



About the ITF

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is a truly global organisation. It is a federation of around 700 transport trade unions in some 150 countries, representing over 4.5 million workers.

The ITF represents transport workers at world level and promotes their interests. It is committed to building strong trade unionism and to defending human and trade union rights. The ITF is one of nine global union federations allied with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

Join us!

What you can do:

The ITF publishes materials electronically and maintains a web presence with information about all its current activities. For actions you can support, campaigns in your industry or affiliation details, please visit:

www.itfglobal.org



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The ITF was founded in 1896 in London by European seafarers' and dockers' union leaders who organised internationally against strike breakers. Today the ITF's industrial sections bring together workers from every world region across the maritime, land-based transport and aviation sectors. The ITF maintains regional offices and special departments that promote women transport workers' and young transport workers' participation.

What the ITF does

The ITF supports its member trade unions as they defend workers in today's global economy. Member unions meet together to decide policy and strategy and then implement initiatives through work programmes, projects and campaigns. Specialist task groups deal with more specific and technical issues.

“Only coordinated global action can effectively challenge a multinational company.”

Solidarity

The ITF promotes solidarity initiatives and supports its affiliates to take solidarity action. Transport unions in conflict in one country can and do benefit from direct help from unions elsewhere. International pressure often proves to be a major factor in winning union battles.

“Unions respond impressively at short notice to calls for solidarity. It's inspiring to see practical action.”

Organising programmes

The ITF's major programmes focus on organising – building trade union presence and strength – in transport companies and along supply chains. They promote participative methods, foster activism and further equality. They fight for decent work as well as social and safety standards. The ITF works especially closely with its sister global union federations to involve workers who are outside the transport sector but part of supply chains.

“If union members network, get involved and support others getting a rough deal in the company, then they help themselves too – they can stop the rot.”

Campaigns and projects

To highlight issues of particular concern to transport workers, the ITF runs international campaigns and projects related to its major work programmes. Examples have included rail safety, HIV/AIDS and combatting violence against women. The ITF's oldest and



best-known campaign is against Flag of Convenience shipping (FOCs)

“Setting up the union was the only way to face up to the issues of privatisation and the greed of the multinational employers, particularly as local labour laws were not good to the workers”

Representation

The ITF represents transport workers' interests in international bodies that take decisions affecting jobs, employment conditions or safety; for example, the International Labour Organization, the International Maritime Organization, and the International Civil Aviation Organization.

How the ITF works

Affiliation fees of its member unions finance the ITF's activities. The ITF uses these funds to run its activities and support its affiliates. Maritime and some cross-sectoral activities have their own special funding, which supports the campaign against FOCs and provides welfare support for seafarers worldwide.

“We can't revitalise without gender balance. Transport may be largely a male-dominated occupation but we miss opportunities if women aren't organised. Unions need to promote women's leadership.”

Member unions run the ITF. The main policy-making body is the congress, which meets every four years. All affiliates can send voting delegates to the congress. They elect the president, vice-presidents, the general secretary and the executive board. The executive board meets regularly and is in overall charge of the ITF between congresses. Any trade union with members in the transport industry can apply to join the ITF. There is a procedure that a union must follow before it can become an affiliate. For an application form and further information, please contact the ITF

Industrial sections

- Civil aviation
- Dockers
- Fisheries
- Inland navigation
- Railways
- Road transport
- Seafarers
- Tourism

“By being part of a union you own it; by promoting and advancing a collective self-interest, you can have a clear effect on your quality of life now and in the future.”