



backgrounder

The National Union and the Global Union Movement

June 2018

Increasingly, the major institutions of the international labour movement are being referred to as *Global Unions*.

Global Unions comprise the following:

- The **International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)**, which is a federation of national labour union centrals (like the Canadian Labour Congress) from around the world.
- The **Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC)** to the OECD, which is a federation of national labour centrals from countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The OECD is an organization of 30 member countries from developed countries (including Canada) that accept the principles of democracy and a free market economy.
- The 10 **Global Union Federations (GUFs)**, which are the international federations of unions from countries around the world that represent and organize members in specific industry sectors or occupational groups (*see below for a full list of GUFs*).

The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) is an active affiliate of the GUF known as Public Services International (PSI). NUPGE is represented at ITUC and TUAC through its affiliation with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC).

Public Services International (PSI)

The National Union is affiliated with Public Services International (PSI), the Global Union Federation (GUF) representing 20 million public sector workers who belong to over 700 unions in 163 countries and territories. (*See the section below on Global Union Federations for a brief description of the other 9 GUFs*).

Through our membership in PSI, the National Union works closely with other public sector unions in the international community to represent and defend public services and public employees.

PSI holds a World Congress every 5 years, with its last congress having recently taken place from October 30 to November 3, 2017, in Geneva, Switzerland. The National Union was entitled to send 6 delegates and 3 observers to the congress. This year's congress celebrated PSI's 110th anniversary.

Rosa Pavanelli, the first woman to take the leadership of PSI in its history, was unanimously re-elected for a second 5-year term as General Secretary by over 100 affiliates and 1,000 delegates.

UNISON general secretary Dave Prentis was unanimously re-elected as Public Services International's president at PSI's 30th World Congress in Geneva in November 2017. Prentis has been president since 2010, and will now continue in that role until the next congress in 2022.

The National Union plays an active and important role within PSI. We are one of 7 national Canadian public sector unions affiliated with PSI. The 6 other national Canadian unions affiliated with PSI are:

- Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
- the Public Service Alliance of Canada/Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada (PSAC)
- Service Employees International Union—Canada (SEIU/UIES)
- Association of Canadian Financial Officers (ACFO)
- Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers (PAFSO)
- Local 2228 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (Local 2228 IBEW).

5 Québec-based unions are also PSI affiliates. They are as follows:

- Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ)
- Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ)
- Syndicat de la fonction publique et parapublique du Québec (SFPQ)
- Syndicat de professionnelles et professionnels du gouvernement du Québec (SPGQ)
- and Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des Services Sociaux (APTS).

Canadian representation on PSI's Executive Board, on the Inter-Americas Regional Executive, and on the World Women's Committee is rotated every two and a half years among the leaders of the 4 Canadian national affiliates.

NUPGE's President Larry Brown assumed the position of the titular member for Canada on the PSI Executive Board and on its Inter-American Regional Executive Committee (IAMREC) immediately following the November 2017 congress and will hold the position until the summer of 2020.

The Canadian representative for the PSI Women's Committee is now a CUPE member, who will serve until the summer of 2020. Then the position will be held by a SEIU member. NUPGE's Secretary-Treasurer Elisabeth Ballermann will represent the National Union on the Women's Committee of IAMREC.

International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) is the world's largest union federation. It is the international federation of national labour centrals from around the world and has 331 affiliated member organizations in 163 countries and territories, with a total membership of 207 million workers.

ITUC had its inaugural Congress in Vienna, Austria, in November 2006 and was formed out of the merger of 2 long-standing international federations: the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), which had traditionally represented labour centrals from western countries; and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL), which traditionally represented labour centrals from the former Eastern bloc countries.

ITUC has 4 Canadian affiliates. Its largest by far is the 3.3 million-member Canadian Labour Congress/Congrès du Travail du Canada (CLC). It has 2 affiliates that are Quebec-based labour centrals: the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), which has 300,000 affiliated members and the Centrale des syndicats démocratiques (CSD), which has 71,100 affiliated members.

The National Union is represented at ITUC through the Canadian Labour Congress. The President of the CLC is a Vice-President and a member of the Executive Board of the ITUC.

Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the OECD

The Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the OECD is an international federation of national labour centrals from the 30 OECD countries that has consultative status with the OECD and its various committees.

OECD stands for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, an organization of 35 countries that accept the principles of representative democracy and a free market economy. The OECD provides a setting where governments can compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, and coordinate domestic and international policies. The mandate of the OECD is very broad. The organization is also a forum where peer pressure can act as a powerful incentive for countries to implement deregulation and other items of the global corporate agenda.

TUAC's role with the OECD is to provide a counter voice to that of the global corporate community by helping to ensure that global markets are balanced by an effective social dimension. Through regular consultations with the OECD and its secretariat, committees, and member governments, TUAC coordinates and represents the views of the union movement in the industrialized countries.

TUAC's affiliates consist of over 58 national organizations in the 30 OECD industrialized countries, which together represent some 66 million workers. TUAC operates through a small secretariat based in Paris. The Canadian Labour Congress is one of TUAC's Canadian affiliates and the CLC President is a member of TUAC's Executive Board.

Global Union Federations (GUFs)

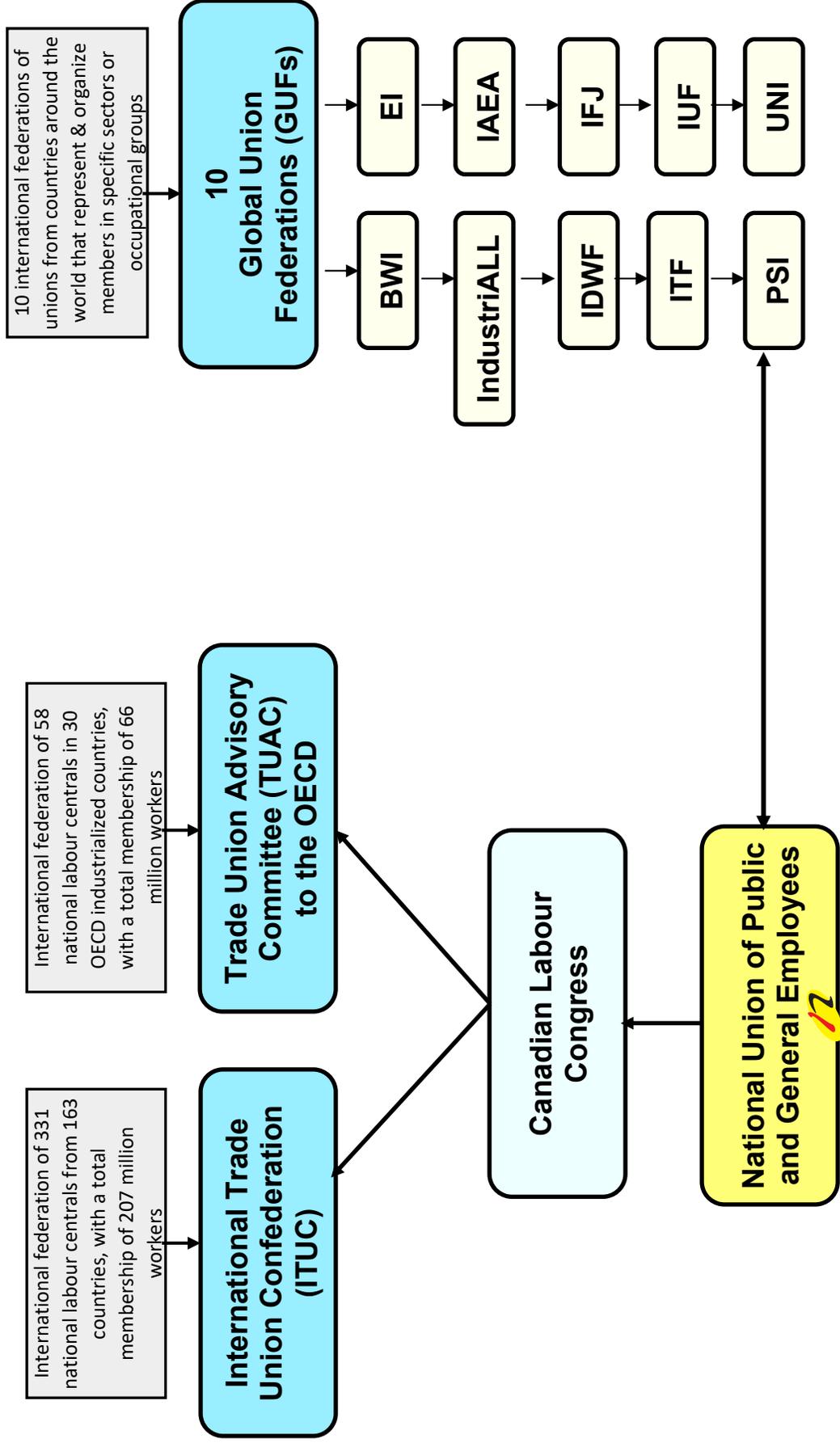
Global Union Federations (GUFs) are the international federations of unions organizing in specific industry sectors or occupational groups. Besides Public Services International (PSI), the other 9 GUFs are:

- Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI), representing 12 million members in the building, building materials, wood, forestry and allied sectors in 326 unions from 130 countries.
- Education International (EI), representing 30 million education employees in 401 unions from 171 countries.
- IndustriALL Global Union, representing 50 million workers in 140 countries in the mining, energy and manufacturing sectors.
- International Arts and Entertainment Alliance (IAEA). The alliance has 3 sections: the International Federation of Actors (FIA), which represents 90 member organizations in more than 60 countries; the International Federation of Musicians (FIM), which represents 70 organizations in 60 countries; and the Media, Entertainment and Arts section of the UNI Global Union (UNI-MEI), which brings together over 100 unions and guilds in over 70 countries.
- International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), representing over 600,000 domestic and household workers from 67 affiliates in 54 countries.
- International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), representing 600,000 journalists from 140 countries.

- International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), representing 19 million workers employed in the transport industry in 670 unions from 147 countries.
- International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), is an international federation of unions representing workers employed in agriculture and plantations, and in the preparation and manufacture of food and beverages, workers employed in hotels, restaurants and catering services, and in all stages of tobacco processing. It represents 10 million workers from 414 trade unions in 128 countries.
- UNI Global Union (UNI), representing 20 million workers from over 900 trade unions in the fastest growing sectors in the world – skills and services.



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NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES

- B. C. Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU)
- Health Sciences Association of British Columbia (HSABC)
- Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA)
- Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union (SGEU)
- Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union (MGEU)
- Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU)
- Canadian Union of Brewery and General Workers (CUBGW)
- New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees (NBU)
- Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU)
- PEI Union of Public Sector Employees (PEI UPSE)
- Newfoundland & Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE)

The National Union of Public and General Employees is an affiliate of the Canadian Labour Congress and a member of Public Services International.

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