

ETUC wants regional strategies for just transition to low-carbon industry

(6 October) The Paris agreement has been ratified by the [European Union](#). The EU commits to being carbon neutral in 2050 if it takes the agreement serious. There will be a transition to the low and zero carbon economy. EPSU and ETUC are arguing that this should be a [just transition](#) and that the EU should make funding available, for example from the Emission Trading Scheme to assist workers that risk losing their jobs. The European Parliament is asked to support proposals to this end. This is especially relevant for certain regions.

ETUC sees “a low-carbon industry as an opportunity for sustainable prosperity. To achieve this industrial regions in the EU need to draw up long-term strategies for reducing emissions, with close involvement of trade unions and employers. That’s the conclusion of a 2 year EU-funded project conducted with trade unions and other regional organisations in seven industrial regions across the EU.”

The ETUC published a report “Industrial regions and climate policies: towards a just transition” . It concludes that

1. Europe needs planning for a socially just transition to low-carbon economy in industrial regions to drastically reduce emissions and keep manufacturing activities and related employment;
2. Trade unions and employers need to be consulted and participate in managing decarbonisation of industry;
3. The EU must accelerate the deployment of breakthrough low-carbon technologies;
4. Investment in skills is vital for a socially just transition to a low-carbon economy;
5. Social impacts of decarbonisation must be tackled

The report makes clear there is a gap between the ambition and what seems

achievable in industrial regions. There are efforts to improve energy efficiency, deploy renewables and have process innovation. Few regions have plans to be carbon neutral in the near future though. Links with resource efficiency, circular and bio-economy are sparse.

The ETUC study says that reducing industrial emissions without losing industrial jobs implies forward looking frameworks. The study also concludes:

The report “Industrial regions and climate policies: towards a just transition” is available [here](#) and outlines low-carbon policies and the involvement and views of trade unionists in seven regions across the EU. The seven regions involved were Humberside and Yorkshire (UK), North Rhine Westphalia (Germany), Asturias (Spain), Antwerp (Belgium), Norrbotten (Sweden), Stara Zagora (Bulgaria) and Silesia (Poland).

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