

Freedom of association



RESPONSIBLE SOURCING POLICY:

#8 All workers are free to exercise their right to form and/or join trade unions or to refrain from doing so and to bargain collectively



The world of work is changing – and we need to continue to uphold fundamental rights and effectively implement ILO core conventions, including the right to freedom of association.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



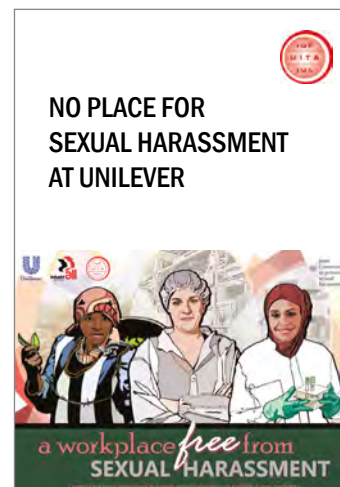
Respecting the right to freedom of association

Freedom of association means that workers are able to form and/or join trade unions of their choice, and to bargain collectively. It is a fundamental human right.

Trade unions play a critical role in representing and supporting workers. Around 80% of our total workforce and around 89% of our manufacturing employees are covered by an independent trade union or collective bargaining agreements. This equates to 285 independent trade unions that we engage and negotiate with on an annual basis around the world.

Working with trade unions at the global, regional and local level

We work extensively with trade unions, including through joint working groups and formal consultations, as well as through the day-to-day interactions that our leadership teams have with union representatives in the workplace. We have working groups in place to address the well-being of our employees, the rights of temporary labour employees, sustainable employment, women's rights and sexual harassment in the workplace. Our relationships with trade unions help us have constructive engagements on workplace practices, enabling us to be proactive and pre-emptive in solving industrial and employment relations issues.



Approximate number of workers in our extended supply chain potentially impacted:

50,000

Top three countries where issues are found:



When a non-compliance is found we estimate the possible number of people impacted. See [Appendix III](#) for details. Our suppliers put remediation plans in place for every non-compliance. Data source: USQS Global Responsible Sourcing Report NC Audit data 2016-YTD 2020 audits.

The Memorandum of Understanding that we have with the [IUF](#) (International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations) and [IndustriALL](#) confirms our commitment to biannual meetings and communications between meetings as deemed necessary. These biannual meetings are a face-to-face engagement between Unilever's senior executive and industrial relations leaders and IUF and IndustriALL leadership and representatives. These discussions allow us to address human and trade union rights arising within the Group's operations and overarching issues and set the tone for local management/trade union relations.

In 2020, to meet the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, we had regular communication with employees and local union representatives on the ground. This enabled us to deep dive in specific countries and sites, and to work with local teams and union representatives to resolve issues.

In Europe, we work with the Unilever European Works Council (UEWC), an annual forum in which union representatives and management from all countries and sites of Unilever in Europe come together. In 2019, the UEWC signed the declaration on the [Future Framework of Work](#) to further strengthen the position of individual employees in times of change and to prepare employees for the future of work. We also work through the European Core Committee (ECC), a monthly forum where we discuss ongoing topics such as employee rights, organisational changes and strategy.

In the USA, we have recently committed to the IUF and affiliated UFCW union that we will continue to recognise employee rights through a transparent process should employees on our sites wish to unionise. In all other countries with unionised sites, we will either undertake local trade union negotiations at site level or regional/sector negotiations at national bargaining level.



“It is important that we continue to work with a partnership mindset with our unions around the world in order to build a more collaborative approach to jointly solve future of Work requirements.”

Antoinette Irvine
VP HR Global Supply Chain,
Unilever