



**IFMETALL**

**Join us in making  
an impact at your  
workplace**

**5 great reasons  
to get involved  
in the union**



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# How to get involved in the union

For example, you can get involved in the union by attending union training courses and/or attending member meetings and making your voice heard at your workplace. Many people who are involved in the union are elected representatives. And being elected is a bit like it sounds – a person who has gained the trust of their colleagues to represent them on various issues at work is elected to this “position of trust”.

There are many different types of elected positions. In one position, you act as a negotiator and support your colleagues, be it in an actual negotiation or in a conversation with your manager. In another position, you can combat discrimination at your workplace as a gender equality officer, and in a third, you can, for example, be a safety officer and push your employer to provide new work shoes.

So, if you want to be elected, you need the trust of your colleagues. There are over twenty different elected positions, so you're sure to find something at your workplace in which you can get involved.

All elected representatives are offered free training, so that they can perform their assignments in the best possible way.



# 5 great reasons to get involved in the union

The union is you and your co-workers A strong union demands that many of us get involved.

In this brochure, we present five great reasons why you should get involved in the union.



# **1. You get the opportunity to influence the work environment at your workplace**

As an elected representative, you play an important role in influencing the work environment at your workplace. You can help reduce stress and pressure by highlighting your and your colleagues' demands for a reasonable workload and a good work environment.

You can participate in safety inspections and discover safety deficiencies that the employer needs to fix in order for you to have a safe work environment.

If there are changes at your workplace, such as re-organisation or the introduction of new work methods, you have the opportunity to influence decisions so that they are implemented in a way that benefits you and your colleagues.

In addition, you can work to ensure that you have more flexible working hours and schedules at your workplace, thus ensuring a better work-life balance.

## **2. You get the opportunity to develop yourself and your workplace**

As an elected representative within the union, you take on an important responsibility – you represent your colleagues on issues related to your workplace.

This gives you valuable experience and knowledge of key aspects of working life, such as protection work, gender issues, and negotiation. This can benefit your future career and enhance your CV.

You can help develop your workplace by making it safer and creating better conditions for workers.

In addition, you are offered training about various working life-related issues, from negotiation to work environment. Training is usually free of charge and conducted during paid working hours.







### **3. You get the opportunity to influence salaries/wages at your workplace**

As an elected representative, you get the opportunity to influence salaries/wages at your workplace. The stronger we are together, the greater the influence we can have in wage negotiations. That's why it's important to have many union members at all our workplaces and numerous elected representatives who can speak for members.

All union clubs have negotiating mandates. This means that if you have a club at your workplace, you can be involved in the negotiation of salaries/wages, benefits and other terms.

No club at your workplace? In that case, you can have a branch representative. If there is no club at your workplace, your branch representative plays an especially important role in advocating for better pay conditions for you and your co-workers. That person can be you!

## **4. You get the opportunity to get involved in what you find interesting**

As an elected representative, you get the opportunity to get involved in the areas you find interesting.

For example, you can become a negotiator and work for better conditions in the workplace, or become a safety officer and ensure a safe and good work environment.

You can also take responsibility for gender issues and work to create a more inclusive workplace, or become an insurance information officer and help your colleagues understand their rights and benefits.

These are just a few of the various elected positions that exist. In other words, there are many ways to get involved and make a difference!

## **5. As an elected representative, you get the opportunity to contribute to something big – to be elected is to take responsibility**

As an elected representative, you get the chance to be part of something bigger and make a difference in the lives of you and your co-workers.

By acting as an elected representative, you help improve your working conditions, achieve greater safety at work, and drive issues that matter to the people at your workplace.

We're stronger together – the more people involved, the greater the impact we have on negotiations and decisions. When you become an elected representative, you take responsibility for both yourself and your co-workers.

# What elected positions exist?

As you are surely aware, there are many a myriad of different elected positions. We have compiled them all in our "Uppdragsguiden".



On the next pages of this brochure, we'll give examples of some common positions in a union club.

If you do not have a club at your workplace, you may have similar positions in your branch.

Being an elected representative is a big responsibility, and we offer plenty of free training courses to help ensure that you can shoulder it well. Training is an important part of being an elected representative.





# The job of a negotiator

As an elected negotiator, you play an important role in improving the working conditions of your co-workers. You represent the members of our union in negotiations with your employer, and your work can affect the salaries/wages and working conditions of both individuals and the group.

You ensure compliance with laws and agreements, while striving to resolve problems smoothly. By being well-prepared and maintaining good contacts with our members, you help create a fair and safe workplace.

This is meaningful work that makes a difference in both the short and long term.



## Key tasks of a negotiator:



1. Represent your co-workers in negotiations



2. Ensure compliance with labour laws and agreements at your workplace



3. Work to create a safe and fair work environment for you and your co-workers

# The job of a safety officer

As an elected safety officer, you have an important role in creating a safe and secure workplace. You represent your co-worker on work environment issues and ensure that the employer complies with laws and regulations. You detect and criticise problems in the work environment, participate in safety inspections, and have the right to halt unsafe work.

Through your work, you help prevent accidents and improve the workplace, both physically and mentally. Your commitment makes a big difference to the safety and well-being of your colleagues at work.

## Key tasks of a safety officer:



**1. Make sure your employer complies with  
work environment laws and regulations**



**2. Detect and criticise work environment  
risks at your workplace**



**3. Halt work, if safety demands it.**

# **The job of a gender equality officer**

As an elected gender equality officer, you play an important role in creating a level playing field for everyone at the workplace. You lead the club's gender equality work and ensure that all members have the same chance to influence both their work environment and union work.

You combat discrimination and make sure your club takes gender equality into account in every decision you make. You also contribute knowledge on issues such as salary mapping and negotiations. Through your work, you help create a fair and inclusive workplace.

## Important tasks of a gender equality officer:



**1. Lead the gender equality work – advocate for a level playing field for everyone at the workplace**



**2. Make sure your union club considers gender equality in every decision you make**



**3. Contribute knowledge about gender equality, for example in the mapping of salaries/wages and in negotiations**

# **The job of an insurance information officer**

As an elected insurance information officer, you play an important role in helping your co-workers understand their insurance coverage. You inform your co-workers about the insurance policies that apply by law and agreement, and support members in understanding how to use them.

By keeping everyone up to date on insurance terms and changes, you contribute to increased security at the workplace. You make a big difference by making sure everyone knows about their rights and protections, while learning more and developing themselves.



## Important tasks of an insurance information officer:



1. Provide information about your co-workers' insurance coverage (and your own)



2. Support your co-workers in understanding how they can best use their insurance



3. Keep track of changes to the terms of your policies

# **I want to become an elected representative! What do I do?**

Being elected is first and foremost about gaining the trust of your colleagues to represent them at your workplace. Talk to your co-workers and show your commitment!

If you have a union club at your workplace, you should turn to them first. If you don't have a club, contact your branch.







# What is a collective agreement?

In this brochure, you read about how you can get involved in the union, and why you should.

Many of the conditions at a workplace are regulated and determined by something very important: the collective agreement! Among other things, it determines your salaries/wages, working hours, vacation days, and the compensation you should get for working overtime. But it is also in the collective agreement that we agree with the employer on the terms of our insurance and pensions.

The collective agreement is an agreement between the employer and the union aimed at ensuring fair conditions and reducing the risk of conflict. The collective agreement may also state what obligations the employer has in the event of redundancies or relocations, so that you have clear and fair guidelines to lean on in such a situation.

# So, how is the content of the collective agreement decided?

The content of your collective agreement is determined through a multi-stage negotiation. The negotiation begins at the national level and then extends all the way down to your workplace. On the next few pages, we explain how this works. In this explanation, IF Metall is the negotiating union.



# IF Metall negotiates with employers at the central level

At the central level (national level), IF Metall and the employers' organisation for a particular industry or professional group negotiate a central collective agreement.

An example of an employer organisation is Teknikarbetsgivarna. They represent companies involved in everything from automobile manufacturing to engineering and computer technology. IF Metall negotiates with the Teknikarbetsgivarna about the collective agreement known as "Teknikavtalet IF Metall". Teknikavtalet is just one of the many agreements to which IF Metall is a negotiating party. IF Metall has over 30 central agreements in a wide range of industries.

IF Metall and the employers' organisation negotiate basic conditions such as salary/wage increases, working hours, and general working conditions. Once consensus is achieved, an agreement is signed that applies to all workplaces with collective agreements in that industry.

## **You negotiate and adapt the agreement based on your workplace**

Once the central agreement is in place, it may need to be adapted to your workplace. Your employer negotiates directly at the workplace with local union representatives from IF Metall. IF Metall's representatives may include one or more of your co-workers who serve as elected representatives, or the union may be represented by a local ombudsman. The ombudsman is employed at IF Metall and comes to negotiate for you at your workplace.

Local negotiations can iron out details that are not regulated in the central agreement, and/or can negotiate how what has been decided in the central agreement should be adapted at your workplace. This may include specific working hours, salary distribution, or work environment measures that are particularly relevant where you work.

## You start using the agreement

Once your local negotiations are complete, the adapted local agreement becomes the collective agreement that applies to you and your co-workers. The agreement then applies for a certain period of time, and both the union and employers agree to comply with it until it expires. During the term of the agreement, neither IF Metall nor the employer may use industrial actions, such as strikes or lockouts. As the agreement period approaches its end, this process restarts.





# Here's why you should get involved in the union!

1. You get the opportunity to influence your work environment!
2. You get the opportunity to develop yourself and your workplace
3. You get the opportunity to influence your salary/ wages!
4. You get to get involved in what you find interesting!
5. You can contribute to something important!

**Curious about how you can get involved? Contact us to start making a difference!**



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