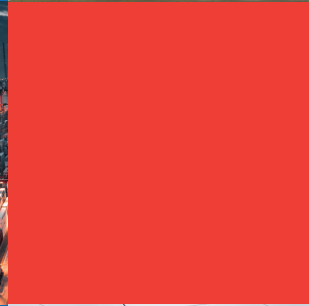




EUROPEAN  
TRANSPORT  
WORKERS'  
FEDERATION

# A NEW DEAL FOR FAIR TRANSPORT

European Transport  
Workers' Manifesto  
**FOR A FAIR EUROPE**



# A NEW DEAL FOR FAIR TRANSPORT

EUROPEAN TRANSPORT  
WORKERS' MANIFESTO  
FOR A FAIR EUROPE



**There is no labour shortage in Europe,  
there is a shortage of good jobs!**

**Transport and transport workers are essential to Europe.**

**However, transport work across Europe is too often defined  
by low wages, long hours and poor and deteriorating working  
conditions.**

The European Union has failed to correctly respond to the social, economic and political challenges created by liberalisation, deregulation, privatisation, globalisation. These policies have not only led to increased exploitation of European workers but also to the political alienation of European citizens, an alienation that has led to increased support for authoritarian right-wing parties. The revitalisation of trade unionism and increased worker power in the workplace is necessary to curb this rise and give workers a voice over decisions that affect them. Strong trade unions, substantive social dialogue, and workplace democracy are essential to meet these challenges as well as tackling the root cause of the challenges present in transport work and to block the growth of far-right parties. In this respect, we demand all candidates for EU election and their political parties support the campaign to make May 8 a Europe-wide public holiday demonstrating the European Union's opposition to far-right authoritarianism.

Ahead of the 2024 European Elections, the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) outlines its demands for a new deal for transport and its workers. The transport workers of Europe call on all candidates for EU election and their political parties to commit to and support these demands during their mandate and in their work.

# 1.

The fundamental role of transport for society is too often ignored by European and national policy-makers. This results in poor governance, ineffective oversight, lack of coherence between policies - including investments - and no systematic and strategic vision for the future of transport and its workers. This must change!

## The transport workers of Europe demand

- A worker-centric approach to transport policy and a decisive political commitment to the concerns of transport workers. All decisions regarding the green and digital transitions must stem from substantive engagement with workers and their trade unions;
- A strategic future-oriented vision for transport as a key sector of general interest;
- Make transport central in EU policy making, connecting transport policy decisions to the EU industrial policy.



# 2.

**European and national transport policies focus too often on liberalising transport markets, lowering costs, and forcing competition into transport and related sectors. Competition in transport, when based on driving down costs and undermining wages and working conditions, has not led to efficiency gains but has rather led to increased ineffectiveness in transport while also putting a downward pressure of wages and safety.** These policies are the fundamental cause of the acute systemic and existential crisis in transport - a shortage of decent jobs! Fragmentation, outsourcing and subcontracting encouraged by liberalising policies undermine working conditions, preventing women and young workers from working in transport. Transport work is an inherently mobile and often international form of work; however, this must not be an excuse for the existence of exploitative actions of unscrupulous transport employers who subvert laws and social obligations. The European Union and its politicians must act with courage to develop a social and just transport in Europe.

## The transport workers of Europe demand

- Specific protections to safeguard mobile, particularly internationally mobile, workers, taking into account the various specificities of each transport sector;
- Substantive and properly funded measures aimed at supporting and promoting collective bargaining (in line with [Directive \(EU\) 2022/2041 on adequate minimum wages in the European Union](#) and the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#)) at sectoral level to ensure decent pay, good working conditions, and a just transition to environmentally sustainable transport and a just digital transitions;
- EU-wide legislation to regulate and limit subcontracting to deter unfair and abusive practices;
- Proper enforcement of existing legislation and measures to deter abuse of legislation and laws;
- A stronger role for the European Labour Authority (ELA) with competency to carry out preliminary investigations on suspected breaches of European law and social obligations, particularly those suggested by trade unions and/or European trade union federations, and with strong competences in leading the follow-up work on such cases.;
- That the exploitation of workers does not result in competitive advantages for transport companies and that accountability and due diligence is encoded and enforced throughout the supply chain;
- The possibility of punitive sanctions on transnational companies that do not respect legal and social obligations, particularly collective agreements.

# 3.

**Transport must be an inclusive sector that reflects the diversity of European society.** The vision of European transport workers is a vision of Fair Transport that actively supports all transport workers, but especially young, women, and black transport workers, transport workers of colour and ethnic and religious minorities, migrant transport workers, LGBT+ transport workers, and transport workers with disabilities, both in the labour market and society.

## **The transport workers of Europe demand**

- That transport work is safe, free of harassment and free of discrimination;
- measures to deter all forms of precarious work that make transport unattractive to people and hinder retention of workers
- A gender-sensitive approach and coherence to EU transport policy to encourage and support a higher number of women to work and remain working in the transport sector.



Vertical integration, i.e., the ownership of two or more steps in the supply-chain by companies, has expanded throughout transport. This has developed an imbalanced power-dynamic, where fewer and fewer transport companies are able to enforce their demands on national governments and dictate the present and the future of European transport and transport work.

4.

## The transport workers of Europe demand

- Substantive economic oversight at the international level to ensure that large companies follow economic and social rules, including social security and tax obligations;
- Transparency in decision-making over exemptions from competition rules;
- Social conditionality mechanisms linked to subsidies and state-aid exemptions;
- Social provisions in procurement procedures to eliminate social dumping and facilitate fair competition.

**The ongoing climate emergency demands urgent action** – the greening of our economies and societies! A Green Transition is only feasible if it overcomes social and political injustice and ensures fair distribution of emissions and resources. Therefore, above all, a green transition must be just. It must build an economy that is fair and inclusive and must ensure that the opportunities and costs are shared equitably. This can be best achieved through substantive social dialogue and collective bargaining agreements that ensure and promote decent work and working conditions, leaving no area or person behind.

## The transport workers of Europe demand

- A stop to austerity policies. Austerity measures only stand to hurt workers, their families, and their communities as well as undermine environmental policy commitments - economic and fiscal policy must support social and environmental policies;
- Political commitment, and appropriate and sufficient public funding, for high-quality collective transport as a public service that resources high-quality transport jobs;
- Substantive engagement of workers and trade unions in the monitoring and evaluation of the deployment of funds dedicated to the environmental transition in transport;
- Mandatory social impact assessments at sectoral, regional and company level in anticipation of the effects of the green transition on employment, equality, skills and training needs, and occupational health & safety;
- Properly funded re-skilling and up-skilling policies and measures at the company level, led by the demands of the workers and their trade unions;
- That the allocation of subsidies for the testing of new fuels, etc., must be linked to a just transition of the workplaces;
- Properly funded support mechanisms for all individual workers in the possible event of redundancies;

5.

**Digitalisation and automation are already changing work, threatening disruptive changes. The present trajectory of company-led and profit-oriented digitalisation and automation promise to intensify work, increase worker surveillance, and lead to greater socio-economic disparities between workers and regions.** Technologies must uphold and reinforce decent work! The digitalisation and automation of our society has the potential to increase employment, decrease work intensity and workload, and bring about social benefits for workers and citizens. Digitalisation and automation must be worker-led and people-centred for this to occur. Employers carrying out digitalisation and/or automation in their workplace have the responsibility to make the transformation socially and ecologically just. International policy must ensure that workers and their trade unions are consulted throughout the process of the application of digital technologies at the workplace, and any changes must be negotiated before implementation. Policy must also ensure that curricula and educational institutions are available to ensure the correct and adequate reskilling and upskilling of all affected workers, at no cost and in consultation with workers. Policy must ensure that the digital transition is just and inclusive.

## **The transport workers of Europe demand**

- An update to EU labour law to protect workers from the challenges of new technologies (An AI Act for the workplace);
- Policies to encourage that digitalisation only occurs at the workplace through negotiation with workers and their trade unions!
- That digital technologies are used to reinforce decent work, labour rights and democracy;
- That the application of digital technologies at the workplace does not lead to behavioural or performance monitoring;
- That digitalisation is used to encourage gender equality and for more women to work in transport.



6.



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