

UNITED FOR A  
GOOD LIFE



ENGINEER ■ ING

Understand more about the world  
of employment

**Your guide to the key facts**





*You have a right to fair conditions*

## **Freedom of association – how does it apply to you?**

### **“For every individual and every profession”**

The right to organise into unions is a basic right – one that is specially protected in the constitution. An individual cannot be favourably or unfavourably discriminated on these grounds. The same rule applies to foreign citizens.

Freedom of association is also used by employers – they organise into employers’ associations in order to represent their interests more effectively.

→ Basic Constitutional Law: “Freedom of Association”, Art. 9 Sec. 3

## **Employee participation - what exactly does it mean?**

### **Clear rules for more democracy**

Elected works councils and supervisory boards ensure a democratic environment within companies. By law, employers and employees are obliged to work together in finding positive solutions that are economically viable and socially responsible. A works council is elected in any company with at least 5 employees.

→ Works Constitution Act and Co-Determination Laws

## **Equal treatment – fiction or reality?**

### **If you suffer discrimination, you can sue**

From job applications and transfers to every other personnel issue – employees can take cases of discrimination to court and demand compensation for damages.

→ General Equal Treatment Act (AGG)

## Employee representatives in plants and companies

### *Who does what?*

#### *The Works Council*

**Elected by  
the work-  
force**

- negotiates the works agreements on working conditions: e.g. pay scale grouping; specific working times such as start time, breaks and company holidays; workplace health and safety provisions.
- ensures that the collective agreements and works agreements are observed.
- has a right to information, genuine rights to co-determination (e.g. in personnel issues such as recruitment, pay scale grouping, job transfers and dismissals) and the right of initiative on the subject of further training.
- is elected by the employees. Employees can seek advice from the council any time during their working hours without needing to give a reason.
- The works council and the union act as cooperating partners within the company environment.

*Over 53,000 works councillors are members of IG Metall – 73 percent of works councillors in the metal, IT and electrical industry.*

## IG Metall

- negotiates collective agreements with the employers' associations – including collective agreements about your income, working hours and holiday entitlement. On the subject of holiday entitlement: 24 days (Monday to Saturday) is the legal requirement, 30 days (Monday to Friday) is IG Metall's collective agreement.
- leads collective action within companies. Unlike the works council, IG Metall is allowed to call strikes.
- provides advice and expertise to the works councils and supports them in conflicts with employers.
- nurtures intercompany networks that enable works councils to exchange specialist information with other firms in their sector.
- represents metal, information technology and electrical industry employees in the decision-making and advisory bodies of regional and federal politics.

**Strength  
based on  
member-  
ship**

***If you are a mem-  
ber, you have an  
influence!***

## Supervisory Boards

### **Co-determination of the company**

The employees vote workforce representatives and IG Metall representatives onto the Supervisory Board. The Supervisory Board monitors the Board of Directors and is involved in determining the company's strategy. The majority on the Supervisory Board is made up of the shareholders. IG Metall representatives donate their fees from Supervisory Board duties to the charitable Hans Böckler Foundation.

## *Did you know...?*

- On average, engineers in companies bound by collective agreements earn 20 percent more than in companies without collective agreements.

Wage Indicator Research Project 2009

- IG Metall negotiates much more than just wages – it also regulates further training entitlement, parental leave, working hours, lifelong overtime accounts and retirement provisions. The specific objectives of its collective negotiations are determined by its members in a democratic process.

- Collective agreements only apply to union members – only members can get their entitlements enforced via legal action.

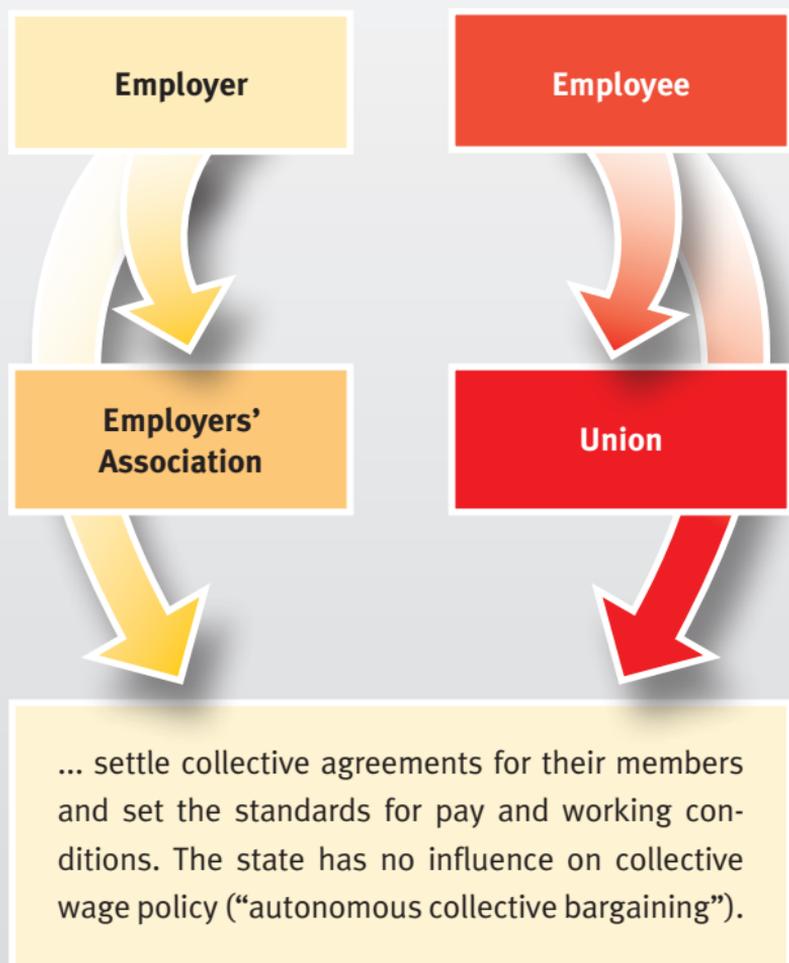
- IG Metall is completely financed by membership subscriptions.

- If you develop a patentable invention or suggest a technical improvement (as defined in the Employee Invention Act), IG Metall provides legal aid for an initial consultation with a patent attorney or specialist employee inventions lawyer. The first step is to contact your local IG Metall office.

- Membership in IG Metall is an entirely private matter. You decide how public to be about your commitment.

## Employers' Associations? Unions?

The two sides of industry. Both organise members in order to express their concerns and represent their interests as effectively as possible.



### ***Nothing lasts for ever ...***

*Each time an agreement expires, the rights and entitlements of employees are open for renegotiation. Once again, IG Metall has to push for the best possible conditions.*

# IG Metall



**IG Metall is a part of German business culture** in which different interest groups treat each other with fairness and respect.



**Many large corporations** push for international framework agreements to ensure that these strong labour relations are established in their foreign plants too. Like Daimler, for example: “DaimlerChrysler acknowledges the human right to form trade unions [...] even in those countries in which freedom of association is not protected by law.”

And VW: “Volkswagen, the unions and employee representatives respectively work together openly and in the spirit of constructive and co-operative conflict management.”



**2.3 million people** are members of IG Metall. Are you?



IG Metall is committed to **sustainable business** and **fair social conditions**.



As a membership organisation, IG Metall is **democratically** structured – its policies and key objectives are determined by its members.



**Join online:**

**[www.igmetall.de/join](http://www.igmetall.de/join)**

The subscription is one percent of your gross salary. It quickly repays itself. Through pay rises. Through the valuable information, advice and legal aid that members are entitled to. And through every single employee-friendly law that IG Metall has campaigned for.

## ***Four of the best***

**Some of the IG Metall activities that engineers and technical experts can participate in**

### **•••• Networking**

IG Metall is a huge network of useful contacts that can provide valuable help in your professional life. Make the most of it and network with colleagues from other companies.



 **Specialist Portal**

[www.engineering-igmetall.de](http://www.engineering-igmetall.de): information, advice and networking options for engineers and technical experts.

 **Research and Development Working Committee**

This brings works council members from R&D departments together for specialist meetings. All the relevant sectors are represented, along with their key companies and research institutes.

 **The Young Engineers Task Force**

The Task Force meets at IG Metall Head Office to develop training and information services. It also helps to shape the agenda on IG Metall's work for engineers and technical experts.

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