



# TOGETHER FOR A FAIR DEAL FOR WORKERS

EL/LV/BL/ch  
Brussels, 27 November 2025

To: Roxana Mînzatu,  
Executive Vice-President for Social Rights and  
Skills, Quality Jobs and Preparedness  
To: Wopke Hoekstra,  
Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean  
Growth

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[Letter sent by e-mail]

Dear Executive Vice-President Mînzatu,  
Dear Commissioner Hoekstra,

As COP30 has concluded, I would like to commend the European Union team for remaining firm and constructive in defending the goals of the Paris Agreement. The EU has been vocal and principled on global climate ambition. However, we must be equally exemplary at home. The transition cannot succeed globally if the European Union does not ensure a credible, fair and skills-based transition for its own workers.

The reality of Europe's skills gap is stark. According to recent DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion [research](#), the EU energy sector alone will require at least 145,000 additional skilled workers by 2030 just to meet our legally binding climate targets. Our members know that this shortage is already delaying investments and weakening Europe's clean growth.

Europe is already experiencing the consequences of insufficient anticipation. Since 2019, the EU has lost well over [one million](#) industrial jobs. In the automotive sector alone, [90,000 jobs](#) have disappeared in the past two years, while the chemicals and steel industries face further closures. Without structured anticipation, these restructurings become sudden and destabilising.

Effective anticipation and management of change is what keeps industrial jobs and investment in Europe. It is not an administrative burden; it is the precondition for long-term competitiveness and shared prosperity for companies and workers. Anticipation means companies and workers plan together, rather than react in crisis, when it is much more socially and financially costly to do so.

We also know what must be done to address this challenge. The European Parliament has recognised the urgency, with the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) working on it and voting on 3 December on the Just Transition Directive Legislative initiative procedure. This is a concrete and practical framework to provide the workforce, planning and social dialogue that Europe requires.



At COP30, the EU endorsed the United Arab Emirates Just Transition Work Programme, whose conclusions align closely with the Just Transition Directive now advancing in Parliament. The decision recognises that just transitions require meaningful and effective social dialogue with workers and social partners (paras. 12(d)–(e)), strong commitments on upskilling and reskilling aligned with labour-market needs (para. 12(g)), and structured planning through national strategies (para. 12(a)). These are the core elements of the Parliament’s text, as advocated for by ETUC and our affiliates across the European Union.

You cannot convincingly advocate for a global just transition abroad while the EU lacks the tools to deliver one at home. The skills gap, the uneven anticipation of restructuring, and the absence of binding transition planning are already limiting Europe’s industrial and climate ambitions. We cannot leave this to chance.

For these reasons, I am writing to ask that the Just Transition Directive be explicitly integrated into the Quality Jobs Roadmap and the forthcoming Quality Jobs Act. This is the natural place for the EU to implement the just transition mechanism endorsed at COP30, and essential for Europe’s productivity, competitiveness and credibility.

I urge you and the wider Commission to work together to ensure that Europe’s global leadership on just transition is matched by credible domestic action. Our goals abroad must align with our delivery at home. The ETUC stands ready to support you and to discuss this matter further at your convenience.

Europe needs a clear legal framework to anticipate change, prepare its workforce and manage industrial transformation. The Just Transition Directive provides exactly that. We count on the Commission to deliver it.

Yours sincerely,

Esther Lynch  
ETUC General Secretary

Ludovic Voet  
ETUC Confederal Secretary