



# Just Transition – A Worker Perspective

# ITUC, ETUC and the Just Transition Centre

The International Trade Union Confederation represents more than 200 million workers worldwide in 162 countries.

The European Trade Union Confederation represents working people in EU-decision making and across the region.

The Centre was established by the ITUC and ETUC in 2016. It supports unions and their allies in getting concrete plans for Just Transition at different levels: National, provincial and municipal government; company and sector; and with investors. .

Good plans for Just Transition improve the material conditions of workers and bring down emissions and/or build resilience.



*Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Just Transition  
Unions, Civil Society and Social Movements  
ITUC-FES-JTC, September 2018, Bangkok, Thailand*



*Joint Seminar Poland-Norway on Just Transition  
Government and union seminar, October 2018, Cracow, Poland*

# ILO Just Transition Guidelines

The International Labor Organization is a UN body. It brings together employers' organizations, unions and governments to develop global labor standards, policies and programs. In 2015, the ILO oversaw the negotiation of global "Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all".

## A Just Transition:

- Is the process by which we get to environmental sustainability and poverty alleviation.
- Is based on social dialogue between unions and employers, often government, and sometimes communities.
- Delivers decent jobs with a fair income, security of contract, safety in the workplace, and opportunities for training and development.
- Requires fundamental labor rights and social protection, including income support, health care, education, and pension.
- Ensures skills training, reskilling and upskilling.

Just Transition includes both measures to reduce the impact of job and livelihood losses and industry phase-out on workers and communities, and measures to produce new, low emissions and decent jobs and livelihoods as well as healthy communities.





New Zealand Council of Trade Unions  
[Just Transition Roundtable](#), October 2018



## What workers want to know

What are the new jobs?

How do we get from here to there?

What does just transition mean for us?



[Labor in the Climate Transition – Just Transition Panels](#)  
Berkeley Labor Center-ITUC-JTC, September 2018, Berkeley, CA



# Canada

## Canada's clean-growth and climate action plan

- Carbon neutrality by 2050.
- Phase out emissions from coal-fired electricity by 2030.

## The Just Transition Task Force for Canadian Coal Power Workers and Communities

- Labor advocated for and leads the Task Force. Members are union and local government representatives, civil society and experts.
- Focused on coal-fired power with 3500 affected workers.
- The Commission has produced recommendations that then must be turned into legislation and budget allocations. A formal announcement from the Canadian Ministry of Environment is forthcoming. 35 million CAD for initial work of Task Force, more funding to come in 2019 budget.
- The Task Force and its work are based on Alberta's Just Transition process. Measures include expanded unemployment insurance; a bridge to pension for older workers; vouchers for skills and other retraining; agreement from employers to retain, reskill and redeploy workers; grants to communities to help them develop new jobs. Funding comes in part from the province's CO2 tax.



# Germany

## German climate targets

- 65% renewables by 2030. The energy sector as a whole will reduce its emissions more than 60% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. Coal-fired electricity produces over 80% of CO2 emissions from Germany's energy sector.
- Plans for coal phaseout must be seen in the context of ongoing steps to phase out nuclear power. Nuclear's share of German installed capacity is down to 9.5%, from 20.4% in 2010. The last nuclear plant will close in 2022.

## Commission "Growth, Structural Change and Employment"

- Labor advocated for the Commission. Members included unions, regional and local govt representatives, environmental organizations, and industry.
- 40 BN EUR over 20 years for regional redevelopment, including infrastructure. The package will ensure that for each direct job lost, a new and decent job is created; and that as coal-fired power leaves the grid, it is replaced with renewable energy, storage and efficiency.
- There will be a plan for every directly employed worker in coal-fired power plants and lignite mines – bridge to pension, new job with new skills, income bridging.
- Complete phaseout of coal-fired power by 2038 at the latest.







# Spain

## Spain's draft climate law

- 100% RES by 2050, 70% RES by 2030.
- Phase out coal and nuclear power stations by 2030.
- Three part plan – Just Transition for coal miners and communities; regional redevelopment; and a national observatory.

## Plan Del Carbon – phase one

- 10 mining fields + all surface mines.
- Agreement with the mining and energy unions covering 1677 workers. The majority will take early retirement.
- Paid for via a € 250 million government fund.



# US – New York and California

## New York

- 9 GW offshore wind, plus retrofitting every public building in New York state. Supported by/advocated for by unions, who created Climate Jobs NY for this purpose.
- Offshore wind projects will offer prevailing wage, including health and pension, as well as other good labor conditions.
- State government fund for skills training with unions.
- Currently in discussion with some of the potential developers and US labor on broad agreements on labor standards through the offshore wind value chain.

## California

- 100% renewable and clean energy target, supported by organized labor.
- Public transport in LA, supported by a coalition of organized labor and community groups.
- Legislature has tied subsidies for electric vehicles to good labor practices, again with pressure from organized labor.
- Potentially, decent labor standards will be part of funding for the response to California's wildfires.

## Some conclusions

- Focus at least as much on new, decent jobs and community redevelopment as on managing the impacts of closures and phasing out sectors on workers and communities. The goal must be transformation of sectors and regions, not just closing stuff down.
- Get a long-term commitment from government that puts social impacts at the center. Use the structures that exist to get that commitment and deliver it. Most countries have some form of social dialogue, from national to community level.
- Look at the whole economy – for the country, region, or municipality – to see where new, good jobs can be created and what investments in hard and soft infrastructure can do. Invest in communities, infrastructure, public services, education.
- Have a plan: Industrial strategy; regional plans including investment, plans for green and decent new jobs; a plan for each worker.
- No one should be left behind. This includes poor and working class households. From a class perspective unions want to ensure that people have clean, safe, reliable, affordable energy.
- Have a government fund for Just Transition. The question of who fills that fund is key. Do we socialize the costs of transition, while companies that have extracted labor, commodities and profits pay nothing? In Canada they're using carbon tax revenue to pay for Just Transition.
- People want jobs where they are, and they want their company to transform with them on board. Retain, retrain, redeploy.
- Engage organized labor. We're the ones who will talk to workers, inform them, help them formulate demands, and support them through the transition.