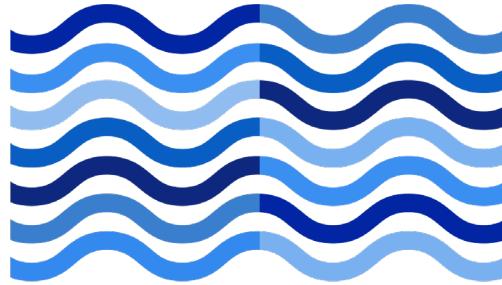




L7

United Kingdom 2021



Exiting the pandemic and building back fairer through multilateralism: Labour 7 Statement to the G7 Leaders' Summit 2021

Exiting the pandemic ...

As the G7 Leaders meet on 11-13 June, prospects for global recovery after the pandemic are still fragile. The failure to ensure vaccine access across the globe threatens lives and livelihoods, increasing the risk of a resurgence of the virus and its variants. The G7 must commit to assist poorer countries in building production capacities for free, transparent and universal access to vaccines, testing, and treatment to all, including refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, working with World Health Organisation leadership and through committing to a temporary suspension of intellectual property rights at the WTO (a TRIPs waiver) and the prevention of trade barriers for vaccines, vaccine components and PPE. This is a 'public good' issue and should be treated as such – with the highest levels of corporate accountability and transparency over contracts.

Trade unions call on Leaders to:

- Step up international cooperation on the pandemic, including scientifically, on manufacturing and distribution of vaccines and testing, medical supplies and assistance. The G7 should support the WHO and WTO efforts, increase COVAX

capacity substantially, support a waiver of the TRIPs regulations at the WTO and reject vaccine nationalism, recognising that no one is safe until we are all safe. The G7 should recognise Covid-19 as an occupational disease by implementing and following ILO occupational health and safety conventions that must be recognized as fundamental ILO conventions in line with the ILO Centenary Declaration, and take all necessary steps to safeguard the health of all workers including via paid sick and care leave, adequate PPE provision and measures for a safe return to the workplace.

- Exiting the crisis has to go hand in hand with rebuilding public health systems, with no return to the austerity which left us underprepared for the pandemic and with less resilient labour markets and higher inequalities . This means significant public investments into the public health and care sector (from childcare to long-term care) to improve its resilience and working conditions, and support emerging economies and developing countries in the same endeavour through international cooperation and the establishment of a Global Social Protection Fund.

... and Building Back Fairer ...

Despite the success of job protection schemes and income support, millions of workers still face unemployment, under-employment or precarious work, and a downgrade in their working conditions. If support is phased out too quickly, millions of workers face the loss of their jobs and incomes. Many contributors to the L7 Summit welcomed the G7 intention to "build back better", but they also warned that without serious considerations of the weaknesses in both our economies and our societies, and without deliberate, focused international efforts to address them, we would build back a more unequal and unsafe world of work. Quality jobs retention and creation should be a "key theme" at the G7 Summit. Leaders should reaffirm their commitment to full employment. This Summit should be the opportunity to come together and agree on these objectives, looking forward towards COP26.

All workers continue to be exposed to enormous risks, not only in the frontlines of healthcare, but in protecting our food security and providing other vital services. The G7 must be a moment for leaders to express not only their gratitude, but to recognize the value of these jobs, by committing to improve working conditions, increase pay, and increase public investment into healthcare, education, broader public services and research. We call on Leaders to acknowledge the value of social dialogue and collective bargaining in delivering quality jobs and a sustainable and inclusive recovery. The L7 – in collaboration with the C7, W7, and Y7 – put the following priorities to the G7 Employment Task Force and calls on Leaders to make commitments that:

- Recognise and reward keyworkers' contributions, including through decent pay and universal sick pay coverage
- Make a strong statement on tackling racism and discrimination, in the workplace and society
- Steer a recovery that promotes decent work, while recognizing the importance of job retention schemes and their continuation for affected sectors
- Prioritise investment in quality jobs in green infrastructure and public investment in care and the health sector through coordinated plans

- Promote youth employment in quality jobs and address women's labour market exclusion, participation and pay gaps
- Include Just Transition plans in country's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the COP26 process
- Support investment in active labour market programmes and lifelong learning, while establishing or improving universal minimum wage floors in G7 countries
- Work with the G20 on responsible business conduct and on universal social protection for all workers, irrespective of employment status, via effective contributory systems.

So, to build back fairer, not just better, the L7 further calls on Leaders to:

- Safeguard jobs and incomes in the short-term and create the conditions for recovery and more resilient economies and labour markets by prolonging or extending crisis support measures as long as needed, and target social groups hit hardest by the crisis with income support and measures that reduce household costs (low-income, non-standard workers, self-employed, women, youth, migrants and refugees). This includes quality job creation and active labour market policies that reach those in need, including migrants and NEETs, including via investment into public employment services, in line with ILO Convention n°88.
- Tackle income and wealth inequalities by strengthening labour market institutions (incl. minimum wages and collective bargaining) and strengthen legislation to tackle precarious work, including setting out regulation that can secure decent work for platform workers.
- Re-affirm the critical role of the state -- for financing critical areas via effective tax collection and progressive taxation for public services and social protection including universal health coverage, sick and care leave, unemployment support and parental leave.
- Provide leadership towards implementing the Paris Climate Agreement with a view to the COP26 and endorse future investments that create quality jobs via climate friendly employment plans, industrial strategies and just transition strategies designed with social partners that ensure protection and training for those working in high carbon industries. Leaders should use their enhanced NDCs to make ambitious commitments, but must also set out how they will support developing and lower income countries affected by climate change/ climate migration.
Developed countries are not meeting the target of providing US\$ 100 billion a year.
- Enhance green, care, health, education and digital public infrastructure spending by matching the most ambitious plans in the G7 – and in doing so take into account regional, local and community interests - and foster coordination on industrial policies that lead to more inclusive and green economies, and that close digital divides through targeted public investments and procurement;
- Work with social partners at national level and follow-up on the G7 Tripartite Declaration.

... through Multilateralism

The L7 encourages the G7 to revive multilateral solutions and work collectively to pave the way towards a sustainable recovery firmly based on democratic values, social justice and a New Social Contract, not only across G7 countries but across the world. It is about rebuilding economies and societies with the ambition to fight inequalities and climate change under a new model of growth and more responsible and resilient global supply chains governed by labour rights and mandated due diligence. Further to the priorities listed above:

- The rise of far-right and authoritarian governments around the world put workers' rights at risk. Our shared democratic principles go beyond the choice of government, and include a tradition of open, inclusive societies. The G7 must support this vision, and stand firm on rule of law principles and human rights, both within societies of G7 countries and by making a strong call on labour rights worldwide, including along global value chains. They should acknowledge that social dialogue and collective bargaining are at the heart of democratic values, underpinned by ILO conventions 87 and 98, and that without workplace democracy we risk a further decline in democratic participation and trust in policy making. The G7 should support action that builds on unionisation and collective bargaining as fundamental tools in the fight for racial justice in the economy and in tackling discriminations on the grounds of gender, race, against LGBTQ+ communities, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, and people with disabilities.
- Narrowly targeted G20-led efforts have not adequately addressed the issue of debt sustainability. The G7 should support expansion of debt relief initiatives to include private creditors and multilateral debt and make middle-income countries eligible. G7 countries should lead the donation of IMF Special Drawing Rights to IMF trust funds that support debt relief and a fair recovery. ODA should be sustained at or above 0.7 per cent with a specific focus on food security, building strong public services and helping countries pursue the same objectives that are needed in G7 countries to exit the crisis and build back fairer, without prescribing failed structural reforms and austerity measures.
- The G7 has a key role to play towards the adoption of a strong agreement for the reform on international taxation rules, currently under discussions at the G20/ OECD Inclusive Framework. The G7 should express a clear support for a robust minimum tax floor of at least 25% to raise much needed public revenues and halt the mutually destructive tax race to the bottom. Furthermore, a better redistribution of wealth and more public investments can be promoted via fairer and more progressive taxation systems including with a tax on excessive profits and measures to address tax avoidance by cross-border digital platforms. In the longer run, discussions must continue with a view to find a sustainable solution on the basis of unitary taxation and fair allocation rules.
- G7 Leaders should put the fair trade and responsible business conduct (RBC) agenda back on the G7 radar, starting with this Summit, and strengthen existing international instruments that enforce labour rights and mandatory due diligence with enforceable labour and environmental standards in trade and investment treaties and agreements, and World Trade Organisation rules. As a foundation, they must enforce International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards on decent work, build on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and ensure

domestic industries that create quality jobs are protected from unfair trade competition. Trade agreements and WTO rules must also ensure protections for public services and sovereignty to allow governments to legislate in the public interest.

- We encourage Leaders to follow up the G7 declaration with international institutions, including the ILO, the OECD and the IMF and encourage collaboration, policy coherence and multilateral responses to the crisis. Specifically, empower the ILO to ensure respect for employment rights in partnership with other multilateral organisations.

The L7 represents national trade union centres from G7 countries. This year, it is coordinated by the Trades Union Congress (TUC), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC).