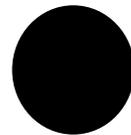
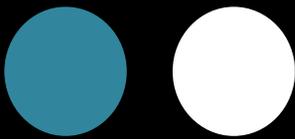




Guidelines to negotiate the Just Transition

to a low-carbon economy





The target of these guidelines are workers, firms and social partners. They flow from the EU research project *Agreement: A Green Mentality for Collective Bargaining*

The project investigates the role of collective bargaining and social dialogue in promoting sustainable development and the just transition to a low-carbon economy



Main policy channels

1

Collective bargaining

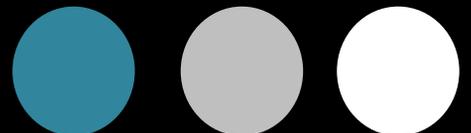
2

Social dialogue

3

Statutory legislation

Green clauses in collective agreements



1

Ensure that collective bargaining is environmentally neutral

In a market economy, “the cake” must be divided and this process generates distributional conflicts. Things get worst since “the cake” cannot grow anymore: global warming and climate change demonstrate that the idea of infinite growth on a finite planet is illusory

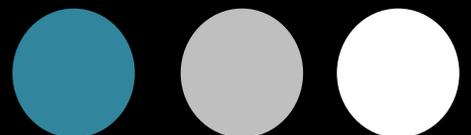
KEY MESSAGE

The trade-off between labour and environmental costs can arise but can be strategically deconstructed through bargaining strategies addressing and protecting both values, rather than accentuating the difference. Instead of focussing on the wage dimension of bargaining demands, unions and firms can embrace a wider conception of production costs and productivity including all the resources needed to produce a good or a service. This way labour and environmental costs can be better balanced, avoiding the risk of competition between the two.

Good practices

-  *Negotiate pay rises linked to energy efficiency and conservation (i.e. green pay)*
-  *Allow the use of labour flexibilities only to companies that invest in environmental sustainability or to attract sustainable FDI*
-  *Promote sustainable home-to-work commuting by incentivizing the use of public transportation, bicycles etc.*

Labour and environmental democracy at work



2

Raise workers' voice for labour and environmental sustainability

Workers voice is crucial to make labour and environmental sustainability convergent. Authentic participation of workers in decision making is a channel to give workers a voice on firms' environmental strategies

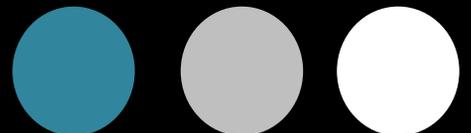
KEY MESSAGE

Employees should be allowed to access information on firms' investments in environmental sustainability. Green representatives are good examples in this direction. In contexts where participation and co-determination of decisions about environmental policies doesn't exist or is limited, unions can resort to confrontational collective action including strikes and other forms of conflict.

Good practices

-  *Involve workers representatives in environmental policy setting and implementation*
-  *Promote environmental whistleblowing in case of non-compliance with environmental standards*
-  *Support workers' refusal to execute orders and directives potentially harmful for the environment*

Environmental risks and OHS regulation and procedures



3

Breach silos approaches between OHS and environmental policies

In modern societies, the boundaries of workplaces collapse and the dichotomy between environmental and OHS regulation and policy becomes more nuanced. The concept of workplace is becoming more and more nebulous, converging with the etymological dimension of the very notion of work environment: the worker's "state of being envired," the "conditions in which a person [a worker] or thing lives"

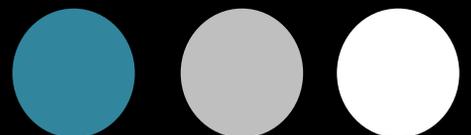
KEY MESSAGE

Environmental effects and risks of the employment relationship will spread everywhere, in all social relations, interconnecting with those effects and risks that massive technological advancements might produce on workers, the environment, and humanity.

Good practices

-  *Negotiate the integration of environmental sustainability within the competences of workers' representatives for health and safety*
-  *Shift the focus of prevention from the workers' safety to the security of human beings, the environment and local communities*
-  *Involve workers' representatives in the definition of Corporate Social Responsibility policies*

Communication strategies and campaigns



4

Communicate and raise awareness on how workers and firms can contribute to environmental sustainability

Social partners could communicate more effectively what they are doing to increase awareness among workers and society about challenges and opportunities of the Just Transition and what concrete actions could be taken to support it

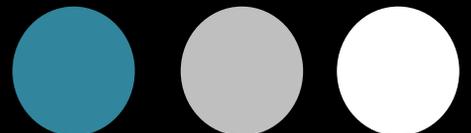
KEY MESSAGE

Further to the role of workers and their representatives in making the production of firms greener, joint initiatives and campaigns can steer the market and consumptions towards forms of productive and re-productive work that protect labour and the environment.

Good practices

-  *Promote assemblies and training courses for workers and their families on environmental sustainability*
-  *Organize joint campaigns against unfair and polluting firms and products*
-  *Campaign to steer workers' financial resources (e.g. via pension funds) towards green investments and negotiate welfare measures for the wellbeing of workers and their families, not for consumeristic purposes*

Just Transition: a democratic process



5

Negotiate the Just Transition with multiple stakeholders

Conflicts of interest involved in the Just Transition go far beyond the traditional contraposition between industrialism and environmentalism. Just Transition does not imply a simplistic choice on whether priority be given to labour or environmental protection but involves complex choices on how to shift from a linear to a systemic type of protection in which both values are pursued simultaneously.

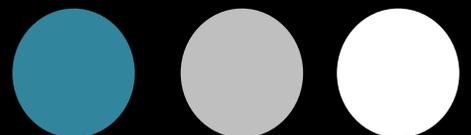
KEY MESSAGE

In order to mediate different interests involved, and avoid negative externality of decisions, transitional practices should be negotiated with multiple stakeholders and cross-sectorally.

Good practices

-  *Engage in a dialogue with (local) public authorities, civil society and environmental groups*
-  *Build alliances with firms that authentically invest in sustainability*
-  *Negotiate sustainable development plans for dismissed industrial plants and areas in crisis*

Effective transitional labour markets for the green economy



6

Support labour market transitions

In many transitional cases plant closures and job losses are inevitable. In order to avoid the job vs. environment blackmail, unions' support in labour market transitions may reduce workers' vulnerability and empower them to react to environmental stress

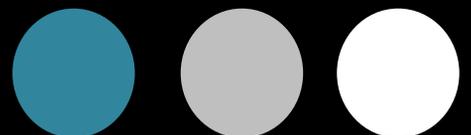
KEY MESSAGE

Effective transitional labour markets governed by mature industrial relations institutions can reduce societal and labour vulnerabilities, increasing workers' independence from coal and other highly intensive industrial activities.

Good practices

-  ***Promote functional and geographical mobilities for workers involved in the Just Transition***
-  ***Negotiate re-skilling, redeployment and early retirement plans and make job classification systems respondent to green jobs***
-  ***Use bilateral inter-professional funds to support transitional arrangements and training for green skills***

Ecological and social- reproductive forms of work



7

Support recognition and redistribution of ecological and social-reproductive work

Individual and collective capacities to engage in paid work rely on plethora of social reproductive labour, including the work of care, household maintenance, and social provisioning. Social reproductive labour (paid and unpaid) is also involved in various forms of community maintenance and environmental remediation, which may be required in contexts where industrial activity negatively impacts environmental conditions of life, or where transitional processes might contribute to social strife and destabilize communities

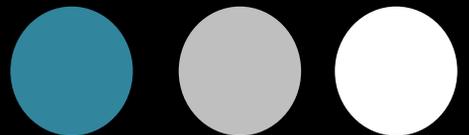
KEY MESSAGE

Social reproductive forms of work tend to generate the lowest environmental impacts, making them paradigmatically 'green' or ecological work. Yet, while necessary to socio-economic and environmental sustainability, these forms of labour are often undervalued in mainstream economic calculus, and, by extension, tend to be marginalized in unions' collective bargaining strategies.

Good practices

-  *Negotiate better accommodation and recognition of unpaid social reproductive labour (e.g. care responsibilities, ecological labour)*
-  *Seek to organize and assist (the often precarious) workers engaged in paid social reproductive and ecological forms of labour*
-  *Coordinate with organizations that provide community supports and environmental services*

**Just Transition
is a global
process**



8

Consider global implication of local choices

In the globalized economy, closing a plant in a country for environmental reasons could imply the delocalization of production elsewhere, with the externalization of its social and environmental costs

KEY MESSAGE

As a result of structural deindustrialization, emissions are declining in developed economies, but in part this process is due to the transfer of polluting production to the developing world. Similarly, the shift towards alternative energy sources in advanced economies is often combined by the import of extractive and polluting energy from other countries.

Good practices

-  ***Negotiate limits to the levels of sub-contracting and to their geographical scope***
-  ***Coordinate with global union and employers and monitor the implementation of green clauses in transnational collective agreements***
-  ***Ask for public incentives to maintain or attract green investments in advanced economies***

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