

Solidarity with people and planet – civil society statement on the occasion of COP26

Joint statement by [SOLIDAR](#) & [Social Platform](#) | 12 November 2021

As COP26 draws to a close, SOLIDAR and Social Platform urge the European Institutions and leaders to transform the promises made into clear action. We are convinced that the transition will only be successful if accompanied by real commitment and action, a clear timeline, as well as appropriate investment towards achieving social justice and the wellbeing of people.

Despite this being the 26th COP meeting, the stage was set unlike any previous meeting of the United Nations' climate change conference. The COVID-19 pandemic has had an immeasurable economic and social impact on the whole world. It is impossible to discuss reversing climate change without taking into account the ongoing recovery from the global recession. The pandemic has shone a light on the gulf that still exists between rich and poor, the privileged and disadvantaged in our communities. While almost everyone has struggled in some way due to the pandemic, by far the hardest hit have been people in already vulnerable situations. Against this backdrop, we call on leaders to put people and their well-being at the heart of the EU Just Transition to climate neutrality.

If there is one thing the pandemic has taught us, it is that we do better when we work together. From the health community coming together to create vaccines at record-breaking speeds, to villages, towns and cities across the EU taking to the streets to clap for carers, we should all be proud of the solidarity we've shown in such an hour of need.

It is this spirit of solidarity that leaders need to draw on now to address the most pressing global challenge we face: climate change.

The Just Transition has the potential to be an effective tool to balance the social and economic wellbeing of people with the urgent need to fight climate change. A social emergency is looming in the shape of growing energy poverty, with EU Member States having to respond and limit the impact on the livelihood of people – in particular those in vulnerable situations – while guiding the Union through the transition.

As highlighted by the European Parliament's Resolution on the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, "achieving climate neutrality goals requires massive investment and an unprecedented transformation of all sectors of our economies." We encourage EU Institutions and Member States to start delivering on the Just Transition by re-shaping our economies to be more equal, inclusive, transparent, democratic, diverse, feminist, collaborative, circular, and sustainable.

We call on leaders to take the following three actions:

- Recognise climate action as an indispensable instrument to reduce social injustice, generate opportunities for people in vulnerable situations and improve people's wellbeing, quality of life, gender equality and access to rights.
- Uphold the principles of full inclusion and meaningful participation of civil society, trade unions and the most marginalised people in society, which are essential to a Just Transition.
- Increase international climate and development finance and ensure policy coherence for sustainable development.