

# Reimagining work for a just transition



**Date of publication:** November 2022

**Authors of the report:**

Katy Wiese ([katharina.wiese@eeb.org](mailto:katharina.wiese@eeb.org)) and  
Marguerite Culot ([marguerite.culot@eeb.org](mailto:marguerite.culot@eeb.org))

**Editor:** Ruby Silk

**The full report should be referenced as follows:** Culot, M. and Wiese, K. (2022). Reimagining work for a just transition. European Environmental Bureau, Brussels.

**Report available online at:** <https://eeb.org/library/reimagining-work-for-a-just-transition/>

**Report produced for and disseminated by:** The European Environmental Bureau [www.eeb.org](http://www.eeb.org)

**Acknowledgements:** We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this report in various ways: Nick Meynen, Luke Haywood, Patrizia Heidegger, Andreas Budiman, Maria Langsenlehner, Kalina Arabadjieva, Pablo Ribera Paya, Katie Treadwell, Tiziano Distefano, Philipp Fey, Pierre Larrouturou, Michel Cermak, Angelika Zahrnt and all participants from our roundtable discussion.

The responsibility for errors remains with the authors.

**Editor responsible:**


European Environmental Bureau (EEB)  
Rue des Deux Eglises 14-16  
1000 Brussels, Belgium  
[www.eeb.org](http://www.eeb.org)

The EEB is the largest network of environmental citizens' organisations in Europe. It is an International non-profit Association Internationale sans but lucratif, with EC transparency register number 06798511314-27.

**Layout:** Viola Madau

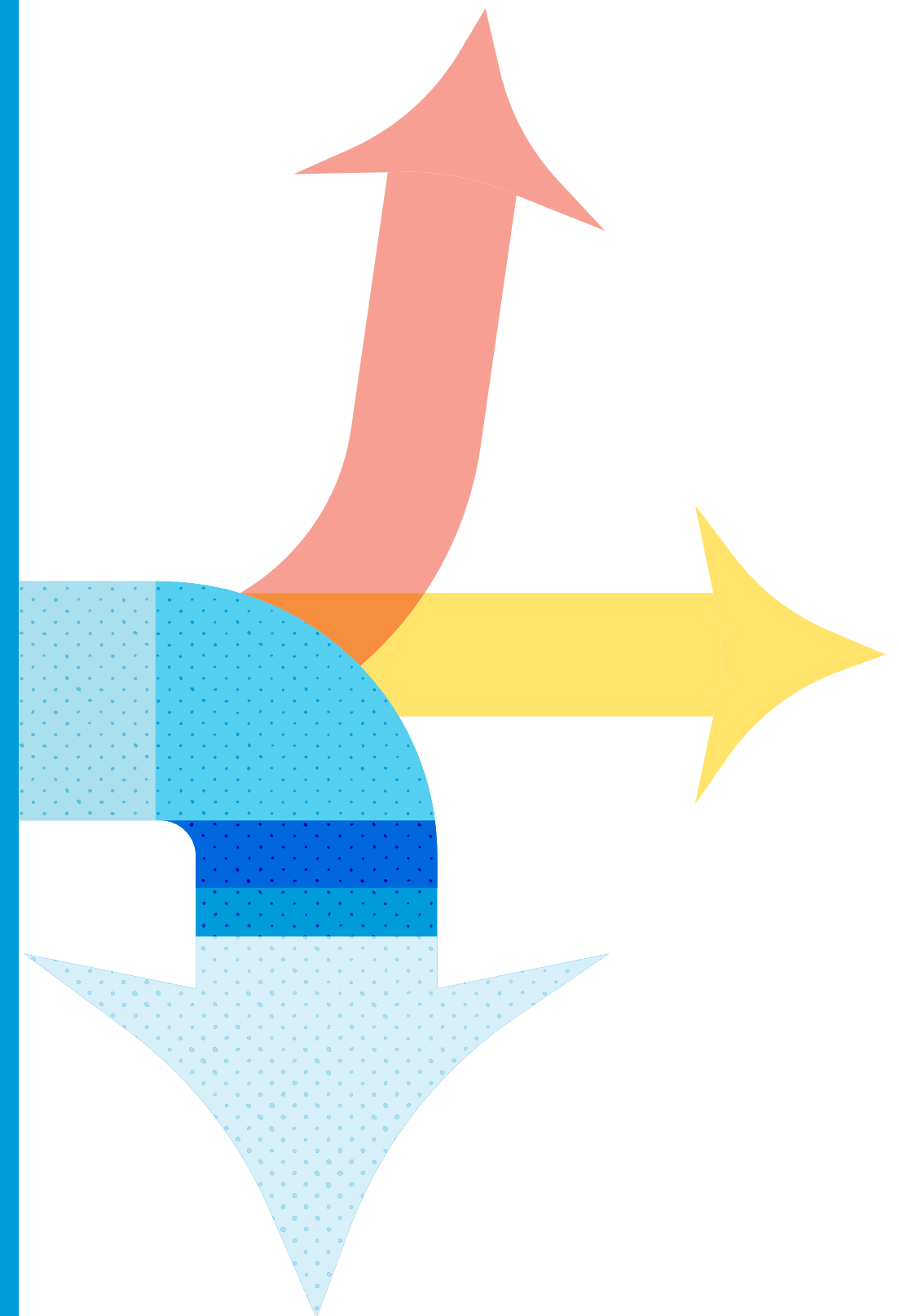
For the production, layout,  
printing and dissemination we  
would like to thank the following:



 Bundesministerium  
Klimaschutz, Umwelt,  
Energie, Mobilität,  
Innovation und Technologie

This report was produced with the partial financial  
support from the European Union's Horizon 2020  
research and innovation programme under grant  
agreement No.821105.

*Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors  
and do not necessarily reflect the views of the  
European Union.*



# Acronyms:

CAP - Common Agriculture Policy	GDP - Gross Domestic Product
EGD - European Green Deal	GHG - Greenhouse Gases
EP - European Parliament	ILO - International Labour Organisation
EPSR - European Pillar of Social Rights	JG - Job Guarantee
ESF+ - European Social Fund Plus	JTF - Just Transition Fund
ETUI - European Trade Union Institute	JTM - Just Transition Mechanism
EU - European Union	RED III - Renewable Energy Directive III
F2F - Farm to Fork Strategy	WTR - Working Time Reduction

## Content Warning:

This report makes reference to self-harm and suicide.

# Table of Contents

01	Introduction	6
02	A more holistic understanding of a just transition	8
03	Work within the EGD and Just Transition policies	16
	EU Targets	18
	Funding the EGD and the Just Transition	20
	1. The Just Transition Fund	21
	2. The European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)	23
	Policy examples in energy and agriculture	26
	1. The REPowerEU Plan	27
	2. The Revision of the Renewable Energy Directive	28
	3. The Farm to Fork Strategy	30
04	Policies moving forward	32
	Working Time Reduction	33
	Job Guarantee	38
05	Policy recommendations	40
	Working Time Reduction	41
	Job Guarantee	45
06	Conclusion	48
07	Bibliography	50

# Introduction

**“The environment is where we live, work and play”**

P. Novotny (1995)

**While the climate crisis has been telling us for years that the way we work will have to change, recent crises have further disrupted the labour market. Europe is still suffering from the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and the [labour market](#), with a direct effect on people’s jobs and wellbeing.**

**This is expected to continue because of [climate-induced inflation](#), additional supply chain disruptions, speculation on energy and food, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In the context of environmental breakdown and the cost of living crisis, employment as it currently exists is not fit for purpose. However, if remodelled and decoupled from GDP growth, its potential to positively transform people’s lives and our connection with the environment is enormous.**

**This report aims to explain why and how this can happen.**

Going back to the pre-pandemic economic status quo and boosting economic growth in order to create jobs is not a sustainable solution. Continuous economic growth drives unsustainable levels of production, consumption, and resource use with detrimental effects on the environment.

Instead, we need to:

- 1 create** millions of new and decent jobs<sup>1</sup> through, for example, public investments and revaluing care to enable the green transition
- 2 transform** existing jobs to make them future-proof for a low-carbon society
- 3 recognise** and value jobs that are essential for the wellbeing of our society and nature.  
*This can only be achieved if we rethink employment, involve social partners, and include meaningful activities as part of the transition.*

The European Green Deal (EGD) is meant to transform Europe into a fairer, more prosperous, sustainable, and resilient society by introducing policies with climate and environmental objectives. Its main goal is to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, and its transitional pathway covers sectors such as mobility, energy, construction, agriculture, circular economy, and finance.

The environmental, social, and economic consequences of climate breakdown and the ensuing policies are creating winners and losers, thereby exacerbating existing social inequalities. Recognising the need for a “fair” transition to climate neutrality, the EGD includes pledges to “leave no one behind”. It stresses the importance of the social dimensions and the need for a “just and inclusive transition” as one of its main objectives.

The main elements to achieve this vision are the [Just Transition Mechanism](#), the [European Social Fund Plus](#), the [Social Climate Fund](#), as well as a non-binding [Council Recommendation](#).<sup>2</sup>

The current instruments and proposals by the European Commission are too narrow and therefore fall short of providing the holistic and [legal](#) just transition<sup>3</sup> framework that society needs. For example, current instruments focus mostly on the negative impacts of the energy transition on specific

regions and economic sectors, such as coal mining regions and high-carbon industries. Such measures mainly benefit men in coal mining areas and lack a gender-sensitive analysis of who will need extra attention. While the transition of brown industries is important, more action is required, such as integrating meaningful activities into a just transition approach. In a nutshell, the existing transition pathway stays within a small, short-termist intervention mindset.

This policy brief aims to set out why there cannot be a just transition without rethinking work in Europe more broadly. The cost of not broadening our understanding of a just transition to fully include already existing low-carbon jobs such as care and education is that tensions in Europe’s labour market will rise. Other consequences include risks to social cohesion, regional disparities, urban-rural divide, and increasing inequalities. We, therefore, argue for stronger integration of work/employment, a just transition, and wider environmental policies within the EGD.

Two main elements should be working time reduction (WTR) and the job guarantee scheme (JG) as these can decrease our structural dependency on GDP growth as a means to create meaningful work.

<sup>1</sup> “Decent work means opportunities for jobs that are freely chosen, respect core labour standards, provide a living wage (whether through self-employment or wage labour) and ensure equal treatment for all. Workers should be able to perform their tasks under safe and healthy conditions and have a voice in the workplace.” Source: [SOLIDAR Factsheet p.1](#)

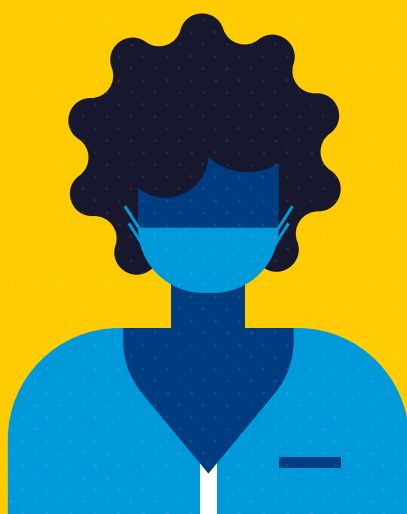
<sup>2</sup> On top of this, the EU has also highlighted the importance of digitalisation for the green transition, referring to the need for a twin transition. Effectively incorporating the digital dimension in the just transition framework, particularly focusing on digital skills and digital literacy, is key to avoid the deepening of existing inequalities such as gender and generational ones. Although digitalisation needs to be taken into account, this element is not covered in this report.

<sup>3</sup> In the following text, just transition (in lowercase letters) refers to the wider concept whereas Just Transition (in capital letters) refers to the initiative by the European Commission.

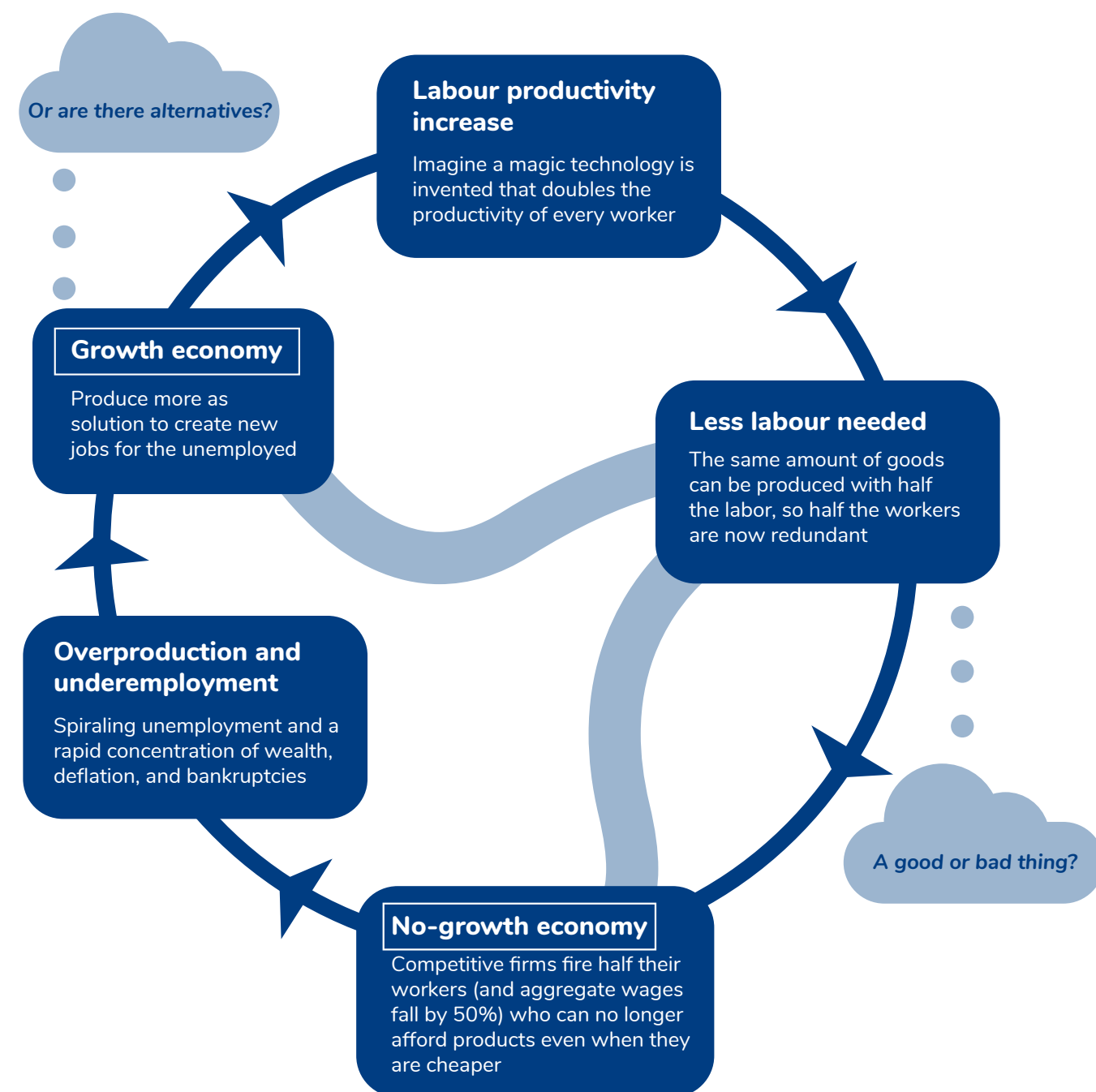


# 2

## A more holistic understanding of a just transition



**Fig. 1** | The economic growth and jobs treadmill



**Source:** Wiese, K. and Mayrhofer, J. (2020). 'Escaping the growth and jobs treadmill: a new policy-agenda for post-coronavirus Europe'. European Environmental Bureau and European Youth Forum

There are ongoing discussions on the meaning and scope of a ‘just transition’. The concept was first used by the [labour union movement](#) in the United States to protect workers of high-polluting industries impacted by climate policies. Since then, the term has made it into many programmes and campaigns. According to the [International Labour Organisation](#) (ILO) a just transition means “greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind.” This is a rather narrow approach that focuses on the structural impacts of workers in high-polluting sectors in specific regions. The understanding of the European Commission

as outlined in its pledges as part of the EGD is closely aligned with this vision (see introduction). The failure to integrate wider social and climate justice concerns such as the distribution of benefits and burdens, meaningful participation or social inclusion in this approach [has been widely criticised](#). Part of the solution is to recognise justice not only as a final result but also as an essential [part of the transition process](#).

Europe’s economy, driven by excessive extraction, production and consumption, is significantly overshooting planetary boundaries. This drives ecological destruction in Europe and beyond. To put this into a picture: the EU as a whole is living as if there were [2.8 planets](#) and

[responsible for 25% of the world’s material use](#), evidence for Europe’s disproportionate claim on nature.

This transgression takes place while failing to meet essential social aims, exemplified by the gender employment, payment, pension and poverty gap as well as general healthcare needs. For example, in the EU, [women earn on average 14,4% less per hour than men](#).

A key driver of this state of affairs is an economic system that is geared towards increasing economic growth at all costs and that is structurally dependent on productivity<sup>4</sup> growth. Economic growth becomes a necessity to create jobs. Our economic system can best be seen as an [endless treadmill](#): the growth-driven market system continues to work as long as we keep on producing more to keep people employed.

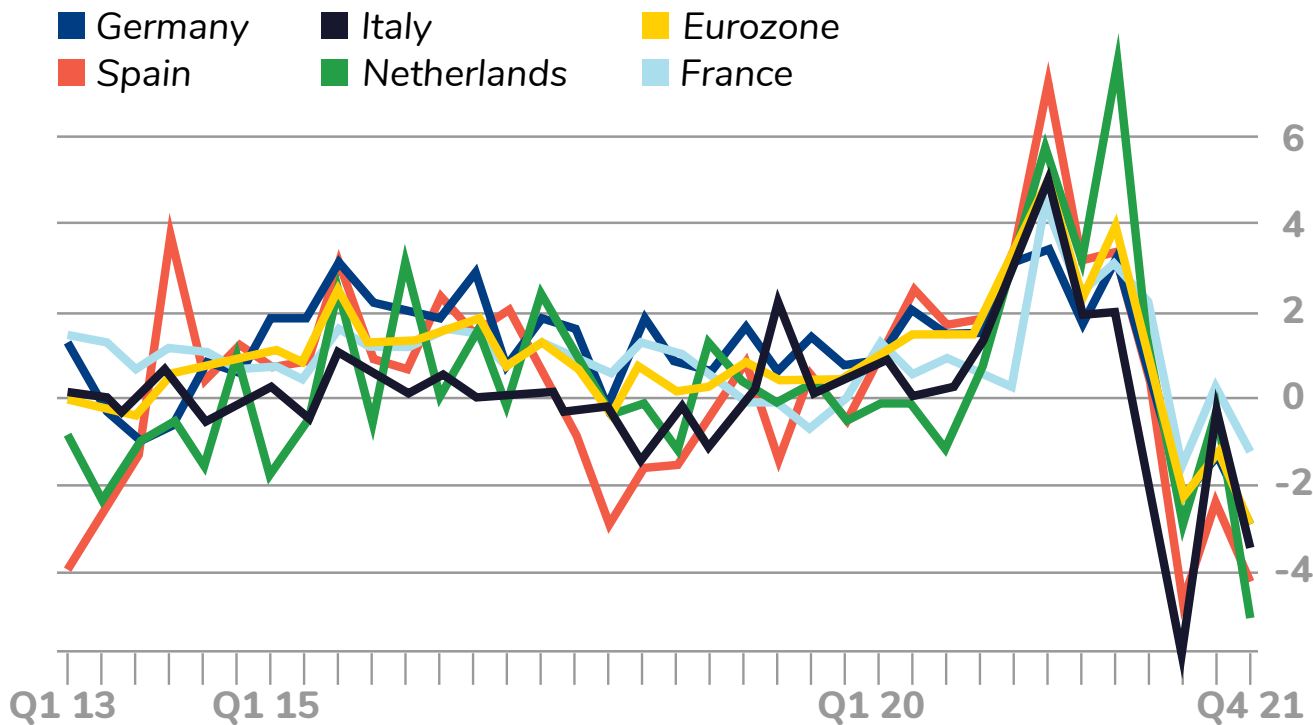
Any slowing down of economic indicators, such as lower productivity growth or rising unemployment, can have cascading effects on our economies. For example, a sluggish economy triggered by a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic can lead to unemployment and trigger a negative spiral of reduced spending power, less demand, fewer investments, and lower employment.

Besides promoting growth, politicians and businesses have always had an interest in increasing labour productivity so that less labour per hour is needed to produce the same output. In theory, this makes

businesses more competitive, decreases prices and increases demand, which in turn sparks more growth. However, this growth does not trickle down to the people who contributed to it most. While higher labour productivity should translate into higher wages (as more wealth is being created per hour), [real wages have been declining](#). This is due to the fact that in the past decades, rewards have shifted from labour to capital. This takes the form of tax policies, automation and income generation through assets rather than the production of goods and services. High taxes on labour are one of the main contributors, making it more attractive for businesses to increase labour productivity to save on expensive labour costs. This is very paradoxical: incentives to increase labour productivity, a flawed tax system and policies favouring growth promote the rationalisation of the workforce, so more growth is needed to generate employment, with high-productivity labour again being prioritised.

The reasons discussed above demonstrate why the belief that economic growth creates or maintains jobs persists in the political debate. The fact that the “treadmill” has some serious side effects on livelihoods and inequality, working conditions, environmental degradation, the wellbeing of people and the social value of jobs is largely neglected. For example, [working conditions have been declining](#), illustrated by precarious employment trends, such as: zero-hour contracts, unpaid internship, undeclared work, bogus self-employment.

**Fig. 2 | Decline of real wages in eurozone from 2013 to 2021<sup>5</sup>**



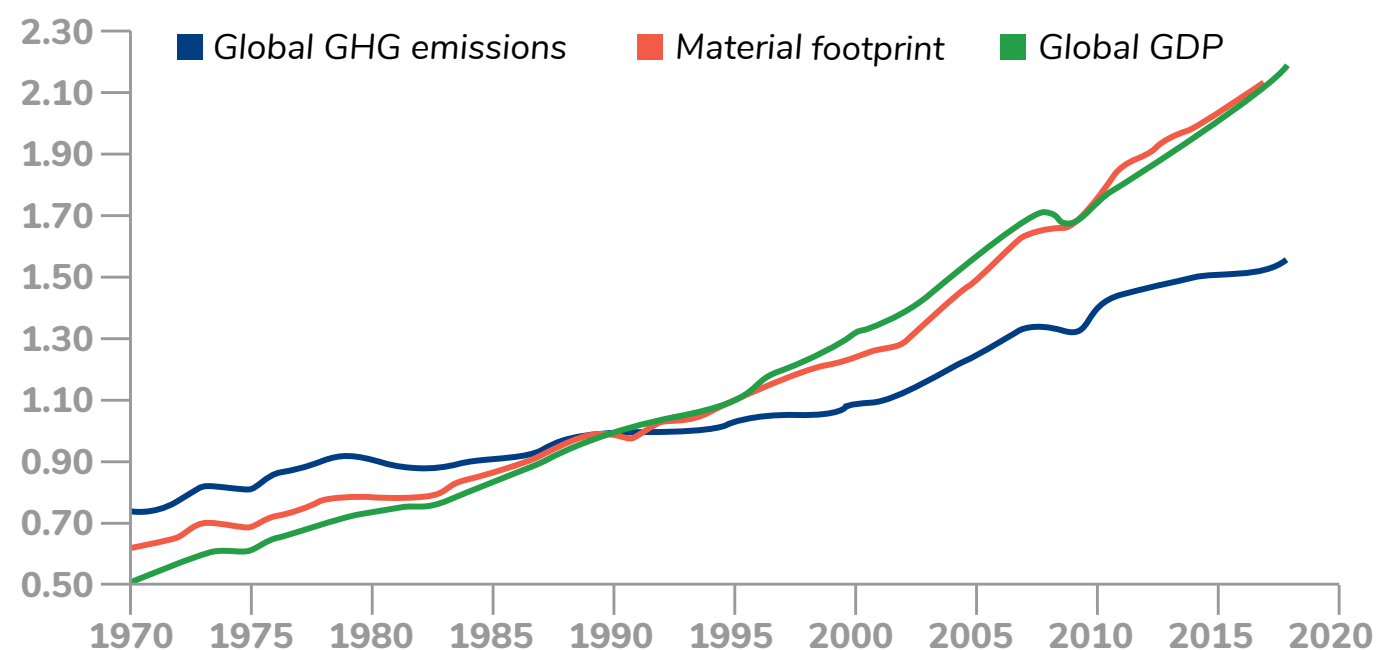
Source: Arnold, M., Vladkov, A. & Romei V. (2022). ‘Europe’s workers face bigger squeeze from real wage cuts’. Financial Times. Accessed on 03/11/2022. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/ed477fe9-46fa-43d0-b315-4170763261c2>

<sup>4</sup> Productivity measures how efficiently production inputs, such as labour and capital, are being used in an economy to produce a given level of output. In other words, it reflects the ratio of how much we produce (output) to how much we use to produce it (input). Productivity can be measured in many ways. One of the most common productivity measures is labour productivity: gross domestic product per hour worked.

In Europe, there is consensus on the need to decarbonise our economies (exemplified by the Just Transition commitments and EGD). However, environmental protection is often viewed in conflict with jobs and the economy: environmental policies are believed to slow down economic growth and cause job losses. The concepts of “decoupling” and “green growth” (i.e. promoting economic growth while reducing resource use and emissions) have been put forward to solve this dilemma. Whether such green growth and associated decoupling are feasible is, however, heavily contested. Recent

scientific evidence shows that [decoupling has not occurred](#) at anywhere near the scale required to stay below 1.5° and is considered extremely unlikely to be achieved in the future. The belief that [technology](#) alone will save us is a dangerous misconception. In fact, rising energy expenditures<sup>6</sup>, [rebound effects](#), and the limited potential of recycling are all trends that provide valid reasons to be sceptical about the potential of decoupling and therefore the future possibility of economic growth. Besides biophysical limits, there are other reasons to be [sceptical about continuous high growth rates](#) in Europe (e.g. increasing market saturation, inequalities).

**Fig. 3** | Global GHG emissions, Material Footprint and Global GDP from 1970 to 2018



Source: European Environment Agency (2021). ‘Growth without economic growth’. EEA website. Accessed on 03/11/2022.  
Available at: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/growth-without-economic-growth>.

<sup>6</sup> Not only the quantity but also the quality and accessibility is important for the availability of natural resources. The less natural resources available, the more expensive, resource and energy intensive they will be to be extracted per unit.

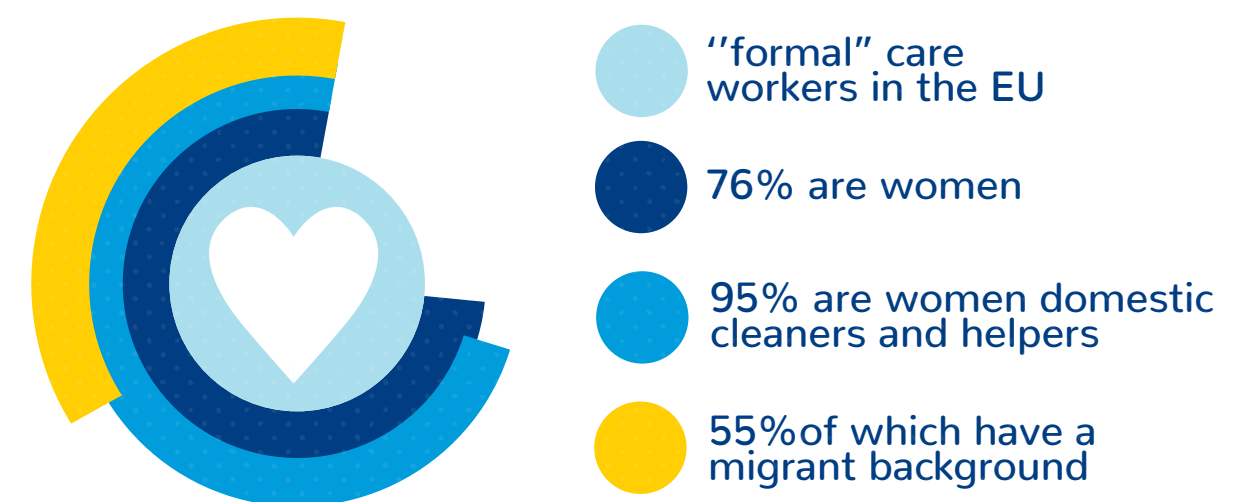
Merely transitioning towards a green growth economy will neither drastically reduce emissions nor enhance gender and social justice as it strongly relies on technology and market mechanisms that have often failed to effectively lower emissions. Furthermore, an economic system based on growth expansion fails to recognise activities such as care, especially unpaid and domestic, and ecological

processes that are essential for sustaining the “formal” economy.

There exists a form of separation between a productive sphere that includes all market goods and services and a reproductive sphere that includes largely non-monetised, unpaid and unrecognised caring activities such as taking care of elderly people.

## Reproductive jobs are disproportionately done by women, migrant workers and minorities.

Around 76% of the “formal” care workers in the EU are [women](#), with a share of 95% for domestic cleaners and helpers. More than 55% of domestic cleaners and helpers have a [migrant background](#), which shows the importance of not only looking at gender but also other socio-demographic aspects that intersect with each other. Care and health professions are also often the most underpaid and affected by poor working conditions.





Many understand [green or sustainable jobs](#) as only relating to energy efficiency, mobility, agriculture or environmental management. Most of the workers in these industries are men. For example, only [22% of transport](#), [32% of energy](#) and [10% of construction workers](#) in the EU are women. Women are also regularly [underrepresented](#) in new (renewable) energy projects, limiting their active participation and involvement in the energy transition. The reasons are well known: the unequal distribution of care responsibilities, stereotypes, biased education, unequal representation in decision-making processes and recruitment—all rooted in patriarchal norms and structures. That is why a just transition focusing solely on the most polluting sectors in specific regions will mainly benefit male workers and reinforce existing gender segregation and inequalities in these sectors and the labour

**“a just transition focusing solely on the most polluting sectors in specific regions will mainly benefit male workers and reinforce existing gender segregation and inequalities”**

market more generally. A just transition that does not go beyond this narrow view overlooks gender dynamics and does not challenge our current economic model. Finally, it is also important to note that a green growth economy does not only fail to acknowledge reproductive activities but also the work done by people in non-formal types of employment. This is problematic as they contribute greatly to key EGD sectors such as agriculture.

For the EU to realise its EGD and social justice objectives, a more holistic understanding of sustainability, [sustainable jobs](#) and the just transition is needed. Well-designed environmental action reduces social and gender injustices. It also improves the living conditions of people and the preservation of the planet. First of all, a just transition needs to aim at a [systemic](#)

[transformation](#) by shifting our extractive economy towards a regenerative and inclusive one that centres around care. This means challenging existing power relations, historic and present injustices, breaking the structural dependencies as well as moving beyond GDP. Transition policies that break the structural dependency on growth and jobs must be at the heart of a just, inclusive, redistributive and sustainable transition.

Lastly, we need to broaden our understanding of green and sustainable jobs beyond employment in formerly high-polluting areas such as energy and mobility, and include all jobs that contribute to the wellbeing of people and the preservation of nature. We must consider and invest in low-carbon jobs in predominantly female-dominated sectors such as care, education and other public services disproportionately carried out by low-paid migrant women.



# 3

## Work within the EGD and just transition policies



In Europe, employment policies remain mostly a national competence. Nevertheless, through the European Pillar of Social Rights and the European Green Deal, the EU has attempted to imagine the future of work in a decarbonising world. Targets focus on employment, training and social inclusion; whilst specific policy proposals focus on jobs within specific sectors, most notably the renewable energy industry.

The Council has given the topic further visibility through its non-binding [Recommendation](#) on Ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality. It argues that if member states adopt the right policies, the green transition could create around 1 million additional “quality” jobs by 2030. Although quality jobs still need to be defined, it is justified to assume that they will exist within the scope of what the EU understands as [environmental jobs](#) (i.e. focused on environmental protection and resource management). But aside from the many questions around the parameters of these jobs, the scope of all action around the just transition is limited to 0,5% of all jobs<sup>7</sup> in the EU. Compared to the whole sphere of work in Europe, this is more symbolic than transformative – society and the planet need the latter.

<sup>7</sup> It is estimated that there are around 200 million jobs in Europe. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/signs-improvement-european-job-market>

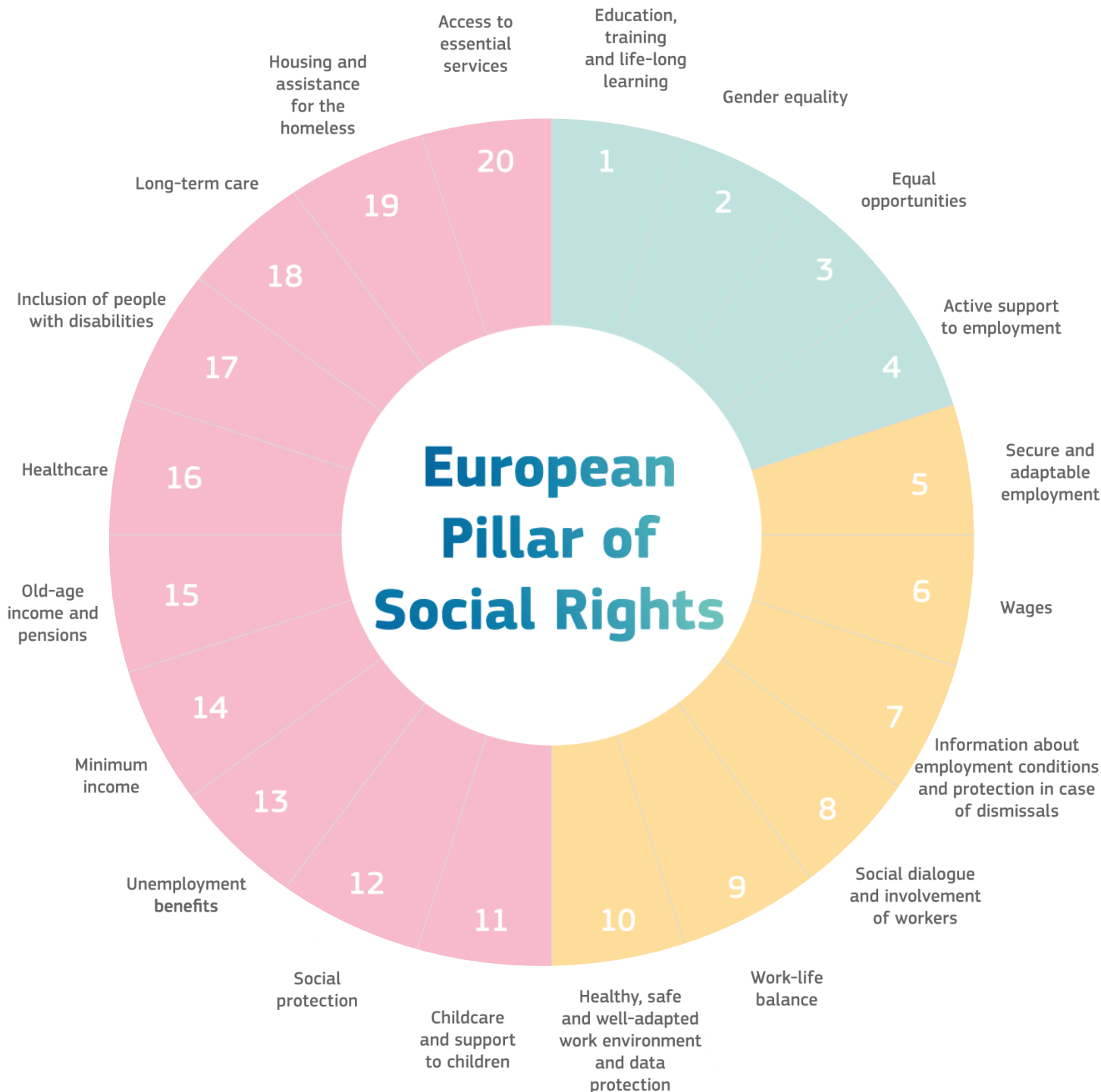


# EU Targets



In order to “build a strong social Europe that is fair, inclusive and full of opportunity”, the three EU institutions have agreed upon a set of 20 principles, summarised in the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR).

**Fig. 4 | European Pillar of Social Rights**



## The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan:

- 1** At least 78% of the population aged 20 to 64 should be in employment by 2030.
- 2** At least 60% of all adults should participate in training every year.
- 3** The number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion should be reduced by at least 15 million by 2030.

In order to reach these targets, complementary goals were agreed upon such as halving the gender employment gap, increasing care and education provisions, and decreasing the number of young people who are neither in employment nor in education.

The principles helpfully shed light on issues that require additional attention, such as gender inequality, and are accompanied by interesting initiatives such as the Youth Guarantee<sup>8</sup>. Nevertheless, the overall targets remain purely indicative. In other words, they are not binding – leaving policymakers and politicians free to pursue them or not. As demonstrated below, the consequence is that green employment in EGD-related files has not been considered sufficiently. Of course, there is only so much the EU can do, with member states retaining most power in the employment policy arena.

Yet, the EU lacks ambition and vision in areas where it can play a role. ETUI argues that the EU could strengthen its leadership in this area by providing more substantial guidance to member states, including through legislation such as the recent Minimum Wage Directive or an ambitious Pay Transparency Directive.

**Source:** European Commission. (2021). ‘European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan’. EC website. Accessed on 03/11/2022.  
**Available at:** <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/empl/european-pillar-of-social-rights/en/>

<sup>8</sup> The reinforced Youth Guarantee is a commitment by all member states to ensure that all young people under the age of 30 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving education.

# Funding the EGD and the Just Transition

In order to achieve EGD goals, the EU will need to transform its economy far deeper than what it is currently planning to do. Some sectors will have to grow, some will have to mutate, and others will have to disappear. Whilst the renewable energy sector is expected to significantly grow in size and workforce, it is anticipated that industries like coal will close down.

However, more than 200,000 people's jobs are directly linked to coal activities in Europe. It is therefore crucial that all the people affected by this transition receive adequate support, whether it concerns finding a new job, transforming their current one, or getting low-carbon activities recognised. Various instruments have been set up to fund the transition - from territorial support through the Just Transition Fund (JTF) to displacement support through the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund and "investment in people" through the European Social Fund Plus. Whilst each of these is a necessary initiative, they lack the common holistic vision and legal framework required to ensure they are fit to respond to people's realities and needs.

**Some sectors will have to grow, some will have to mutate, and others will have to disappear.**



## The Just Transition Fund

The fund will be equipped with **17.5€ billion**

**"The aims of the JTF are to mitigate the adverse effects of the climate transition by supporting the most affected territories and workers concerned and to promote a balanced socio-economic transition. In line with the JTF's single specific objective, actions supported by the JTF should directly contribute to alleviating the impact of the transition by mitigating the negative repercussions on employment and by financing the diversification and modernisation of the local economy."**

In order to "ensure that the transition towards a climate-neutral economy happens in a fair way, leaving no one behind", the EU has created a Just Transition Mechanism (JTM) together with a Just Transition Fund.

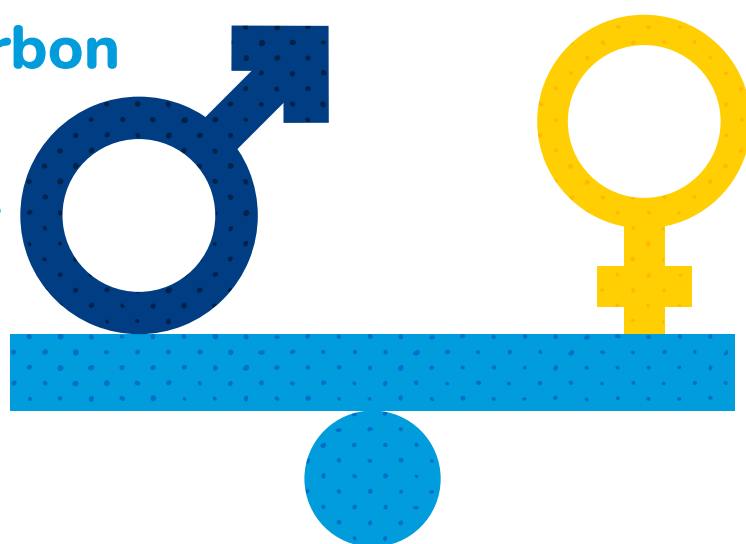
Positively, the fund calls for special attention to vulnerable citizens and affected workers, regardless of whether they are still employed or have lost their job due to the transition. However, this is limited since it mostly concerns upskilling and reskilling. The fund also encourages member states to pay attention to disabilities but it does not provide guidance on how to do this. Gender is mentioned too and practical recommendations are listed, such as

equal pay. In practice, however, the fund heavily relies on the creation of firms, and investments in renewable energy and low-carbon transport – all dominated by men. The fund does provide some support for activities in areas such as education and child and elderly care – which are mostly carried out by women. This is a positive step because investment in care is essential as the climate crisis and increased environmental destruction will put even more pressure on care and healthcare systems (e.g. [through an increase in zoonotic diseases](#)). However, the way the fund is designed does not guarantee that countries will develop territorial plans that ensure quality opportunities for all. The Council Recommendation encourages member states to give specific consideration to vulnerable communities and under-represented group by, for example, taking into account energy poverty. However, since the document is non-binding, insufficient results are to be expected from it.

To remedy the limitations of the fund, its thematic scope should be expanded and its approach should be made more holistic. Practically, its current design means only a specific group of people, who represent only a fraction of those who are directly part of the transition, will truly benefit from it. Proposals to restructure work are completely absent. The fund needs to go beyond common calls for equal pay and participation and include measures to redistribute work more evenly in society. Looking at ways to support young people, address (energy) poverty and keep people's geographical situations in mind is also necessary. Regarding the latter, for example, [relocation schemes](#) might be helpful to some.

Including other sectors in the fund would also facilitate the achievement of the

the fund heavily relies on the creation of firms, and investments in renewable energy and low-carbon transport – all dominated by men.



EU's climate goal and the European Pillar of Social Rights' objectives. The Council Recommendation recognises the importance of adequate social infrastructure to prevent social exclusion and address health risks, and this should be reflected more explicitly in the fund. Extending support beyond child and elderly care and also including other [care services and essential public services](#) is logical as this sector can be considered as a low-carbon sector and generally lacks

workers.

As it currently stands, the fund is too narrow and superficial to address the vast employment and related social issues (e.g. energy poverty) it aims to tackle. Not only should it be expanded financially to address these, but also to ensure that the transition truly leaves no one behind. It is obvious that more money alone will not achieve this, but it definitely is needed for a just transition.

## The European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)

### The European Social Fund Plus (period 2021-2027) aims to:

**“support Member States and regions to achieve high employment levels, fair social protection and a skilled and resilient workforce ready for the future world of work, as well as inclusive and cohesive societies aiming to eradicating poverty and delivering on the principles set out in the European Pillar of Social Rights.”**

**“support, complement and add value to the policies of Member States to ensure equal opportunities, equal access to the labour market, fair and quality working conditions, social protection and inclusion, in particular, focusing on quality and inclusive.”**

As highlighted in its objectives, the ESF+ looks at employment from a relatively

strong social angle. It explicitly promotes the integration of young people (e.g. via the Youth Guarantee) and Roma people in the workforce. Long-term unemployed people are seen as a key target group, and it also promotes gender-balanced participation through measures focused on equal working conditions, improved work-life balance and access to childcare. It positively goes beyond basic recommendations for women and other disadvantaged groups by calling for such groups to have access to social and micro-enterprise creation. In short, the ESF+ makes its intentions clear by stating that the fund [“should not support any action that contributes to segregation or to social exclusion”](#). This is a step in the right direction for achieving a transition that is truly just, nevertheless, it lacks the necessary complementary green vision.

Despite stating that it aims to contribute to a [“greener, low carbon Europe”](#), the

ESF+ is limited to skills and the creation of new jobs in specific sectors. To be fair, it acknowledges that skills will need to be adapted and that new jobs will be required in sectors such as energy and the circular economy. The worry, however, is that it remains too vague and narrow-minded with regard to what is needed for a just transition that responds to today's environmental and societal challenges.

For example, the ESF+ states that it should support [“policy and system reform”](#) in the fields of employment, social inclusion, (health) care, education and training, as well as poverty eradication. However, it does not make the link with the green transition beyond acknowledging that the nature of work is changing and that new opportunities arise from the digital and green transitions and the transformation of the industrial sector. Sporadically, it brings forward positive proposals but, regrettably, does not make them binding nor important enough. For example, it notes the significance of acquiring skills for sustainable development, but leaves these undefined and does not provide a clear pathway to provide training.

Interestingly, the ESF+ allows – under specific circumstances and limited to 18 months<sup>9</sup> – the support for [“the financing of short-time work schemes without the requirement that they be combined with active measures”](#). In a context of post-pandemic and where the European Parliament declared a climate emergency (2019), this could be activated to fund job guarantee schemes (for more information, see [page 45](#)), which have been shown to contribute to the resilience of society and the planet.

**the ESF+ makes its intentions clear by stating that the fund “should not support any action that contributes to segregation or to social exclusion”.**

<sup>9</sup> “Where after 1 July 2021 the Council has recognised the occurrence of an unusual event outside the control of one or more member states, which has a major impact on the financial position of the general government or a severe economic downturn for the euro area or the Union” Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 Article 20



# Policy examples in energy and agriculture<sup>10</sup>

In a context where food systems are under pressure and the energy sector needs to move towards sustainability, security and sufficiency, the European Commission has come forward with new proposals, such as the REPowerEU plan, the Fit for 55 package, including the revision of the Renewable Energy Directive (REDIII), and the Farm to Fork (F2F) Strategy.



## The REPowerEU Plan

### The Commission proposal for the REPowerEU Plan:

**“encourages stakeholders in renewable energy production (solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, heat pumps etc.) and permitting authorities to establish a large-scale skills partnership under the Pact for Skills.”**

**“will support skills through ERASMUS+ and the Joint Undertaking on Clean Hydrogen, with the launch of a large project to develop skills for the hydrogen economy.”**

The [REPowerEU plan](#) aims to save energy, produce clean energy and diversify energy supplies. Through this plan, the Commission recognises that the energy transition offers “ample job market opportunities and helps ensure reskilled jobs for transition sectors.” This is because the deployment of renewables and achieving energy efficiency targets will require a skilled workforce, which does not exist yet in sufficient numbers.

<sup>10</sup> This report was written before the finalisation of the RepowerEU Plan and the RED III revision so some elements are likely to change after it is published.



# The Revision of the Renewable Energy Directive

## The Commission proposal for the revision of RED III encourages member states to:

**“cooperate with social partners, renewable energy communities and small and medium-sized enterprises to anticipate the skills that will be needed, for example, by providing training programmes.”**

**“ensure that actions taken are designed to attract underrepresented groups in the occupational areas.”**

The revision of the [Renewable Energy Directive \(RED III\)](#) aims to increase the target percentage of energy from renewable sources by 2030. Similarly to the REPowerEU plan, the revision of RED III, currently underway, is further expected to create jobs. Here too, the Commission realises that there is an insufficient number of skilled workers.

## The need for meaningful, decent and green jobs

Although training and the creation of green jobs are essential parts of a just transition, it cannot be limited to this. “Green” jobs need to be understood much more holistically, beyond purely environmental protection and resource management activities. Moreover, a just transition requires that jobs are decent. Training also needs to be accessible, and explicit attention needs to be given to specific social groups such as young people, older workers, women, migrant workers and workers with disabilities. For all of this to happen, it is crucial that labour unions are part of the process.

Despite the need to label other “low carbon” jobs as green jobs, it is important to define what is understood as a green or environmental job. Often, jobs are advertised and promoted for being “green” even though they are not necessarily environmentally friendly. For example, the biofuel and geothermal industries come with [serious limitations](#), which raises the question of whether they should be labelled green at all or see their workforce expand. Similar points can be made about the booming market of [Carbon Capture and Storage](#) Technology and the [hydrogen](#) economy. Moreover, the Campaign Against Climate Change Trade Union Group (CACCTU) makes the relevant point of arguing that a shift to jobs in renewables is needed, but also, a shift to jobs that directly

help to [reduce energy](#) consumption in each sector. Echoing this point, a special focus should also be given to reuse, maintenance, repair and recycling jobs. Instead of pursuing a ‘Business as Usual but electrified’ pathway, CACCTU rightly advocates for a wider economic shift.

Additionally, “green” jobs are not necessarily [decent jobs](#). Reports have shown that the renewable energy sector can have [problematic working conditions](#), in relation to wages or rights to organise. In order to retain and attract workers, it is key that jobs are in line with [ILO standards and the EPSR](#). Those who need to (re)train need to be able to access it easily. Paid opportunities, such as remunerated traineeships as recommended by the Council, are crucial and could benefit excluded groups such as women and young people. Special attention also needs to be given to older workers, as training is often mainly targeted at younger people. Whilst making training accessible to all ages is necessary, it can also be helpful to acknowledge that older people might benefit from [early retirement schemes](#) in cases where difficulties to find a job are too high. In any case, consultation with social partners should be mandatory, not simply encouraged, when identifying which types of jobs should be changed, extinguished or created.

# The Farm to Fork Strategy

Although the Farm to Fork Strategy proposal by the Commission primarily focuses on making the European food system fair, healthy and environmentally friendly, it mentions employment and jobs a number of times (such as in relation to the circular economy and organic farming). Yet, nothing is translated into concrete policy recommendations.

The modest attention the Commission has given to employment in the F2F Strategy is somewhat surprising. Whilst the sector is experiencing a worrying [loss of farms and its workforce](#), little is done to effectively support farmers to transform their jobs (e.g. shift to [Community-Supported Agriculture](#)) or create new jobs (e.g. via [consumer cooperatives](#)) that fit within a people-friendly food system. The F2F positively mentions [agroecology](#), but never in relation to work although research has demonstrated its significant [job-creation](#) and [productivity](#) potential. The latter benefit brings a necessary nuance to the debate by demonstrating that productivity growth is not necessarily harmful.

To achieve the EGD goals, a shift away from input-intensive farming toward nature and knowledge-intensive techniques is necessary, and this will require more labour. However, to stay in line with the just transition and EGD principles, it is key that these jobs are good jobs in terms of [contract type, social security, wages and working conditions](#). Farming is known to be a demanding job both physically and mentally due to isolation, financial distress and long working hours. A 2018 report about the French sector showed that a farmer committed [suicide](#) every two days. It is key that wellbeing is put centre stage of the agricultural just transition. Low-impact (organic) farming tends to provide better working conditions in the field of [health and safety](#), however, additional mechanisms should be put in place to [protect vulnerable employees](#) (such as migrant and seasonal workers) from widespread abuse. For instance, this can be done by supporting the organisation of workers in non-formal types of employment. The new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) includes a social conditionality, meaning that beneficiaries will have to respect some elements of EU

labour and social laws to receive payments. However, the level of social compliance standards is only [minimal](#), and the 'third pillar' (i.e. social conditionalities) will only be compulsory from 2025. One way to address this in the meantime would be to encourage the creation and/or transformation of farms as cooperatives, where workers have [increased power and control](#).

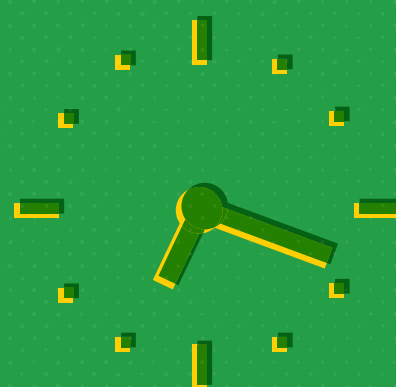
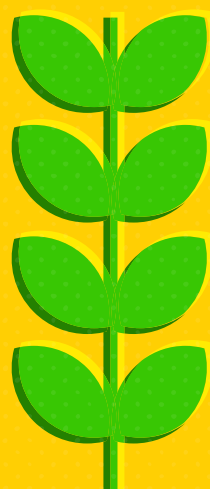
Furthermore, it is also surprising that concrete measures include increased internet connectivity, but not easier access to land, seeds and living wages, which are necessary to attract new workers, including young people and women. All in all, it seems that the positive impact of greening the greening agricultural employment has been largely overlooked, which is surprising since a move towards sustainable agriculture can have a positive effect on existing and future jobs.

To conclude, it seems that the only link the EU has made between agriculture

and employment is an observatory one: it recognises that there are fewer farms and fewer people working in the sector, yet it does not offer concrete policy recommendations to remedy this. It mentions agroecology but does not give it the space it deserves since this approach can serve the double purpose of responding to the social and environmental crises. The main explanation for this is the continued influence of [lobbies](#), who prioritise making short-term profits for their shareholders over environmental sustainability, health, food security and affordability.

# 4

## Policies moving forward

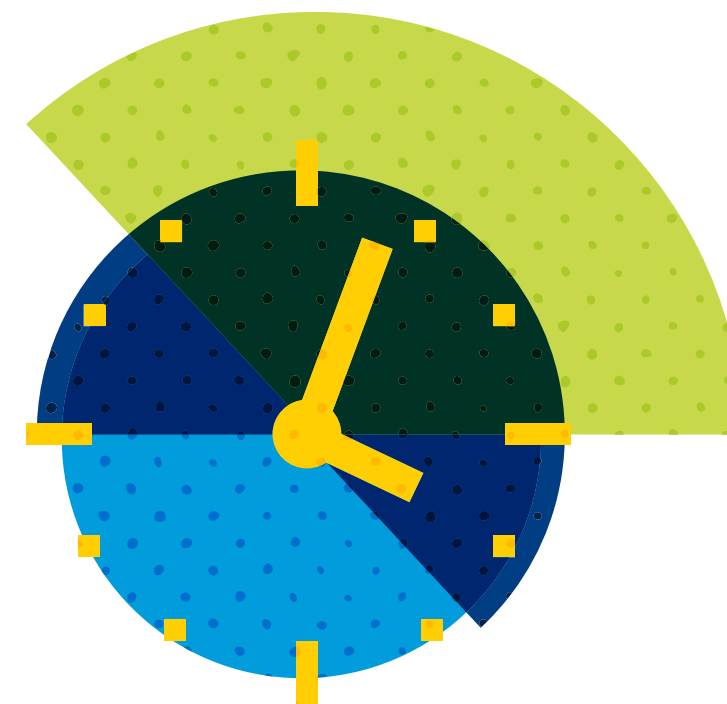


## Working time reduction

Working time reduction (WTR) refers to a collectively agreed reduction of time spent in employment. WTR can take many forms<sup>11</sup>, such as shorter working weeks, increased number of paid holidays or early retirement, and can happen on a variety of levels, such as the national, sectoral and company-wide levels.

For instance, France adopted the “loi Robien” in 1996, which allowed [companies to voluntarily reduce the working time of their employees](#), with government support. Ever since, various similar initiatives have emerged. However, it is important to remain vigilant as some initiatives labelled as WTR fail to be aligned with just transition and EGD principles (e.g. “leaving no one behind”). For example, some WTR initiatives have been ‘paid for’ by workers through decreased wages, as was the case with the [freizeitoption](#) which offered the choice to workers of the Austrian electrical and electronics industry to either choose a wage increase or additional leisure time (i.e. less working hours).

It is thus crucial that working time reduction is understood as a [collective agreement, with no cut in pay and with compensatory staff recruitment where necessary](#). WTR hence does not reduce social security contributions<sup>12</sup>. An inspiring pilot project called the [4 Day Week Campaign](#), has brought together 70 UK companies (representing 3,300 workers) to trial a four-



day, 32-hour working week with no loss of pay. Preliminary results are very positive for [productivity](#), [wellbeing](#) and tackling the [cost of living crisis](#). Key players have embraced this solution too: [IndustriAll](#) promoted it as a viable piece of the puzzle for the COVID recovery, the Greens in the European Parliament see it as a way to create a ‘[new production model](#)’, and a [Bosch](#) factory in Vénisseux (France) has had this work policy in place since 1998. The multiple benefits of a 4-day working week and growing [national initiatives](#) suggest it would be a welcome and effective instrument to both achieve a just transition and EGD goals.

<sup>11</sup> These should undergo an intersectional analysis to ensure WTR does not perpetuate existing inequalities. For example, early retirement schemes must ensure that women and vulnerable groups benefit from (pre) pension rights to avoid poverty trap.

<sup>12</sup> There are even [case studies](#) that show an increase in social security contributions.

# WTR for achieving EGD goals

There are two reasons why WTR might help achieve EGD goals.

**1** First, work puts pressure on the environment as labour-intensive households (i.e. with a heavy time burden of paid work) tend to spend a greater part of their income on goods and services with [heavy ecological footprints](#) such as ready-made meals and using the car. Fewer working hours means that people would have more time to adopt lifestyles with lower environmental impacts. For example, going from a 40 hour work week to a 32 hour work week gives people more time to grow and cook their own food, and bike instead of

drive. The link between WTR and a lower environmental impact is [not a given](#) (e.g. labour could be substituted by energy-intensive machines or people could use their free time to pursue resource-intensive lifestyles), so it is important to create the right conditions, for example, by ensuring that machines run on renewable energy and that social programmes and corresponding green infrastructure (such as appropriate biking lanes) are implemented alongside WTR.



**“going from a 40 hour work week to a 32 hour work week gives people more time to grow and cook their own food, and bike instead of drive.”**

**2** Second, working less, particularly in workplaces, has led to a reduction in energy consumption and carbon-intensive commuting.

[Huge energy savings](#) can be made by reducing office lighting, elevator operating, heating or air conditioning, and carbon emissions would decrease as fewer car journeys are likely to be made. These reduction effects will have to become widespread if the EU’s goal to reduce emissions by at least 55% is to be achieved by 2030. Last but not least, WTR frees time to pursue meaningful activities for leisure and recreation, to redistribute unpaid care work, improve community services, and increase political participation, which can have positive impacts on democracy and the collective wellbeing of society. In that sense, it contributes to the social objectives enshrined in the European Pillar of Social Rights and could increase political acceptance of the just transition.



## WTR for achieving a just transition

While WTR is an important ingredient for a just transition as it supports decreasing the dependence of work on economic growth, it is entirely missing in the European Green Deal. As exponential growth is not compatible with an economy that falls within planetary boundaries, [WTR aims to redistribute work more evenly in a post-growth society](#): in a steady-state or non-growing economy, fewer outputs are generated, which means that fewer working hours are needed. In addition, job sharing<sup>13</sup> would not only allow for paid work to be redistributed but also incentivise a more equal accomplishment of reproductive tasks.

In a context where [only half of the people](#) believe that their current skills allow them to contribute to the green transition, WTR would also free up time for training, re/upskilling and education. This is particularly important as some green jobs will require a large trained workforce (e.g. solar technologies). In order to anticipate this change, WTR could be implemented to give workers the time to follow the

necessary courses that could make them feel more prepared for and engaged with the transition, thereby facilitating their career shift.

In cases where WTR is introduced and results in additional jobs being created, these could go to women in priority, thereby reducing gender gaps both in employment and income. In order to ensure that this does not deepen the sectoral gender gap, it is particularly helpful to apply this to sectors affected by the just transition where women are often underrepresented, such as the energy sector, and provide the necessary [training and social infrastructure](#). Additionally, WTR also has the potential to reverse the unpaid labour division as men who work fewer paid hours tend to do more [unpaid care work](#).

Again, WTR is not a silver bullet and requires additional policies, such as [equitable parental leave](#) when a child is born since care work patterns tend to become established at that moment. Wider policy measures could also play a valuable role here, including, for

example, expanded universal basic services and a universal basic income. Both could help to ensure a decent quality of life for all, regardless of the amount of paid work that any given individual is doing. But WTR is a missing piece of the puzzle for bringing the goals of the just transition closer to reality.

To conclude, WTR could be a powerful instrument for the just transition and the EGD as it responds to economic, social and environmental concerns. However, WTR alone will not do the trick. It is crucial to consider it part of a package, one that makes sure that workers do not need to compromise (e.g. through pay cuts) and that makes green and decent jobs accessible to all. Because of its flexible nature, the potential of WTR is enormous - as long as it is designed with environmental and social justice in mind. For this, the combination of greater democracy in the workplace, the close involvement of civil society organisations and the binding participation of labour unions is an indispensable element.

**It is crucial to consider it part of a package, one that makes sure that workers do not need to compromise and that makes green and decent jobs accessible to all.**



<sup>13</sup> Whilst certain jobs are a natural choice for job sharing, we acknowledge that this is not suited to all types of employment.



# The job guarantee scheme

**Another way of addressing the employment and wage gap, and ensuring a just transition (in a post-growth economy) is the job guarantee.**

As defined by Pavlina Tcherneva (2018), it is “a permanent, [nationally] funded, and locally administered programme that supplies [voluntary employment opportunities](#) on demand for all who are ready and willing to work at a living wage.” An important aspect of the job guarantee is that it has a rights-based approach rather than a duty-based approach. In line with the UN Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “everyone has the right to work” (Art 23.3), this governmental programme would introduce a much-needed [democratic element](#) in the labour market with the state acting as ‘Employer

of Last Resort’, i.e. it guarantees a job to anyone who cannot find one and is willing and able to work.

On top of the job losses provoked by the financial crash and the COVID-19 pandemic, job guarantee schemes can help absorb job losses caused by the green transition (e.g. in the fossil fuel industry) and the [climate crisis](#) (e.g. heat stress is projected to destroy 80 million jobs worldwide by 2030). JG programmes are suited to respond to the current socio-ecological crisis by expanding jobs in green and wellbeing sectors needed for a just transition and EGD implementation while [ensuring full employment](#). They also serve as a mechanism to [maintain price stability](#) and [stabilise total employment](#) at all stages of the business cycle.

In Europe, programmes such as the French initiative of ‘[Territoires Zéro Chômeur de Longue Durée](#)’ (Zero long-term unemployment territories’) have been initiated by ATD Quart Monde to offer a permanent job based on personal skills to anyone in a local community who was denied employment.



More than 1000 permanent jobs were created through the scheme, ranging from waste sorting from recycling to care activities to repair and maintenance. This initiative has crossed borders and is now being tested in Belgium since April 2022.

## Designing job guarantee schemes

To tap into its full potential and avoid the creation of unnecessary or low-value employment, [which is a common critique](#), a JG needs to, first of all, be well-designed to only include jobs that contribute to the EU’s environmental, social and [wellbeing](#) goals.

For example, job guarantee schemes can be a valuable solution for coal mining communities who reasonably fear for their livelihoods and the future of their regions. The scheme can help them [transform their lands and communities](#) by filling mines with water to create lakes, restoring the ecosystems, stemming soil erosion and reintroducing wildlife. The location can then serve as agrarian production, recreation, and ecotourism sites. Such physical transformation requires infrastructure work, which can be compatible with the [skills of unemployed miners](#).

Secondly, the design of the scheme would have to ensure that it does not reduce the [wages of public sector workers](#). The transition needs to be just for everyone, including public employees, and as said above, it needs a holistic approach. Key sectors such as (social and environmental) care should be integrated into this vision and therefore cannot be ignored or sidelined when just transition solutions are set up<sup>14</sup>. To ensure that job guarantee schemes respond to societal and workers’ needs, co-design of JG schemes should be considered. The involvement of labour unions in this process can help make sure that jobs are decent and meaningful, and

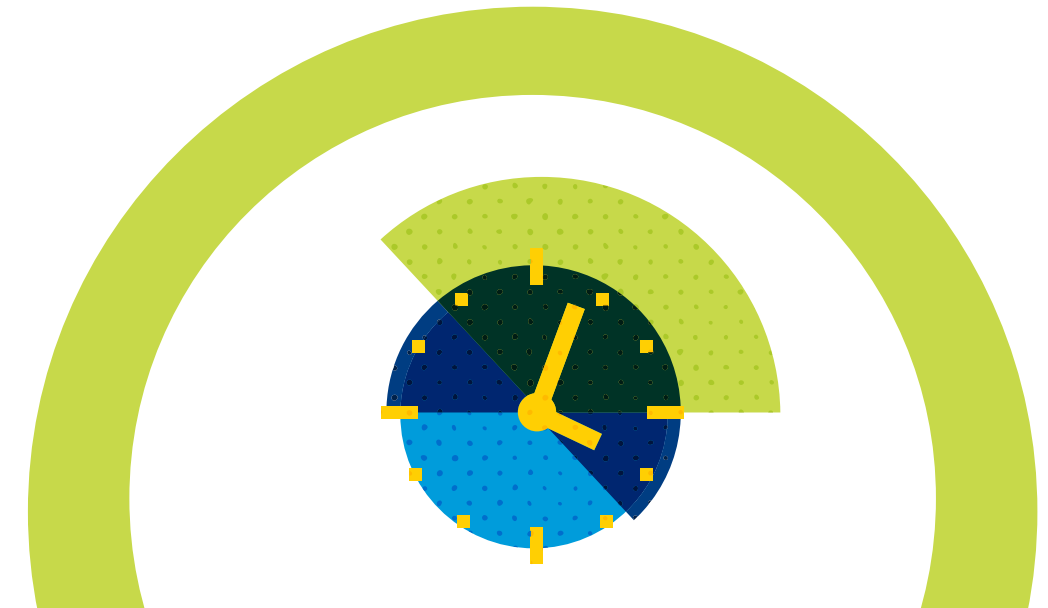
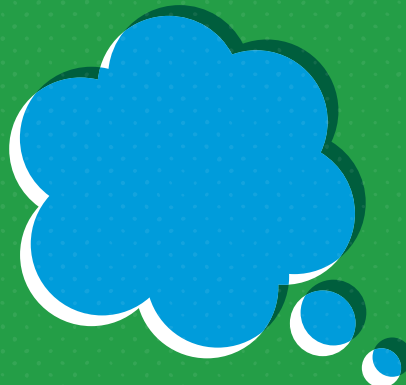
job guarantee workers’ participation can be both beneficial for [increased democracy at the workplace](#), but also identifying what job guarantee projects a community might benefit most from.

Generally, [cost estimates to implement such a policy tend to be low](#). For example, Argentina’s Jefes programme costs, at its peak with 2 million participants, approximately 1% of GDP. In South Africa, 200,000 jobs are offered per year, which amounts to approximately 0.5% of GDP. Although the real cost is expected to be higher as these calculations do not include other costs such as administrative expenses or living wages, it is important to note that job guarantee programmes would [absorb other costs](#) such as unemployment support.

To conclude, a job guarantee has enormous potential to respond to both social and environmental crises. (High) unemployment and/or low-income employment could be tackled, thereby having a positive effect on poverty, social inclusion and income equality. More specifically, a JG programme can provide valuable alternatives to the communities and regions affected by the environmental goals and policies set by the EU. Its design phase is crucial, but if done well, a JG scheme can play an important role in making the green transition truly just. Importantly, it opens the door to imagining a future [where people can earn a living outside the sphere of capital accumulation](#), with a focus on production for use rather than exchange.

<sup>14</sup> Some argue that there are two other additional measures which are needed to enable the job guarantee to act effectively as a ‘backstop’ for employment and prevent exploitative work practices. These measures are Universal Basic Services and Universal Basic Income. UBI and UBS would provide more scope for independent initiatives, such as setting up one’s own business, as well as allowing people to simply take a break from engaging in

# Policy recommendations



## Working time reduction

From a review of several case studies, [ETUI](#) concludes that WTR implementation makes more sense on a collective rather than an individual or company level. Member states and EU institutions thus have an important role to play in the realisation of a just green transition. To design this, careful planning and evaluation are necessary as the devil is in the details.

As said above, WTR should be seen as part of a wider package, rather than a standalone policy, including investment in social infrastructure, labour union involvement and cultural change.

## EU level:

### ★ Introduce a common framework around working time reduction:

To homogenise its meaning among various stakeholders, increase clarity, and allow for better data and case study collection.

### ★ Support a shift in work culture:

Reducing working hours should go hand in hand with changing the “[long working hours culture](#)”. The EU should support a shift towards a more wellbeing-oriented work culture by launching initiatives such as a [Right to Disconnect Directive](#) as called for by the European Parliament.

### ★ Revise the Working Time Directive:

Towards a 32 hours work week and to ensure that Member states cannot [opt out](#) of the maximum 48 hours working week limit. Previous attempts to revise the Directive have failed, however, in the context of (post)-pandemic and climate crisis, it is key that the EU updates the Directive so that it is fit for the just transition.

### ★ Support a cultural shift to low-carbon consumption and lifestyles:

To ensure that people do not use their non-working hours on carbon-intensive activities, the EU should set up awareness-raising (e.g. campaigns promoting less consumption), invest in [public infrastructure](#) (e.g. making public transport more accessible) and integrate the concept of [consumption corridors](#) (minima and maxima levels of consumption) or similar concepts into its policymaking.

### ★ Address [gender inequalities](#):

To guarantee that WTR does not further disadvantage women. The EU should specifically target the pay, pension and promotion gap, time poverty and the redistribution of unpaid care work with appropriate measures (e.g. universal access to public services, equal pay) to address these.

### ★ Adopt a Care Deal for Europe:

To complement the European Green Deal and Digital Agenda. While the European Care Strategy is a good step in the right direction, a just transition must have a more robust Care Deal with targeted investments.

## Member state level:

### ■ Focus on actual time reduction:

Small working time reductions (e.g. from a 40-hour week to a 38-hour week) do not necessarily translate into [less time spent at work](#). To prevent this, member states should encourage a significant reduction in working hours (e.g. the promotion of the four-day work week such as in [Spain](#)).

### ■ Set a target but organise in a flexible manner:

France adopted the 35-hour work week but let social partners at the company level decide [how the reduction should be organised](#). Member states should implement a country-wide reduction of working hours but allow for enough flexibility as this can help consider the variety of needs of different workers.

### ■ [Avoid the promotion of a compressed working week:](#)

Where all the work hours are performed in four instead of five days, as research has shown it is not beneficial for workers and women specifically.

### ■ Support labour institutions and start with the most unionised sectors:

Unions play a central role in the successful implementation of WTR. To ensure that “[the green transition and shorter working week are equitable](#)”, member states should support unions, equal pay legislation, increased job security, permanent contracts, higher minimum wages, an improved and equitable parental leave, as well as a wage cap and higher democracy at work.



## The job guarantee

Like WTR, the conditions for a successful job guarantee scheme depend on both EU and national level efforts. Such schemes not only require specific policies that would enable their practical implementation but also rely on a wider employment framework that ensures work is meaningful, accessible and wellbeing-oriented.



## EU level:

### ★ Make job guarantee schemes compliant with the Minimum Wage Directive:

To avoid a decline in public sector workers' wages. The EU should further encourage the member states that do not have a minimum wage to adopt one.

### ★ Provide sufficient financial resources and policy support:

The EU must provide substantial funding as well as policy guidance to support the EU-wide implementation of job guarantee schemes. A job guarantee must further sit alongside a strengthened social security system and collectively agreed working conditions.

### ★ Develop and invest in awareness-raising campaigns and social infrastructure:

These would facilitate the equal participation of women in JG schemes, for example by making childcare more accessible and combatting work discrimination (e.g. by ensuring equal opportunities).

### ★ Design job guarantee schemes in a way that is inclusive and accessible to vulnerable communities such as [Roma people](#):

The EU must further recognize and formalise the beneficial work done by such communities (e.g. waste pickers).

### ★ Ensure that health and safety standards are respected for all (including vulnerable communities such as Roma people, seasonal workers and people with migratory backgrounds).

The EU should further push for greater protection for people and nature in just transition sectors by, for example, setting stricter rules on the usage of pesticides.

### ★ Accompany JG schemes with sufficiency-focused skill programmes so that, in the context of the [European Year of Skills](#), people who need to retrain and JG workers have the “right skills” to contribute to a wellbeing economy.

## Member state level:

### ■ Set a specific quantitative target or conditionalities for the participation of often excluded social groups:

This has been done e.g. in the [Expanded Public Works Programme](#) in South Africa, where women have to represent 40% of the workers, youth 20% and people with disabilities 2%.

### ■ Create jobs that are beneficial for people and nature:

Member states should promote work that centres around care for communities (e.g. cleaners, kitchen help, grocery delivery) and care for the environment (e.g. setting up tool lending libraries, organising carsharing programmes). These jobs should also focus on reducing the consumption of energy and materials as much as possible.

### ■ Consider the time factor:

Since job guarantee schemes are likely to respond to the business cycle during the transitional period to a post-growth society, it is important that member states [do not encourage long-term projects](#) such as large-scale infrastructure to avoid unfinished projects.

### ■ Support labour institutions:

Member states should support unions, equal pay legislation, increased job security, permanent contracts, higher minimum wages, improved and equitable parental leave, a wage cap and higher democracy at work.



# Conclusion

With the multiple socio-ecological crises worsening and reinforcing one another, labour markets are under pressure and are no longer compatible with what is required for a fair and green transition. The EU has partly recognised this and has tried to remedy this tension through the Council Recommendation, the European Pillar of Social Rights, Funds such as the JTF and ESF+, as well as EGD policies. Nevertheless, this has proven to be insufficient both in funding and in scope.

This is partly because the EU has a rather narrow understanding of what a just and green transition means and whom it should include. For example, the EGD will transform and create many jobs, but it currently lacks a social perspective to reach its social targets. Brown industries certainly need to transition and should receive appropriate support, however limiting the shift to this activity neglects gender dynamics, is exclusionary and represents a threat to remaining below a 1.5° global temperature increase

Fortunately, [feasible alternatives exist](#). To achieve this, employment should be decoupled from GDP growth and work as a concept should be remodelled. Concretely, this means that the EU should focus on creating new meaningful jobs that centre around caring for people and the planet (e.g. increasing agroecological farming); transforming existing

jobs to make employment future-proof for a low-carbon society (e.g. from fossil-fuel jobs to renewable energy activities); and recognising and valuing jobs that are currently invisibilised despite being foundational for a wellbeing economy (e.g. care jobs).

Two examples were developed in this brief to demonstrate how this more holistic vision of work can help society, the economy and nature become more resilient. **Working time reduction** has proven to be positive for human wellbeing, tackling the cost of living crisis, energy savings, gender equality and conducive to lower environmental footprints. On top of this, it also provides the benefit of allowing for more time to re/upskill, which, in a context of the green transition, will undoubtedly prove helpful to many. **The job guarantee scheme** has the valuable capacity to ensure full employment as well as to absorb job losses triggered by the transition and the climate crisis. Without reducing the wages of the public sector and being too expensive, job guarantee schemes can play an important role by developing key socio-environmental sectors and refocusing work around sufficiency. To ensure that these two solutions contribute to a holistic just and green transition, these cannot be seen as silver bullets but rather as part of policy packages, part of a just transition legal framework, with social partners and access to meaningful jobs for all at their core.



# Bibliography

**Akgüç, M., Arabadjieva, K., & Galgóczi, B. (2022).** Why the EU's patchy 'just transition' framework is not up to meeting its climate ambitions. ETUI, Brussels.

**Arnold, M., Vladkov, A. & Romei V. (2022).** 'Europe's workers face bigger squeeze from real wage cuts'. Financial Times. Accessed on 03/11/2022. Available at <https://www.ft.com/content/ed477fe9-46fa-43d0-b315-4170763261c2>

**Bohnenberger, K. (2022).** Is it a green or brown job? A Taxonomy of Sustainable Employment. Ecological Economics, 200, 107469.

**Clancy, J., & Feenstra, M. (2019).** Women, gender equality and the energy transition in the EU. Publications Office of the European Union, Brussels.

**Climate Action Network. (2020).** 'CAN Europe's position on Carbon Capture and Storage and/or Use (CSCU)'. CAN Europe website. Accessed on 22/09/2022. Available at : <https://caneurope.org/position-carbon-capture-storage/>

**CGT. (2021).** 'A Bosch Vénissieux les salariés vivent à 32 heures'. CGT website. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at : <https://www.cgt.fr/actualites/france/interprofessionnel/temps-de-travail/bosch-venissieux-les-salaries-vivent-32-heures>

**Council of the European Union (2022).** Proposal for a [DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Directive \(EU\) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Directive 98/70/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the promotion of energy from renewable sources, and repealing Council Directive \(EU\) 2015/652. COM/2021/557 final](#)

**D'Alessandro, S., Cieplinski, A., Distefano, T., & Dittmer, K. (2020).** Feasible alternatives to green growth. Nature Sustainability, 3(4), 329-335.

**De Spiegelaere, S. and Piasna, A. (2017).** The why and how of working time reduction. ETUI, Brussels.

**Ehnts, D. H. (2019).** The job guarantee: full employment, price stability and social progress. Society Register, 3(2), 49-65.

**EIGE (2021).** Gender inequalities in care and consequences for the labour market. <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-inequalities-care-and-consequences-labour-market>

**Ellena, S. (2022).** 'Commission adopts proposal to make 2023 the European Year

of Skills.' Euractiv. Accessed on 13/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/economy-jobs/news/commission-adopts-proposal-to-make-2023-the-european-year-of-skills/>

**ETUC. (n.d.).** 'Combating abuse of migrant labour in Italy'. ETUC website. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.etuc.org/en/combating-abuse-migrant-labour-italy>

**ETUI. (2022).** 'The climate change impact on inflation: regressive effects and policy options'. ETUI website. Accessed on 29/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.etui.org/news/climate-change-impact-inflation-regressive-effects-and-policy-options>

**Eurobarometer. (2022).** 'Fairness perceptions of the green transition'. Eurobarometer website. Accessed on 04/11/2022. Accessible at: <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2672>

**European Commission. (2019).** 'The Just Transition Mechanism: making sure no one is left behind'. EC website. Accessed on 13/08/2022. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/finance-and-green-deal/just-transition-mechanism\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/finance-and-green-deal/just-transition-mechanism_en)

**European Commission. (2021, July 14).** 'European Green Deal: Commission proposes transformation of EU economy and society to meet climate ambitions.' EC press release. Accessed on 08/08/2022. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_21\\_3541](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_3541)

**European Commission. (2021, December 14).** 'Commission presents guide for a fair transition towards climate neutrality'. EC website. Accessed on 13/08/2022. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=10125&furtherNews=yes>

**European Commission. (2021).** 'European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan'. EC website. Accessed on 03/11/2022. Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/empl/european-pillar-of-social-rights/en/>

**European Commission. (2022).** [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1057 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the European Social Fund Plus \(ESF+\) and repealing Regulation \(EU\) No 1296/2013](#)

**European Commission. (2022).** [COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS](#) REPower EU Plan. COM(2022) 230 final, Brussels

**European Commission. (no date,a).** 'Women in Mobility'. DG Mobility and Transport website. Accessed on 18/08/2022. Available at: [https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/social-issues/women-transport\\_en](https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/social-issues/women-transport_en)

**European Commission. (no date,b).** 'European Pillar of Social Rights'. DG Communication website. Accessed on 13/08/2022. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu>

[eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/economy-works-people/jobs-growth-and-investment/european-pillar-social-rights/european-pillar-social-rights-action-plan\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/economy-works-people/jobs-growth-and-investment/european-pillar-social-rights/european-pillar-social-rights-action-plan_en)

**European Commission. (no date,c).** 'The reinforced Youth Guarantee'. DG Employ website. Accessed on 13/09/2022. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079&langId=en>

**European Commission. (no date,d).** 'Coal regions in transition'. DG Energy website. Accessed on 20/09/2022. Available at: [https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/oil-gas-and-coal/eu-coal-regions/coal-regions-transition\\_en](https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/oil-gas-and-coal/eu-coal-regions/coal-regions-transition_en)

**European Commission. (no date, e).** 'ESF for recovery'. EC website. Accessed on 17/10/2022. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/european-social-fund-plus/en>

**European Commission. (no date, f).** 'European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGD)'. EC website. Accessed on 07/11/2022. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=326>

**European Environmental Bureau. (n.d.).** 'Climate & Energy : Biofuels'. EEB website. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: <https://eeb.org/work-areas/climate-energy/biofuels/>

**European Environmental Bureau. (2021).** Face to face with hydrogen: The reality behind the hype. An EEB position paper for a better-informed approach to hydrogen. European Environmental Bureau, Brussels.

**European Environment Agency. (2021).** 'Growth without economic growth'. EEA website. Accessed on 03/11/2022. Available at: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/growth-without-economic-growth>.

**European Parliament. (2021).** 'Right to disconnect' should be an EU-wide fundamental right, MEPs say'. Press release European Parliament website. Accessed on 29/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210114IPR95618/right-to-disconnect-should-be-an-eu-wide-fundamental-right-meps-say>

**Eurostat. (2018).** 'Farms and farmland in the European Union - statistics'. Eurostat Statistics Explained. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Farms\\_and\\_farmland\\_in\\_the\\_European\\_Union\\_-\\_statistics#The\\_evolution\\_of\\_farms\\_and\\_farmland\\_from\\_2005\\_to\\_2016](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Farms_and_farmland_in_the_European_Union_-_statistics#The_evolution_of_farms_and_farmland_from_2005_to_2016)

**European Greens. (n.d.).** 'Here's why we should all have a 4 day work week'. European Greens website. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: <https://europeangreens.eu/news/we-need-4-day-work-week-people-and-planet>

**Eurostat (2022).** 'Gender Statistics'. Eurostat Statistics explained website. Accessed on 24/08/2022. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender\\_statistics#Labour\\_market](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender_statistics#Labour_market)

**Eurostat. (2022).** 'Environmental economy – statistics on employment and growth'. Eurostat Statistics explained website. Accessed on 13/08/2022. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Environmental\\_economy\\_%E2%80%93\\_statistics\\_on\\_employment\\_and\\_growth#Development\\_of\\_key\\_indicators\\_for\\_the\\_environmental\\_economy](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Environmental_economy_%E2%80%93_statistics_on_employment_and_growth#Development_of_key_indicators_for_the_environmental_economy)

**Ewbank, R. & Mailu, W. (2021).** Climate Resilient Agriculture - The transformation needed for global resilience, food security and net zero by 2050. Christian Aid, London.

**Fortuna, G. (2021).** 'CAP deal lays ground for third 'social' pillar'. Euractiv. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/agriculture-food/news/cap-deal-lays-ground-for-third-social-pillar/>

**Four Day Week Campaign website.** Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.4dayweek.co.uk/>

**Frey, P. (2021).** Costing A 4 Day Week in the German Public Sector. Autonomy, London.

**García-García, P., Carpintero, Ó., & Buendía, L. (2020).** Just energy transitions to low carbon economies: A review of the concept and its effects on labour and income. Energy Research & Social Science, 70, 101664.

**Heffernan, R. et al. (2022).** A Feminist European Green Deal: Towards an Ecological and Gender Just Transition. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Berlin.

**Heidegger, P. & Wiese, K. (2020).** Pushed to the wastelands: Environmental racism against Roma communities in Central and Eastern Europe. European Environmental Bureau, Brussels.

**Heynen, D. A. et al. (2020).** Just transition in the context of EU environmental policy and the European Green Deal. Issue Paper under Task 3 of the 'Service contract on future EU environment policy. Öko-Institut e.V., Freiburg.

**Hickel, J., O'Neill, D. W., Fanning, A. L., & Zoomkawala, H. (2022).** National responsibility for ecological breakdown: a fair-shares assessment of resource use, 1970–2017. The Lancet Planetary Health, 6(4), e342–e349.

**Hickel, J., & Kallis, G. (2020).** Is green growth possible?. New political economy, 25(4), 469–486.



**IndusriAll. (2020).** 'A fair recovery: only by saving jobs and securing wages'.

**IndustriAll Europe website.** Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: <https://news.industrialall-europe.eu/Article/491>

**International Labour Organisation. (2012).** Are "green" jobs decent?. International Journal of Labour Research, 4(2), 131-248.

**International Labour Organisation. (2019).** 'Work for a brighter future. Global commission on the future of work'. ILO website. Accessed on 13/08/2022. Available at: [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms\\_662410.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_662410.pdf)

**International Labour Organisation. (2019).** Working on a warmer planet: The impact of heat stress on labour productivity and decent work. ILO, Geneva.

**International Labour Organisation. (2022).** 'Frequently Asked Questions on the Just Transition'. ILO website. Accessed on 13/08/2022. Available at: [https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/WCMS\\_824102/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/WCMS_824102/lang--en/index.htm)

**International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) (2019):** Renewable Energy: A Gender Perspective. IRENA, Abu Dhabi.

**Jackson, T., & Victor, P. (2011).** Productivity and work in the 'green economy': Some theoretical reflections and empirical tests. Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions, 1(1), 101-108.

**Jeffrey, S. et al. (2021).** 'Climate jobs: Building a workforce for the climate emergency'. Campaign Against Climate Change Trade Union Group (CACCTU), London.

**Jolly, J. (2022).** 'Four-day week could alleviate cost of living crisis, thinktank claims'. The Guardian. Accessed on 22/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/sep/19/four-day-week-could-alleviate-cost-of-living-crisis-thinktank-claims>

**Kalia, A. (2022).** "I had a very welcome lie-in on Friday: the joys and challenges of switching to a four-day week". The Guardian. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: [https://www.theguardian.com/money/2022/aug/18/four-day-week-trial-uk-workers-joys-challenges?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw](https://www.theguardian.com/money/2022/aug/18/four-day-week-trial-uk-workers-joys-challenges?CMP=share_btn_tw)

**Liébus, P. (2021).** 'Promoting gender equality in the construction sector'. Euractiv. Accessed on 12/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/social-europe-jobs/opinion/diversify-the-construction-sector-for-jobs-and-growth/>

**LOCOMOTION (2022).** Energy security, sustainability and sufficiency in Europe

and beyond. EEB on behalf of the LOCOMOTION consortium, Brussels.

**Mastini, R. (2018).** A Job Guarantee scheme for a Post-growth Economy. Friends of the Earth Europe, Brussels 1-5.

**Michalopoulos, S. (2018).** 'One French farmer commits suicide every two days, survey says'. Euractiv. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/agriculture-food/news/one-french-farmer-commits-suicide-every-two-days-survey-says/>

**Mindegaard, A. (2020a).** 'Future farming: Re-localising food systems across Europe'. META. Accessed on 22/09/2022. Available at: <https://meta.eeb.org/2020/11/23/future-farming-re-localising-food-systems-across-europe/>

**Mindegaard, A. (2020b).** 'Future farming: bringing farm closer to fork in Belgium'. META. Accessed on 22/09/2022. Available at: <https://meta.eeb.org/2020/04/07/future-farming-bringing-farm-closer-to-fork-in-belgium/>

**Mindegaard, A. (2020c).** 'Agroecology: Farming for a better future?'. META. Accessed on 22/09/2022. Available at: <https://meta.eeb.org/2020/03/24/agroecology-farming-for-a-better-future/>

**Mindegaard, A. (2021).** 'Future farming: Cultivating people-friendly food systems'. META. Accessed on 22/09/2022. Available at: <https://meta.eeb.org/2021/01/13/future-farming-cultivating-people-friendly-food-systems/>

**Mompelat, L. (2021).** 'Stop the clock: The environmental benefits of a shorter working week'. Platform.

**Nenning, L. (2022).** The Gender Dimensions of the Climate Crisis and the European Green Deal. EPSU, Brussels.

**Novotny, P. (1995).** Where we live, work and play: Refraining the cultural landscape of environmentalism in the environmental justice movement. New Political Science, 16(1), 61-79.

**Seidl, I., & Zahrnt, A. (Eds.). (2021).** Post-growth Work: Employment and Meaningful Activities Within Planetary Boundaries. Routledge.

**OECD (2022).** Empowering Women in the Transition Towards Green Growth in Greece. OECD Publishing, Paris.

**Onaram, Ö. and Jump, R. C. (2022).** A shorter working week as part of a green caring economy: UK Feminist Green New Deal Policy Paper. The Women Budget



Group and Women's Environmental Network, London.

**Palley, T. (2018).** 'Job Guarantee Programs: Careful What You Wish For'. Social Europe. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: <https://socialeurope.eu/job-guarantee-programs-careful-what-you-wish-for>

**Parrique, T. et al. (2019).** Decoupling debunked: Evidence and arguments against green growth as a sole strategy for sustainability. European Environmental Bureau, Brussels.

**SOLIDAR (n.d.).** Factsheet on decent work in agriculture. SOLIDAR, Brussels

**Sturgess, H. (2016).** Would a Job Guarantee Guarantee Jobs? An Analysis of the Employer of Last Resort Proposal. Thesis at the Department of Political Economy at the University of Sydney, 1-71.

**Tamma, P. (2022).** 'Is Friday the new Saturday? Europe eyes a 4-day week'. Politico. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.politico.eu/article/friday-new-saturday-europe-four-day-week/>

**Tcherneva, P. (2018).** The Job Guarantee: Design, Jobs, and Implementation – Working Paper No. 902. Levy Economics Institute of Bard College, p. 1-66.

**UN General Assembly. (1948).** Universal declaration of human rights (217 [III] A). Paris.

**UNEP (2022).** Preventing the next pandemic - Zoonotic diseases and how to break the chain of transmission. United Nations Environment Programme and International Livestock Research Institute, Nairobi.

**Van der Ploeg, J. D. et al. (2019).** The economic potential of agroecology: Empirical evidence from Europe. Journal of Rural Studies, 71, 46-61.

**Wiese, K., & Mayrhofer, J. (2020).** Escaping the growth and jobs treadmill, a new policy agenda for post-corona virus Europe. European Environmental Bureau, European Youth Forum, Brussels.

**Yu, E. (2022).** 'UK Bank Says Four-Day Week Is The 'Future of Working Life''. Bloomberg. Accessed on 14/09/2022. Available at: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-08-24/atom-bank-says-four-day-week-is-the-future-of-working-life?leadSource=uverify%20wall>