GMB

UNION

GMB Congress - get involved!

GMB Congress is a yearly conference where members from across the country come together to set the policies and priorities for the union. It's our biggest event of the year, because GMB is a democratic organisation that is run by our members, for our members.

Members who attend Congress on behalf of their GMB Region are called delegates. Any GMB member who has been a member for 53 weeks or more (so just over a year) can ask to be considered as a delegate, and we encourage everyone who might be interested to get in touch with their branch or GMB Regional Office.

Here are some frequently asked questions about Congress, and some information about how to get involved.

The opening banner ceremony (2022, Harrogate). Performed by a different region each year.

When is it?

It's always in early June. In 2023, Congress will take place from the 4th June to the 8th June in Brighton.

How can I become a delegate?

This can sound complicated, but it's not really. The basics are:

1. Your branch is entitled to nominate someone to be a delegate

2. To be considered to be a delegate, you need to let your Branch know and attend the meeting on the day your Branch will make a nomination

3. If more than one person in the Branch wants to be a delegate, your Branch will vote at that meeting on who to nominate

4. Your Branch lets your GMB Region know you're their choice by the end of December

5. On a Regional level, if there are too many nominees for the number of delegate places your region has, then there is a second election, but this time an election of Branches so every Branch gets a vote.

GMB

UNION

But there's more....

The vast majority of delegates to Congress are nominated by their Branch, but Branches or other Committees, Forums and post holders can also nominate one extra person to be a delegate as part of a 'top up' list. 10% of the delegation comes from the 'top up' list.

GMB is committed to equality, so we try as much as possible to make sure women, disabled, BAME, LGBT+ and young members are properly represented in our delegations.

If you class yourself as being in one of these groups, you should let your branch and region know. If the delegation is not balanced after the elections have happened, your Regional Committee can 'top up' the delegation to make it more representative – make sure they know you are interested!

Can I have time off work?

If you are in a recognised workplace, that may be possible. You will need to speak to your employers and reps. It can be trickier if GMB isn't organised but it is worth checking.

Do I get paid when attending?

That depends if you are on release. All delegates are entitled to claim a subsistence allowance for attending Congress.

Where do I stay?

When you're a delegate, your region will make sure you are well looked after! Accommodation will be booked for you and travel expenses paid.

What happens when we're there?

Every GMB branch can submit motions to GMB Congress (and every other year Branches can also submit changes to GMB's rules). Those motions are submitted to Regional Offices by the end of January each year.

Each day at Congress, motions are 'moved' (which means put forward) from the Congress stage by the Region that submitted the motion. Congress delegates debate whether they agree or disagree with the motion, then vote on whether they think that should be GMB policy or not (after our Executive Council has given a recommendation)

We have other events during lunch times, called fringe meetings. They can be on anything from workshops on organisation, to discussing equality in the workplace or big issues like energy and education.

Sometimes we have guest speakers come to deliver speeches, often the Leader of the Labour Party or senior politicians will pay us a visit.

President's Night is also a great time to meet fellow delegates from other regions. Our President hosts a get together for all delegates on the Sunday evening.

Need more information? Speak to a rep in your Branch or get in touch with your Officer/Regional Office.

GMB
UNION