



European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC]
Confédération européenne des syndicats [CES]

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

Brussels, 20 February 2007

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), on 20 and 21 February, published the results of research carried out in 11 European countries detailing the impact of climate change on employment. The study was presented at a conference entitled: 'Jobs in a low carbon Europe'.

This is the first time a systematic study has been made of measures to combat climate change and their impact on employment. It specifically analyses the implications in different sectors of the economy: energy generation, transport, iron and steel, cement, housing and construction, which alone account for over 80% of greenhouse gas emissions.

Opening the conference, ETUC General Secretary John Monks told participants: *"If we are going to succeed in fighting climate change, we have no choice but to take account of the social consequences, both positive and negative, of the changes required. We cannot say that climate change is a reality and not be concerned at the way its consequences will be handled. If we do nothing, we know who will have to pay the price: the poorest and most vulnerable, in the developed world and the developing countries alike. It is clear that the processes involved in reducing emissions will lead to changes in the organisation of labour, jobs and incomes. These changes must be innovative and positive to transform carbon constraints into a positive opportunity for the development of European industry and the maintenance of its jobs. So we need to move from a defensive version of restructuring operations (traditional industries facing competition from newcomers) to an offensive vision (preparing for the future). The watchwords are: anticipate, adapt, invest and establish solidarity."*

Joël Decaillon, ETUC Confederal Secretary responsible for this area, highlighted the need for an energy, environment and research community within the European Union, on the model of the ECSC (European Coal and Steel Community).

Real social dialogue must take place on this question, based on Article 138 of the Treaty, so that together we can develop strategies for anticipating and dealing with future challenges.

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