



GREENING THE ECONOMY

Sustainable development goals and the role of the trade union movement

AUGUST 2021



TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	5
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	6
1. THE KICK-OFF	9
A green transition with trade unions – Kitty Jong, vice president FNV	9
Climate action and social policy - two sides of the same coin – Ludovic Voet, secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation	9
Why are the SDGs important for the trade union? – Sandra Pellegrom, national coordinator SDG <i>Results of poll question 1</i>	10 11
2. A GREEN ECONOMY, HOW TO GET THERE	12
United towards a just transition – Bas van Weegberg, trade union leader FNV	12
GREEN STEEL Good for climate, environment and employment – Roel Berghuis, trade union leader at Tatasteel Companies must be given room to invest – Joosje de Lang, FNV trade union leader process industry, Groningen region	14 16
The waste industry fighting for a green economy – Hanan Yagoubi, FNV trade union leader GEO industry Looking across the border: what is the German trade union doing to green the economy? – Leon Krüger, section secretary structural, industrial and service department of the DGB <i>Discussion / questions from the chat</i>	16 18 19
3. EMPLOYMENT IN THE GREEN ECONOMY	20
The circular economy as a job engine – Joel Marsden, researcher Circular Jobs Initiative at Circle Economy <i>Results of poll question 2</i>	20 21
Training workers for the green jobs – Isabel Coenen, Training and Development Policy Advisor FNV There is still a lot of work to be done in the wind offshore industry – Charley Ramdas, trade union leader of Nautilus	22 22
Much to gain from renovation – Ellen Hoeijenbos, trade union leader FNV Bouwen en Wonen You can only go green if you do it fairly! – Chant van den Berg, trade union leader FNV Havens and chairman of the Coal Fund	23 25
We need a good balance between economic, ecological and social dimension. – Lucie Studničná, International Secretary of the Czech - Moravian trade union CMKOS <i>Discussion / questions from the chats</i>	26 27
4. INVESTING IN A GREEN ECONOMY	28
The trade union is a green movement – Kitty Jong, vice president FNV The Fair Climate Agenda – Rens van Tilburg, Member and Director of Sustainable Finance Lab <i>Results of poll question 3</i>	28 29 29
Sustainable investment can also be very profitable – José Meijer, trade union leader Pension Fund ABP Focusing on human rights throughout the entire chain – Lucia van Westerlaak, policy Advisor FNV, ICSR specialist	30 31
Together strong for fair green taxes – Sacha Dierckx, Policy Advisor ABVV <i>Discussion / questions from the chat</i>	31 32
5. CLOSURE	33
Offering workers a green future – Ludovic Voet, secretary ETUC	33



FOREWORD

On June 10th, 2021, the FNV organised a seminar on the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (or “SDG” in English) to which the Dutch government committed itself in 2015. These goals are to be achieved by 2030. There is still a lot of work to be done because, in recent years, the labour market in the Netherlands has turned into a flexible labour market with many uncertain jobs, and therefore an uncertain income. Poverty has increased rather than decreased and not everyone has equal opportunities.

The FNV has been committed to most of these sustainable development goals for years. For the trade union SDG 8, *Decent work and Economic growth*, is paramount. We combine this vision with SDG 1: *No Poverty*, SDG 3: *Good Health and Wellbeing*, SDG 5: *Gender equality* and SDG 10: *Reduced inequality*. We do this at a national, European and global levels. Focussing on economic growth and employment does not necessarily mean that we sacrifice other goals, such as those for a circular economy (SDG 12: *Responsible consumption and production*) and a better climate (SDG 13: *Climate action*). The challenge is to link the goals in such a way that everyone benefits.

While organising this seminar, it was good to observe that many colleagues are working on this. Some of them include Tata Steel, the process industry, the waste industry, construction, maritime, Education & Development and Pension funds. People were eager to participate in a seminar on this subject, focused on the field of green economy. This applies to FNV managers from the various industries, foreign trade union colleagues and speakers from outside the FNV. The aim of the meeting was to exchange and fine-tune our trade union agenda.

These were the topics of discussion at the seminar. This seminar brought together a diverse group of speakers from different industries both inside and outside the FNV. Videos were shown and questions were asked online through chat sessions. The seminar was wonderfully led by Linda Vermeulen, trade union leader in shopping streets. The organization of the seminar and the reporting was done by Caroline Rietbergen, member of the ETUC committee sustainable development goals, energy and climate change. This report is addressed to all participants, to the ETUC and the European Commission.

I strongly believe that this seminar is an important step in our mutual cooperation towards a green and fair economy, taking into account the interests of all workers.

Kitty Jong
Vice president FNV



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The trade union has long been committed to the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, even before they were originally written. Fighting Poverty and the Reducing Inequality, promoting a Good Health and Wellbeing and Gender equality and of course promoting Decent Work and Economic Growth have been at the top of our agenda. In recent years, the trade union has been devoting more attention to greening the economy. And the same points recur again in this respect.

The transition to a climate-neutral economy must be a just transition with good employment opportunities that allows everyone to earn a decent living. The FNV is committed to an ambitious climate policy that is linked to a social agenda geared towards improving the quality of labour and a fair distribution of benefits and costs. The 17 goals are universal, indivisible and grounded in solidarity and human rights. However, in order to achieve all the goals simultaneously, a change must take place in the economy and society.

The SDG goals have been set globally. Other important global guidelines, established at the global level, are the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (on International Corporate Social Responsibility), the UN "*Guiding principles for Business and Human Rights*" and the "*Multinational Declaration*" of the ILO. These three policy frameworks emphasise the importance of focussing on people and labour rights in international supply and investment chains. These are also important goals for greening because you don't want solar panels on your roof that have been produced with forced labour.

CONCLUSION 1 CLIMATE ACTION IS AT THE HEART OF THE TRADE UNION, BUT DESERVES MORE ATTENTION AT A DECENTRALISED LEVEL

Dutch workers and trade unions are increasingly aware of their (potential) role in climate action.

- Trade unions have played an important role in the Climate Agreement but the results are not yet optimal. Even on the day of publication of the Climate Agreement, negotiations still had to take place on the inclusion of a passage on the coal fund.
- Green collective negotiations have not yet got off the ground in the Netherlands, but in Canada & the UK they are already quite normal. In Germany, the term 'green collective agreement' is avoided, and people prefer to talk about a 'future-oriented collective agreement'. The German trade union at IG Metal has negotiated and laid down three points in a future-oriented collective agreement:
 - Job security: long-term exclusion of redundancies;
 - Investments: Investing in sustainable transformation;
 - Qualification: Retraining of workers to adapt to the changing work processes.
- - Work Councils do not yet have enough climate tools.

CONCLUSION 2 FIGHTING FOR THE CLIMATE IS ALSO A FIGHT FOR (MAINTAINING) JOBS

A major concern for the trade union is to persuade employers (and the government) to invest in a sustainable future of the economy, while at the same time safeguarding jobs.

During the meeting we saw that the willingness to take action is high in the different industries:

1. The Tata Steel workers have drawn up their own plan to accelerate the greening of the steel production and are asking the government for support in this.
2. The workers in the process industry in Groningen are campaigning for a European approach and for a government policy that prevents companies from leaving the Netherlands.
3. The workers in the waste industry are campaigning against the import tax on foreign waste. This import tax puts jobs at risk. Waste companies have invested in sustainable technology, and need the material to make the investments profitable.
4. The maritime industry is fighting for safety and good working conditions in the Wind offshore industry and for workers from the industry to move on to these new jobs. Renewable energy also requires sustainable jobs.



5. The creation of sustainable jobs is also the goal of the construction industry. Due to shortages in the construction industry, greening (e.g. through the renovation wave) has not taken off. With 25% permanent jobs and 75% flexible jobs you will not make it.
6. FNV Havens will not stand idly by as 'The Hague' enthusiastically compensates companies without thinking of the workers who lose their jobs as a result. Whether it concerns transfer from coal, agribulk or tank storage: if our members are made redundant, they must be well taken care of.

CONCLUSION 3 TRANSITION CAN ALSO BE A DRIVER OF EMPLOYMENT, MORE AWARENESS OF THE EMPLOYMENT EFFECTS NEEDED AND MORE FUTURE-ORIENTED INVESTMENT

Jobs disappear, jobs change but new jobs are also created thanks to the transition to a sustainable green economy. This is certainly true in the circular economy. Skills, quality of work and an inclusive labour market are key words for the future. Circle Economy has four tips for social partners:

1. Create access opportunities to lifelong learning
2. Ensure social protection and collective agreements
3. Outline transition paths for workers and for people outside the labour market
4. Unlock financing to make work and workplaces more circular and inclusive.

The FNV has already some good examples of what is happening in this field. In the Metal and Engineering industry the trade unions work with DI advisors who enter into dialogue with workers on the shop floor. Instruments: road map, coaching talks and workshops. In some different industries, the trade unions also work with Learning Ambassadors. It would be good if more industries would use these instruments to support workers in the context of energy transition, together with the Education & Development funds (if available).

CONCLUSION 4 A JUST TRANSITION CANNOT BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT TRADE UNIONS

Following in the footsteps of the European Commission, many parties are now talking about 'Just Transition'. But not all parties have realised that trade union involvement is essential in this.

Employers who complain about shortages of workers should also look in the mirror and ask themselves whether the work they are offering is attractive enough. On the other hand, people must have the knowledge and skills to carry out the job. The 'Fair Climate Agenda' contains a very concrete investment package to train 60,000 people over the next 4 years to work on the energy transition. There are two concrete points that the FNV has contributed in the 'Fair Climate Agenda'.

During their working lives, workers save for a good pension. Let workers' money also work for workers. So, invest these billions in pension funds in a sustainable way: this is good for the environment as well as for the workers' rights, trade union freedom, freedom to negotiate as a union, labour rights, working conditions and a living wage all over the world.

We also need fairness when it comes to green taxes. Excise taxes are levied on petrol and diesel - which is not a bad thing in itself - but not on kerosene. Also subsidies, for example for buying an electric car, solar panels or insulating your house, often go to the richest. That leads to resistance among the people who have no money for this and who do see their energy bills getting higher and higher. If the benefits and costs are not better distributed, resistance will increase and nothing will come of that green transition.

CONCLUSION 5 CLEARLY DEFINING A JUST TRANSITION

During the seminar, different elements of a just transition were identified. It is important that the trade union includes these elements in every discussion/negotiation on greening the economy.

ELEMENTS:

1. Invest not only in technology but mainly in people. Greening the economy is also about employment, good jobs and good collective labour agreements.
2. Make visible what transitions will look like: loss of work, change of work, new work and quantify per industry and/or region.
3. Provide adequate social protection and training programmes to assist workers in their transitions. The FNV calls on its Education & Development fund managers to invest in the green transition.
4. Ensure a fair distribution of benefits and costs. More and more are experiencing fuel poverty. Show solidarity and support the most vulnerable instead of subsidising the rich, as is currently the case.
5. Think of industrial strategies to create new jobs and stimulate local economies, such as in the circular economy.
6. Ensure fair taxes. Closes the loopholes of tax avoidance by large companies.
7. Ensure honest investments of pension funds: social and administratively responsible and good for the environment. The FNV calls on its pension fund managers to do more to support the transition to a CO2 emission free society by urging the funds to invest more in the just transition, the energy transition and in a green economy in general.
8. Organise an effective social dialogue and a strong worker participation at all stages of the process.
9. Establish a Just Transition Commission on the Scottish model where social parties will meet and find solutions.



1. THE KICK-OFF

A GREEN TRANSITION WITH TRADE UNIONS

KITTY JONG, VICE PRESIDENT FNV

The sustainable Development goals are wonderful goals that have been at the heart of our programme for years as a trade union. We recognise ourselves in these goals, such as:

- Fighting Poverty and the Reducing Inequality
- Promoting a Good Health and Wellbeing and Gender equality
- And, of course, promoting Decent Work and Economic Growth!

Traditional trade union goals, you might say. For a number of years now, we have been actively working on the climate. We have laid down a Climate Vision and a vision on energy transition. We have entered into strategic alliances, co-written policy plans and implemented agendas. We have conducted campaigns nationally, per industry and locally, drawn up handbooks, organised seminars, opened trade union cafés, set up training and carried out lobbying activities and I think we should pay even more attention to the climate. It is good to focus on the SDG goals on greening the economy.

I would like to mention a few important principles:

- The transition to a climate-neutral economy must be a just transition with good jobs that allow everyone to earn a decent living. A well-known slogan in the environmental movement is: *"There are no jobs on a dead planet"*. We also adopt this slogan, but we add one *"No transition without trade unions"*.
- We are committed to an ambitious climate policy that goes hand in hand with a social agenda aimed at improving the quality of labour and a fair distribution of benefits and costs.

As logical as these basic principles sound, it is difficult to get them accepted by everyone.

Attention to the workers' perspective is still regularly lacking in politics and policy. It is sometimes easier to talk about the technical aspects of sustainability than about the people who are at risk of losing their jobs and who must prepare for other work. Companies that need to become more sustainable are included in the policy and receive money for their transition. But workers are sometimes forgotten or it is assumed that the money for companies also fairly reaches the workers. That is not the case. The money more often goes to shareholders than to workers. And so, parties come up against each other. It doesn't have to be that way.

I was pleased to hear this morning many industry leaders talking about the climate actions in their industry. From Groningen to Maastricht, from Tata Steel to the pension funds. Things are moving and shaking! Today, we are listing the actions and will continue tomorrow with a sharpened agenda!

CLIMATE ACTION AND SOCIAL POLICY - TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

LUDOVIC VOET, SECRETARY OF THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

The ETUC believes it is particularly important to point out that climate action and social policy are two sides of the same coin. We know that phasing out coal affects 300,000 workers in the EU. We know that the transition from conventional to electric cars will affect 14 million people in the chain. 30 million households in Europe are already experiencing fuel poverty. The most vulnerable people suffer the most from the effects of climate change. The UN goals are about Reducing Inequality, protecting - in particular the most vulnerable - people and providing better future with quality jobs and good wages. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals provide us with the right framework to meet these challenges.

The SDGs can help us achieve the minimum "social floor" needed to ensure that all people can have decent work, decent wages and decent working conditions. At the same time, they can help us to stay below the maximum



“environmental ceiling” to guarantee that our societies do not endanger our environment and future generations. To achieve this vision, the concept of a just transition will be key.

For trade unions, a just transition in concrete terms means that ambitious climate measures must always be complemented by four factors:

1. solidarity mechanisms to support the most vulnerable and affected industries and regions,
2. adequate social protection and training programmes to assist workers in their transitions,
3. industrial strategies to create new jobs and to develop local economies
4. effective social dialogue and strong workers participation at all stages of the process.

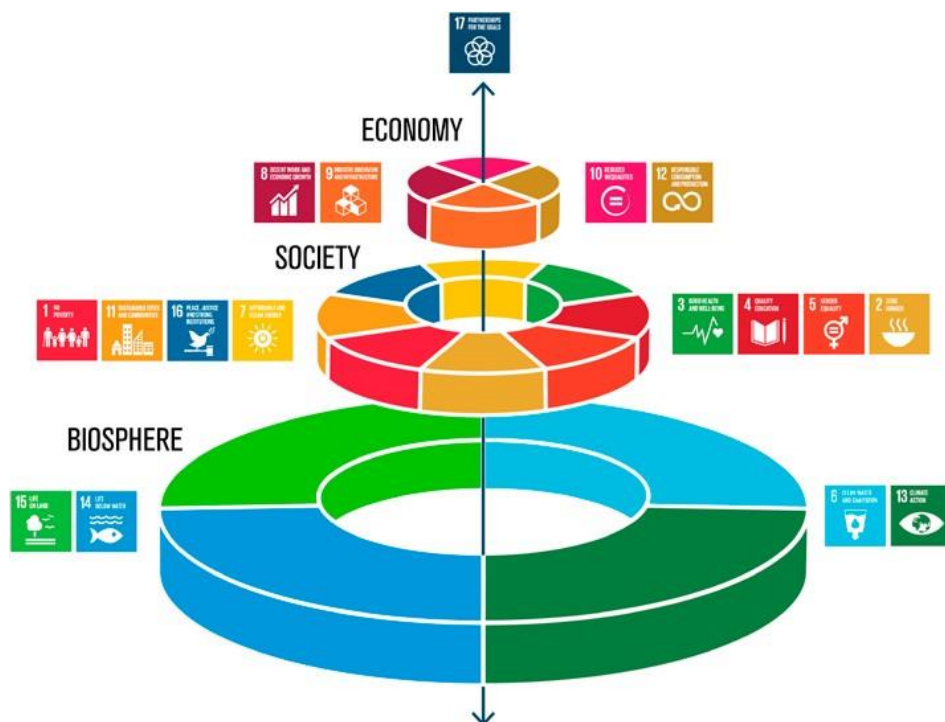
At EU level we fight for this just transition. On to a Europe with a strong social policy and a strong environmental agenda.

WHY ARE THE SDGs IMPORTANT FOR THE TRADE UNION?

SANDRA PELLEGRAM, NATIONAL COORDINATOR SDG

The 17 sustainable development goals, SDGs, form our joint plan for a future-proof world. A future in which people worldwide and future generations can live in well-being and dignity. To achieve this, a real change must take place. This was already clear in 2015: humans are operating outside the margin of safety, both in terms of environmental impact and ever-increasing inequality around the world. These challenges have been brought together in the SDGs: essentially our to-do list to achieve a green, inclusive, safe and just world. This change goes to the heart of our economic thinking. The image below (the ‘SDG-Wedding Cake’) illustrates it well: a successful economy can only be built within planetary boundaries and on solid social foundation.

This may seem obvious by now, but never before have we adopted such an ambitious, broad set of shared goals worldwide. What is also unique is that the goals were established with input not only from governments, but also from social stakeholders from all those countries: NGOs, companies and also trade unions have contributed to this. We also see important themes from the trade union reflected in the SDGs.



A POWERFUL TOOL FOR ORGANISATIONS

There are three elements that make the SDG agenda such a powerful tool for organisations:

1. **Universal:** not only for all countries, but also for all social actors. Governments cannot achieve this alone; all actors have a role - the more influence, the more responsibility companies have. That's why critical reflection of the trade union is also important: to look together how companies can integrate the SDGs so into their activities as broadly and effectively as possible.
2. **Indivisible:** the agenda assumes that no single goal can be effectively achieved without also achieving other goals. Systems thinking is of great importance: e.g. sustainable production and consumption, climate transition is impossible without inclusiveness, good jobs and letting everyone participate. *Fortunately, scientific research shows that there are many positive relationships among the goals: in most cases, by working towards one goal, you can also positively influence other goals. Therefore, we should look for solutions where there is as much synergy among goals as possible - that is more effective and costs efficient. However, there are also potential negative trade-offs - far fewer than positive effects but important to understand so we can prevent or mitigate them.*
3. SDGs are – just like the roots of the trade union - **grounded in solidarity and human rights:** Leaving No One Behind is a core principle of the SDG agenda. This means precisely helping those people and groups who are most at risk of being left behind to move forward more quickly. This is linked to the SDG's focus on equal opportunities and equal access, and to that effect with equal rights.

A FUTURE-PROOF NETHERLANDS IN A FUTURE-PROOF WORLD

The SDGs may sound complex, but people intuitively feel that it is the right thing to do. And that is the most promising way to build a truly future-proof world.

We are in a transitional phase and that is difficult: we have to let go of old certainties – such as earning power and the jobs we have now. But there are also many opportunities. The Netherlands has everything needed to make the change.

To do that, we need to start creating a new image of the future. The trade union can make a key contribution to formulating and telling what that new picture for the Netherlands looks like and what it will bring to people, including workers and companies.

TWO VIDEOS OF FNV MONDIAAL EXPLAINING JUST TRANSITION

<https://vimeo.com/521013317>

<https://vimeo.com/521014141>

We showed one of them

RESULTS OF POLL QUESTION 1

The environmental movement pays too little attention to real jobs where workers can work safely and in good health and earn a good wage.



Results of the poll among seminar participants

2. A GREEN ECONOMY, HOW TO GET THERE

UNITED TOWARDS A JUST TRANSITION 1

BAS VAN WEEGBERG, TRADE UNION LEADER FNV

Climate change is one of the most urgent problems of the moment and is leading to protests all over the world, such as the climate strike last year. However, it was not a real strike – trade unions recommended taking a day off.



An interesting fact is that in recent months, there has been an actual strike at Tata Steel, the steel producer in IJmuiden. This was perhaps the first real climate strike in the Netherlands with workers demanding investments in CO2 reduction. Sustainability and greening are really part of the demands at Tata Steel.

WHAT DO WE SEE?

- Trade unions more and more present in climate action, most recently also the Climate Alarm along with the environmental movement.
- Trade unions can contribute to environmental protection
- Trade union work and climate action go hand in hand, see also the Fair Climate Agenda which also draws attention to the impact of workers.

1 Bas van Weeberg investigated the role of trade unions in climate action. B. van Weeberg. *United Towards a Just Transition. Exploring the role of Dutch workers and unions in climate action.* Thesis LLM Labour Law and Employment Relations. Tilburg University 12 August 2020



GREEN JOBS

Climate change does not only affect workers in steel factories, but the entire world. As a result of climate change, jobs will appear, disappear and change.

Tackling climate change will create 24 million green jobs by 2030, according to the ILO (2018).

This raises the question for trade unions of how to deal with this.

Tony Mazocchi, trade union leader and environmental activist in the 1970s, introduces the term 'Just Transition' became a crucial element of the global labour and environment movement. Key principles include financial support, transition of workers to green jobs and involvement of trade unions and communities in proactive industrial planning.

CLIMATE AGREEMENT

Trade unions played an important role in the Climate Agreement. In 2019, after more than a year of negotiations, the Dutch National Climate Agreement was presented. Trade unions had been at the tables and worked together with organisations such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, but Kitty Jong, the vice chairman of the FNV, commented on the whole process as suboptimal.

COAL FUND SAFEGUARDED

However, a coal fund was promised, as well as attention to the training of workers in the fossil industries.

The financial support for this is less than EUR 2.2 million per year. Only EUR 22 million over a period of ten years for training workers in fossil industries? That cannot be called particularly generous.

GREEN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

In the Netherlands, we do not yet have as many examples of green collective bargaining as Canada. In Canada, environmental objectives are part of the negotiations. Issues such as extreme weather, green purchasing, recycling and training are also part of collective bargaining.

WORK COUNCILS

The interesting thing about Work Councils is that they offer a very concrete legal tool to put climate change on the organisational agenda. In Section 28.4, WOR it is clearly stated: "The Works Council shall do all in its power to promote environmental care on the part of the enterprise [...]" . Research, however, shows that this is not actively used. I have only found two cases of Works Councils negotiating about climate effects and that was when jobs were at stake. So, we can do more about that with our members in the Works Councils.

GOOD EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Good employment practices refer to individual labour law. It is regulated in Section 7:611 of the Dutch Civil Code (BW). In the 1980s, this Section was mainly used in relation to part-time work and job transfers. More recently issues concern parental leave and training obligation. Good employment practices, employee benefits and training obligations can provide concrete legal guidance for workers and employers in the coming years to see if climate change can become an issue in individual labour law.

Good employment practices = Providing timely retraining for workers on green jobs





Dutch workers and trade unions are increasingly aware of their (potential) role in climate action, but seem unsure how to fill this role.

- Trade unions play a major role in Climate Agreement, although the results are meagre
- Green collective negotiations that does not exist in the Netherlands. Canada & the UK lead the way
- Work Councils are not aware of available 'climate tools'
- Collective climate action shows promising start
- Climate change can become the subject of individual labour law, like part-time work

GREEN STEEL GOOD FOR CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT AND EMPLOYMENT²

ROEL BERGHUIS, TRADE UNION LEADER AT TATASTEEL

The IJmond region and the steel industry are inextricably linked. For more than 100 years, the steel mills in this region have provided thousands of workers and suppliers with work and income. In addition, the presence of the Koninklijke Hoogovens has always ensured a high level of social cohesion and an impulse to prosperity and the level of services in the region.

In 2021, the current steel company is under fire. Outdated installations and the manufacturing processes used are damaging the environment and the quality of life in the immediate vicinity of the company. As a result of the Climate Agreement, the steel company will have to implement several major technological changes in a relatively short period of time.

² The text below is a summary: *Groen Staal, a plan for the climate, a cleaner IJmond and employment*. FNV Metaal, May 2021. At the time of the seminar, Roel Berghuis was taking action in the Dutch government with the Tata Steel executives to draw attention to this plan.



CLIMATE AND CO2 REDUCTION

With its current production methods, Tata Steel is one of the largest emitters of CO2 in the Netherlands. One of the ways to achieve reduction is to store CO2 underground, for example in empty gas fields. That is called CCS: Carbon Dioxide Capture and Storage. But to realise CCS, an estimated investment of EUR 3 billion is required. That is a lot of money for a temporary solution, because eventually the steel company will have to switch to a CO2-free production method. Besides CCS, other more sustainable solutions are possible that have a greater impact and lead to faster and greater environmental benefits for the climate and the environment.

CLEANER DEMANDS AN ADDITIONAL STEP

The quality of life in the IJmond region is under pressure. Local residents experienced nuisance, varying from stench to particle matter and dust. The longer-term consequences for public health are the subject of government research. Reducing CO2 emissions will not change much. The company is taking measures to reduce the experienced nuisance, but the key question is whether these will be sufficient, as dissatisfaction among local residents is growing.

To achieve a sustainable improvement in the living environment, the company will have to take major steps.

The main source of nuisance is the use of fossil fuels to fire the blast furnaces. The cokes and gas plants ensure cause both dust and odour nuisance. Moreover, the use of fossil fuels is also the cause of CO2 emissions. The solution of both the CO2 problem and the quality of life issue in the immediate vicinity can be addressed together. This requires judicious choices. Choices for the future.

EMPLOYMENT IMPLICATIONS

The transition from coal-fired blast furnaces to electrically powered EAF and a gas-fired DRI requires different knowledge and skills, both for the company and its workers. The new way of working is less labour-intensive, which means that fewer people are needed to run the installations. It also requires more knowledge of new technologies. Workers of the current installations will have to undergo some additional training to become familiar with the new installations. Others may prefer to work at a different location within the company. It is estimated that employment will fall by 150 to 200 FTEs. This can be absorbed by natural reduction. Approximately seven hundred FTEs will be retiring from production in the coming five years.

WHO IS GOING TO PAY FOR THAT? HELP WANTED!

The fact that the current owner has put Tata Steel up for sale does not make it any easier to draw up an investment agenda. The assumption is that Tata Steel will not want to contribute much more. The required resources will have to come from elsewhere. The steel company in the IJmond region is a profitable company. In spite of the difficult market conditions, the company has always made profits. In recent years, some of the equity flowed away to other parts of the Tata Steel group and has been skimmed off by the owners. This is a lot of money that is not readily available.

At the same time, we see that the government is putting money into CCS-CO2 storage. The transition from coal-fired blast furnaces to EAF/DRI plants also reduces CO2 emissions. Moreover, the nuisance for the surrounding area will also be greatly reduced. We therefore urge the government to adjust this money flow so that the budget can also be used for this form of CO2 reduction.

A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

If the step to greener and cleaner steel from the IJmond region has been taken, many wonderful things can happen. Fewer emissions, less nuisance, better for the climate. Preservation of jobs for workers and suppliers, preservation of a key Dutch manufacturing industry. Plus room for new developments, which can create thousands of new jobs.

For example, the creation of an industrial complex on the site of the steel company with new future-oriented manufacturing industry, including the construction and maintenance of new generations of wind turbines, with the associated construction of a new heavy plate rolling mill, which is needed to supply heavy plate for the masts.

The company's location by the sea, with a deep sea port, makes new initiatives possible. Wind energy generated at sea will be the company's power source. But the company can also contribute to further growth of offshore wind energy by producing the steel for the turbines locally and by building the turbines together with partners and putting them out to sea. The current generation of wind turbines is so large that transport by road is extremely complex. In the IJmond region, they can be taken directly out to sea. There are several partnerships and products that can be developed in the metal-energy cluster that can strengthen the economic activity in the IJmond region



and so contribute to jobs and prosperity. There are not only environmental reasons for the rapid construction of EAF/DRI installations. Other steel producers are also working to switch to a CO₂-free steel production with DRIs as soon as possible. If we in IJmuiden wait until 2030 or beyond, our competitive position will be seriously jeopardised. For illustrative purposes: the automotive industry has already announced that it wants to sell CO₂-free cars from 2030 onwards.

WHAT THE FNV METAAL WANTS TO ACHIEVE:

1. Support for our plans for greener, cleaner steel from the IJmond region, from governments and other stakeholders.
2. A quick independent feasibility study and completion of the business case in which the outlined transition to an EAF/DRI plant is detailed and set alongside that of CCS.
3. Adjustment of the rules for use of funds for CO₂ reduction, so that all initiatives for CO₂ reduction subsidised can be.
4. An engaged government that takes the lead in the development of the steel industry in the IJmond region.
5. Future prospects for the 40,000 people who have jobs and income thanks to the presence of the steel industry in the IJmond region.
6. A better quality of life in the immediate vicinity, with fewer nuisance and adverse effects on public health.
7. Support for and retention of high-quality steel production at this location.
8. A company that is an active part of a circular society.
9. A broad social coalition that stands shoulder to shoulder and is committed to the aforementioned goals.

COMPANIES MUST BE GIVEN ROOM TO INVEST

JOOSJE DE LANG, FNV TRADE UNION LEADER PROCESS INDUSTRY, GRONINGEN REGION

In Groningen, we are very keen to go green in the process industry, but we want to do it properly, i.e. while preserving jobs. What we see now is that other European countries are getting subsidies for going green and the Netherlands is not applying for them³. That is why, together with the employers in the north of the country, we are taking action in the direction of the Dutch government to make sure that companies are given the opportunity to invest, to keep our jobs in the northern part of the country and are not lose them to Belgium, Germany or other European countries.

Success will depend on the number of members you have and whether you can therefore exercise trade union power. There are companies where you can do that very well and companies where you cannot. If we act together, we can also determine where to go for good job retention.

THE WASTE INDUSTRY FIGHTING FOR A GREEN ECONOMY

HANAN YAGOUBI, FNV TRADE UNION LEADER GEO INDUSTRY

The sector "Raw materials Energy & Environment" GEO consists of 35 companies affiliated to the WenB employers' association. They represent approximately 7,400 workers (of which about 1,564 are FNV members), working on:

- Collecting,
- packing,
- transporting,
- storage and transshipment,

³ This refers, among other things, to the ETS compensation scheme applied for by neighbouring countries, but not by the Netherlands.



- treatment, processing and/or disposal of waste materials, or the execution of:
- managing public spaces
- sewer cleaning services,
- sewer inspection services,
- related environmental services or activities.

WHAT IS THE WASTE INDUSTRY DOING ABOUT GREENING?

1. Full commitment to reuse

The waste industry is committed to reducing, reusing, recycling and producing raw materials and energy. Circular activities are taking place throughout the Netherlands. From new separation plants to fermentation plants, from cleaning bottom ash to producing high-quality recycled raw materials.

2. Optimal value creation

Waste is a source of raw materials and energy. The industry is committed to creating as much value as possible from waste. Together with our partners, we look for solutions along the entire value chains. From waste prevention to better collection, from smarter reuse and recycling to energy recovery from non-recyclable waste: ultimately, it is about the total added value in the entire chain.

3. Working together across the whole chain

We cannot do it alone. A circular economy requires cooperation among waste companies, producers, governments, citizens and knowledge institutes. The industry is actively seeking that cooperation, among other things, to discuss opportunities for eco-design and new business models. The waste industry has expertise in prevention, collection and processing.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FOR A GREEN ECONOMY?

For the waste industry, the following three factors are important to make the transition to the circular economy:

A. Product design (or environment must be more important than marketing)

Develop products that have a longer service life, i.e. are easy to repair and/or upgrade, and with a view to future recycling after disposal. "Prohibit" non-recyclable materials.

B. The market for raw materials

Without the sale of secondary raw materials, the circular economy will not take off. The cost price of secondary raw materials versus primary raw materials must be reduced.

C. Employment and knowledge in the industry

Employment is at risk because there is insufficient cooperation in the chain. As a result, the waste treatment sector is never in the lead, but is seen as the 'bad guy' when it comes to not achieving recycling targets. Now the industry is being punished again with an import tax on foreign waste after having transformed waste incineration plants into the most environmentally efficient in the world over the last 10 years.

LOOKING ACROSS THE BORDER: WHAT IS THE GERMAN TRADE UNION DOING TO GREEN THE ECONOMY?

LEON KRÜGER, SECTION SECRETARY STRUCTURAL, INDUSTRIAL AND SERVICE DEPARTMENT OF THE DGB

The DGB (8 million members) is very much engaged in the subject of greening the economy and we have quite similar activities to those mentioned by the colleagues of FNV.

MAIN POINT

The main point is that climate will change our economy and the way we work. Potential job losses are at stake. This means that we need to protect our companies, fight climate change and provide decent jobs for the future generation.

The central question in this discussion is how to ensure effective climate measures within companies, including job security, decent work, employee participation - in short: a just transition.

1. The fossil industries must change their companies to a sustainable model in which jobs are preserved.
2. The flexibilisation of employment and the decline of collective bargaining will lead to resistance and increase social inequality.

Secure work and decent jobs contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals, are needed for greening the economy and are crucial for acceptance. This requires a national, European and an international approach.

WHAT ARE THE TOOLS?

Three examples used by the German trade unions in different industries/regions, are:

1. Future-oriented collective labour agreements (we deliberately do not call them green collective agreements, but future-oriented collective labour agreements)
2. Transformation Councils
3. Transformation guides

FUTURE-ORIENTED COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS (IG METALL)

IG Metall has negotiated 3 points to commit employers:

- Job security: long-term exclusion of redundancies;
- Investments: Investing in sustainable transformation;
- Qualification: Refresher course of their workers to adapt to the changing work processes (combined with part time or reduced working hours during training);

An important consideration is to force employers to invest in a sustainable future while at the same time safeguarding jobs. This, incidentally, also requires government investment.

TRANSFORMATION COUNCIL(S)

- Regional stakeholders (politicians, social partners, scientists...) analyse affected regions and companies, come together and develop a strategy for a just transition.
- In order to tackle local challenges, the Council elaborates specific policy measures and these are recommended to local governments such as:
 - Public financing for research, pilot projects for renewable energy
 - Vocational education and further training

TRANSFORMATION GUIDES

It is a continuous training programme, run by the social partners, in which workers themselves become "transformation guides" who identify and stimulate the potential of transformation within a company. It basically involves power/direction to shape one's own future. Transformation hubs are also used to exchange ideas between companies.

The DGB is also active in other policy areas, such as mobility and makes policy recommendations for the government to ensure a just transition.



DISCUSSION / QUESTIONS FROM THE CHAT

Linda Vermeulen: There is a question from the chat: Surely Section 28.4 of the WOR is not the only instrument to do something?

Bas van Weegberg: That Section offers a means to do something. What matters to me is that climate change is really something for workers. I found it interesting what Leon Krüger just said about the region. Regional Energy Strategies (RES) are being set up everywhere now. We are trying to influence that as well.

Linda Vermeulen: Roel Berghuis is now campaigning in the Dutch government with his own plan for Tata Steel. Hanan, how do you feel about that?

Hanan Yagoubi: We have also submitted a plan to politicians, together with our members in the waste industry and the Works Council.

From the chat: How is the waste industry preparing for a waste-free society?

Caroline Rietbergen: We produce an incredible amount of waste together, so I would first like to ask the question again. How are you helping to produce less waste? The waste treatment facilities are fully committed to reuse, optimal value creation (so waste is no longer seen as waste but as raw material and energy) and collaboration in the chains, so between waste companies and producers, governments and consumers.

From the chat: Should Tata Steel preserve jobs or rather change by downsizing?

Caroline Rietbergen: It is not a matter of or job preservation or change, but of both. As a trade union, we are always in favour of retaining jobs, but we are also in favour of greening. Steel must be produced greener and the workers must go along with that transition. And they are happy to go along. Therefore, the people of Tata Steel are taking action in the Dutch government. Incidentally, we also need steel for the greening, because how else will you produce those windmills?

3. EMPLOYMENT IN THE GREEN ECONOMY

THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY AS A JOB ENGINE

JOEL MARSDEN, RESEARCHER CIRCULAR JOBS INITIATIVE AT CIRCLE ECONOMY

"Human labour -work- is different from other renewable resources: creative, versatile and adaptable and able to be educated, but perishable if unused" Walter Stahel (2012)

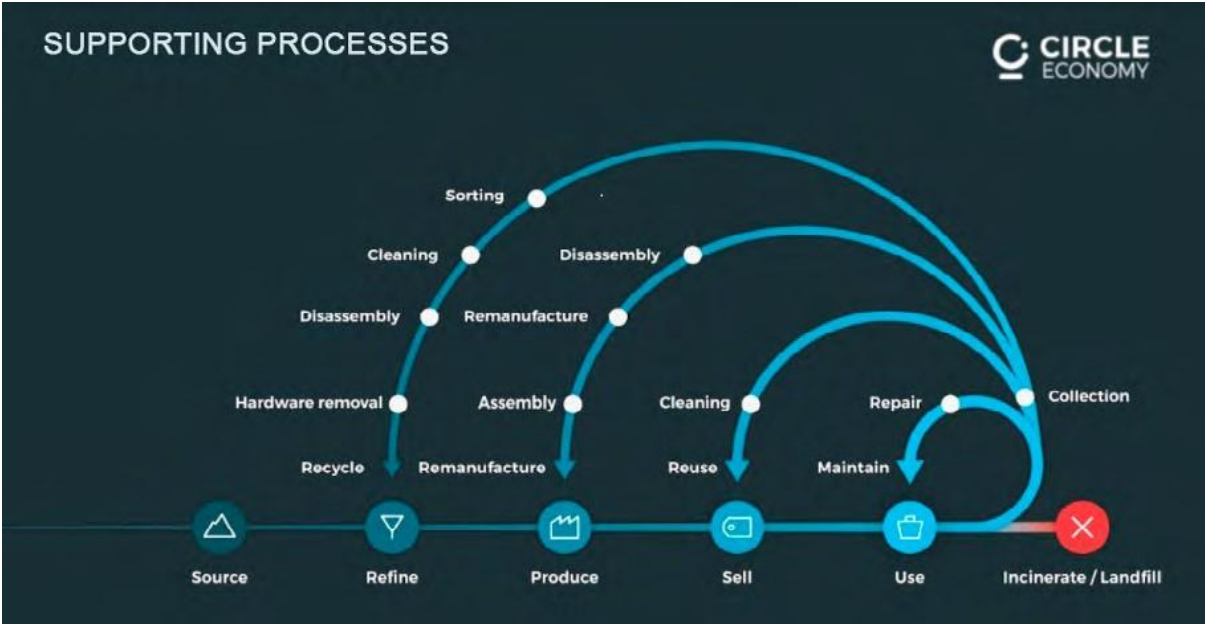
Since the beginning, the impact of the circular economy on people, their jobs and knowledge has been on the agenda. But these social dimensions are too often forgotten or overshadowed compared to the ecological dimensions. At Circle Economy, our goal is to provide measuring values and practical tools to the circular economy to make the circular economy work for people and planet.

In recent years, there has been a lot of research and discussion about the impact of the circular economy on the labour market. Many campaigns have already taken place, but there is still much more to do. And much to learn from each other.

WHAT DOES CIRCULAR ECONOMY MEAN?

In the current economy, we extract raw materials, produce, consume and then there is waste (take-make-waste). In a circular economy, you do not lose value but you retain the value of the materials. Value is not just about economic value, but about the entire socio-economic potential, because the circular economy requires many labour-intensive support processes in repair and especially in reuse.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE LABOUR MARKET?



The circular economy can really be a policy-driven job engine. As a result of policy, production methods and demand patterns change. As a result, new jobs are created, but other jobs will disappear or be replaced. Research shows that the net outcome is likely to be positive.

Scientific research predicts a 3% increase in employment by 2030 (Wiebe et al. 2019). The European Commission predicts 700,000 net jobs by 2030 (European Commission, 2018). But a net outcome does not paint the whole picture. For the majority of the jobs, tasks and skills will change. Those jobs will have to meet future demands that support the new sustainable business models.



CIRCULAR JOBS INITIATIVE

Circular Jobs Initiative works to ensure a positive transition for workers and society. There are three important elements:

1. Skills
2. Quality of work
3. Inclusive labour market

With our Circular Jobs *Monitor* we keep track how many jobs there are to support the circular economy, where these jobs are located and in which industries. The Netherlands currently has 700,000 circular jobs that support sustainability, mostly in the digital industry and services. The number of jobs is an important criterion, but should not be the only focus. Our research shows that the success of a circular economy depends on the knowledge and skills of workers. To achieve the circular economy, we also need to focus on the quality of jobs and inclusiveness.

WHAT CAN TRADE UNIONS AND OTHER SOCIAL PARTNERS DO?

At Circle Economy, we have created a guide specifically for social partners, including tips.

The results of our research show the following four actions as the most important.

1. **Create access opportunities to lifelong learning:** Foresight and long-term planning are hugely important in facilitating the transition.
2. **Ensure social protection and collective agreements** in declining, growing and emerging industries.
3. **Outline transition paths for workers** based on structural changes in the provision of training and education (with an LLL trajectory), including for those outside the labour market.
4. **Unlock financing.** Create new financing opportunities or use existing funds to make work and workplaces more circular and inclusive.

CONCLUSIONS

The knowledge and skills of workers (and employers) are hugely important in realising sustainable and circular strategies. In a circular economy, value is not lost. This must also apply to the value of human capital, in which we must also invest.

Trade unions play a key role in ensuring a just transition and that workers can participate to achieve a positive social and environmental impact.

joel@circle-economy.com

RESULTS OF POLL QUESTION 2

The Education & Development funds must do more to educate workers about climate change and what it means for work in the industry.



Results of the poll among seminar participants

TRAINING WORKERS FOR THE GREEN JOBS

ISABEL COENEN, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY ADVISOR FNV

The energy transition can only be a success if it is accompanied by accessible tailor-made training and development programmes. This will enable people to equip themselves to meet the new demands of the labour market.

Training and development funds can certainly play an important role in this, even more so than they do now. They have knowledge and an overview of the labour market developments in the industry. They also have an infrastructure for support and advice.

In a fund, your knowledge and expertise can be pooled and collective agreements can be reached to achieve good arrangements. A success factor is when workers and job seekers are involved in the design and can take control of their career themselves. It is also important to agree on a secure learning environment, stable employment and independent advice and support. When you don't know if you are going to be able to pay the rent tomorrow, your first priority certainly won't be training and development.

Funding comes from the wage bill and is therefore the money of the worker. Therefore, in the context of the big changes with regard to energy transition, the funds should offer co-financing, so that they can realise good and integral trajectories to this end. A good energy transition is also partly a public responsibility.

Funds are managed by parity so trade unions are also at the helm. An important issue here is that training facilities must be accessible to all. In addition, as trade unions we can play a role because we are independent, stand beside the worker and therefore have the trust of workers.

A good example is the deployment of DI advisors from the trade unions organised in the metal and engineering industries who enter into dialogue with workers on the shop floor through a road map, coaching talks and workshops. Another example are the Learning Ambassadors that we have organised in a number of industries such as the municipality in SW. We would like to see more use in these industries and also to support workers during the changes within the framework of energy transition. I would be delighted if more Education & Development funds took this up.

THERE IS STILL A LOT OF WORK TO BE DONE IN THE WIND OFFSHORE INDUSTRY

CHARLEY RAMDAS, TRADE UNION LEADER AT NAUTILUS

When you talk about energy transition, you talk about an employment engine, but when it comes to offshore wind industry, you talk about a polluting diesel engine. The offshore wind sector is a real cowboy industry, nothing has been regulated yet. There is no social infrastructure. Trade unions are systematically banned, so that we have to fight our way in. And that is what we are doing. In this industry, you are still talking about patriarchal relationships. Currently, some of our members are being called to account for their opposition to the long schedules associated with COVID-19. After more than a year of COVID-19, 10-12 weeks at sea is really not necessary any more. However, the employers refuse to discuss this.

More and more 'good jobs' are being turned into 'bad jobs' that are filled by, among others, Eastern Europeans. Large dredging companies are increasingly focusing on offshore wind energy. But when it comes to reorganisations, dredging workers are simply dismissed, whereas they could be easily relocated to offshore wind. These people already have maritime experience, but they are sent away and replaced by cheaper workers.

We started a project in the wind offshore industry two years ago with a few target companies. There, we have now won the battle on security, one of the most important issues when it comes to workers' interests. We are now involved in discussions on the Health and Safety Catalogue in the wind offshore industry, so after two years we



have achieved that. But with the people themselves, we are also fighting for a decent package of employment conditions. Security and employment, that is what we are fighting for.

The companies we are talking about come from the maritime service industry. Traditionally, these are companies with good employment conditions, including pension accrual, but in this transition to a new field, they consciously choose not to fascinate and commit people, but to work as cheaply as possible. In other words, they are going for the short term and not the long term. Between now and 2030, there must be more and more wind at sea, so the question is whether there will be enough people who can do this work to achieve those green goals.

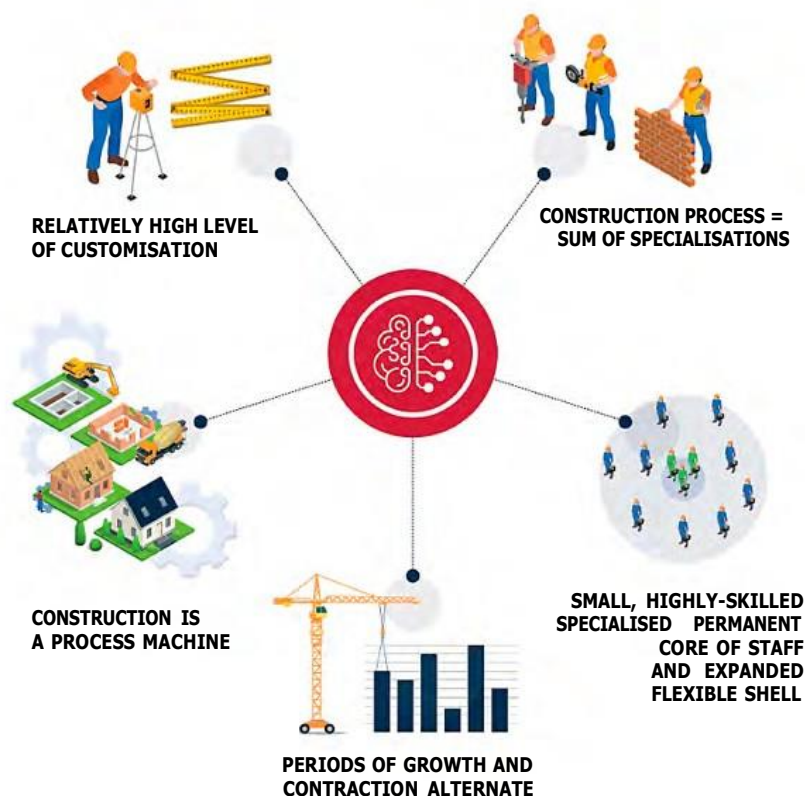
I also think that there is too little attention for these aspects from the Dutch government. We did manage to get the text of the Climate Agreement to include something about good employment terms and conditions, but practice really leaves something to be desired.

MUCH TO GAIN FROM RENOVATION

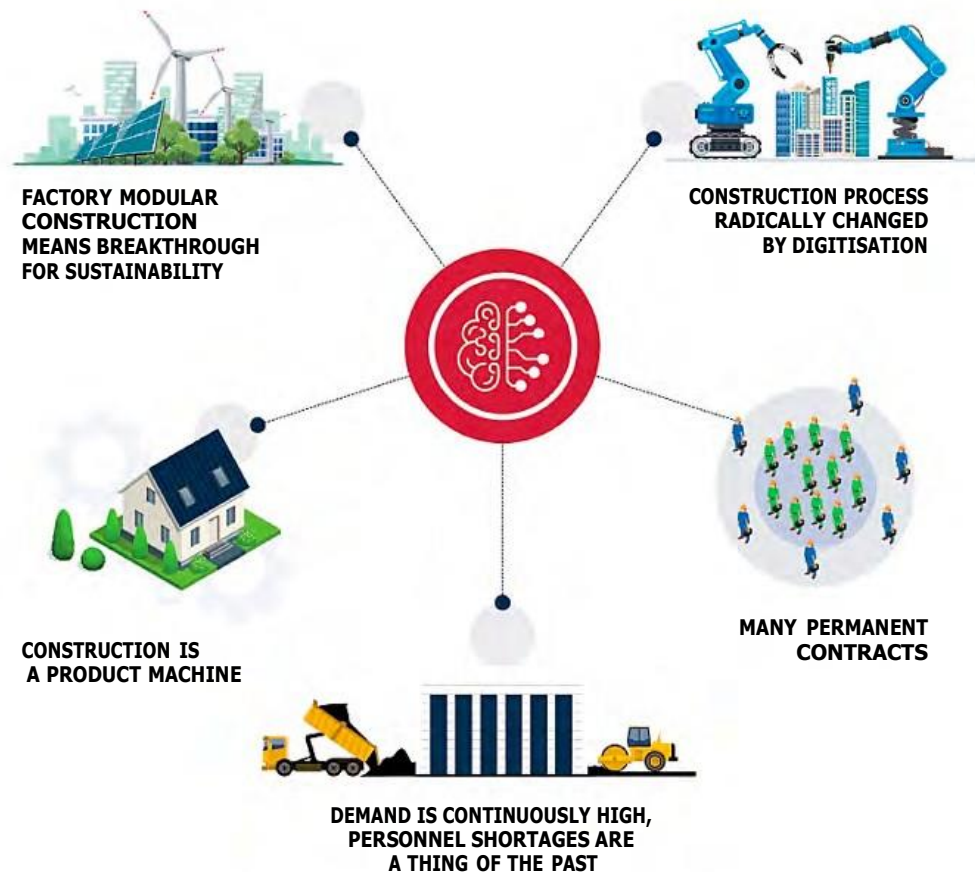
ELLEN HOEIJENBOS, TRADE UNION LEADER FNV BOUWEN EN WONEN

Within the context of Energy transition, our industry talks about 'The Built Environment'. All houses and buildings in the EU together are responsible for 40% of CO2 emissions. Therefore, there is a lot of climate benefit to be achieved and there is also a huge task from the EU Renovation Wave Programme. The houses we live in all have to become CO2 neutral and the government is leading the way in this.

I outline two images of the construction industry:
The first image is an image of a modern building industry, with plenty of opportunities for green jobs, higher educated people and women. An industry that is attractive to (creative) young people. Data-driven and new (industrialised) construction processes are the magic words.



The second image shows a different picture that is similar to what we see on the construction site today. There is one main contractor with an endless chain of subcontractors underneath. Number of permanent contracts 25% versus 75% flex-workers! Whereby flexible can be: temporary workers, (semi) self-employed, migrant workers. This is certainly not a picture of a sustainable industry. Flexible is definitely not limited to peak and sick periods. The ISZW inspection confirms the picture that we as a trade union also see, namely an increase of the deployment of migrant workers, including particularly many third-country nationals (people from outside the EU such as Ukrainians). The industry is primarily driven by cost control and that completes the picture. The government is one of the biggest clients in the social real estate sector, so it should play a larger role in changing the situation. There is still a lot of work to be done here.



A recent analysis/evaluation of the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations shows that the two major bottlenecks in the renovation of buildings (Dutch neighbourhoods natural gas-free) are:

- A. Affordability
- B. Complexity

Two ingredients that are attractive to employers, who particularly to go for the easiest and cheapest solution.

The trade unions are often blamed for putting the brakes on when it comes to greening. And I'm quite happy to point an accusing finger at employers and they do a lot of things wrong and are to blame - but then I'd also like to point out the role that the government plays here. More money is simply needed. In the tender phase: attention must be paid to social procurement. In the Netherlands, the Tender Directive has been implemented only minimally. As a trade union, we can also be blamed for this.



Obviously, I do not want money to go to employers just like that. Extra money must go hand in hand with conditions. This means that more must be invested in sustainable jobs and in a sustainable industry, where the right Collective Labour Agreement applies. The fact that a Collective Labour Agreement applies does not always mean that it is the right one. The solution to this problem is not to create new collective labour agreements with lower employment conditions.

YOU CAN ONLY GO GREEN IF YOU DO IT FAIRLY!

CHANT VAN DEN BERG, TRADE UNION LEADER FNV HAVENS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE COAL FUND

The phase-out of coal combustion has gained momentum due to the Urgenda ruling (Dec 2019). I will talk about how we were able to assimilate the shock of the closure of the 1st coal-fired power station, how we are now in the process of managing the 2nd closure and how we see future developments, because it doesn't stop with these 2 power stations, it is not limited to phasing out coal through the energy transition, many things are going to change

Last year, the Hemweg power plant in Amsterdam was the first coal-fired power station to close its doors. This closure affected not only the personnel of the power plants themselves, but also the rest of the coal chains. As a result, some of our members from the coal transshipment company OBA were made redundant and lost their jobs. FNV Havens had been taking action to cope with this impact for more than 5 years. Only through persistent action with our members and executives have we been able to establish a Coal Fund. The coal fund entails that the dismissed workers are given 3 years to go from job to job. They are entitled to support for three years, can follow training of their own choice and receive a supplement to their unemployment benefit or possibly a lower paid position.

Now it is the turn of the **Onyx coal-fired power station in the Rijnmond region**. Onyx wants to sell their coal-firing licence back to the Dutch government. The negotiations are still in full swing and the sum involved would be around €238,000,000 - almost a quarter of a billion.

As soon as this power station closes down, the coal transshipment company EMO, which transships coal for the Onyx power station, will also feel the effects of the closure. Our members at the power plant and EMO have joint forces to campaign for the implementation of the Coal Fund here too. This means three years of support, training and no loss of income. The good thing is that environmental organisations have also joined us. They, too, realise that the energy transition needs support. That support can only be gained if the bill is divided fairly. In other words, We do not want employees to have to foot the bill, while companies are generously compensated. Here, too, we want at least the same arrangement as was agreed for the Hemweg power station for the entire coal chains.

In the future, the other three coal-fired power stations will also be closed down.

We are also closely following the discussions on reducing the livestock population. This will have an effect on our members in the agribulk that feed the cattle. The same applies to the impact of the Shell ruling two weeks ago. Sooner or later, this is going to have consequences for our members in the tank storage companies. We will have to wait and see what the new government has in store for us in this area. In any case, we will not stand idly by while the Dutch government enthusiastically compensates companies without thinking of the workers who lose their jobs as a result. We will be there again, together with our members, our colleagues from the other FNV industries and the environmental organisations. Because we do not care whether it is about coal handling, agribulk or tank storage: if our members are made redundant, they must be well taken care of. You can only go green if you do it fairly, so take good care of the workers!



WE NEED A GOOD BALANCE BETWEEN ECONOMIC, ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL DIMENSION.

LUCIE STUDNIČNÁ, INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE CZECH - MORAVIAN TRADE UNION CMKOS

The coal phase-out in the Czech Republic has been going on for about 20-25 years. The Czech Republic still has a lot of mining and it is linked to heavy industry. Coal is one of the main sources of energy generation and therefore a major contributor to industrial production. Some mines have already been closed down, some for economic reasons (ETS process). The mining industry employs approximately 11,000 workers. With the surrounding services/activities it concerns approximately 30,000 workers in the Czech Republic who depend on mining.

For companies and factories, the coal phase-out is a big problem. Coal is essential for employment, particularly in three specific regions. The Czech Republic has three important mining regions. In north-western Bohemia (the Ústí na Labem and Karlovy Vary regions) and north-eastern Moravia (the Ostrava region).

There is a comprehensive start-up plan for the rehabilitation of these regions, but not all the necessary elements for success are included. Two years ago, the National Coal Commission was established to deal with different elements of the coal phase-out; by the end of this year, a concrete roadmap should be completed, focusing on concrete measures to address economic and social impacts. If I have to evaluate it myself, don't look at the Czech Republic, if you want to learn from approaches in other countries.

I also participate – for 5 years now – in the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (CCMI) of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). In 2016, the EESC issued an opinion on coal with concrete recommendations such as the creation of a European Exchange Platform - Coal Regions in Transition- focused on opinion building and activities around a just transition. I think we are also at the core of the Just Transition Fund. We have several meetings a year with different stakeholders involved. There are 41 coal regions in Europe and we have visited them all. We have organised a number of activities and provide assistance to stakeholders.

Ultimately, we have identified 10 elements in the CCMI for a successful transition:

1. You must have a good **plan** on how you are going to phase out coal
2. Obviously, you need **money**
3. Particularly important is the **involvement /participation** of all stakeholders
4. And the **public acceptance**
5. There must be a solid **social dialogue**
6. And **coordination of different levels**
7. **Timing**, count on 20 to 30 years for the transition
8. **Investments**, because jobs must come to these regions
9. And good **quality jobs** (location, timing, quality)
10. **Good education, training and re-training** of workers and research

The process has winners and losers. There is an urgent need to focus on recovery and to mitigate the negative impacts. Green initiatives need a good balance between the economic, ecological and social dimensions. Yesterday we adopted a statement in the CCMI and it reads: No Green Deal without a Social Deal!



DISCUSSION / QUESTIONS FROM THE CHATS

Linda Vermeulen: I recently heard someone from the environmental movement say focusing on employment only slows down the climate policy. In short, is the trade union putting on the brakes!?

Ellen Hoeijenbos: I would rather say that the government is putting on the brakes. You simply have to focus on sustainable jobs, otherwise you won't be able to make the green transition.

Linda Vermeulen: Isn't it true that public opinion often sees standing up for a better climate and standing up for good employment opportunities as two different things?

Chant van den Berg: No. I notice that the environmental movement also stands up for good jobs. If we campaign, they will join in. They also carry banners saying that we need a good social plan.

Linda Vermeulen: Aren't you afraid that nothing will come of the green transition if you only stand up for good employment conditions everywhere? Won't that make it too expensive?

Charley Ramdas: Too expensive compared to what? Compared to Asian wages which are disproportionate to our wages? What I fear is that the plug will be pulled out. This doesn't only apply to the maritime industry. Those ships also employ people who fall under the metal or construction collective labour agreements. And if there is one thing I have learned, it is that employers are very keen on looking away when it comes to social issues.

Linda Vermeulen: Shouldn't these Learning Ambassadors be called Climate Ambassadors?

Isabel Coenen: I definitely think that this concept can also be used to train and supervise Climate Ambassadors. Our British colleagues at the TUC already have successful examples of this.

Linda Vermeulen: The question is whether FNV can play a bigger role locally in the climate transition.

Ellen Hoeijenbos: Yes, indeed! One thing that FNV Bouw was good at, before the merger, was making contacts in the region. 80% of the work in the construction industry is done locally, mostly by SMEs. So we will have to re-organise our ears and eyes in the region again. What is going on? What is happening locally? This requires a different way of organisation, coordination and collaboration.

4. INVESTING IN A GREEN ECONOMY

THE TRADE UNION IS A GREEN MOVEMENT

KITTY JONG, VICE PRESIDENT FNV

The fact that the trade union is also a green movement, is very clearly demonstrated today. I believe that most environmental organisations have also realised this by now. I am incredibly proud of the initiative at Tata Steel, that we are taking a step forward for sustainability: for greening and for jobs. Many actions, naturally stem from where the government falls short. When I see Charley's struggle at Wind op Zee, Hanan's struggle with waste and Joosje's struggle in Groningen, I realise that the government is coming up with all kinds of measures without having a vision of what our economy should look like in a few years' time, without any flanking policy. We are not going to sit and wait until the government has a vision, we are going to take action ourselves.

Such a statement was also made at Shell. It is a shame, of course, that it had to come to this. Until recently, Shell always said that they would only stop using fossil fuels once the last drop of petrol had been filled up. Shell has an exemplary function, so that it is sad that it had to come to a judicial decision. But I hope that this is a prelude for other companies to follow the initiative at Tata.

'Just transition' is a precondition for the Paris Agreement. With the 'Fair Climate Agenda', together with the Sustainable Finance Lab, environmental organisations, NGOs and employer's organisations, we have submitted a document in which we make it clear that it is not only about investing in technology, but also in people. It should also be about jobs, good jobs, good collective labour agreements. There are companies that are working on our sustainability, but where we as a trade union are not allowed to enter, as Charley Ramdas' story illustrates. Making your home more sustainable means that you also invest in it yourself. But many people are not in a position to do so. More and more households are faced with fuel poverty. They live in old houses that are poorly insulated which means they have high heating bills. The government has failed to have a vision on this. In December 2019, the Climate Agreement was presented to the press. On the morning of the presentation, we added another sentence: if people can't experience it, then resources must be made available. That led to a voucher of €75, far too little of course.

Therefore, we have now created the 'Fair Climate Agenda'.⁴ A just transition commission should also be set up, after the Scottish model, a just transition commission where social parties can find each other and reach solutions. Energy transition is also a gender issue because the benefits and costs are distributed unequally. The southern hemisphere of the planet has it harder than we do, so there is also a racism aspect to it. The whole package of measures is reflected in the 'Fair Climate Agenda' for which the Sustainable Finance Lab was the planner and coordinator.

⁴ The Fair Climate Agenda was drafted under the chairmanship of Farid Tabarki and is supported by: Milieudefensie, FNV, Techniek Nederland, Nederlandse Vereniging Duurzame Energie NVDE, MVO Nederland, Jonge Klimaatbeweging, Natuur & Milieu, IVN Natuureducatie, Aedes, Woonbond, Nibud, Natuur en Milieufederaties, Nationale Jeugdgraad, World Class Maintenance, Stichting Probos, Koninklijke Vereniging van Hoveniers en Groenvoorzieners, Fietsersbond, Reizigersvereniging Rover, Federatie Nederlandse rubber- en kunststofindustrie NRK, Our New Economy, MKB Amsterdam.



THE FAIR CLIMATE AGENDA

RENS VAN TILBURG, MEMBER AND DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABLE FINANCE LAB

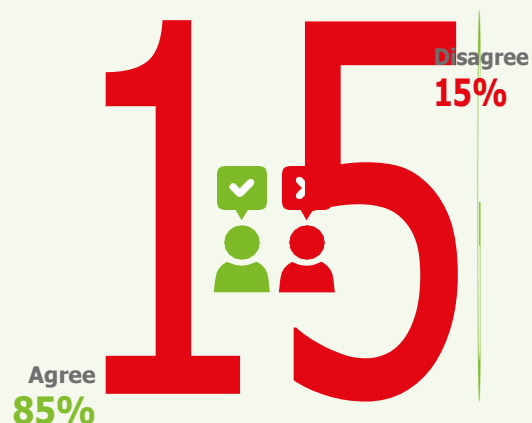
The Sustainable Finance Lab is an academic think tank that was founded ten years ago by Herman Wijffels, former chairman of the SER and at that time professor of Transition Studies at the University of Utrecht. He got into conversation with Pieter Blom of the Triodos bank. The financial crisis had also hit the Netherlands hard but, unlike other countries, there was hardly any fundamental discussion in the Netherlands about how the financial industry could do things differently. Can't we think of something, was Herman Wijffels' question to Pieter Blom. That is how the Sustainable Finance Lab came into being. The think tank consists of 20 people, predominantly professors from different universities. I was one of the members from the beginning but was not a professor at the time. I was working for the government in the field of innovation policy. I am now director of the secretariat of the University of Utrecht.

Collaboration with the trade union is particularly important. I haven't come across the trade union much in recent years. What the trade union has brought to the table are references to good work: not only talking about the results of the transition but also about the way in which it is achieved. One of the interesting things about the Fair Climate Agenda is that it has also been endorsed by employers. Actually, I thought beforehand that it might lead to tension between employers' and workers' organisations. But employment proved to be one of the connecting elements. Because the energy transition is a huge job engine, but are there also people going to get the work done? I think employers have learned that if you don't create decent, good jobs, it won't be attractive for people to work in the industry. When employers complain about labour shortages, they should also look in the mirror and ask themselves whether they are attractive enough for people to work for them. On the other hand, people have to have the knowledge and skills to do the job. So our agenda also contains a very concrete investment package for training 60,000 people over the next four years to work in the energy transition. Those were two very concrete points that the FNV brought up. But I also like the fact that you put the subject in a broader context -Kitty put that nicely.

I think the penny has dropped with the environmental organisations too. The climate transition always has to happen quickly and then you start looking for those measures where you can achieve as much as possible with your money. This quickly leads to measures that exceptionally support the rich: a subsidy for buying a Tesla or for insulating your house. It is precisely then that you see resistance from people who do not have the money to buy a Tesla and who do not have the money to insulate their house. This resistance is growing. If we want to meet the European goals, this will have an increasing impact on people's lives. If you don't broaden the scope so that everyone benefits from the measures, you will see resistance grow.

RESULTS OF POLL QUESTION 3

Pension funds must, above all, invest sustainably, even if this means lower returns in the short term.



Result of a poll among the seminar participants

SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT CAN ALSO BE VERY PROFITABLE

JOSÉ MEIJER, TRADE UNION LEADER PENSION FUND ABP

I find the outcome of the poll surprising! I had expected it to be more like 50-50%. Many pension members are also worried about their pensions. But I would like to add that sustainability can also be very profitable. It doesn't have to cost money.

Sustainable investment is my ideal. We need to make sure that investments benefit people. But with pension funds, it is of course about what the participants want.

HOW DOES THE FNV EXERT INFLUENCE ON PENSION FUND INVESTMENTS?

The FNV has approximately 30 pension fund managers in the different pension funds. The pension fund managers make the members' voices heard there. On the board, they can promote policies that are in line with the wishes of the fund members and that generate the highest possible sustainable return. They must ensure that each investment decision is characterised by an integral assessment of costs- risk- profitability and sustainability.

WHEN IS AN INVESTMENT SUSTAINABLE, HOW DO FUNDS CHECK THAT IT IS ALSO PROFITABLE?

In the Netherlands, we have accumulated pension assets of about € 1,700 billion. Pensions are the deferred salaries of employees. Therefore, the funds belong to the employees and are for the employees!

This amount has been raised by the workers' premiums, the employer's contributions, but particularly it is growing thanks to our investment results.

Out of every € 1,000.– in pension, around € 350.– is raised by the contributions of the worker and the employer. Approximately € 650.– is raised through investments.

So investments are important.

In recent years, the emphasis of participants and therefore also of pension funds has shifted to these investments. Participants indicate that they not only want a good pension, but also that they want to enjoy (and accrue) their pension in a liveable world. Because then a good pension is worth even more. Then your children and grandchildren will also benefit from it.

What is a liveable world? A world in which we do not deplete the earth (climate), a world in which human rights and therefore workers' rights are secured and a world in which companies/governments have a good governance/management culture.

All investment decisions of the pension fund are measured against the yardstick of:

- **E** (environment, responsible for the environment),
- **S** (social, socially responsible)
- **G** (governance, administratively responsible).

The FNV emphasises the S of that criteria. We particularly focus on workers' rights, trade union freedom, freedom to negotiate as a union, labour rights, working conditions and a living wage. Things are going well with the E, and also with the G. But the S requires more attention. Let's make workers' money work for workers!!!

We draw attention to ICSR covenants of the pension industry and the activities of the committee on workers capital, which is part of the ITUC and brings together all unions with trustees in funds and holds asset managers to account.

This policy has taken off in recent years. We have now reached the point where sustainable investment provides a higher return because it reduces risk.

The Dutch Bank (DNB) demands sustainability from us; as do the pension funds code and politicians. When do we know if an investment is sustainable? Often we don't, the pension industry invests all over the world, in many different sectors and companies, in many different investment categories.



WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A FUND BOARD?

First of all, we can agree on a clear investment policy: what do we want to invest in, what do we not want to invest in. This can be done based on professional expertise, but above all by asking the participants what they want. In the new system, this will be more explicitly asked.

Secondly, we can collect data, benchmarking. This is done all over the world.

We also support government policy (European, global) which requires companies and organisations to be transparent and to report on their sustainability. Europe and the UN play an important role in this.

The pension industry in the Netherlands has no choice but to invest sustainably. The Netherlands is in the lead in this respect; in Europe and in the rest of the world. That does not mean that all is well, so participants should continue to call their Fund Board to account!

FOCUSING ON HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE CHAIN

LUCIA VAN WESTERLAAK, POLICY ADVISOR FNV, ICSR SPECIALIST

The most important policy frameworks for International Corporate Social Responsibility ICSR are the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the United Nations Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights and the ILO Multinational Declaration. All three of these policy frameworks emphasise the importance of focussing on people and labour rights in international supply and investment chains.

Also when it comes to the all-important greening of energy (sources) and related activities, it is important to first investigate the chains for possible breaches of human rights and the environment. If we fail to do so, we will come across, for example, the supply of solar panels made with forced labour by Uyghurs and the installation of windmills by migrant workers hired by the Dutch dredging companies under poor working conditions and circumstances.

In 2019, in the SER we prepared an advisory report on the relationship between International Corporate Social Responsibility and the sustainable development goals. The SER calls for: first apply the ICSR framework. Then do the extra things you want to do. Working on ICSR policy frameworks means you are contributing to the SDGs anyway. Clean up your room before you go out to play that's easy to remember, right?

TOGETHER STRONG FOR FAIR GREEN TAXES

SACHA DIERCKX, POLICY ADVISOR ABVV

There is a noticeably clear link between fair taxation and a just transition. There are three reasons for this. First of all, the government needs funds to be able to invest because private parties will not do so. This concerns, for example, public transport, energy-efficient housing for low income groups, and renewable energy. In addition, social protection is necessary for people who are in danger of losing their jobs or who are in difficulty in some other way, to mention some examples. It means not abandoning them; not leaving anyone behind.

A second reason why those fair taxes are so necessary for a just transition is to counteract inequality. This is important for the support of that transition. If you are already living on the edge of poverty and the government is also going to make certain polluting activities more expensive, it is logical that you will oppose this.

This is also important because we know from research that people with higher incomes pollute much more, and therefore contribute to the climate crisis, than people with lower incomes. I always say: there is enough on this planet to satisfy everyone's needs, but there is not enough for everyone's greed. The inequality also touches a power issue, because the people with a lot of money do not always have an interest in a just transition and will oppose stricter climate measures. Here, too, a just transition can assist in this.

At present, we often see a privatisation of profits and a socialisation of costs. Companies often receive subsidies while making large profits. This subsidy is paid for by the taxpayer. To give an example. Here in Belgium, we also have windmills, which are invested in by one of the five richest families in Belgium. This family receives a government subsidy and makes a large profit, while the cost of the subsidy is translated into a higher energy bill for households. In other words, those families contribute much more to the energy transition than those large companies do. That is a very unfair way to shape that transition. Taxing the profits of companies and shareholders more can therefore contribute to a just transition.

WHAT ARE FAIR TAXES?

1. Taxing wealth capital. In Belgium we do not have a wealth tax, but in the Netherlands we have a form of tax on returns.
2. Tax companies. It is important to close the loopholes that companies often find to avoid paying tax.
3. Tax all income in the same way. Taxation on capital is much lower in Belgium than on labour. That is not fair. We say: a euro is a euro. So shareholders should pay the same tax on their profits as companies pay on their labour costs.
4. Fairness in green taxes. Excise taxes are levied on petrol and diesel, which is not bad in itself, but not on kerosene. While we know that it is often people with higher incomes who travel by plane more often. As far as we are concerned, there should be VAT on airline tickets. A second example is that many companies pay their staff in part with a company car and fuel card. The Belgian government wants these companies to go green and subsidises companies to make their fleets electric. That is not fair either, because once again the taxpayer is paying for it.

To conclude: these fair taxes will not come by themselves. They require social struggles from trade unions and the environmental movement. So, I would like to end as we always say in the ABVV: Strong Together!

DISCUSSION / QUESTIONS FROM THE CHAT

Linda Vermeulen: I recognise the story about subsidies going to the rich. As a trade union woman in the shopping street, I see the same thing happening. The companies pocketed labour cost subsidies while they are making huge profits.

Rens van Tilburg: The most important thing is that there is recognition of the fact that this transition can only take place if it happens fairly. Sacha's examples are clear. In the Netherlands, too, you can see resistance growing. The SME industry is already starting to take umbrage at the fact that all the subsidies end up in the pockets of the big 0% large companies, while the SME industry itself is running up against the wall. We have not quite woken up in the Netherlands yet. I am therefore very curious about the new coalition agreement. I really hope that this just transition will play a major role in the formation of a government.

Kitty Jong: Fighting is important. We have a lot of active executives in the ports and in the power plants. We had to fight for six years in order to get the Coal Fund to close the Hemweg power station. Something about this was finally included in the Climate Agreement. Now we have to fight again for every power station that is to be closed down, while the owners of the power stations are amply compensated for the closure of the power stations. That is not fair. We don't want to end up in the same situation as with the En. The fact that the subsidy pots are filled with a surcharge on citizens' energy bills is not right either. The SDE++ pot is a subsidy pot that is paid from the surcharge on the energy bills of SME and citizens. So, that is a crazy system. While the large companies pocket the subsidy, SMEs and citizens have to pay for it. So, we have to stand shoulder to shoulder to fight that battle.



5. CLOSURE

OFFERING WORKERS A GREEN FUTURE

LUDOVIC VOET, SECRETARY ETUC

In this seminar, we have seen a broad overview of trade union action. Trade union members from different industries are trying to influence the processes. I would like to warmly congratulate the FNV for this. Some final conclusions from my side are:

1. We have to phase out the fossil industry and we have to do it fairly.
2. We must also look at how we can quickly invest in the energy-rich industries so that they can switch to sustainable clean technologies and to good quality jobs. Steel, cement, aluminium ...
3. A lot has been said about training and education so that people do not lose their jobs but can switch to other work.
4. Strong social protection is important. This must generate a future for workers so that they do not lose their faith in a green transition either.
5. From a European perspective, we see regions that are particularly affected, as we also heard from our Czech colleague. If we do not solve this, we will lose the trust of the workers.
6. But solving it is complex because the locations where windmills are now being erected at sea are not the same locations where the mines are closing down.
7. We have seen that the Renovation Wave can create a lot of jobs, but we also know that the working conditions in the construction industry are sometimes downright poor. We know that there are many job opportunities in the circular economy, but we also know that work in the waste industry is hard work, so we will always ask for attention to be paid to the quality of work and working conditions. We are interested in Circular Economy and we as ETUC are currently working together with the European employer organisations on recommendations for the CE process.
8. Then there is the issue of money. How do we finance the transition. What currently exists in the European Just Transition Fund is insufficient. We need more resources for the construction, automotive and transport industry. This has also been mentioned by our Belgian colleague. Who will pay for this? We must look not only at public funds, but also at companies. Our German fellow Member mentioned a particularly good example with his future-oriented collective labour agreements. If public money is invested in a company, then that money belongs to all of us. So, we can also make demands. So does it go to the company's profits or to good wages? We must make demands on the recovery agenda.

There have now been conferences in Bulgaria, Belgium, Spain and this one in the Netherlands. In September, ETUC will organise a final conference in which a number of joint conclusions and recommendations will be made.





Co-funded by
the European Union



CONFEDERATION
**SYNDICAT
EUROPÉEN
TRADE UNION**



COLOFON

Editor: **Caroline Rietbergen**

Editorial assistance: **Communication and Marketing FNV**

Lay-out: **studiofny**

Cover image: **Micheile | Unsplash.com**

Date: **August 2021**

Order number: **210657**

