# **ETUC project “Adaptation to climate change”**

## Questionnaire addressed to **sectoral trade union organizations**

**Objectives of this questionnaire**

This questionnaire is being addressed to you in the framework of the new ETUC project, entitled “Adaptation to climate change”. Its’ objective is to take stock of what has been done so far, in the different EU sectors, to involve social partners into the debate on adaptation. It also aims at getting a sense of the maturity of the debate within the trade union movement on these issues as well as to identify possible best practices and experiences that may be shared.

**What is exactly adaptation to climate change?**

Climate change adaptation can be defined as the process of adjustment of a society or a natural system to the evolution of weather conditions caused by global warming, aiming at lowering the risks caused by these evolutions and exploiting their potential beneficial opportunities.

The primary objective of adaptation measures is of course to reduce climate vulnerability of specific regions, economic sectors or populations. These measures can for example consist in:

* Investment in infrastructure to protect against natural disasters (urban and coastal planning, defences against sea-level rise, improving the quality of road surfaces to withstand hotter temperatures, etc.);
* Development of resources efficiency management systems (energy, materials, circular economy);
* Behavioural shifts, such as individuals using less water, increased use of air-conditioning, farmers planting different crops and more households and businesses buying flood insurance.
* Strengthening of social protection systems and adoption of adequate prevention measures (e.g. Investments in firefighting equipment), etc.

In that sense, climate change adaptation should not be confused with climate change mitigation actions, which address the root causes of climate change, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions (energy efficiency, development of renewable energies, etc.).

**Rationale of the project**

Climate change is increasingly recognized as a major threat to the stability and prosperity of society. No matter what the climate change mitigation efforts are, unavoidable climate impacts (floods, droughts, heat waves, variations in precipitation levels, storms and hurricanes, scarcity of natural resources, decline of biodiversity, population displacements, etc.) will take place together with the economic, social and environmental costs coming along.

For the world of work, the adoption of coherent adaptation strategies (and trade union involvement in their design) is of significant importance. Climate change and adaptation measures have a wide range of effects over employment[[1]](#footnote-1), such as **potential job destructions** (e.g. in vulnerable sectors facing production shifts), **job creation** (e.g. adaptation action is expected to bring new market opportunities and jobs, in such sectors as agricultural technologies, civil protection, engineering, ecosystem management, construction or water management, etc.) and the **evolution of competences and skills needs** (e.g. introduction of adaptation techniques and technologies). Last but not least, climate change has also strong implications in terms of **health and safety at work** (e.g. extreme temperatures or intense natural hazards keeping people from performing their jobs or reaching their workplace).

Even though trade unions have been very active on climate-related issues, the impact of climate change consequences on workers are not always known and understood. In the same way, the importance of adaptation strategies requires to prepare stakeholders to get familiar with it in order to contribute to it. The three main objectives of this project are:

1. To inform European trade unions about the consequences of climate change on the world of work that are already foreseeable.

2. To prepare trade unions to play an active role in the design and implementation of the national strategies for adaptation.

3. To develop a tool kit for trade unions to bring adaptation on the agenda of industrial relations

**INTRODUCTORY DETAILS**

**Name :**

**Sector:**

**Trade union organisation:**

**Function:**

**Contact (email):**

**Please return the completed questionnaire by email to Mr Félix Mailleux, by 30 July 2019 (**[**fmailleux@etuc.org**](mailto:fmailleux@etuc.org)**).**

## **Climate evolutions and their impacts over the world of work**

* 1. **According to you, are climate evolutions / disruptions expected to have significant impacts on companies and workers of your sector (employment, working conditions, safety, etc.)?**

Yes, definitely

Rather yes

Rather no

Not at all

1.1.1. Could you please specify your answer?

**Employment**

* 1. **According to you, can climate evolutions / disruptions potentially lead to job destructions in your sector if no proper adaptation measures are taken?**

Yes, definitely

Rather yes

Rather no

Not at all

1.2.1. Could you please specify your answer (for example by giving a concrete example)?

* 1. **According to you, if proper adaptation measures are taken, can their implementation lead to the creation of new jobs and an increase in employment in your sector?**

Yes, definitely

Rather yes

Rather no

Not at all

1.3.1. Could you please specify your answer (for example by giving a concrete example)?

* 1. **According to you, if proper adaptation measures are taken, can their implementation lead to the development of new economic activities?**

Yes, definitely

Rather yes

Rather no

Not at all

1.4.1. Could you please specify your answer (for example by giving a concrete example)?

**Working conditions**

* 1. **According to you, can climate evolutions / disruptions potentially affect working conditions in your sector?**

Yes, definitely

Rather yes

Rather no

Not at all

* 1. **If yes, could it result in exacerbating one or more of the situations mentioned below? (Please tick one or more of the following boxes)**

Increased work pressure

Increased stress

Exposure to heat / rain / cold

Safety issues

Lower productivity

Irregular working hours

Other (please specify):

1.6.1. Could you please specify your answer?

* 1. **Do you know any example of climate disruption / weather event linked to climate change (heat wave, flooding, etc.) that had a significant (detrimental) impact over workers and / or working conditions?**

*Examples: heat waves leading to the impossibility of performing a job / task or causing a modification in working hours, modification of climate conditions leading to disruptions in production or the provision of services, increased health and safety risks, etc.*

Yes

No

1.7.1. If yes, could you please specify?

* 1. **Do you know any example of industrial action (strike, protest) linked to the impact of climate change over workers in your sector?**

Yes

No

1.8.1. If yes, could you please specify?

**Competences and skills**

* 1. **According to you, will climate evolutions / disruptions and / or the adoption of adaptation policies lead to a modification of skills needs in your sector?**

Yes, definitely

Rather yes

Rather no

Not at all

1.9.1. Could you please specify your answer (for example by giving concrete examples)?

* 1. **According to you, will climate evolutions / disruptions and / or the adoption of adaptation policies lead, within your economic sector, to a need for investment into new equipment and / or new technologies?**

Yes, definitely

Rather yes

Rather no

Not at all

1.10.1. Could you please specify your answer (for example by giving concrete examples)?

* 1. **Are you aware of any existing measure or action aiming at reinforcing workers’ employability (for example initiatives aimed at assessing skills or training needs, reskilling programs, setup of innovative vocational and educational training programs, etc.) that could be linked to the effects of climate change or the introduction of adaptation measures?**

Yes

No

1.11.1. If yes, could you please specify?

* 1. **Are you aware, in your sector, of any training fund or financial resource that could be used to finance training programs aiming at adapting workers skills to the consequences of climate change or related to an adaptation policy?**

Yes

No

1.12.1. If yes, could you please specify?

1. **Sectoral adaptation strategies**
   1. **Can you identify in your economic sector any example of sectoral climate change adaptation strategy (at European or national level. If there are on-going discussions, please indicate accordingly)?**

Yes

No

2.1.1. If yes, could you provide us with more details?

2.1.2. If yes, have trade unions been involved?

Yes

No

I do not know

* + - 1. if yes, please explain how?
      2. If no, please explain why?
  1. **Can you identify, in your economic sector, any example of regional / local climate change adaptation strategy (if there are on-going discussions, please indicate accordingly)?**

Yes

No

2.2.1. If yes, could you provide us with more details?

2.2.2. If yes, have trade unions been involved?

Yes

No

I do not know

2.2.2.1. if yes, please explain how?

2.2.2.2. If no, please explain why?

* 1. **Can you identify in your economic sector any example of adaptation strategy set at the company level?**

Yes

No

2.3.1. If yes, could you provide us with more details?

2.3.2. If yes, have trade unions been involved (for example through a national or European works   
council)?

Yes

No

I do not know

2.3.2.1. if yes, please explain how?

2.3.2.2. If no, please explain why

* 1. **Are you aware of any study/analysis aimed at assessing the impacts over your economic sector of climate change and / or the implementation of adaptation measures and policies?**

Yes

No

2.4.1. If yes, please indicate the name of the study:

2.4.2. If yes, have the impacts over employment and working conditions been assessed?

Yes

No

2.4.3. If yes, have the trade unions been involved?

Yes

No

1. **Climate change adaptation and sectoral trade union organisations**
   1. **Has the issue of adaptation to climate change already been addressed by your organization (for example through the publication of official positions, trade union leader statements, studies, training programs, awareness-raising actions, etc.)?**

**3.1.1. At European level?**

Yes

No

I do not know

If yes, in what form?

**3.1.2. At national level?**

Yes

No

I do not know

If yes, in what form?

**3.1.3. At regional / local level?**

Yes

No

I do not know

If yes, in what form?

* 1. **Can you identify, in your economic sector, concrete examples of initiatives, involving trade union organisations, which have led to a successful implementation of adaptation policies or measures (for example through national sectoral social dialogue institutions)? If yes, please explain:**
  2. **Do you know any example of existing collective agreements that integrates that deal with the potential impacts of climate change upon workers (need for training, evolution of health and safety rules and rules related to working equipment, etc.)?**

Yes

No

* + 1. If yes, could you provide us with more details?
  1. **How do you assess, in terms of resources, the ability of your organisation to participate in discussions linked to adaptation to climate change and its impacts over workers?**

Very good

Rather good

Rather not good

Insufficient

* 1. **According to you, what are the main barriers to trade union involvement in the design of climate change adaptation strategies?**

Lack of human resources

Lack of financial resources

Lack of priority

Lack of competences

Legitimacy not recognized by public authorities/employers’ organisations

None of the above (please explain)

* 1. **Do you know any initiatives aimed at reinforcing trade unions’ internal capacities and which could be linked to the issues covered by the project?**

Yes

No

3.6.1. If yes, please explain (trainings, consulting external/internal experts, EU-funded projects,   
studies, etc.)?

1. A recent report made by Triple E Consulting for the EC estimates that around 410 thousand jobs will be lost by 2050 due to climate change if no further adaptation is taking place. On the contrary, the report evaluates at around 1 million (direct + indirect) the number of jobs that could be created (+ 330 thousand saved jobs) in the same period if climate change adaptation expenditure increases up to 1% of GDP. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)