

#ALLFORCLIMATE: ROLE OF THE TRADE UNIONS

We are facing a climate emergency posing an existential threat to humanity. The crisis requires “rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society”, says the UN’s IPCC*. If we want to ensure good living conditions for all, within the limits of the planet, we must redefine what living well means, and create an economy that does not depend on growth.

We have been waiting too long for others to solve the crisis. But all actors in society have important roles to play in the transition ahead. All of us, individuals and organisations, must realise that we are part of the problem and must act boldly now to become part of the solution. This is the core of the #AllForClimate campaign.

The trade union movement has a unique responsibility to ensure that no employees are left behind in the transition to sustainable workplaces and sustainable working life. We are calling on the trade unions to follow seven recommendations for a rapid and socially just transition to a carbon-neutral society.

* Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change



1 TAKE THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY SERIOUSLY

Acknowledge that we are now in a climate emergency. Educate yourself on its causes and consequences. Evaluate all of your initiatives in terms of their climate impact. Make it your overall goal to define and achieve sustainable working life, and prioritise this task above everything else.



2 FIGHT FOR QUALITY OF LIFE RATHER THAN WAGES

Stop pursuing higher wages for those who already have enough, and recognise that we need to distribute the earth’s limited resources more fairly. Focus instead on ensuring that everyone’s basic financial needs are met and that working life contributes to a better quality of life. Fight for meaningful jobs and workplace well-being for all.



3 PROTECT PEOPLE RATHER THAN WORKPLACES

Accept that industries and companies that damage the climate must be phased out. Negotiate to ensure financial security for those who lose their jobs, and strive for new jobs that contribute to the green transition. Engage in developing a labour market where jobs can be created independently of economic growth, for example by job sharing.



4 BUILD SUSTAINABLE SKILLS

Push for everyone, regardless of education and employment, to be trained to facilitate the transition to a carbon-neutral society in their current or future jobs. Fight for a common green retraining fund across unions and industries, for example financed with money normally earmarked for wage increases.



5 DEMAND POLITICAL ACTION

Push politicians at all levels to introduce regulations and incentives that will make sustainable working life and sustainable entrepreneurship the natural first choice for all employees and workplaces. Use strike action to enforce the demands, if necessary.



6 INFLUENCE PENSION FUNDS

Pressure pension funds to drop all investments in climate-damaging activities and to instead invest in companies contributing to the green transition. Work towards a solidary pension scheme that works without growth.



7 CREATE A NEW STORY

Inspire and support your members in the cultural transition to an everyday life with lower income and reduced carbon footprint. Support the development of economic models that respect and care for ecosystems and humans. Shape the vital debate about what sustainable working life and sustainable workplaces could look like.

