



C7 contribution to the 1st G7 Employment Working Group meeting

8 - 9 February 2024

The international civil society gathered in the C7 believes it is necessary to recall the important time in which we are celebrating the Italian G7 Presidency. As a constituency we have chosen to work synergistically on the process-G7/G20, counting on the participation of over 700 civil society organisations from more than 70 countries involved in seven Working Groups: Climate, Energy Transformation and Environmental Justice, Economic Justice and Transformation, Global Health, Principled Humanitarian Assistance, Peace, Common Security and Nuclear Disarmament, Human Mobility and Migration and Food Justice and Food Systems Transformation to tackle the different drivers and root causes of poverty, inequalities and injustice. As we are still facing a number of critical, structural and systemic challenges with large groups of population such as women, children and youth and the most marginalised carrying the heaviest burden of these crises, we cannot fail to remember how these processes have been marked since their beginnings by recommendations that asked the global leadership to introduce a paradigm shift in development, with democratic processes to address the root causes of the current polycrisis.

As civil society representatives at global level, we call on the G7 governments, as proposed by the Italian Presidency, to contribute to strengthening the Mediterranean and African regions cooperation, policymaking, and democratic participation by involving civil society.

As C7, we feel the historical responsibility to **invite the governments to exercise leadership and direct systemic, transformative and generative change in international policies and multilateral system**, so the G7 can play a useful role in building consensus on accelerating the action needed to advance the agenda for sustainable development and prevent the multi-layered crisis from reaching catastrophic levels. It is therefore essential to promote peace action at a global level, with the framework of Human Rights and the protection of the environment, which clearly set the universal commitment for justice, equal treatment for women and men, decent work for all.

Human rights and labour

The current international legal framework does not adequately respond to these challenges and human rights violations in global supply chains. The slowdown in growth in the G7 countries themselves has an impact on the multiplication of cases of gang mastering, lack of transparency in supply chains and exploitation of labour among the most marginalised part of the population, such as women, LGBTQIA+ and young people, even in the internal market.

In labour relations, in particular for platform workers, it is necessary to **fully guarantee the right of collective bargaining and the right of collective bargaining of trade unions.**

We urge G7 members to contribute to strengthening the multilateral frameworks responsible for protecting workers and employment. We call on them to step up to their responsibility and actively promote the implementation of ILO conventions, the ILO Forced Labour Protocol, UN Framework and Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and due diligence standard. Such instruments are essential to



protect workers in vulnerable situations from exploitation, promote responsible business conduct and promote adequate remedies, not only in the companies' home countries but in their operations worldwide.

We call on G7 leaders to take **immediate and concrete action to end child labour by 2025 and forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking by 2030**, as targeted in SDG 8.7, and strengthen monitoring and assessment on the progress made with closer participation of civil society.

A just transition is unavoidable

For years the world has been engaged in a demanding transition: it won't be neutral and public actors are responsible for preventing increasing exploitation and fuel inequalities.

Technical evolution provides increasing opportunities for hiding profits and bending the rules. **We can't speak about just transition if we don't provide tax justice and just re-distribution** so we reiterate the support for a **Financial Transaction Tax (FTT)** and a **comprehensive reform of trade and financial global governance**.

International trade and financial agreements must be anticipated and monitored by **serious and stringent impact assessments and timelines** that quantify and qualify their impact on employment, its quality and the environment. At the same time, all environmental protection measures introduced by G7 must be carefully evaluated and balanced with technological transfer and cooperation actions with partner countries to **progressively remove the environmental and social negative impacts including dumping**.

Governments must indicate conditions, standards and appropriate investments for the transition to be fair and equitable, in line with the ILO Guidelines and standards, to achieve environmental and social justice and prevent conflicts and climate denialism.

A climate-safe future has many new industries and services that can make humanity thrive, but at the same time, some technologies and practices need to fade away. **Just Transition of the workforce** from dirty industries like coal, oil and gas, towards other better, qualified and sustainable jobs is also needed. A transition towards a sustainable future must consider the livelihood of workers and communities who depend on the existing industries.

Governments also have a **duty to protect the environment and human rights defenders and whistle blowers** from intimidation and retaliation.

The digital challenge and AI perspective

To deliver the benefit of digitalization for the whole society, not to limit it to a privileged few, **we need to focus on policy coherence**, closing the digital divide whilst at the same time minimising the potential negative impacts of digitalization, particularly for the most vulnerable people and communities in G7 countries as well.

The dangers coming from the technology misuse or the corporate concentration are enormous, with potential consequences on labour conditions, human rights, dignity and the quality of our democracies. We commend the G7 Hiroshima AI Process for its commitment to systems that are ethical, secure, and aligned with human values.



Strengthening participatory governance of digital technologies and platforms, AI and the data they generate, should be prioritised, including an urgent need for an inclusive, transparent, global and regional mechanism for evaluation of digital techs before they are fully developed and deployed. The use of AI in the workplace poses risks of surveillance and exploitation of workers. **Participation of civil society in assessing opportunities and risks associated with the use of AI in the labour market is recommended.**

G7 shall expand the framework to explicitly include the principle of human control over AI systems which includes enhancing civic use of technology and AI, protecting cyber safety of children, functional digital literacy, ethical technology and applying measurement of Digital Economy which is aligned with SDGs. This can be achieved by **incorporating clear guidelines that ensure AI systems remain under human oversight and intervention**, reflecting principles in keeping with the Right to Human Determination, and the Termination Obligation as outlined in the **Universal Guidelines on Artificial Intelligence (UGAI)**.

Women are still under-represented in some of the most dynamic sectors, including Information and Communications Technology (ICT), which offer higher pay and better career opportunities. In fact, the more advanced business and industrial fields such as ICT and AI are mainly male dominated and the public and private sectors are to ensure women, in all their diversity, can access new and green jobs on an equal footing, overcoming gender stereotypes.

AI can also play a role in enhancing gender discrimination via automated hiring systems. Emphasising algorithmic transparency and accountability for labour forces and workplaces is a core necessity in order to address technology-enabled discrimination and inequality in the workplace.

The gender pay gap is an unresolved issue, exacerbated within digital companies and in the non-management categories of platform companies. Regulations and policies, as well as a shift in harmful social norms, are essential to close the gender balance in the workforce as well as the gender pay gap, and so is to address the structural issue of gender-based violence in the workplaces and in society as a whole. Cooperation is needed to ensure women, in all their diversity, can access the workplace without **experiencing discrimination and violence**.

Across the world, women carry out three-quarters of unpaid care work, or more than 75 per cent of the total hours provided on average, dedicating 3.2 times more time than men to unpaid care work. There is no country where an equal share of unpaid care work is carried out. As a result, women are at a higher risk of poverty and their participation in the labour market is constrained. Laws, funds and policies addressing this issue must be reinforced.

Training, role of education and lifelong learning

As civil society we encourage our governments to support our best practices engaging elders in the field of active ageing, community care, care of the common goods, but also training on the job, tutoring and mentoring for low skilled workers and migrants that our organisations experiment and implement with public, private and their own support all over the world.

Lifelong learning and skill upgrading are crucial, as well as fostering transitions in the labour market and ensuring the socio-economic inclusion of all citizens. The implementation of new technologies can cause the exclusion of women and girls and vulnerable and marginalised groups, including youth, people with



disabilities, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees, nomads, children facing the risk of child labour, people with mental health issues, rural and remote communities, and those living in crisis caused by conflicts and natural disasters. To achieve actionable policies to increase the representation of marginalised groups in employment, public policies, calling the private sector on responsibility, have to encourage and support investments both in lifelong learning and skills upgrading and in infrastructure and technological tools.

We therefore encourage G7 to propose programmes on “**generational transition**” engaging older workers in tutoring the eventual trainees in countries with the highest rates of ageing population.

G7 should also stringently take commitment in migrants’ inclusion, not only in the critical sectors of the care economy and essential services, but to train to fully contribute in the most qualified and advanced sectors of production and in the ruling class of the destination countries. Only this way will we be able to promptly remedy the demographic decline of our countries and their social and economic systems, strengthening their democratic governance with participation and sharing.

The G7 shall consider investing in **education as the main leverage to affect inequalities and restore equality of opportunity**. This means considering lifelong learning as a fundamental way to build a democratic culture, able to protect common goods and human rights as the main transversal competence to be citizens of the future.

Since access to workplaces and schools was and continues to be off-limits for millions of workers and students worldwide, particularly girls, bold policy responses, in scope and scale, are required to put human beings before profit interests. **This means that education systems must be adequately funded, inclusive and oriented towards integral formation of human persons and achieving suitability for jobs that offer dignified remuneration and empowering life prospects.** New public sector jobs must be generated through initiatives such as Green New Deals or a New Social Contract. Civic spiritedness, global solidarity, and harnessing technology for learning and labour needs to be fostered, as well as ambitious and dedicated internationalisation of education, **embedding Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in formal, informal and non-formal education.**

Preparing young people for future skills and future jobs with capabilities for new jobs covering both technical and GCE skills to foster the competencies of a global worker is essential. Therefore, we call for G7 to recognise that provisions in education and employment are crucial.