FUNDRAISER***

Members of the Unifor Quebec Council Young Workers Committee organize an annual Dragon Boat racing team that part in a fundraiser for Le Grand Chemin Foundation, a group that aims to help young people struggling with addiction. In 2013, the Unifor team raised \$6,500 and finished in first place!

### ***Local 4534 leads YOUNG CITIZENS COMMITTEE***

The Unifor Local 4534 young workers committee spearheaded the creation of a Young Citizen’s Committee in Jasper, Alberta. The Citizen’s Committee, in partnership with the municipality, aims to become a local advocacy organization for youth and a place where young people in town can go to find resources, to make sense of local issues and to help them take action on building a more sustainable community.

# Getting Started

## *Evaluating the Work of Your Committee*

Every so often it makes sense to take a good serious look at the effectiveness of your young workers committee. Take a critical eye to the work you've done and ask yourself how your committee can improve.

You may consider having a 'year-end' committee debrief session, which gives committee members the opportunity to reflect on the year that has passed, celebrate your successes and outline areas that need improvement.

This can be a very helpful and healthy exercise. It allows members to express their concerns (and possible frustrations) in a safe and open forum (to avoid blow-ups or negative feelings to fester) and can facilitate a dialogue of constructive criticism.

Consider the following questions for your evaluation:

- Have we developed our young members into stronger trade unionists? Are we using every channel at our disposal to reach out to them?
- Do more of our young members play an active role in the union (i.e. attend more meetings or local union events than they had before)?
- Is the work of our committee appealing to all of our members, especially women, Aboriginal workers, workers of colour and our brothers and sisters in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer communities?
- Is our work helping to build a stronger youth movement in our community and in Canada?
- Are we maintaining a strong and productive relationship with our local leadership and representatives of other standing committees?
- Is our committee functioning properly? Are the meetings well attended? Does every member of the committee have a democratic voice in decision-making?

All of these points centre on one: Are we building the union? That's the crucial question in surveying all of your committee's activities.

*\*NOTE: You may consider drafting your own committee evaluation form with your own set of criteria. Some excerpts taken from the UAW Handbook for Local Union Education Committees, 1945*

# Getting Started

## *Making Meetings Effective*

Every committee meeting should include something useful and educational for members – a short video, a guest speaker, an interactive quiz, a quick report from all of the committee members (and their workplaces), a short discussion about a newspaper article, a book review, etc.

But this is not all! Here are some additional tips for making your meetings more successful:

**Pre-Planning:** *You need to ask yourself what the purpose of the meeting is and consider the following items;*

**Location.** Where and when will your meeting be held? If space needs to be booked be sure to do this in advance!

**Attendees.** Will new people be attending? If so, how will they be welcomed? How will they be brought into the discussions so they don't feel left out?

**Notification.** Make sure people know that a meeting is being held! Post announcements, send emails, create flyers for distribution, etc.

**Needs.** Consider people's personal needs. If the meeting is over the dinner hour arrange to have food and refreshments, if possible.

**Outline goals.** What are the goals of the meeting? Are you planning an event, is it a monthly meeting where there are standard items to deal with? Make sure participants understand the goals of the meeting up front.

**Agenda.** A meeting agenda outlines what is to be covered at the meeting. The items are usually discussed in the order they are listed. It is best if the agenda is distributed in advance of the meeting so that people can prepare. In some cases, an agenda is the same from one meeting to the next and items that are different are brought forward under headings such as "New Business" (see sample agenda on next page).

**During the meeting:** The following are points to consider in making the meeting itself more effective:

**Review the agenda at the start of the meeting** and have the group adopt the agenda to avoid debate later and keep this 'on track'.

**Circulate a contact sheet (if appropriate)** so that contact information for those in attendance is available (this is especially helpful if there are first-time participants at the meeting).

**Select someone to chair the meeting.** Someone needs to chair (in other words, facilitate) the meeting. This could be the Committee Chair (it often is), or someone else. The role of chairing can be rotated throughout the committee. Decide in advance who will chair. Meetings without a leader tend to lose focus.

**Select someone to take minutes.** Taking "minutes" (a fancy way of saying taking detailed notes of what is

discussed at your meeting) is helpful. Documenting what is said at meetings provides a detailed record of the committee's work and can provide useful information when reporting on the committee's work to a local executive board, or membership meeting.

**Find a way to ensure everyone is part of the discussion.** This can be as simple as a quick go-around with an introductory question (give people a clear sense of the length of comments you're after – i.e. "let's take 10 minutes and hear a word or two from everyone about what members are talking about in the workplace" or "let's go around and hear from everyone about what you think was most, or least, successful about our last event – please keep your comments brief").

**Watch the energy level.** Take breaks when people need them.

**Stay focused.** If the meeting stalls over a conflict or a disagreement of some sort, try to refocus where there is agreement/commonalities. Try not to get stuck – look for ways to give people an opportunity to compromise as opposed to getting locked into positions.

**End meetings on time.** If the items on the agenda are not complete when the allotted time is up, check with the group to see if an extension of the meetings is in order or whether the remaining items should be carried over to another meeting.

**Review actions.** Before ending the meeting review what actions have been agreed on and who has agreed to take these actions.

**Schedule your next meeting;**

**Thank everyone for their participation.**



# Sample Youth Committee Meeting Agenda

## ***Sample Young Workers Committee Meeting Agenda***

Unifor Local 0000 Young Workers Committee  
6:00pm-8:00pm, March 9, 2010  
Union Hall, 79 Solidarity Way

**Meeting Chair: Anne**

### ***Meeting Agenda:***

- 1. Welcome and introductions (Anne - 10 minutes)**
- 2. Review of minutes from previous meeting (Terrence - 10 minutes)**
- 3. Review and adoption of agenda (Anne - 5 minutes)**
- 4. Old business (70 minutes)**
  - Environment Committee proposal for community forum on local pesticide ban (Rebecca- 25 minutes) – member from the local Environment Committee will talk about goals of forum and how the Young Workers Committee can help. Outcome: decision on Youth Committee involvement, date of event, volunteers to support, should we agree to participate.
  - Fundraiser for Community Youth Shelter (Don-20 minutes) – review feedback sent by youth shelter representatives on weekend fundraising event needs. Outcome: decision on how the youth committee will support the fundraiser, volunteers to help, develop a set of recommendations that will be brought to Executive Board.
  - Review evaluations from union orientation workshop in February (Sarah-10 minutes). Outcome: Is another education workshop worth doing and, if so, who will volunteer to search out options for another topic.
- 5. New Business (Anne-30 minutes)**
  - Quick go-around assessing young members needs around workplace safety education (15 minutes)
  - Discussion on possibility of inviting a guest speaker to lead a forum on young workers safety issues in June in collaboration with the Education Committee.
- 6. Other Items**

Section  
Three

Young Workers Committee  
Resources



**UNIFOR**

Young Workers | Jeunes au travail

# Young Workers Committee Resources

## ***Unifor Constitution***

The Unifor Constitution sets out the core principles, structures, objectives and function of the union. The Constitution is written in plain-language, and can be accessed online at: <http://www.unifor.org/en/about-unifor/constitution>

## ***Unifor Website***

Unifor's website is filled with useful information and resources for members and activists, including current news stories, campaign information, member services, and more. Visit: [www.unifor.org](http://www.unifor.org)

## ***Unifor Young Workers Regional and Canadian Council Standing Committees***

Unifor is comprised of four regions across the country (Atlantic, Ontario, Prairies and British Columbia), and also Quebec. Each of these regions maintains its own Regional Council, a parliamentary body that includes elected delegates from the various local unions in those jurisdictions. These Regional Councils meeting twice per year.

Each Council has its own set of bylaws, and maintains its own Standing Committees – including a Young Workers Committee. The Committee is open to all elected delegates, and special delegates, 35 years of age and younger. The Committee also elects 3 representatives to lead its work, including one chairperson. The 3 elected representatives from each region comprise Unifor's Canadian Council Young Workers Committee that meets, in person, once every 3 years.

To learn more about the Regional Council Committees, email: [youngworkers@unifor.org](mailto:youngworkers@unifor.org)  
For more information about the Quebec Council Committee, email: [jeunesautravail@unifor.org](mailto:jeunesautravail@unifor.org)

## ***Unifor Young Workers Newsletter (Echo)***

The Echo is a publication of the Unifor National Office devoted entirely to highlighting the work of young union activists and commenting on issues that affect young workers. Each issue of the Echo is available online (in both English and French) and can be accessed here: <http://www.unifor.org/en/whats-new/newsletters>  
The Echo is published twice each year.

## ***Unifor Young Workers Network***

The Unifor Young Workers Network is a group of young members from across Canada. Our union can have potentially hundreds of young workers committees, in local unions from coast-to-coast. The Network aims to connect them all together, and facilitate campaigns, communication and information-sharing.  
To join the Network, email: [youngworkers@unifor.org](mailto:youngworkers@unifor.org)

## ***Unifor Young Workers Conferences***

Unifor holds a national Young Workers Conference every two years, and is open to all members that are 35 years of age and younger. Conference call letters are sent out to every Unifor local in the country, encouraging leadership to send delegates. Conference call letters are also circulated through the Young Workers Network and on the Unifor website.

To find out when the next Unifor Young Workers conference is being held, contact:  
youngworkers@unifor.org

## ***Unifor Young Workers Liaison***

Unifor staff has been assigned to oversee the work of the union's Young Workers Program. There is one staff liaison based out of the Unifor National Office in Toronto, and another staff based out of Quebec. These liaisons are responsible for assisting the start-up of young worker committees, coordinating the work of young members and organizing the Young Workers Conference, among other duties.

To contact the staff liaison email: youngworkers@unifor.org or jeunesautravail@unifor.org

## ***Canadian Labour Congress and Provincial Federations of Labour***

Unifor plays an active role in the Canadian Labour Congress' (CLC) Young Workers Advisory Committee, as well as with various young workers committees at the provincial federations of labour.

Official appointments to these committees are made through the Unifor National Office (often, federations require that each affiliate submit one person as an official representative on the committee, sometimes for voting purposes). However, local unions are free to encourage the participation of their members in these committees, as they see fit.

For more information on the CLC and provincial federation young workers committees contact your local president or email: youngworkers@unifor.org

## ***Education Courses***

The Unifor Education Department offers an extensive labour education program both in the areas where our members live as well as at our Unifor Education Centre in Port Elgin, Ontario. The union offers courses on a variety of subjects that range in length from one-day workshops to intensive four week programs. Unifor boasts one of the most comprehensive and sophisticated education programs for union members in Canada!

To view the courses Unifor offers, visit: <http://www.unifor.org/en/member-services/education>  
To find out about regional workshops, registration information and other matters, email:  
education@unifor.org

# Young Workers Committee Resources

## *Movies About Workers, Unions and Struggle*

(The following list of labour films includes a number of classics. For additional lists of challenging and relevant films about working people, google 'labour films'.)

### **American Dream** (1990 Barbara Kopple)

The film recounts an unsuccessful strike in the heartland of America against the Hormel Foods Corporation.

### **The Big One** (1997 Michael Moore)

On his book tour, Michael Moore exposes more wrongdoing by greedy big businesses and callous politicians around America.

### **Billy Elliot** (2000 Stephen Daldry)

It's the coming-of-age story of a young boy, Billy, who through his unexpected love of dance, embarks on a journey of self-discovery in the world of picket lines, cultural stereotypes, a family in crisis and a headstrong ballet teacher.

### **Black Gold** (2006 Marc & Nick Francis)

An in-depth look at the world of coffee and global trade. When a \$3 cup of coffee nets the farmer six cents, something has to be done... a Co-Operative?

### **Bombay Calling** (2006 Ben Addelman & Samir Mallal)

Bombay Calling delves into the lives of a group of young Indians working outsourced jobs at a call center in Bombay.

### **Bound for Glory** (1976 Hal Ashby)

This film is an excellent biography of Woody Guthrie, one of America's greatest folk singers. He left his dust-devastated Texas home in the 1930s to find work, and discovered the suffering and strength of America's working class, organizing and singing all the way.

### **Brassed Off** (1996 Mark Herman)

In existence for a hundred years, Grimley Colliery Brass band is as old as the mine. But the miners are now deciding whether to fight to keep the pit open, and the future for town and band looks bleak.

### **Bread & Roses** (2000 Ken Loach)

After Maya, an illegal Mexican immigrant, joins her Sister at work in the States, she meets an activist who encourages them to protest for trade union rights. It's a grim drama about the plight of seemingly invisible office cleaners in contemporary L.A. who often earn as little as \$6 a day without benefits.

### **Devil's Miner** (2005 Kief Davidson & Richard Ladkani)

'The Devil's Miner' tells the story of 14-year-old Basilio who worships the devil for protection while working in a Bolivian silver mine to support his family.

### **Germinal** (1993 Claude Berri)

Mid 19th century in northern France. The story is about a coal miner's town. The workers are exploited by the mine's owner. One day, they decide to go on strike, and the authorities repress them. Also made in 1963 and 1913.

**Grapes of Wrath** (1940 John Ford)

A poor Midwest family is forced off of their land. They travel to California, suffering the misfortunes of the homeless in the Great Depression. Considered by many to be a cinematic classic.

**H2O** (2004 Charles Biname)

When Canada's Prime Minister drowns in what appears to be a boating accident, his son takes office and is drawn into a deceptive world of power and corruption. Canada's greatest resource is at risk.

**Harlan County U.S.A.** (1976 Barbara Kopple)

Director Barbara Kopple won her first Oscar for showing us the inside of a bitterly violent Coal Miner's Strike in Harlan County, Kentucky. From the 4 am pickets to the Women's auxiliary meetings, nothing is spared.

**How Green Was My Valley** (1941 John Ford)

At the turn of the century in a Welsh mining village, the Morgans raise coal-mining sons and hope their youngest will find a better life. Lots of atmosphere, very sentimental view of pre-union miners' lives.

**Killing Floor, The** (1985 Bill Duke)

During World War I, a poor black Southerner travels north to Chicago to get work in the city's slaughterhouses, where he becomes embroiled in the organized labor movement. He becomes prominent as a leader of fellow African-Americans in the union, though many, including his best friend, view him as a sell-out.

**Manufactured Landscapes** (2006 Jennifer Baichwal)

Macro- Photographer Edward Burtynsky travels the world observing changes in landscapes due to industrial work and manufacturing.

**Manufacturing Consent** (1992 Mark Achbar & Peter Wintonick)

A film about the noted American linguist/political dissident, Noam Chomsky, and his warning about corporate media's role in modern propaganda.

**Matewan** (1987 John Sayles)

A labor union organizer comes to an embattled mining community brutally and violently dominated and harassed by the mining company.

**Metropolis** (1927 Fritz Lang)

In a futuristic city sharply divided between the working class and the city planners, the son of the city's mastermind falls in love with a working class prophet who predicts the coming of a savior to mediate their differences.

**Modern Times** (1936 Charles Chaplin)

The Tramp struggles to live in modern industrial society with the help of a young homeless woman.

**Mondovina** (2004 Jonathan Nossiter)

A documentary on the impact of globalization on the world's different wine regions.

**Norma Rae** (1979 Martin Ritt)

A young single mother and textile worker agrees to help unionize her mill despite the problems and dangers involved. Sally Fields Oscar Winning performance.

**North Country** (2005 Niki Caro)

A fictionalized account of the first major successful sexual harassment case in the United States -- Jenson vs. Eveleth Mines, where a woman who endured a range of abuse while working as a miner filed and won the landmark 1984 lawsuit.

**Organizer, The** (1963 Mario Monicelli)

The story of exploited textile factory workers in Turin, Italy at the turn of the century and their beginnings of their fight for better working conditions. Professor Sinigaglia (Marcello Mastroianni) is sent by (presumably) the Socialists to help them organize their strike and give form to their struggle.

**Paperclips** (2004 Elliot Berlin & Joe Fab)

As a part of their study of the Holocaust, the children of the Whitwell, TN Middle School try to collect 6 million paper clips representing the 6 million Jews killed by the Nazis.

**Pete Seeger, The Power of Song** (2007 Jim Brown)

Interviews, archival footage and home movies are used to illustrate a social history of folk artists Pete Seeger.

**Prairie Giant** (2006 John M. Smith)

A mini-series based on the work of Canadian political icon Tommy Douglas.

**Roger & Me** (1989 Michael Moore)

Director Michael Moore pursues GM CEO Roger Smith to confront him about the harm he did to Flint, Michigan with his massive downsizing.

**Salt of the Earth** (1954 Herbert J. Biberman)

The film is about a labor strike in a zinc mine in New Mexico in the early 1950s, led by Mexican-Americans and Anglo miners. The film shows how the miners (the union men and their wives), the company, and the police react during the strike. Salt of the Earth is one of the first pictures to advance the feminist social and political point-of-view.

**Silkwood** (1983 Mike Nichols)

The story of Karen Silkwood, a metallurgy worker at a plutonium processing plant who was purposefully contaminated, psychologically tortured and possibly murdered to prevent her from exposing blatant worker safety violations at the plant. With Meryl Streep, Kurt Russell, & Cher.

**Sunset Story** (2003 Laura Gabbert)

Lucille and Irja are retired residents of Sunset Hall, a Los Angeles home for the elderly. Residents of Sunset Hall are retired radicals; they have retired from work but not from protesting against injustice.

**Take, The** (2004 Avi Lewis)

In suburban Buenos Aires, thirty unemployed auto-parts workers walk into their idle factory, roll out sleeping mats and refuse to leave. All they want is to re-start the silent machines. But this simple act - the take - has the power to turn the globalization debate on its head.

**Wobblies, The** (1979 Stewart Bird & Deborah Shaffer)

The film is a well-constructed film--with lots of interviews with surviving union members from the early days and vintage footage chronicling the history of the I.W.W..

**Yes Men, The** (2003 Dan Ollman, Sarah Price & Chris Smith)

Anti-corporate activists travel from conference to conference, impersonating members of the World Trade Organization. Not for the faint of heart.

# Web Links

Assembly of First Nations [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca)

Avaaz.org [www.avaaz.org](http://www.avaaz.org)

Canada Without Poverty [www.canadawithoutpoverty.org](http://www.canadawithoutpoverty.org)

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives [www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca)

Canadian Federation of Students [www.cfs-fcee.ca](http://www.cfs-fcee.ca)

Canadian Labour Congress [www.clc-ctc.ca](http://www.clc-ctc.ca)

Canadian Youth Climate Coalition [www.ourclimate.ca](http://www.ourclimate.ca)

Campaign2000 [www.campaign2000.ca](http://www.campaign2000.ca)

Check Your Head (B.C.) <http://checkyourhead.org>

Common Frontiers [www.commonfrontiers.ca](http://www.commonfrontiers.ca)

Council of Canadians [www.canadians.org](http://www.canadians.org)

Daily Bread Food Bank [www.dailybread.ca](http://www.dailybread.ca)

Egale Canada [www.egale.ca](http://www.egale.ca)

Rabble.ca [www.rabble.ca](http://www.rabble.ca)

Sierra Youth Coalition [www.syc-cjs.org/](http://www.syc-cjs.org/)

United for a Fair Economy [www.faireconomy.ca](http://www.faireconomy.ca)

United Way [www.unitedway.ca](http://www.unitedway.ca)

Youth Canada (Government of Canada site) <http://www.youth.gc.ca/eng/home.shtml>

Section  
Four

About Unifor



**UNIFOR**

Young Workers | Jeunes au travail

# About Unifor

## ***Unifor's Mission***

Unifor strives to protect the economic rights of our members and every member of the workforce (employed or unemployed). We are committed to building the strongest and most effective union to bargain on behalf of our members, working with our members to improve their rights in the workplace, and extending the benefits of unions to non-unionized workers and other interested Canadians.

## ***Unifor's History***

Unifor was officially formed on August 31, 2013, at a Founding Convention in Toronto, Ontario. It marked the coming together of the Canadian Auto Workers union (CAW) and the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP) – two of Canada's largest and most influential labour unions.

The birth of Unifor represented a sign of hope for the Canadian labour movement, and working people more generally.

For decades, union membership (as a share of total employment) had been in steady decline – particularly in the private sector. Running parallel to this decline in union density had been a sharp rise in income inequality, growing threats to retirement security, chronic unemployment and underemployment (particularly for young people) and a noticeable rise in insecure, precarious forms of work, especially among newcomers. The decline of union influence coincided with the rise of grossly imbalanced business-friendly policies, starting in the 1980s, that included tax cuts, labour market deregulation and corporate-led free trade deals.

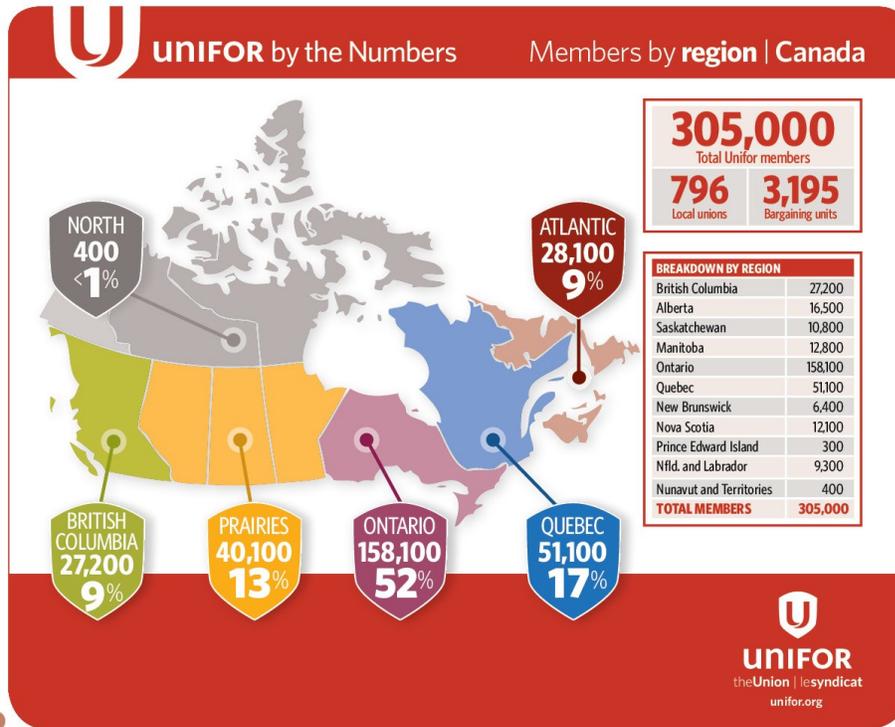
Unifor was a bold answer to the question: “How do Canadian unions respond to the changing economy and these challenging times?”

Its large and diverse membership (that includes nearly every sector of the economy), makes it one of the most representative voices of our national economy. Its representative organizational structure and innovative forms of membership means it can better address regional economic and political matters on behalf of working people. Its core mandate – to be an effective union that is built by its members and deeply rooted in community – brings Unifor's work into the day-to-day lives of Canadian families.

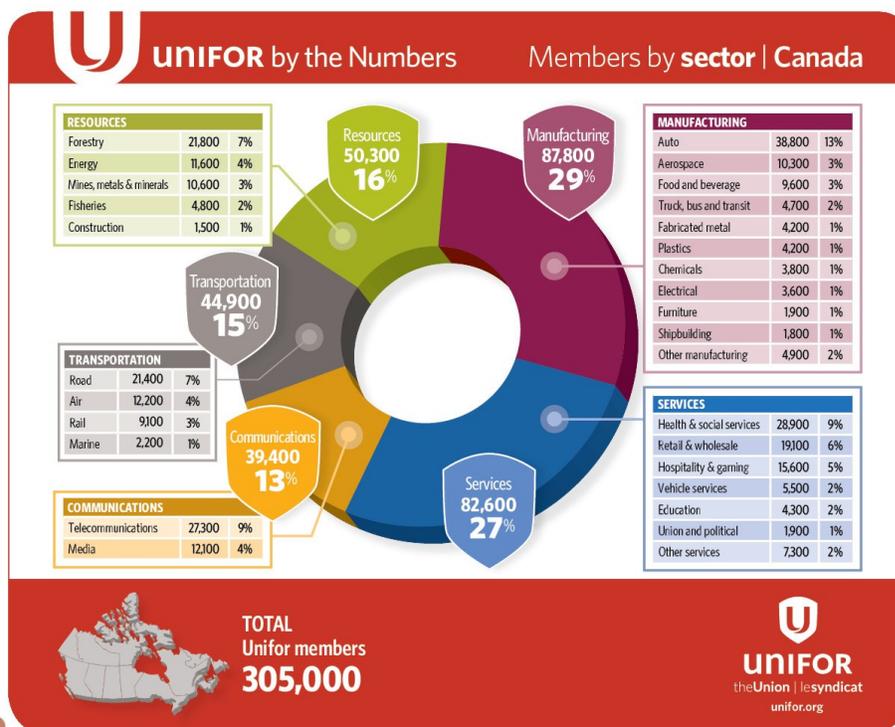
The Unifor project began as a discussion about union renewal in the fall of 2011 between former CAW President Ken Lewenza and former CEP President Dave Coles. Informal discussions led to formal talks among union leadership and staff. A formal discussion paper was prepared, which led to a comprehensive, open and inclusive union revitalization project, spanning 20-months. Members were invited to follow developments of the New Union Project through regularly published reports, a frequently updated website, and were also asked to participate in telephone town hall meetings and online polls.

From its inception, Unifor has become a source of optimism and inspiration that a fairer, more secure future can be won for working people, that unions can adapt to changing times and remain a relevant voice for workplace and social justice.

# About Unifor



1



2

# About Unifor



## UNIFOR by the Numbers

## Member snapshot | Canada

Air Canada  
Bell Aliant  
Bell Canada

**25 largest employers**  
LISTED ALPHABETICALLY

- Bell Technical Solutions
- Bombardier
- Caesar's Windsor
- Chrysler
- CN Rail
- Coast Mountain Bus
- CP Rail
- Fairmont Hotels
- First Student
- Ford Motor Company
- General Motors
- Jazz Air
- Metro Grocery
- NAV Canada
- Prett & Whitney
- Resolute Forest Products
- Rio Tinto Alcan
- Sasktel
- St. Joseph's Health Centre
- Suncor
- Tembec
- VIA Rail

- PUBLIC SECTOR**
- Public utilities
  - Passenger rail
  - Education
  - Public transit
  - Social services
  - Health care
  - Private

**17% PUBLIC SECTOR**

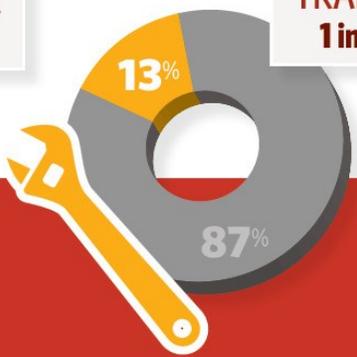
**86,000 WOMEN**  
ALMOST 1 in 3



**51,000 PUBLIC SECTOR**  
**1 in 6**

**83% PRIVATE**

**40,000 SKILLED TRADES**  
**1 in 8**



**AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE**  
**\$24.17**

**Largest employers' share of members:**  
**24%**



**UNIFOR**  
theUnion | lesyndicat  
unifor.org

## HAVE QUESTIONS?

For more information on the Unifor Young Workers Program or to Join the Unifor Young Workers Network contact:

**email:** [youngworkers@unifor.org](mailto:youngworkers@unifor.org)

**call:** 1-800-268-5763

**write:** Unifor Young Workers  
205 Placer Court  
Toronto, Ontario  
M2H 3H9



**UNIFOR**

Young Workers | Jeunes au travail