

industriAll Europe Trade Union Strategic Plan

2025-2029

Strategic Plan 2025-2029

Uniting workers for an industrial future

Representing 7 million manufacturing, mining and energy workers, industriAll Europe unites trade unions across Europe in their fight for sustainable, well-paid jobs with high-level working conditions for all, strong workers' rights and democracy.

Geopolitical volatility, austerity, labour market insecurity, declining purchasing power, hyper and market driven globalisation, rising and highly volatile energy prices, lack of industrial strategies and the embrace of short-termism by multinational companies, have eroded our industries and good jobs¹ in Europe and fuelled rising inequality and precariousness, the return of nationalism and threat of trade wars.

Wealth created is increasingly concentrated in fewer hands, with less redistribution of gains and investment in Europe by European business. Lagging private sector investment is holding Europe back.

The wars in Ukraine, the Middle East, growing instability in the Mediterranean and imperialistic posturing globally, and geopolitical turbulences have also put security and defence back at the top of the European agenda – in military production and energy terms. Over-reliance on global supply chains and the lack of industrial sovereignty in Europe has increasingly exposed our economies to external shocks. Collectively, together with Europe's inability to act in a unified manner, this has damaged people across Europe, undermined their trust in the capacity of the European project to deliver prosperity for all and has created a seed bed for the far right to feed on.

There is an urgent need for action. Exceptional times demand rapid, innovative and proactive solutions and measures. There's no way to deliver quality jobs and stronger rights for industrial workers in a de-industrialised, neoliberal Europe, which lacks a strategy for essential sectors. This is why the next mandate period will be critically important for securing, rebuilding and future proofing our industrial base – strengthening our industrial sovereignty, our research and development base in order to retain and gain technological leadership in the transition. Considerable private and public investment will be needed in the transformation and the development of sustainable and resilient industries, underpinned by quality jobs and robust social dialogue and collective bargaining. It is only with sustainable industries providing good jobs, with negotiated terms and conditions and a high level of social protection, that we can ensure prosperity for all, underpinned by strong public policies. As governments around the world step up their industrial and energy planning, Europe is in danger of paying a high price for its inaction, and it is necessary to find momentum for a coordinated and proactive European industrial and trade policy. We demand that it has a solid and sustainable social foundation through the reinforced and enforced employment and social rights. The transition must be negotiated with the workforce.

¹ <https://news.industriall-europe.eu/Article/1123>

This is the antidote Europe needs to urgently resolve the economic and social insecurity that lies behind the growing fear of social decline among industrial workers. Not more of the same failed policies. This is also the way to keep the compass set on our collective duty towards future generations in terms of planetary boundaries and climate neutrality by 2050.

Solidarity is our strength, and we stand together against toxic rhetoric and those who aim to pit workers and communities against each other. Democratic forces must take workers' concerns into account to regain trust. The far right offers seemingly simple solutions to complex problems. We need measures of a scale and urgency to tackle the complex challenges we face. We need to give working people more control over their lives by successfully encouraging them to organise in trade unions and stand up for their rights and good working conditions. We need a strong, democratic and active base in the workplace in order to increase our trade union power, strengthen workers' rights at all levels, conclude better collective agreements, increase collective bargaining coverage and effectively represent trade union issues vis-à-vis politicians.

Peace is a pre-condition for the full exercise of human rights and stable democracies. There can be no peace and security without social and economic justice.

Democracy, trade unions and workers' rights are intricately linked. As attempts by some governments and businesses to dismantle fundamental pillars of democracy such as the right to strike and to protest are on the rise, we will continue fighting for our basic fundamental rights. No rights must be taken for granted. We can only rely on our own strength to defend our hard-won rights and struggle for more and better rights. Trade union renewal and autonomy must be our guiding objective. This will bring dividends for working people in tackling the biggest challenges facing our societies and giving them a stake in decision-making. This is the way to defend democracy at the workplace and in our societies.

For the period 2025-2029, the activities of industriAll Europe will be concentrated on four main priorities:

- Uniting to Build Trade Union Power for strong, sustainable industrial jobs in Europe
- Uniting to Build Trade Union Power for fair pay and better conditions
- Uniting to Build Trade Union Power for solidarity and peace
- Uniting for a new common trade union agenda

1. Uniting to Build Trade Union Power for strong, sustainable industrial jobs in Europe

European prosperity is underpinned by our manufacturing base, maintaining and creating direct and indirect jobs. Today the threat of deindustrialisation looms over many sectors and regions across Europe, creating enormous uncertainties for workers and communities about their future, in the context of high energy prices and the need to access to clean, abundant, sustainable and affordable energy. Faced with the risk of deindustrialisation and a persistent cost-of-living crisis, industrial workers fear social decline and the erosion of employment conditions and hard-won rights.

This is compounded by the scale of industrial transformation underway, driven by decarbonisation and technological developments, in a fierce global market place. The double transition is incompatible with austerity policies.

Many of our industries are facing huge transformation challenges, which are no longer predictions for the future, but the reality now. In order to face these challenges at the group, company and plant level, and to respond to proposed restructuring, redundancies and production relocations, more effective and concrete action and strategies are needed.

Europe's vulnerability to external shocks has exposed the limits of laissez-faire and austerity policies, and the lack of coordination. Teaching us a lesson about the critical importance of fostering European resilience by collectively securing access to reliable and affordable energy (if necessary, by removing energy from the European market), raw materials, goods and key components while fostering research and innovation, circularity, energy savings and limiting the use of natural resources. The idea that "the market" alone can deliver the needs of sustainable and resilient industries has been exposed. Since meeting climate goals is a political and societal priority, politicians have a direct responsibility for putting in place an active economic policy and the necessary political framework and tools to implement an orderly and Just Transition with workers' involvement and social security at the core. This is a time for political and industrial bravery not policy gimmicks. To build a common European energy and industrial plan, Europe can no longer afford either a return to austerity policies or uncoordinated initiatives by national governments, or industrial policies based purely on national fiscal space to invest. It is necessary to learn the lessons from the pandemic on common spending, investment and jobs guarantees.

After years of collective action by industriAll Europe to get industrial policy back on the European agenda, now that it's there our high expectations must be met.

A proactive and robust European industrial deal with a comprehensive industrial strategy must be at the centre of Europe's economic plan. Decarbonisation is the objective, based on the Green Deal. There is no 'business as usual' scenario for European industry. We must resist the siren calls of short-termism and speak up for long term vision and sustainability. We must promote and defend the interests of workers, their jobs, wages and working conditions, while bearing in mind that climate and environmental protection is essential. Actions must be socially acceptable, economically sustainable and must leave no one behind. We urgently

need ambitious and coherent investment and innovation policies, supporting strategic planning of industrial activities and products, taking into account the entire industrial value chain. This industrial deal must create the conditions to ensure that our foundation, energy-intensive industries stay, grown, reshore and develop in Europe. We need industrial alliances and smart clusters for the industrial areas of expertise where Europe is strong, to ensure industrial leadership and RDI excellence, including through the further development of “Important Projects of Common European Interest”. Regional cohesion objectives must ensure that no region or community is left behind and internal demand is fuelled.

Industrial policy and the sectoral work of industriAll Europe must be aligned with an effective and proactive European company policy. If trade unions are not rooted in companies and are unable to develop and enforce our strategies at a decision-making level, we limit our ability to shape company transformation proposals in favour of our members and our influence will remain inadequate. It is imperative that industriAll Europe focuses its energy and efforts on developing strategies and policies that aim to influence and shape strategic and concrete company decisions that impact our members.

Such an ambitious EU industrial policy cannot be done on the cheap. Serious investment plans must combine sufficient private and public investments. Investment in the economy both at national and European levels should deliver on social progress and quality jobs through strong, mandatory social conditionalities. Public resources must pursue upward-convergence and social cohesion across Europe’s regions preventing a fragmentation of the EU and ensuring convergence and that no region is left behind.

Europe’s industrial success has been and will be based primarily on highly skilled and qualified workers, with good labour conditions and robust industrial relations. This gives us an advantage in the green transition. Therefore, investing into retraining and upskilling and the skills intelligence must remain at the heart of European industrial strategy. This does not only benefit workers but also employers who have a clear interest and responsibility to invest in their workforce and provide for quality training opportunities. As laid out in the European Skills Agenda, this must be underpinned by European and national skills strategies and investments.

In the current volatile industrial context, a narrative of ‘competitiveness’ dominates the public debate. We will defend a high road to social progress, quality jobs, full employment, wealth redistribution, investment in innovation, education and training, and assertively oppose cost-cutting, social dumping and a race to the bottom in terms of wages and working conditions. While we recognise the need to secure of industrial autonomy, European industrial policies must not be built only on the pure logic of profitability, but on strong criteria on the public good, sustainability (ESG) and quality. Trade unions must play an important role in the design and implementation of these industrial policies, as well as in the monitoring of public aid. IndustriAll Europe will seek to work with employers’ counterparts to achieve this.

To achieve this, we will:

- i) Call for the implementation of an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient European industrial policy which strengthens the strategic autonomy of Europe, respects fair and sustainable international trade, and promotes social progress within the different regions of Europe. This industrial plan should prevent unfair competition between regions to attract investments for quality job creation, combat deindustrialisation, and

- promote the reshoring of critical manufacturing value chains and production, while ensuring that all public funds have enforceable obligations to ensure social justice strings are attached. Moreover, plans for industrial reconversion and ecological transition must be shared, negotiated and pursued within a reasonable timeframe to ensure an adequate response from the regions and the retraining of workers.
- ii) Develop proactive and effective European trade union strategies and company policy that complement industrial policy and company level.
 - iii) Call for a European industrial investment plan at scale for clean technology value chains, with built-in solidarity, and a good jobs plan for each region. This must include a strengthened, comprehensive Just Transition Fund to support all affected regions and sectors. Social conditionalities must ensure that support provided through policy tools, state aid or EU funds leads to quality jobs in Europe, underpinned by strong and stable industrial relations.
 - iv) Work to ensure that macroeconomic policies are in line with our industrial policy and Just Transition objectives. Oppose the re-introduction of austerity policies and fight for an economic governance framework that allows for public investments at scale of the green and digital transformation and for a Just Transition for all. Europe's fiscal space is also essential to mobilise private investments which are a major building block in achieving the decarbonisation targets. Call for common European financing instrument and monetary policies that support investments.
 - v) Beyond the energy emergency, campaign for a revision of the EU energy policy which ensures stable and abundant supplies of affordable, low-carbon electricity and gas for a sustainable future included through the creation of a European energy agency and common purchasing policy. Energy cannot be guided by the market alone. The system needs to be properly regulated and organised to ensure low-carbon, safe and affordable energy supply for all, as a common good. We must work to reform the wholesale market price formation mechanism. Speculation and profiteering on essential goods must be denounced and prevented through price monitoring, and we must continue to fight against liberalisation steps in essential goods and services. National governments must take responsibility for proper grids. European energy infrastructures must be built, in a coordinated manner, at pace to meet demand with security of supply, ensuring the reliability of the grids and price stability. We call for a comprehensive strategy for CCS/CCU.
 - vi) Oppose purely shareholder-value driven corporate strategies which lead to European deindustrialisation by developing united industrial alternatives through strong, democratic trade union coordination in multinational companies and the strengthening of European Works Councils. Hence, ensuring that workers have a stronger voice in corporate decision-making and that profits are reinvested in research and development, training and just transitions.
 - vii) Fight against tax evasion, tax havens (inside and outside Europe), and call for a fair, progressive tax system, including taxation on windfall profits, the introduction of an ambitious (minimum) corporate tax and a fairer redistribution of wealth overall including through well-resourced social protection measures. Tax competition in Europe is ruinous. The increasing inequality is tearing the social fabric of our societies apart.
 - viii) Continue working on a progressive reform of competition law and the revision of the state aid regime, with social and environmental conditionalities attached enabling all Member States to invest in transformation with quality jobs attached and to avoid fragmentation and market distortions.

- ix) Call for a level playing field underpinned by regulated fair trade, free from exploitation. We will continue working for the multilateral regulation of international trade, and, in the context of geostrategic needs for free trade agreements, we call for the enforcement and universal respect of workers' rights as well as environmental standards at its core. We will push for action to address overcapacities and unfair practices through the use of trade defence instruments including quotas. To ensure coherence with EU political ambitions, we call in particular for the extension of the scope of the Carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM) to prevent carbon leakage and the relocation outside of the EU of manufacturing activities downstream the supply chains and the effective use of the Foreign Subsidies Regulation which is important in fighting the distortive impact that foreign subsidies have on the EU market and which is detrimental to European industries.
- x) Continuously scrutinise and challenge the impact on the quantity and quality of jobs in our industries. Defend and promote good working conditions and healthy and safe working environments, emphasise occupational health and the prevention of occupational hazards, and seek to reduce the number of accidents at work, notably through worker involvement, collective bargaining, training, and the effective enforcement of existing OSH legislation, and the better inclusion of psychosocial risks including through a specific Directive on the prevention of these risks at work. Promote a progressive and inclusive approach for older workers. As part of the transitions, many jobs will evolve or change, but experienced workers are also an asset. With the help of sustainable employability, the quality of work should also be good for this entire group.
- xi) Keep our focus on the goals set on carbon neutrality by 2050, zero waste and the building of a circular economy, and continue mobilising for a comprehensive Just Transition Framework that is embedded in EU climate and industrial policies with social dialogue and quality jobs at the core. To this end, we will:
 - a. Continue fighting for a legislative framework for the anticipation and management of change, with this objective of maintaining employment security and creating quality jobs based on social dialogue and joint governance.
 - b. Actively shape and implement the EU Just Transition Observatory and call for the development of national Observatories.
 - c. Monitor the consequences of European actions on workers globally in close cooperation with IndustriALL Global Union
- xii) Work together to address restructuring action to avoid forced redundancies and loss of industrial capacities including through the creation of a SURE 2.0 scheme to address restructuring, including mandatory conditions on retraining/upskilling and the validation of skills, to help industry and the workforce affected by the multiple crises. Ensure negotiated solutions for all sites and workers. Denounce shareholder-driven, cost-cutting programmes that intensify pressure on wages and working conditions. Demand clawback rules on public subsidies in the case of relocations.
- xiii) Continue to address shortages of labour and necessary skills, which will potentially hamper a fair transformation, with serious impacts on workers, companies and society as a whole. We will campaign for comprehensive education and skills strategies (including the validation of skills) in line with industrial plans to facilitate transitions between jobs and ensure future possibilities for employment, in all Member States. Equally, we need to ensure that the right to training is guaranteed for all addressing financial disincentives and barrier to access. Skills need to be properly recognised

through validation processes including at European level where possible. Press for fair migration policies and equal treatment for migrant workers. Develop strategies to deal with demographic change, including for those who wish to work longer in good health, and young people joining the labour market.

- xiv) Secure equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex or gender, pregnancy, childbirth, parenthood or family obligations, including training on equality at the workplace. Notably, since women are underrepresented and underpaid in technical professions and the STEM fields, their job possibilities should be promoted, and their working conditions and career opportunities improved.
- xv) While digitalisation is accelerating, we will continue exploring the potential of digital technologies to support the transition towards a future-proof, smart, clean and innovative industry, creating added value for a fair and inclusive society. Global competition to master artificial intelligence represents one of Europe's most serious investment gaps. The AI Act is a first step to ensure trustworthy AI. However much more need to be done to prevent a new digital divide both in terms of investment and working conditions. Industry 5.0 should steer the deployment of digital technologies. Public and democratic control of big data including personal data, and trade union participation in the supervision and control of these, is needed. The digital transition must be negotiated collectively.
- xvi) Call for action to tackle the supply shortages of key components and materials, ensuring resource efficiency. It must be ensured that in the future, no unilateral dependence on third parties is created that endangers industrial production and the supply of essential goods for people in Europe including medical supplies. The present situation has underlined the need for European strategic autonomy within key industries notably in terms of investment in R&D, as well as strong policies on essential sustainable mining and energy, and the promotion of the circular economy. Priority should be given to industrial actors with value chains in Europe, to support good industrial jobs. We will actively monitor and promote trade union involvement in the implementation of the Critical Raw Materials Act and the Chips Act, ensuring good industrial jobs along global supply chains and avoiding neocolonial practices. We also support a prospective Critical Medicines Act which aims at guaranteeing pharmaceutical security. Call for the creation of a raw materials agency, with trade union participation. In light of future chemical regulation, security of supply of critical chemicals and raw materials must be ensured.
- xvii) Take advantage of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, better working together to reinforce monitoring of companies' social and environmental commitments and ensure more responsible business conduct and fair competition, together with IndustriALL Global Union. While employers are actively pushing for their deregulation agenda, we will continue lobbying for the fast adoption of the EU sustainability reporting standards and oppose any attempt from employers to reduce their reporting obligation. This is also an opportunity to reinforce and strengthen social dialogue and worker participation which must be grasped.
- xviii) Build proactive trade union strategy to ensure the effective implementation of the European Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and closely cooperate on current cases related to implementation of national legislation. EU-wide regulation should set a common minimum standard, but no country should be prevented from taking more ambitious measures, including through implementing the much stronger recommendations of the OECD Due Diligence Guidance. We advocate for a solution

so that companies not only proactively comply with ILO core labour standards and environmental standards, but also implement and promote them along the entire value chain. IndustriAll Europe, together with IndustriALL Global Union, will continue working together to establish common criteria for the monitoring. They should also act together with the trade unions from the headquarter countries when handling complaints about violations of human rights due diligence.

- xix) Work together with IndustriALL Global Union to counter employer opposition to greater transparency of and liability for their human rights and environmental behaviour, including through the promotion of a UN Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights.

2. Uniting to Build Trade Union Power for fair pay and better working conditions

Faced with the risk of multinational companies using the transition and successive crises to fragment workers, trade unions must reinforce their coordination on democracy at work and collective bargaining strategies to strengthen trade union power. Although the rate of inflation growth has slowed, the price level remains very high, meaning that the workers' living conditions are still under pressure. Indeed, wage increases are still lagging behind price increases and the wage share continues to decline. However, the profits of some companies continue to reach record levels while others are facing major financial problems in part due to energy prices, and wealth is increasingly concentrated in fewer hands contributing to ever-growing inequalities. This is a fact that we cannot and will not accept. Workers need to be fairly compensated for their work. Furthermore, without a fair compensation and a real wage increase, consumption will not recover sustainably supporting internal demand, and therefore economic growth will be further delayed. Weak demand is currently the key brake on industrial production in Europe.

Collective bargaining and social dialogue remain the best way to secure good wages and improve working conditions. However, collective bargaining and social dialogue structures have been dismantled in many European countries during austerity which resulted in boosting economic and social insecurity. Beside the pressure from employers to limit our demands, basic trade union rights, like the right to strike, are under increased pressure in many countries. Only with strong and democratic trade unions, with high density and an active membership at the shopfloor, strong sectoral organisation and effective transnational cooperation will it be possible to resist these attacks and elevate the role of unions as defendants of democratic rights. In the recent years, EU policy makers made a positive start by recognising the added value of collective bargaining and social dialogue for economic stability, workers' purchasing power and the society as a whole. With the shift to the right and the sirens of austerity being louder we will have to fight harder to secure the implementation of these positive developments on the ground. As employers are getting more vocal calling for a deregulation agenda, we have to mobilise to oppose further attacks on workers and trade union rights.

Austerity has already proven to be the recipe for recession, low investments, wage-stagnation, and inequality. The new fiscal rules risk a return to this failed strategy that led to economic and social insecurity, deindustrialisation and which has fuelled the rise of anti-democratic parties and the Far Right. Austerity will not deliver a fair transformation, nor will it deliver the much-needed investment in education, social services and social security and public health or make Europe a competitive world leader. It will also undermine the capacity of the European Union to turn the promises of the EPSR into a reality. We will continue to assert that there is an alternative: a high road to competitiveness with investment and respect of workers' rights.

Digitalisation is neither a positive or negative thing for workers. The impact on workers depends on how it is shaped and used at all levels: from the legal framework, through regulation, to tailor-made measures, especially at sectoral and company level by the social partners through social dialogue and collective bargaining. AI is a disruptive game changer, providing huge opportunities, but has also massive implications for workers notably in terms of monitoring and employer control, if left unregulated. Appropriate and rapidly evolving regulation, put in place as a matter of urgency, can avoid the risk of rights at work falling behind the pace of innovation. It must create opportunities for all. The world of work cannot be treated by default as a testbed for new AI. Technological progress must go hand in hand with social progress and in particular the sharing of the wealth created. Ethics and the principle of human control must be our compass in the deployment of AI.

We will:

- i) Continue to defend the autonomy of social partners and support industriAll Europe's affiliated organisations to develop bargaining space and increase collective bargaining coverage. Push collective bargaining back to the sectoral level and establish new collective bargaining agreements, with special attention paid to workplaces in emerging industries and to organising the changing world of work.
- ii) Campaign to reach real wage increases for workers to receive their fair share of the wealth that they have helped create. IndustriAll Europe and its members must continue to demand a fair distribution of wealth in our societies between shareholders, investment, employees and company recapitalisations. The organisation of working time, including its reduction through different models, is one of the important instruments for the improvement of working and living conditions and can lead to an overall redistribution of working time. Oppose the payment of free shares to shareholders which is a transfer of the wealth generated by workers to shareholders and which escapes redistribution. The distribution of dividends must also be conditional and monitored including through greater transparency of profit margins, ensuring that productive investment is promoted.
- iii) Work to secure that all workers are covered by a collective agreement increasing decent wages and working conditions. Strengthen collective bargaining systems and rebuild them where they have been dismantled. We demand national governments, where needed, through real and meaningful social dialogue process to put in place national plans to strengthening respective national systems, as stated in the EU directive on adequate minimum wages.
- iv) Leverage the Pay Transparency Directive to reduce the gender pay gap and strengthen our coordination to address violence against women and girls in and out of the workplace, with specific actions for the prevention of sexual and gender-based harassment in the workplace. Advocate for legislative measures, including the effective implementation of the new directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence. Ensure that social dialogue, and collective bargaining, play a strong role.
- v) Tackle upward convergence between Eastern and Western Europe, centre and peripheries. Campaign for a fair distribution of welfare and address the profit drain, especially in Central and Eastern European countries, that is leading to a lack of investment, blocking the decarbonisation effort, contributing to deindustrialisation and promoting the brain drain. We must ensure that multinational companies reinvest their profits, notably in the local workforce and socio-economic development in Europe's peripheral regions where production sites are located.
- vi) Actively oppose any attack on the right to collective bargaining, the right to organise, strike and other trade union rights and freedoms. We will press the EU to condemn violation of trade union rights and trade union criminalisation. We will strengthen our united trade union network in order to defend the exercise of trade union rights for all workers.
- vii) On macroeconomic governance, call on Member States to retain the ability to invest in social, health care, public services and universal services (e.g. energy) and future proof labour market policies, bearing in mind that well designed social investment and reforms produce returns in terms of growth which ultimately will improve countries' debt sustainability. The positive experience of supporting the economy during the pandemic, via the National Recovery and Resilience Plans, should not go to waste.
- viii) Focus on the needs of future generations and ensure that industrial jobs are attractive to younger generations with real career prospects and promote quality traineeships,

apprenticeships and education to reduce social exclusion among young people. With youth unemployment as high as 25% in some countries, Europe cannot afford to fail another generation.

- ix) Fight for decent jobs for all and against precarious employment, in due respect to voluntary forms of part-time work and flexibility. Especially listen to the needs of younger generations and promote high-quality jobs for young people. Defend working time policies that ensure that workers retire in good health, create and redistribute jobs, and improve health and safety at work and work-life balance.
- x) Strive, including through collective bargaining, for inclusive workplaces with equal treatment and opportunities for all, regardless of one's sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, race and ethnic origin, nationality, language, religion, political or trade union activity, learning ability, physical impairment, or other personal characteristics.
- xi) Denounce and fight social dumping on jobs and the living and working conditions of workers, with particular attention for posted and agency workers. Fight against the misuse of temporary employment, which further increases the vulnerability of workers and limits the rights and power of trade unions
- xii) Ensure equal treatment between migrant and domestic workers by organising migrant workers into trade unions, campaigning for their rights together with them, fighting barriers to organise them and preventing that EU policies become a tool to misuse skills shortages leading to social dumping and exploitation of third country nationals while diverting employers from investing in their own workforces. We must fight against the exploitation of migrant workers.
- xiii) Ensure that AI leads to the creation of quality jobs for all by guaranteeing that workers through trade unions and works council have a say in the introduction of AI tools in the workplace including in the development of the algorithm and that legal instrument targeting algorithmic management is adopted. Identifying and promoting agreements ensuring the workers reap the benefits of AI and that the human in control is applied including in relation with the use of personal data. AI acculturation and continuous training and reskilling are key building blocks to stay up-to-date and up-front to utilise AI tools.
- xiv) Strengthen effective information, consultation and participation of workers in transnational companies to secure that they have a say at the earliest stage of strategic processes and are also fully involved in shaping the transformation of our industries. Campaign for a robust EU legal framework for more democracy at work, via a stronger European Works Council (EWC) Directive in line with the demands of the European Parliament, the revision of the Directive on European Companies (SE), greater corporate transparency with ambitious European reporting standards, and their effective implementation in national laws. Call on the European Commission and DG EMPL in particular to perform its role as guardian of EU legislation, notably the social acquis.
- xv) Strengthen cross border cooperation and solidarity via EWCs and other forms of bilateral and multilateral trade union coordination, in order to avoid race to the bottom situations, and stand up to companies' unacceptable pressure. Empower trade union representatives in multinational companies and coordinators assisting European Works Councils and European Companies (SEs) by providing political, legal and other guidance and practical recommendations on how to enforce and strengthen the operation of EWCs/SE-WCs, as well as transnational dialogue on strategic issues and vigilance on the rollback of national worker participation rights. In the event of restructuring, or upon request, we will organise trade union coordination actions and

joint campaigns, involving all actors including along the supply chain affected and subcontractors.

- xvi) Proactively develop strategies and actions that influence company decisions in favour of workers' interests. This will not only involve working closely with EWCs, but also to increase and implement trade union coordination strategies in companies at all levels. In order to achieve this, industriAll Europe evaluates and analyses existing instruments of trade union coordination on company level and identifies where these need to be improved, with the support of the Company Policy Committee.
- xvii) Promote and reinforce social dialogue, both at national and European level, to strengthen workers' rights and make business accountable through timely and effective anticipation and management of changes ahead. We must reinforce European Social Dialogue, following the Val Duchesse Tripartite Declaration and get European employers (at cross-sectoral and sectoral level) back at the negotiation table. We strongly oppose European employers' attempts to undermine social dialogue. We will work towards a Pact for European Social Dialogue that makes European social dialogue (at sectoral level as well as at cross-industry level) more binding, with regular and in-person meetings. It must continue to be provided with the appropriate financial means by the European Commission. Where requested, agreements between the social partners must immediately be transposed into binding legislation by the EU institutions.
- xviii) Promote active social dialogue and workers' involvement and participation at the workplace and at all levels, as these are the foundation of an orderly and just transition. EU support for trade union capacity building is needed. In this regard, we will work to ensure that national administrations and governments involve trade unions in the administration, management and supervision of European funds intended for the development of the productive fabric of the Member States. Strong conditionality must be introduced by linking all forms of public funding and procurement to social dialogue, collective bargaining and quality jobs. Demand adequate support for trade union capacity building to allow proper scrutiny and involvement.
- xix) Monitor state aid and support to non-European companies to ensure that foreign direct investment (FDI) leads to the creation of sustainable and good jobs. Support to companies should not come at the expense of social spending needs or the level playing field between European countries.

3. Uniting to Build Trade Union Power for solidarity and peace

Europe is still facing a situation of a global polycrisis. The pandemic and the energy crisis both revealed an over reliance on global value chains exposing Europe vulnerability to external shocks. Fierce global competition, in particular for clean tech and strategic components such as chips and logistic routes are fuelling geopolitical tensions and realignment and has exposed a trend of turning away from multilateralism.

Years of prioritising finance and business interests over social and environmental objectives have led to economic and social insecurity, with productive investments dwarfed and workers' purchasing power and living conditions well-undermined. Increased insecurity has fuelled the rise of nationalist ideas and Far-Right parties that propose liberal and authoritarian policies accompanied by the suppression of individual and collective freedoms, including trade union freedom. It is not a coincidence that one of the first acts of every authoritarian regime is to limit the rights of trade unions. We are also concerned about anti-gender and anti LGBTI+ policies that attack the human rights and sexual and reproductive rights of women and gender-diverse people. European cooperation must build solidarity among countries and people, as well as trade policies based on universal rules that protect the people and the planet. Furthermore, solidarity must extend to and across our continental borders. We must unite and act to oppose structural inequalities and discrimination.

There is no “business as usual”. The EU project must deliver for everyone, including workers and trade unions. Policy makers across Europe have to recognise a basic fact: there is no purely national solution to the transnational problems we face economically, socially, geopolitically or environmentally. Investment, cohesion and solidarity must guide policy-making. We need a Europe grounded on equality.

While some companies try to take advantage of the situation and pit workers against each other within and between countries, we must build transnational solidarity between our members from different countries and reinforce our unity, campaigning for more democracy at work, speaking out for each other and defending each other's rights and jobs, and working in solidarity with workers along our industrial value chains.

The international geopolitical situation, the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, and the rise of armed conflicts globally, must lead Europe to ensure its own security (including defence capabilities), while maintaining peace, avoiding a rearmament race, ensuring social justice and delivering on its green ambitions. This must include a European space and satellite policy. In particular, budgets devoted to the European Union's defence capacity should not take place at the expense of social justice and ecological investment. Democracy, peace and security must be at the heart of the world order, and the EU must actively promote and translate them in European trade and foreign policies.

We will:

- i) Oppose the return of austerity policies and ensure that defence spending does not take place at the expense of critical investments in the green transition, good industrial jobs and well-being of people and the European social agenda. Fight a deregulation agenda that risks undermining crucial labour rights and social protection systems. Policies must be driven by sustainability and the safeguarding and creation of quality jobs, not by increasing shareholder profits. Ensure that any EU initiatives on defence or security do not come at the expense of social progress, human rights, workers'

- rights and working conditions, and that trade unions are involved through social dialogue and collective bargaining.
- ii) Closely monitor and engage in the European Semester and notably in the Mid-Term fiscal structural plans as well as the preparation of the Tripartite Social Summit to ensure that priority is given to anti-austerity measures, social and sustainable investments.
 - iii) Closely monitor with IndustriALL Global trade union the enlargement negotiations with EU candidate countries calling on policy makers to ensure that the enlargement is a success for working people in these countries themselves as well as for those in existing members of the European Union. Defend the full involvement of trade unions in the accession process, in particular in relation to decisions on how EU funds dedicated to facilitating the accession process should be spent. Develop our activities to support affiliates in accession countries and ensure full compliance with the EU's social and democratic acquis.
 - iv) Stand in full solidarity with the people of Ukraine, our brothers and sisters in the trade union movement, and reiterate our demand for an immediate cessation of Russia's acts of aggression, while we call for dialogue and talks for sustainable peace. The EU institutions must do their utmost to contribute to peace, as declared in the founding treaty.
 - v) The rule of law must prevail in Europe and everywhere around the world and never the law of the strongest. We express our full solidarity and closeness to all the peoples oppressed by wars and believe that Europe must never preach a double standard morality, which is why we condemn every action of war, act of retaliation, or terrorism targeting unarmed civilians, wherever they occur. The trade union movement must also do their utmost to build bridges of solidarity and advocate for peace including for the collection and delivery of concrete aid to the populations affected by the war.
 - vi) Work towards equality, inclusiveness and equal opportunities at the workplace and fight all forms of discrimination.
 - vii) Cooperation and solidarity must also be shown and strengthened by and between governments, employers and social partners together. We need to find genuine European solutions and practice solidarity.
 - viii) Strengthen solidarity coordination between workers, in particular against multinationals, in case of transnational restructuring by organising action between trade unions, within EWCs and all available networks, joint campaigns and coordinated actions, extended to the whole value chain. We will also strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation and demand control over the pay and working conditions of subcontracted workers on the shop floors.
 - ix) Oppose anti-migrant policies and sentiments. As trade unions we must ensure all workers enjoy decent and equal pay and working conditions, fair wages and social inclusion
 - x) Call for a revision of the European reception system opposing the idea of a fortress Europe on whose borders people continue to die and promote action to fight the root causes of forced displacement.
 - xi) Call on workers to resist the temptations of political extremism and to stand together and ensure that we emerge stronger, not divided. Build a strong response to counter Far-Right strategies and narratives and to develop coherent trade union actions to defend and strengthen democracy and the Rule of Law. Raise awareness about these strategies at the workplace, identify and promote agreements and clauses negotiated by trade unions and engage with employers to combat these strategies at the level of the workplace. Carry out training programmes for members to build their capacity in challenging the spread of Far Right views among workers.

4. Uniting for a new common trade union agenda

The last decades have been perceived by many trade unions in Europe as a massive weakening of their membership base. Union density and membership numbers are falling steadily in most European countries. This is particularly the case where the trade union membership base has been already weak. This negative membership development has led to a loss of resources and political power of the trade unions movement and therefore to a loss of the ability to act and assert itself. Despite this development being slowed down considerably and some trade unions gaining successes, this issue must be a priority and matter of urgency of industriAll Europe and its affiliated organisations. To achieve our demands, we need strong trade unions across Europe and therefore trade union must recognise the importance of continuous organising campaigns. Deindustrialisation is fuelling the decline in union membership and this is also the reason why we must campaign for the reshoring of industries to Europe.

The danger that future economic, social and labour market policies in Europe will further weaken trade union and labour rights and our social model is very high, given the shift to the right and the return to austerity and deregulation agendas pushed by some governments and multinational companies. We have to face the facts: either we change and consistently focus on trade union renewal and strengthening our membership base on the shopfloor, or we will further massively lose importance and political influence over the next years. Therefore, we must refocus our work on winning and retaining members, actively involving them in trade union work so that they experience their power of influence and modernising our union structures.

Our strongest place of action is the workplace. Every trade union draws its strength from its membership in the workplace. This is where we want to become even more effective, tangible and visible. Trade union representation based on a large, active and stable membership is the foundation for our political leverage and action for social justice and a better life for all. A trade union can only gain legitimacy for its political action if it can rely on being the truly democratic and representative voice of employees in the workplace. In the wake of a shift to the right in recent elections in many European countries and at the European Parliament, we must develop a strategy of occupying the ground and of powerful union networking to revert the shift by bringing back confidence in the democracy at work and quality jobs.

Organising only a small proportion of the employees in a company or only formally describing oneself as a representative of the interests of a group of employees is not enough to act with full conviction as a legitimate representative of the interests of the employees vis-à-vis politicians and to demand a political say. We must not be caretakers of the status quo, hope for the best and resign ourselves to the fact that we are organising an ever-smaller part of the workforce. Otherwise, we run the risk that, as European trade unions, we will no longer be the heart and brain of social change, but merely its appendix.

A bright future for our movement depends on reversing the negative trend of low youth membership. Unless we reverse this trend, around 50% of our members will retire in the next 10 to 20 years. Today only 15.3% of our members are under 35 years old. This figure is considerably inflated by those affiliated organisations which still have high youth membership, meaning that in some countries the situation is dramatic. More than ever, we must now continue our efforts to attract young people to our movement and to include them in our structures.

The basic orientation of a modern trade union policy must be member- and participation-oriented if it is to be effective. This is not an end in itself. On the contrary, action based on

these principles leads to better solutions, enables independent political trade union action and, not least, strengthens negotiating power vis-à-vis the employer. This is by no means an easy path. This necessitates, first and foremost, the willingness for a change in awareness and culture among the affiliates of industriAll Europe themselves.

Membership numbers alone are not enough. In order to exercise organisational power, efficient structures are also needed to deploy resources effectively and to conduct disputes and negotiations. Member participation is therefore crucial: in addition to the will to pay membership dues to their unions, members must above all have the possibility (and we have to encourage them) - to play an active role in internal discussions, mobilisations and strikes. They should not rely on us being service providers. Instead, we need to convince them that they can only improve their situation if they stand up for their rights themselves together with their colleagues and united in a trade union. In this way, they experience their own power and become less susceptible to simplistic populist slogans. A disconnection of the trade union officials from the concerns and challenges within their membership base is an obstacle and needs to be overcome.

The development of the trade union movement is in our own hands. While large parts of politics and companies are fighting our trade union efforts (recent policy reforms, which have led to the curtailment of trade union rights, are a striking example of this), the political fight for trade union rights must continue to be waged in workplaces. However, it will not lead us to success if action is limited to full-time union officials and leaves our colleagues in the workplaces behind. We must strengthen our democratic structures by involving more employees and members in the workplace. Only through involvement and active participation will the workers be willing to take part in industrial and political actions.

More crucially, we as affiliates of industriAll Europe must understand and leverage our membership base in factories and shopfloors as a decisive power resource. Therefore, we need a transformative agenda for the trade union movement. Our union structures and the ways we do trade union work today need to change if we are to meet the challenges of organising changing workplaces. In this context, a transnational exchange of mutual experiences is of crucial importance. Some affiliated unions have already put into practice successful, national and transnational focused strategies. Other European trade union federations have also gained experience with their own organising strategies. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) is currently in the process of developing its own agenda for trade union renewal. These broad experiences and opportunities for collaboration must be pooled to support and strengthen each other in our work. IndustriAll Europe can play a decisive role in the organisation and coordination of this debate and be a dynamic engine in the necessary change within the trade unions.

At industriAll Europe, Building Trade Union Power is already anchored as a priority in our statutes. The efforts of industriAll Europe and its affiliates must be intensified to meet the challenges of transformation, including through increased trade union density to strengthen trade union influence.

We will:

- i) Adopt a common Action Plan to initiate and enhance the involvement of affiliates in organising and building trade union power. The Action Plan needs to take into account all the regions in Europe and should be based on the full commitment of affiliates to the goals of Building Trade Union Power. The key points of the Action Plan should be:
 - Gather knowledge and continue organising exchanges of good practice.
 - Strengthen existing platforms by holding regular meetings with affiliates who are open to and ready for a discussion on strengthening their membership and internal structures, on the basis of which they can work together on the challenges of their

own trade union work and look for solutions from a range of experiences and contexts from the members of this network.

- Identify whether there are priority regions in Europe where trade unions can work on common challenges with temporary local support from industriAll Europe and strengthen each other in their goals and through long-term joint projects. There must be a willingness to provide additional resources on a case-by-case and voluntary basis from the affiliates for this kind of intensive project work.
- Establish a network of strategic organisers who are themselves employed by trade unions or come from the trade union context of organising activities.
- Close cooperation with the ETUC and its plans for a Trade Union Renewal Centre, as well as NGOs and other civil movements which could be potential alliances.
- On the basis of the value of solidarity and recognition of our common interests, support each other in bi- or multi-lateral forms of transnational cooperation.
- Not leave anyone behind. We will do the necessary work to organise all workers, avoiding social dumping and exploitation.
- Develop targeted organising strategies.
- Support industriAll Europe's youth network and its work for increasing youth membership across Europe
- Build up cross-border networks between the unions of multinational premises including EWCs, and also along the value chain to demand implementation of strong due diligence measures ahead of legal requirements and following OECD Guidance.
- Strengthen our cooperation with IndustriALL Global Union to target companies worldwide, the ETUC and other European Trade Union Federations to increase our collective power.

During the end of 2024 and beginning of 2025, signs of a more challenging world with new trade regulations are moving up. The need to meet these new obstacles with strategies for European resilience and competitiveness is important.

Therefore, it is important to be aware of and flexible when handling major changes in global politics and also during the industriAll Europe Congress period.

Our strategies are based on actions which lead to industry in Europe that stays, grows, develops and innovates.