

B20-L20 Statement 2024

The world is experiencing geo-political conflicts and converging crises, putting at risk many of the recent achievements for welfare and prosperity. In this unstable global context, Employers and Workers play a fundamental role in the multilateral system to advance concrete global and sustainable solutions to the numerous challenges.

The G20 must contribute to building resilience and promoting peace and geo-political stability.

More than ever, social partners have a key role in this regard. Tripartite cooperation can contribute to national reconciliation and lead to more peaceful and democratic societies that are in the interests of people. It is also key to promoting sustainable and just economic prosperity and growth. As recognised in the preamble of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work: “the continuous and concerted action of governments and representatives of employers and workers is essential to the achievement of social justice, democracy and the promotion of universal and lasting peace”.¹

Social dialogue, including collective bargaining, workplace cooperation, consultation and tripartite cooperation are crucial tools for social peace. They can also contribute to forging social consensus for policies and measures. In the spirit of social dialogue and tripartism, the B20 and L20 call on the G20 to advance in concerted efforts to address economic decline, promote social justice, roll-out an inclusive digital transformation strategy and contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Such efforts should be focused on specific policies that will promote social inclusion, poverty eradication and sustainable enterprises using a decent work-centred approach. There is a need to advance Just Transitions which safeguard and create jobs. There is nothing less sustainable than a society without jobs. An enabling environment for businesses to prosper and thrive, where rights are respected and decent working conditions must be ensured. Science-led innovation can strengthen entrepreneurship, especially when combined with effective measures for upskilling and reskilling the workforce, while bridging the gap between academia and businesses. Specific support for MSMEs to adopt digital technologies and sustainable practices is equally important.

Advancing inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all to contribute to socioeconomic inclusion and the elimination of poverty

Full, productive, freely chosen employment and decent work for all are vital to the development of prosperous societies and accelerating action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

¹ ILO, *Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work*, 2019 https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_711674.pdf

The B20 and L20 urge the G20 to increase investments to drive sustainable growth and decent job creation to progress towards full and productive employment, and to put in place effective measures to promote transitions from the informal to the formal economy, in line with ILO Recommendation 204. The G20 must further ensure the respect, promotion and realisation of the fundamental conventions, principles and rights at work and accelerate their ratification and proper implementation.

To advance towards greater social inclusion, poverty eradication and sustainable enterprises, the G20 should accelerate progress towards universal access to adequate and sustainable social protection systems, including social protection floors in line with ILO Recommendation 202. These should be more adapted to developments in the world of work, especially in the environmental and digital spheres. The G20 must also work with more ambition on creating an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises, especially for small and medium-sized companies and ensuring greater access to financial services. It should also act to strengthen institutions, fight corruption and promote appropriate legislative and regulatory frameworks and well-functioning systems for the registration of companies and workers.

Progress on wage policies, including living wages and sound macroeconomic policies, in coordination with educational policies and strategies for scientific development, must be part of efforts by G20 members to address poverty and inequalities as well as the decline in the labour income share. The G20 should invest in initiatives for work-integrated learning solutions that help reduce inequalities in job opportunities and promote decent work, entrepreneurship and productivity.

There is a need for a robust skills agenda. Educational programmes must be reformed to address the skills gaps across levels and demographic groups. The alignment of educational strategies with labour policies is pivotal for developing an agile and resilient workforce. A digitally literate population and digitally ready workforce and entrepreneurs would be more capable of using technology with trust.

Progress needs to be made in gender equality to ensure an inclusive and diverse work environment. The G20 must promote specific measures to advance economic inclusion of underrepresented groups and combat discrimination, prejudice and hatred on any grounds.

Responding to environmental transformations to achieve a Just Transition

Stronger action is required to respond to the challenges of climate change. Effective climate policies are urgently needed to reduce CO2 emissions, and a Just Transition is needed to respond to the uncertainties that these changes can bring.

To be just and promote ownership, this transition will need to be anticipated and managed with the social partners through social dialogue, anticipate skills needs and avoid massive job losses due to climate change and climate policies that do not take into account socioeconomic impacts on workers and companies.

To advance in a Just Transition, the G20 must proactively implement specific labour market policies and upskill and reskill the workforce, especially in digital skills and proficiencies, for a Just Transition. Investments in education, including in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), and in life-long learning, technical, vocational and educational training need to be made to ensure the necessary skills for new jobs in the green sectors and promote sustainable practices. These will need to be coupled with jobs plans for a Just Transition and with sustainable social protection policies developed with the social partners to accompany workers and employers in the transition process.

Companies need adequate incentives, access to finance and an enabling regulatory environment to adapt to and mitigate climate change. Accelerating innovation and fostering scientific and technological development are essential to gaining ground on environmental transformations.

Promoting an inclusive digital transformation

The future of work will bring many changes that need to be tackled through specific regulation on areas such as workers' rights, privacy and the cybersecurity protection of individuals and businesses, and promote digital trust by harmonising cybersecurity and data governance. Technologies can be used to advance the economic inclusion of underrepresented groups and ensure shared productivity increases. The G20 needs to accelerate the expansion of affordable ICT infrastructure in underserved regions, assuring an effective means for digital inclusion. Encouraging targeted financial support and access to credit to MSMEs to fund the adoption of digital technologies will be fundamental to facing these transitions in a collaborative manner and guaranteeing shared gains.

Upskilling and reskilling the workforce will entail learning how to use emerging tools and technologies, including in areas such as artificial intelligence and cybersecurity for a Just Transition. Investments must ensure the improvement of the quality of basic education, vocational education and training and lifelong learning to navigate the future of work, in close partnership with workers and business representatives. Besides numeracy and literacy, basic skills must include new skills such as digital literacy, financial education, cyber awareness and data analysis. Updates in STEM curricula across all levels of education will be needed to keep pace with technological changes, and require an ongoing review of teacher training programmes and national guidelines. Work-integrated learning solutions, both in VET and academic training, will also need to be implemented, especially in the face of digital transformations.

The B20 and L20 are strongly committed to supporting the G20 in addressing the above-mentioned challenges to jointly build a just world and a sustainable planet.