



## **Joint Declaration of Trade Unions of Industrial Workers of Central European Countries on the Future of Industry**

Industry in Central Europe is undergoing a fundamental transformation that will directly impact millions of workers and entire regions dependent on industrial production. Technological change, energy insecurity, the pressure of global competition and the slowdown of the European economy are creating new challenges for workers, businesses and governments in our region.

Our countries belong to the most important industrial regions of the European Union, and their economic stability is essential for European production chains. Millions of workers here create value that is an integral part of European production chains. However, the economic model of the region is still largely based on assembly production, dependence on foreign investors and relatively low added value of production.

This model is reaching its limits. The slowdown in the European economy, the transformation particularly in key sectors such as automotive, metallurgy, chemicals and energy-intensive industries, rising energy prices and technological change are exposing the structural weaknesses of our economies. Yet the region's governments still too often compete for foreign investors with tax breaks, public subsidies and pressure to maintain low wages, instead of systematically building modern and technologically advanced industries.

The future of industry in Central Europe is inextricably linked to the future of the European Union's industrial policy. The European transformation must be at the same time socially just, technologically ambitious and must strengthen the industrial base of the Member States as well as candidate countries for EU membership.

In the context of Russia's war against Ukraine, which has significant consequences for industry, energy security, economic stability and workers across the region, it is also essential to strengthen industrial resilience and cooperation among European Countries.

Trade unions therefore call on the governments of Central European countries to adopt active policies that will ensure maintaining and developing a strong industrial base as the foundation of economic, social and technological security and long-term competitiveness of industry, job stability and decent working conditions for employees.

### **We consider the following to be key priorities and demands:**

#### **1. Strong social dialogue**

*Trade unions must be a full partner in the creation of economic and industrial policy. The transformation of the economy can only be successful if workers, employers and governments participate in its management.*

## **2. Active industrial policy**

*Governments must systematically support the development of modern industry and create conditions for technological modernization of production, digitalization, and the development of strategic industrial sectors.*

## **3. Responsible use of public investment support**

*Public funds intended to support investments must be linked to social conditionality and clear commitments from employers in the area of employment – in particular, creating quality jobs, developing skills, respecting collective bargaining and involving employees in industrial transformation processes, investing in innovation and a long-term presence in the region.*

## **4. Stable and affordable energy**

*The competitiveness of industry depends on affordable and stable energy. Governments must introduce protective mechanisms and compensation for energy-intensive industries related to the EU ETS system.*

## **5. Investment in research, development and innovation**

*The region needs to significantly increase investments in research and development and create conditions for the emergence of technology and innovation centers that will bring jobs with high added value.*

## **6. Support for domestic industrial enterprises**

*Governments must actively support the development of domestic industrial enterprises and create conditions for strengthening their position in European and global supply chains.*

## **7. Just industrial transformation**

*Technological and energy changes must take place in a way that protects workers and regions dependent on industry. This requires investment in retraining, education and active employment policies.*

## **8. Quality jobs**

*The transformation of industry must be accompanied by the creation and maintenance of quality jobs that ensure decent wages, job stability and safe working conditions. The competitiveness of the region cannot be based on low wages and flexibility at the expense of employees, but on higher added value, innovation and a skilled workforce.*

## **9. Supply Chains and Economic Security**

*Shortening and rebuilding European supply chains, reducing dependence on imports from outside the EU and counteracting unfair global competition. It is essential to protect European markets from imports of products from countries that do not bear the costs of climate policy (preventing carbon leakage).*

## **10. Climate Just Transition**

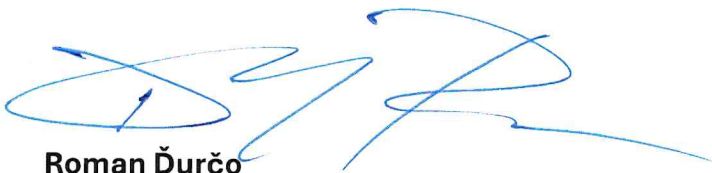
*The energy transition must protect jobs, be publicly financed and support energy intensive industries.*

The future of industry in Central Europe must be based on a combination of technological progress, economic competitiveness and decent working conditions for all employees.

Trade unions of Central European countries will simultaneously strive to deepen mutual cooperation and jointly promote these priorities at the European level.

Trade unions are ready to actively fight for these goals.

In Prague, 28.4.2026



**Roman Ďurčo**

IndustriAll Europe Eastern Region Vice-President  
On behalf of Eastern Region Member Organisations