



# CLIMATE, ENERGY, MOBILITY – SHAPING A JUST TRANSITION



In order to counter climate change, a gradual departure from the burning of fossil fuels is necessary as stipulated in international agreements. The transition to a low-carbon economy calls into question the existing structures of our economic system, particularly as far more than 80 percent of the total primary energy supply stems from fossil fuels.

Economies, regions, industries, companies and employees are already in the middle of the far-reaching change processes required for an energy and mobility transition. The trade unions must ensure that this transition is implemented fairly from the perspective of working people. This is the only way to ensure long-term acceptance of the necessary changes to our economic structure. The trade union concept of “Just Transition” was stipulated in the Paris Agreement.

The German Confederation of Trade Unions, DGB, and its member unions demand that the socially just creation of structural change be given much greater focus in the political debate in future. We want “Just Transition” to be formulated as the guiding principle of German, European and international climate policy. The following aspects in particular should guide political action:

- Good Work, the binding effect of collective agreements and co-determination must be strengthened. This must apply equally to existing and new jobs and sectors.
- An active structural policy must create sustainable and economically viable prospects, in particular by harnessing regional and decentralised potential for structural development and aiming for a positive employment record.
- Ongoing employee qualification as well as increased training and further education must empower employees to drive new ideas forward as innovators.
- The fair distribution of costs and revenues must ensure that the possible negative distribution effects of structural change are limited as far as possible. Consumer groups must not be burdened beyond their own capabilities.
- Security of supply and affordability of energy and mobility must be in line with an ambitious climate policy.

Unions advocate globally for country-specific implementation of Just Transition. They are, together with workers and employees, central agents of the transition process:

- We know the obstacles to creating climate-friendly supply structures.
- We want to embrace opportunities to create and protect high-quality jobs.
- We want to participate in the transition of our energy supply and transportation systems with the objective of Good Work and a higher quality of life.

Well-qualified employees are a prerequisite for a successful transition process. It is the employees on site who apply and implement new concepts and systems. Therefore, it is important to continue to train them well and to qualify them further. At the same time, a culture of participation and co-determination must be established or strengthened in the companies. Ideas and innovations from the workforce can only emerge in a corporate culture that welcomes commitment. Works councils are key players in implementing climate protection locally. The corresponding co-determination structures and experimental spaces set the stage for employees to accept new ideas.

Particularly in the industrial sector, it has to date not yet been conclusively determined which technologies will be used to achieve the ambitious climate targets. It is therefore essential that innovations and investments are accelerated along the value chains and consistently oriented towards a sustainable economy. The transition process requires a state capable of taking action to create Just Transition with a balanced mix of framework, exertion of influence and public sector investments (including in a climate-neutral infrastructure).

An active employee-oriented industrial policy promotes innovation to strengthen the performance and competitiveness of industrial value creation, rather than driving a dumping race regarding working conditions and environmental standards. To this end, complete value chains are important to also preserve industry's problem-solving competence. Only in this way can industry make its specific contributions to achieving climate targets, for example as a supplier of the energy transition or by providing products for low-carbon mobility. Deindustrialisation, on the other hand, is not a sustainable development model.

Regions whose prosperity largely depends on carbon-intensive products, carbon-intensive production processes or energy supply are facing massive changes. This also applies to regions that are in a good economic position today. Future prospects must now be developed through a preventive regional structural policy in order to avert economic decline for all regions. This must be done following comprehensive strategies linked to the industrial skills of the regions concerned and geared towards the creation of high-quality jobs. For Germany, this also means that financial resources must be made available in addition to the existing funding structures (European Structural Funds, Joint Agreement for the Improvement of Regional Economic Structures).

The DGB and its member unions therefore call for politicians and businesses to

- pursue an ambitious climate protection policy in line with international, European and national targets;
- lineate a trajectory for Just Transition;
- secure employment prospects in structural change through qualification and innovation activities;
- strengthen innovation and technology development along value chains;
- reconcile climate and environmental protection, competitiveness, security of supply, Good Work and social security, affordability and equitable burden sharing;
- create the conditions for an efficient overall energy system consisting of electricity, heating and transport;
- create experimental spaces in which new concepts, systems and innovations can be tested with the participation of the collective agreement parties. Cities, municipalities and companies must seek new forms of cooperation, e.g. in urban mobility partnerships.