

# LO Programme of Action 2017–2021

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Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions

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# 1. The bigger picture

Norway is, to the great majority of us, a good place to live. Cultural services almost free of cost, free education and a well-developed social safety net have helped create a society in which one is safe should the unexpected happen. A robust labour legislation, coupled with strong, responsible trade unions and a regulated labour market, ensures a safe and sustainable world of work. A smoothly functioning democracy where decisions are taken collectively and where non-governmental organizations and the free media play an important role are decisive for the freedom of the individual. We have access to nature close by where we live; crime rates are low, as is the level of social conflict. Women and men enjoy more equality than ever and everyone can participate in different social settings and forums independently of their gender. Small social differences and a society in which people share meeting places help build security and mutual trust. It creates a “we” that does not come at the cost of the “I”. The combination of a strong welfare state and a relatively equal distribution of private prosperity ensures a good balance between individual freedoms and the security provided by society.

The Norwegian model has proved resilient and it generates interest among social engineers in other parts of the world. It has produced high rates of employment, effective adaptability and a learning world of work. This society did not create itself. Organised interest communities have been instrumental in developing Norway’s democracy and welfare state. The labour movement in particular has played an important role in ensuring democracy, economic growth, gender parity, balanced redistribution and safety for all citizens. Political cooperation between LO and the Labour Party has been instrumental in imprinting our values on the Norwegian society and will continue to do so in future. Today, Norway proves that balanced redistribution is not an obstacle to economic growth but rather a precondition.

**LO wants to further develop and strengthen these features of the Norwegian society. Meanwhile, we also face important challenges:**

- Wealth inequality is greater and poverty rates are on the rise.
- More young people have trouble gaining entry into and a permanent foothold in the labour market. Those who have not completed their upper secondary education are particularly vulnerable. Workers over 50 years of age have difficulties getting and holding decent jobs.
- Women still have a systematically weaker labour market attachment than men do, both in terms of female employment rates and the rate of part-timers. In general, women are in a weaker financial position and are overrepresented in part-time positions and low-pay professions. At the same time, women take on a larger share of unpaid care responsibilities.
- The labour market is changing with the appearance of new contractual arrangements and new ways of organizing companies that give rise to a society of day labourers in which permanent contracts are no longer the norm and power shifts from workers to employers. This may undercut incentives for investing in knowledge and skills. The circumvention of pay scales and collective agreements, the increased use of manning agencies and contract workers, and the spread of social dumping, are all parts of this picture. Trade union density is declining both in Norway and internationally, adversely affecting societal development.
- In the public sector, the growing prevalence of business management models undermines political governance and employee influence. Users are offered poorer services. There is a need for a confidence reform in public sector.
- Increasing flows of labour and services, combined with tendering and privatizing is causing a growing low wage problem, especially in the service sector.
- The pension reform and its subsequent amendments may well end up in pensions that do not amount to a living income for those who are now young or on disability benefits, nor for those

who, before they turn 62, lose their job in private sector companies with a collectively agreed pension scheme, nor for those who are forced to withdraw from the labour market at an early age.

- Society, represented by the central and local governments, is under pressure to deliver more and better welfare services without increasing taxes, a development exploited by the political right to undermine collective services and solutions.
- Rapid technological developments open new opportunities for prosperity and improved working environments but also increase the risk of excluding more people from the world of work. The challenge will be to ensure relevant and competencies in the entire labour force.
- Manmade climate change is one of the major challenges of our times. Greenhouse gas emissions need to be substantially reduced, in line with the goals set out in the Paris agreement.
- Globalization of financial markets, rampant tax planning and complicated ownership structures make ownership less visible to employees and allow big profits to end up in tax havens. This is how big companies avoid their responsibilities to society and undermine social welfare services.

To LO, a main goal is to move society towards a development in the opposite direction: Greater job security, a more balanced redistribution, increased gender parity and a more robust welfare state financed by public revenues. A decent world of work and employment for all must be the overriding goals of our policies.

Throughout our history, LO has been a driving force in the development of our democracy and the Norwegian welfare society. Our strength in numbers, our representativeness, and our will and ability to take social responsibility have afforded us considerable influence. This is our heritage and a responsibility that we will continue to build on in future, as we have done in the past.

## 2. Learning

The ways in which we organise learning and skills development are key mechanisms in society. It is about schools and other educational institutions but also about the interplay between work, private life, politics and organizations. Knowledge reserved for the few provides for concentration of power. Knowledge for all provides for freedom. LO has been a strong driver in the educational revolution we have been through in the past 40 – 50 years.

Equal rights to education and lifelong learning are fundamental to people's access to individual development and participation in society. High levels of competency and a well- informed population give Norwegian businesses an important competitive advantage and ensure high quality products and services in the private and public sectors alike. An educated and skilled population is important to maintain a welfare society with small social differences.

The boundaries between basic training, continuing education, upskilling and further knowledge development building on prior learning have become blurred. Basic training can now be considered a preparation for the lifelong learning that starts when the person enters the labour market. Vocational technical colleges, universities and university colleges will play a more prominent role in offering continuing education, upskilling and further knowledge development adapted to a rapidly changing world of work with a more diverse workforce. The foundation laid by the educational system is decisive for further learning. There is a need for large numbers of highly educated workers and the shortage of workers with tertiary vocational education is particularly acute.

LO wants to have an educational system that is under democratic control and that ensures everyone the opportunity to realize their abilities and talents, and in which everyone has access to education independent of their background. Education must be a public responsibility, free of cost and available to all. Every person is entitled to real and equivalent access to kindergarten, primary

education, cultural education, secondary education and tertiary education. Career guidance services, including those offered by schools, need strengthening. We need a competency reform for lifelong learning.

**LO will:**

- Work towards education to continue to be a public responsibility and fight against privatization.
- Ensure that every person enjoys satisfactory conditions for lifelong learning and the right to continuing education and training on financial terms that afford the individual a real opportunity to participate.
- Strengthen vocational training from the primary school level, via upper secondary to tertiary vocational education.

## **2.1 Kindergarten**

Kindergarten is one of the most important pillars of the Norwegian welfare state. Access to kindergarten for all is important for learning, for preventing children dropping out of school later on, and for evening out social differences. Attendance is especially important for the development of language skills. Kindergartens provide a safe arena where children can develop and grow. The number of staff must be adequate, including trained preschool teachers and child and youth specialists that can facilitate children's free and spontaneous play, learning and socialization.

**LO will:**

- Improve the quality of kindergartens and ensure equivalent services in all institutions by introducing staffing norms.
- Gradually extend the right to a place in a kindergarten in order to achieve rolling admission.
- Ensure lower fees for all by lowering the maximum fees.

## **2.2 Supervised after-school programs**

Supervised after-school programs play an important role in and take up a substantial part of many children's daily life. There is a need to strengthen the regulatory framework for supervised after-school programs.

**LO will:**

- Work towards reforming of the after school programs to enhance quality, reduce fees and establish a statutory right to supervised after-school programs.
- Develop after school programs with a focus on play, social inclusion, creativity and practical learning, and facilitate access and services to after-school activities for children with special needs.

## **2.3 The cultural school**

All children who so wish should have access to the cultural school. LO will work towards establishing a special regulation to the Education Act with requirements for staff professionalism, capacity and caps on cultural school fees.

**LO will:**

- Promote an increase in State and local government investment in music education and the cultural school.

## 2.4 Basic education

Public, comprehensive education is an important pillar of the Norwegian labour market model. Schools must be socially inclusive and contribute to cohesion and to developing independent, creative and reflective individuals. LO will work towards a comprehensive school day that includes meals, homework help and physical activity. Creative and practical skills will be of great importance in the world of work, business and societal life in future. Accordingly, LO will work towards increasing the educational institutions' competency in practical-aesthetic subjects.

Primary and lower secondary schools must give students a basis that allows them to make good choices in upper secondary school. They need to give children and youth an education that, in a balanced way, prepares them and lays the foundations for both academic and vocational studies. School desertion at the upper secondary level must be countered by early intervention, close follow-up and a greater focus on vocational training, including apprenticeships.

### LO will:

- Strengthen early intervention by introducing regulations on teacher density and by fostering interdisciplinarity.
- Youth under 30 years of age must be guaranteed employment or upskilling.
- Increase the professional freedom of educational staff, including more freedom of action and less use of tests and scores.

## 2.5 Vocational education

Vocational education must ensure broad and relevant access to the labour market, equipping students with the skills needed to take part in the technological development and preparing them for a rapidly changing world of work. More people should have the opportunity to obtain a certificate of completed apprenticeship, including people that have completed their upper secondary education. The social partners need to be represented with full rights at the boards of the apprenticeships training offices. The dimensioning of the upper secondary schools needs to be more closely tailored to the number and type of apprenticeships available. County authorities, who are responsible for upper secondary education, need to recruit new companies to provide apprenticeships, in cooperation with the social partners, through the County Vocational Training Boards. Pupils and apprentices must have equal rights to vocational counselling. There is a need for more practical training in program subjects.

### LO will:

- Advance apprenticeships for young people who chose vocational studies.
- Work towards more people having access to basic vocational training and to continuing education, and towards increasing the number of admissions.
- Strengthen tripartite cooperation in vocational training and education at all levels.

## 2.6 University and University College Education

LO works towards equal access to higher education and the gradual elimination of social, geographical, ethnic and gender based differences in the student pool. Overall governance and financing of education should be a public responsibility. Higher education needs to include academic as well as professional studies and vocational careers, ensuring good quality and relevance to the labour market. The regulatory conditions governing professional studies must ensure research-based, career-oriented studies that have a solid foothold in professional practice. Higher education scholarships must ensure equal rights to education and support full time studies. Public authorities need to pursue proactive policies for building student housing. LO defends linking

study loans and grants to the National Insurance basic amount (G) and increasing the amount to 1.5 G over 11 months. Full scholarships are a long-term goal in educational finance. Scientific and administrative staff at the institutions need proper working conditions and full time permanent contracts. The content, scope and duration of university and university college education must be in line with professional considerations and society's needs. LO believes there is a need to reinforce democracy at universities and university colleges.

**LO will:**

- Work towards closer cooperation between educational institutions and the labour market and increase the practice component of tertiary education.
- Work towards permanent, full time employment for university and university college staff.
- Ensure solid basic finance for research and educational institutions.

## **2.7 Vocational technical colleges**

Vocational technical colleges are the vocational alternative to university and university college education, but they are few and far between. Vocational technical colleges have an important role to play as providers of vocational career studies and of continuing education and training.

**LO will:**

- Work towards developing more vocational technical college education programs and towards strengthening this educational offer substantially.
- Work towards instituting an upgrade system with fixed criteria for local vocational colleges to achieve the status of national vocational technical university colleges.
- Work towards facilitating student transition between vocational technical colleges and university and university colleges.

## **2.8 Learning in the labour market**

The labour market simultaneously presents the most important strengths and the most important challenges to the competency system. Special features of the Norwegian model that underpin continuous upskilling of workers must be protected and further developed.

The entire labour market is, and shall continue to be, principally a market for highly skilled work. We cannot allow the development of a new layer of low-skilled jobs in our world of work. Formalised vocational education requirements for practitioners should be considered in more professions in order to ensure and improve quality in services and products, as well as corporate compliance with rules and regulations. The inhabitants of Norway must be offered skills development. The interface between the world of work and educational institutions needs strengthening.

To manage the challenges of the future, companies will need to provide staff that have short educations with better conditions for learning on the job and for continuing education and training. Vocational education must become a more attractive avenue and adults should be able to sit the apprentice final exam while we simultaneously avoid the pitfall of developing "craft certificates light". The labour market requires high levels of competency and the trend is towards higher demand for specialized education, multiple craft certificates and interdisciplinary competency.

Qualifications regulations and programs need to develop into proving real final competencies and facilitating lifelong learning. Higher levels of formal qualification should be attainable through lifelong learning. Strengthening career opportunities for skilled workers is also a means to achieve gender parity and integration. Good cooperation and compliant companies that have systems for co-decision at the workplace facilitate learning on the job and learning in the world of work at large.

Shop stewards are key to corporate work on upskilling and competency. LO and affiliates must contribute to constructive and systematic interaction with educational institutions in order to ensure relevant access to knowledge and competency in the digitized world of work of the future.

**LO will:**

- Work towards providing pupils and higher education students with knowledge about the labour market and its organizations and structures.
- Work towards instituting systems for documenting prior learning and competency acquired on the job and putting it on an equal footing with equivalent formal competencies acquired in the public school system.
- Strengthen knowledge about learning in the labour market.

## 3. Creating

High levels of value creation are the basis for private prosperity as well as public welfare, and give Norwegian workers access to high quality employment. Throughout our history, this has been achieved through the accumulation of knowledge and capital, efficient public institutions, a well-organized world of work, and business in which workers enjoy the right to co-decision at the workplace. The private and public sectors are mutually dependent. A strong public sector lays the foundation for value creation in the companies, whereas efficient private sector growth lays the foundation for the welfare state. An open economy provides access to larger markets, and a broad public sector financed by the state revenues provides for high levels of adaptability, stability and predictability in our national economy.

The Norwegian industrial relations model is widely supported by the social partners, the government and key research environments and it must inform Norwegian economic and labour market policies going forward. History has taught us that the State also has a role to play as a developer of business and industry. A successful transformation into a green economy requires the State to take on responsibilities that go beyond the facilitating role it has played in the past few years.

### 3.1 Economic governance

If Norway is to maintain high income levels and living standards, a learning world of work that promotes good health and a strong welfare state in future, there must be a smooth and successful interplay between the private and public sectors, between essential policy areas and between the social partners.

Having a solid and well-regulated financial sector that is a proactive partner to Norwegian companies both nationally and internationally is important both in periods of growth and during slumps.

**LO will:**

- Promote good macro-economic governance and proactive labour market policies.
- Promote coordinated wage formation that ensures high rates of employment and low unemployment rates.
- Promote active public policies that ensure social governance, welfare development, ownership of our natural resources, and proactive industrial and business policies.



### 3.2 Industrial relations and competency

Cooperation between the social partners and government agencies is pivotal to the Norwegian model. Equally important are relations between management and workers at the workplace. High trade union density and highly organised employers are thus an important competitive advantage to Norwegian corporations.

Good industrial relations and proactive employee co-participation and involvement have proven highly beneficial to corporate innovation and adaptability. Highly educated and independent, skilled workers with high competency give Norway a competitive edge. A world of work that respects formal education as well as competency based on experience stimulates development and innovation.

#### LO will:

- Foster the understanding of long-term visions in employment and job stability as a prerequisite for a well-organised world of work.
- Strengthen cooperation between the social partners and the government with a view to general economic policies, employment rates, business and industrial development, and policies for an inclusive world of work (IA activities), as well as research and development (R&D) and a forward-leaning labour market and competency policy.
- Strengthen relations between staff, stewards, HES stewards and corporate management in order to support innovation, value creation, increased productivity and a decent and inclusive world of work.

### 3.3 A proactive market and competency policy

The Nordic countries have been singularly successful in managing their human resources. Nevertheless, the challenge of including everyone is growing. Particularly vulnerable groups face a more demanding labour market. Increasing cross-border labour migration denies vulnerable groups the pull into the labour market that periods of strong economic expansion might afford them.

People with weak labour market attachment are particularly dependent on continuity in services. The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) must get better funding for following up users and abuse of labour market measures must be prevented. Public schemes to ease people into work must not replace regular contracts.

#### LO will:

- Promote more proactive and targeted labour market policies with a sharper focus on competency. More people must be able to further develop their basic skills, have access to retraining and the opportunity to finish their upper secondary education.
- Intensify efforts to prevent people from abandoning education and employment. They need early intervention and close follow-up and schools' social work resources need strengthening. There must be sufficient apprenticeships to cover demand.
- Maintain and improve unemployment benefit schemes for unemployed and laid-off workers, including reinstating their right to holiday pay.

### 3.4 An open economy

Conditions in countries around us demonstrate the enormous challenge of creating added value. Low employment rates, growth stagnation and high levels of indebtedness generate problems in many European countries. The choices we have made in Norway have made us better equipped to face the future but developments in Europe also pose major challenges. Our economy is heavily

dependent on exports, particularly to the European market, and on international regulatory conditions.

LO believes negotiations on new trade agreements need to be based on hard-won rights and labour standards and we demand transparency on these agreements. Trade union rights and co-decision, including the right to collective bargaining, need safeguarding and protection. Norway's high standards in fields such as social rights, culture, the environment and food safety must be upheld. These agreements cannot contain clauses tying the hands of future governments, nor any acceptance of investors having separate dispute resolution mechanisms that allow them to sue for damages for the possible consequences of democratic decisions in individual countries.

**LO will:**

- Contribute to strengthening Norway's competitive edge through coordinated wage formation and proper macroeconomic governance.
- Contribute to developing international trade agreements that ensure fair competition worldwide, strengthens trade union rights, human rights, consumer rights and the environment, while also ensuring national scope of action and control with public services.
- Demand full transparency about negotiations, and demand that Norwegian public services not be opened to foreign providers under the TISA or other international trade agreements.

### **3.5 The EU and the EEA**

Our European neighbours and the EU are Norway's main partners both economically and politically and they make up Norway's largest export market. Reliable and mutual cooperation is needed to ensure Norway's access to the single market and framework conditions in line with those in other EU and EEA countries. Since its entry into force, the EEA agreement has safeguarded Norway's interests in this respect. The EEA agreement is thus the basis of LO's trade union policy on Europe.

LO is of the view that the single market's social dimension needs strengthening. Ensuring minimum labour clauses and preventing social dumping should be top priorities. Developments have moved in the opposite direction, including attacks on existing rights and fewer new minimum regulations. The financial crisis has compounded matters by pressurizing domestic wage formation, collective bargaining and fundamental labour rights in many European countries.

LO demands an active Norwegian policy on Europe. Norway must exploit the room for manoeuvre afforded by the EEA agreement to influence the drafting of new regulations and their implementation into Norwegian law. Employment authorities must ensure that Norway's interests are safeguarded. Early intervention in political processes is required to gain acceptance for our views. Dialogue with the social partners in connection with the transposition of EU legislation into Norwegian law is decisive. The reservation clause should be triggered when EU directives restrict domestic actions against social dumping and curtail trade union rights and welfare schemes.

The United Kingdom's prospective withdrawal from the European Union (EU) could have considerable impact on both the EU and on Norway. Norway's relations and trade with the UK must thus be ensured through new agreements. LO expects the Norwegian government to produce in-depth reports on the political, economic, social and contractual consequences of the UK's withdrawal from the EEA Agreement.

**LO will:**

- Demand that the Norwegian government oppose any restriction on the right to resort to collective action, on the collective bargaining system and on the right to national wage formation.
- Demand that the ILO core conventions be incorporated into the Human Rights Act and that they, in case of conflict of laws, take precedence over other legislation, including legislation with

equivalent conflict-of-law rules. Norwegian collective agreements and Norwegian labour legislation must take precedence over EU regulations. Work must be started with a view to incorporating the ILO core conventions into the Norwegian Constitution.

- Play an active part in the EFTA consultative committee in order to promote labour rights and the social dimension.

### **3.6 Research and development**

Research and development are essential to maintaining and further developing democracy, quality social services, competitive industries and companies, high employment rates and future economic growth. The State must ensure long-term investment in research so that it benefits all of society.

Funding must support independent research to ensure the unfettered development of new knowledge. Business-oriented research and interaction between universities, university colleges and companies should also be a priority. The best long-term results come through the fruitful interaction between basic research and applied research. The advantage afforded by increasing employee involvement and industrial democracy must be exploited more efficiently.

#### **LO will:**

- Ensure that general governance and funding of the education and research sector is a public responsibility.
- Work towards a substantial increase in the global funding of Norway's R&D.
- Strengthen social, welfare and labour market research as well as research on and development of Norwegian land-based industry.

### **3.7 The low-emission society**

As a civilised society, we must hand over the planet to the next generation in a better condition than we received it. Climate change is the biggest challenge of our times. We must cut greenhouse gas emissions substantially if we are to avoid major and destructive climate changes. Human activity will always potentially conflict with the environment, but we must design the way in which we produce and live to minimize negative environmental impact as far as possible. The green shift brings great opportunities and Norway has the competency, capital and technology required for success. The government must actively promote the green shift and facilitate industrial innovation and development.

Climate change is, by its very nature, global. Accordingly, national actions to cut greenhouse gas emissions need to have a global impact and focus on reducing emissions in sectors that are not included in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). The precautionary principle and a knowledge-based approach must inform our environmental and climate change policies. The private and public sectors should be geared towards maintaining high levels of production and value creation but production must become increasingly sustainable and aim for carbon neutrality. Norway must continue to help enable poor countries to cut their emissions and adapt to climate change.

LO supports the UN sustainability goals and the goals set out in the Climate Change Agreement to curb global warming at well below two degrees and to work towards limiting the global average temperature rise to 1.5 degrees. Our goal is for Norway to be a low emission society by 2050, and we support the EU goals of a 40 percent cut in greenhouse gas emissions. This will require technological development, research and unambiguous political principles.

#### **LO will:**

- Work towards a comprehensive carbon capture and storage (CCS) effort in Norway, including starting up several full-scale CCS industrial projects by 2020.
- Work towards increasing investments in research and development to transform Norway into a low emission society.
- Propose strengthening the role of the State in fostering new, climate-friendly production.

### 3.8 A proactive industrial policy

Norway must pursue an industrial policy that puts the entire country to use. All industries and economic activities shall enjoy development opportunities in Norway but industrially neutral regulatory conditions alone cannot be the sole basis of Norwegian industry. In a world where an increasing number of goods and services are exposed to international competition, we must invest in sectors where Norway enjoys special advantages, where we have acquired a leading position internationally and where we have powerful clusters with knowledge and competency at all levels of the value chain. LO will work towards ensuring that important competency remains in Norway and that Norwegian businesses, private and public alike enjoy conditions that make further development here attractive.

In a high cost country like Norway, only the most knowledge-based, productive and sustainable companies will survive. Norway must design strategies and industrial policies that can guide and target the development of competencies that will be the foundation of our livelihoods in future. This will have to come about through clearer political priorities and more, and more robust, coordination. Means and institutions must be geared towards creating sustainable growth and prosperity. For Norway to succeed we must make our businesses and industries even more environmentally and climate change responsive, and better technologically and commercially equipped to meet an ever sharper global competition.

The production of goods and services is especially vulnerable to competition from low-cost countries but our strength lies in quality, competency, productivity and innovation. Our goal should be to maintain and develop industries that create positive ripple effects for business and employment locally as well as nationally. Innovation in small companies and upstarts is important but the main basis for innovation and job creation is in and related to existing companies. Public policies and actions must support these industries and companies. The High North will be Norway's most important strategic policy area in coming years, offering both opportunities and challenges linked to management, the environment, commercial interests and security. Norway has a great responsibility for sustainable resource and environmental surveillance in the High North, and for enforcing Norwegian legislation and sovereignty.

#### LO will:

- Focus on industries in which we have a competitive edge and competency in the entire value chain.
- Strengthen competency networks in strong clusters.
- Gear policies and regulations towards support for industrial production in Norway.

### 3.9 Production

Norway's access to raw materials and renewable resources should be exploited to create value and employment in all of Norway. We must employ our competency in all parts of the value chain in the domestic industrial processing of raw materials, including oil, gas, hydropower, minerals, wood, fish and agricultural products.

A high quality and innovative tourist industry is vital to maintaining value creation in the regions. This assumes that the industry expands its development of stable and attractive jobs that offer decent wage and working conditions, by investing in competency in the entire value chain. Despite being the country's most visible national industry, retail is often forgotten. Retail's contribution to employment, welfare and society in general is huge and must be made more visible. A comprehensive policy for the construction sector will stimulate builders to invest in new technologies and organizational development. The annual biomass increase in Norwegian forests is substantial and has a big industrial potential that should be exploited to a much greater degree than at present.

LO believes there is a need to bolster comprehensive food production policies to ensure employment in the food processing industry and primary production all over Norway. Concentration of power and the emergence of monopolies in the food industry undermine this goal. In order to safeguard the core production of Norwegian agricultural foodstuffs, we need to use the scope we have in the WTO and other international agreements. The marine sector is poised to become one of the world's most important sources of food. There is great potential in further developing this value chain in Norway. Using all residues and creating a basis for full-year jobs in the fish processing industry will be a prerequisite for success in the bio-economy of the future. The ambition of exploiting our natural resources in a sustainable manner, on-shore as well as offshore, must remain firm.

This goal of exploiting our natural resources in a sustainable manner, on-shore as well and offshore, has been a salient feature of the Norwegian labour movement's industrial policies. The desire to discover mineral deposits, to manage our fish resources and to develop sustainable marine farming and petroleum production has enjoyed broad support. This ambition has also had a strong imprint on public policies, regulations and legislation. Long-term investment needs dictate predictable and stable regulatory conditions. There must be no doubt about access to mining, forestry and long-term access to areas for hydrocarbon exploration. Accordingly, prospecting for oil and gas needs to be an ongoing activity so that commercial findings of oil and energy resources can be developed and exploited. The opening of new areas for hydrocarbon exploration should be a gradual process. LO believes great importance should be attached to global management plans that balance the needs of the industry against other considerations. New licenses must be based on a precautionary principle and strict HES and environmental requirements.

**LO will:**

- Develop new and safeguard existing, future-oriented jobs through high competency throughout the entire value chain.
- Work towards increased processing of Norwegian natural resources.
- Work towards basing Norwegian energy production and consumption on energy sources that are in line with sustainable development in a global perspective.

### **3.10 Public ownership**

Public ownership ensures long-term and democratic governance of sectors that are vital to society. It is of particular importance that companies operating in natural resources, critical infrastructure and essential services are owned and managed by public entities. Strategically important companies must have a strong basis in Norway.

Strong public ownership is important to keep companies headquartered in Norway, as it fosters activities based in Norway and a national ownership environment. Public ownership gives Norway a competitive advantage and increased flexibility.

**LO will:**

- Work towards keeping the headquarters of strategically important companies in Norway and maintaining a 100 % governmental ownership of companies that have ownership rights to important natural resources and infrastructure.

- Advance the State not only as a strong owner but also as an active exerciser of ownership rights in companies in which it has a stake.
- Strengthen the existing public ownership management regime by establishing a strategic ownership instrument that aims to ensure broad national acceptance of public ownership in companies of national importance.

### **3.11 Infrastructure**

Efficient and safe transport solutions are a prerequisite for creating economic and industrial development in the regions as well as in central locations. The transport system is essential to our competitive power and future investments must prioritise transport corridors between the different parts of the country and regions, and towards our neighbouring countries.

Environmental and climate change concerns, our sparsely populated areas and people's need for transport services mandate investing in public transport all over Norway. In densely populated areas, the increase of population will force transport growth to come principally in public transport. Urban centres must be protected as important retail areas and thus part of our policies to mitigate climate change and the strain on the environment. Public transport is a good provided by and financed by society and needs to be reorganized so that revenues are used to the benefit of travellers.

Energy and power supply is to facilitate value creation, employment and enable people to settle all over the country, based on our natural advantages. We are increasingly dependent on safe and secure energy supplies.

#### **LO will:**

- Work towards upgrading and modernising power plants and grids in order to achieve equalization of prices between regions.
- Enable the transport system to handle transport growth in a sustainable manner.
- Work towards a transport policy that facilitates the development of safe quality jobs, centred on quality and competency.

### **3.12 Culture, sports and the media**

An active and diverse cultural life is important to enrich our lives and contributes to growth, competency, learning, health and tolerance. Everyone shall have access to and opportunities to take part in cultural activities.

This is best ensured through public support schemes and free entrance to important cultural services. To safeguard the participation of children and young people in cultural activities, the cultural school must be strengthened and national regulations on professionalism, capacity and fees be adopted. Libraries should be free and available in all municipalities. LO wants a systematic effort to boost culture as an economic activity. LO will work towards better conditions for artists, and towards robust art and culture-related workplaces. Intellectual property rights must be reinforced to guarantee the incomes of creative and performing artists.

LO will work towards parity between the two varieties of Norwegian. This means that everyone shall be able to use their variety in the labour market, that there is quality training in both varieties in schools and that the Language Act is enforced in practice. The New Norwegian variety must also have a natural place in the written presentations of LO and affiliates.

Physical activity and sports offer health and well-being. LO will strengthen company sports and help to facilitate physical activity in relation to the workplace. Ensuring diversity in the mass media is a

public responsibility. Press grants are vital to maintaining media diversity in Norway, and need strengthening. The public broadcaster NRK must have the necessary opportunities and resources to continue delivering broad, quality programmes in all outlets.

**LO will:**

- Work to ensure that all children and young persons may take part in leisure sports, school bands and leisure activities, independent of their economic situation.
- Make trade union culture and history visible by intensifying our involvement in the protection of cultural heritage. The labour movement's importance for the industrial towns of Rjukan and Notodden as World Heritage sites should be highlighted. The Labour Movement Archives need digitization and to be opened to the entire population. This is a public responsibility.
- Work towards increasing public funding for art and culture. At least one per cent of the national budget shall be earmarked for cultural purposes.

## 4. Working

Having a job at a living wage is a fundamental human right and an important condition for personal freedom and individual participation in society. A society with small social differences affords safety for all. By successfully bargaining collective agreements and defending hard-won rights, the labour movement has helped to develop the decent world of work that most of us are a part of today. Permanent contracts are the foundation of the labour market and ensure safety for workers and competency at the workplace. High labour force participation rates, for women as well as men, have produced economic growth and increased freedom for large swaths of the population.

The decent world of work is under pressure. At home and abroad we see a growing trend towards individualization and dismantling of workers' regulatory protection. Social dumping, increased use of manning and temporary employment agencies, coupled with complex corporate structures undermine HES, industrial democracy and the power balance between employers and employees. LO will work towards further development of the decent world of work we have in Norway, and fight the negative developments trends we experience.

### 4.1 Collective bargaining policies and trade union rights

Trade union rights are the very basis of a smoothly functioning and healthy world of work. The core purpose of collective bargaining policies is to ensure members' share of wealth creation through increased purchasing power, equal redistribution and social improvements.

LO will reinforce the importance of the agreements between the Confederation and the employers' associations, the industry agreements and the rights of stewards, and safeguard the right to collective action while assessing the potential use of different means of collective action.

**LO will:**

- Defend and reinforce the collective bargaining system.
- Work towards strengthening industrial democracy and the right of co-determination at the workplace and their adaptation to the factual governance and decision-making structures in all kinds of companies, in order to make them effective.
- Work towards the statutory right to employee representation on Boards of Directors and companies with more than ten employees.



## 4.2 A world of work under pressure

The decent world of work is being challenged by complex corporate structures and the extensive use of manning and temporary employment agencies, and social dumping. This trend intensified after the EU enlargement, which gave increased access to labour. Shifting employer responsibilities around in the corporate structure, establishing long contractual chains, increasing the use of manning agencies that subcontract staff for parent companies and subsidiaries, setting up of local companies with «local places of employment» are all examples of this development. The manning industry's practice of hiring people on "permanent", zero hour contracts with no pay between assignments undermines the entire Norwegian labour market and the Norwegian model. These are not permanent appointments but successive temporary contracts. An increasing number of workers choose or are forced into self-employment. In some cases, this may afford better control over their own working conditions but in other it is an illegal circumvention of the regulations on permanent employment contracts that deprives workers of their lawful rights in the labour market, without the benefit of increased freedom or self-determination. In the commercial sharing economy, we see clear trends towards employers trying to organize themselves out of their responsibilities as employers and operating at the fringes of Norwegian legislation. These corporate structures will increase the number of workers with no employment contract and steer the world of work away from clear regulations and rules of the game.

This development will, if allowed to continue, lead to day labour becoming the norm and undermine job security and co-determination, and put a downward pressure on wages. This will be particularly hard on those who already are in a vulnerable position in the labour market, and favour serious economic crime and tax evasion. LO will therefore further develop our strong commitment against labour market crime, social dumping and precarious work, and defend permanent employment at real employers. Rules on competition must be reviewed and strengthened to increase their efficiency, including a review of the severity of the punishment and periods of disqualification from business. The supervisory entities' resources and powers of sanction, and their interdisciplinary coordination, need a solid boost. There is a need for a review and assessment of how the Labour Inspection Authority can play a more proactive and effective inspection role in respect of conditions related to the subcontracting of labour, including the equal treatment rules pursuant to Section 14-12 (a) of the Working Environment Act, and to temporary employment. Other measures should also be considered to ensure better compliance with regulations on subcontracting and temporary employment.

The public sector must lead the work on a compliant world of work. There shall be zero tolerance for social dumping in public procurement.

### LO will:

- Strengthen the legal institution of general application of collective agreements and lower the standard of proof in cases related to demands for general application of collective agreements.
- Advance the establishment of a legislative drafting committee to examine the different forms of circumvention/creative adaptation in the area of labour law.
- Limit companies' ability to hire people temporarily and work towards a more stringent definition of what a permanent contract should contain pursuant to the Working Environment Act.

## 4.3 The manning industry

Precarious work, temporary employment and zero hour contracts facilitate exploitation of workers and challenge the Norwegian labour market model by opening for the organization of work in a way that favours competition on wage conditions instead of on productivity and quality. The Working Environment Act provides for two types on employment, permanent and temporary, of which permanent employment is to be the main rule.



LO considers this development a grave hazard, especially in the manning industry, where the concept of permanent employment is being hollowed out. Minimum requirements should include a fixed, minimum number of hours and a work plan that also guarantees a predictable weekly/monthly working time, and these conditions must be clearly stated in the employment contract and thus constitute the basis for the parties' contractual obligations to work and to pay for the work performed.

Subcontracting workers from manning agencies is in some industries on the verge of dislodging permanent employment, training and apprentices. Trade union density is eroded, which increases the risk of injuries and accidents.

The building industry is particularly exposed and a major part of contract labour is made up of foreign, non-unionised workers. Even in critical infrastructure, including civil aviation, atypical contracts are a menace to safety.

**LO will:**

- Work towards outlawing subcontracting as a general principle.
- Make fixed-term subcontracting an exception to the general principle of the Working Environment Act and admissible only pursuant to national collective agreements.
- Work towards the application of Section 14-12 (5) by the Ministry to ban the subcontracting of certain groups of workers and within specific industries when important societal considerations make it appropriate.

#### **4.4 The working environment**

A healthy working environment is an important precondition for a world of work that accommodates everyone and in which employees' health, environment and safety are safeguarded through co-decision, well-developed industrial relations, strong legislation and safe conditions in general. Workplaces that enjoy a high degree of mutual trust, cooperation between the local partners, fair management and where jobs offer positive challenges act as protecting factors against ill health. A common language at the workplace, Norwegian being the first choice, is important to build a solid safety culture at the workplace. Legislation and collective agreements must be designed to prevent deceitful interpretations of working environment requirements and ensure that new technology is not used for surveillance of staff. Control and surveillance at the workplace challenge privacy protection, cause stress and undermine workers' influence. Rules and regulations must be strengthened to ensure the integrity of the individual in the workplace. The rights of workers and their stewards when activities are subcontracted need strengthening. Safety stewards and members of the HES committees should have access to updating training annually. A public authorization scheme for HES training providers is needed. The introduction of regional safety stewards should be considered on an on-going basis in industries as appropriate.

Workers' freedom of expression must be effective so that employees can express themselves on conditions at the workplace and professional and trade union issues that warrant public knowledge. The whistle-blower rules must be reinforced to protect workers against retaliation.

The agreement on a more including world of work (the IA agreement) is an important tool in HES work. The IA agreement must also include actions to promote higher rates of employment among persons with reduced rates of performance, actions to bring down sickness absence and to prevent workers falling out of the labour market, and actions aimed at making older workers stay longer on the job.

Quality, systematic HES work must have local ownership and build on research on HES risk factors. This applies to HES work in general also but also includes matters related to violence, bullying and sexual harassment. Knowledge must be reflected in stewards' enhanced training in handling such problems. In these preventive and systematic efforts, the company health service is a key player. All

injuries and sicknesses that are attributable to work should give rise to professional injury compensation.

**LO will:**

- Strengthen the Working Environment Act and other, relevant legal instruments. The Working Environment Act must protect all workers, unless covered by other, equivalent legislation. The Working Environment Act must be made applicable to petroleum workers on multipurpose vessels and have the Petroleum Safety Authority as the supervisory authority.
- Further develop the IA agreement in cooperation with the government and the other social partners.
- Strengthen the resources available to supervisory bodies and their powers of sanction.

#### **4.5 Working hours**

New organizational forms in the labour market, new technologies and political decisions challenge standard working hours and workers' influence over their own working hours.

Provisions related to the number of working hours, the time of the day the work is to be performed, workers' influence over working time and the statutory compensation for strenuous working hours must be designed to ensure workers' health and welfare and enable them to stay on the job until reaching pensionable age. The goal is that the flexibility afforded by the legislation and technology does not cause pressure or blur the boundaries between working hours and leisure time nor gives rise to health risks.

There is a continuous liberalization of business and working hours as shopping malls and the big chains dictate opening and working hours to a much larger degree than ever before. The inexistence of co-determination, pressure on staff to work abnormal hours and the lack of adequate protection in legislation are issues that present major challenges to employees.

Working hours reforms may provide for a more including and equalized world of work with more full-time positions and bigger opportunities for more people to stay in the labour market until pensionable age.

There will be a need for different kinds of working time reduction in future, including time to upskill, reductions in the number of daily hours of work and other forms of reduced working time. How fast reductions will come and how extensive they will be depends on the extent to which workers' demands for their share of wealth creation come in the form of investment, improved purchasing power or social benefits.

In the coming four-year period, LO will prepare a plan for moving towards gradual working time reductions. The plan needs to have a comprehensive perspective and build on experiences from national and international pilot projects in different industries and sectors, including a six-hour day/30-hour working week.

The percentage of part-time workers has declined over time in the Norwegian world of work but still many workers – mainly women – do not have the opportunity to work full-time. Part-time work undermines people's ability to provide for themselves, both while working and as pensions. It also limits access to competent labour at a time of scarcity.

**LO will:**

- Defend standard working hours and strengthen the trade union movement's influence on the organization of working hours. So-called zero hour contracts must be outlawed.
- Ensure that the right to full-time employment is effective for all workers.

- Work towards Sundays still being a different day.

#### 4.6 Gender parity and equal pay

Even though Norway has come far in terms of gender parity, we still have systematic differences. LO's goal for gender parity activities is that women and men have equal rights and opportunities in education, employment, income, benefits and influence. Full-time jobs and an independent, living wage are decisive for women's equality.

Women's wage development is best ensured through collective bargaining at the confederate level. The accuracy of means and actions to promote equal pay and raise low wages must improve. A better gender distribution within the different professions, industries and sectors will help to even out wage differences between gendered professions. LO will work towards higher valuation of female-dominated professions and industries. Some groups of workers with higher education need to see a levelling of wage differences between the private and public sectors.

What we have achieved in terms of gender parity did not come as a gift. There is still a great need for proactive gender parity policies, a separate act on gender parity and efficient enforcement. A dedicated ombud for gender parity would boost gender parity work. Tripartite cooperation must be exploited to generate concrete and proactive measures to promote gender parity.

Gender parity in labour market is related to gender parity in the family. There is a need for a proactive family policy that must support women's labour market participation. The policy must include continued strong investments in kindergartens and after-school programmes. Kindergarten, schools and public services must enable full labour market participation of parents of children with special needs.

The parental benefit scheme must ensure each parent at least 40 per cent of the parental leave and independent contribution rights. The cash benefit for toddlers not attending kindergarten undermines women's labour market attachment and must be abolished.

Women are more vulnerable to sexual abuse and violence in close relationships than men are. Public authorities must take responsibility for preventive and alleviating measures, for funding and establishing more crisis centres, and for changing the attitudes and practice of police and the courts. Starting awareness raising early is important. Therefore, sex, relationships and gender parity must be subjects in both primary and secondary education.

##### **LO will:**

- Prioritize equal pay and low wage groups in collective bargaining.
- Work towards a proactive family and gender parity policy to reinforce women's position in the labour market.
- Support measures to improve the gender balance in education and the world of work.

## 5. Sharing

There is now broad international consensus that the Nordic countries have been more successful at combining economic efficiency and fair redistribution than any other country has. Nevertheless, there are signs that wage formation and income redistribution are increasingly affected by decisions taken outside of wage bargaining and democratic bodies. Globalization opens opportunities to increase earnings, acquire new experience, new knowledge and wider access to technology but it also entails stronger influence on our own social structures and the redistribution of benefits and

burdens. It could also lead to more pressure towards greater inequality. The increased flow of labour and services could involve a downward pressure on wages.

LO's goal is a society where benefits and burdens are evenly distributed. Wage formation, the tax system, competency policies, subsidies and public welfare are the most important mechanisms to ensure equalization. The trade union movement must contribute to economic governance through comprehensive collective settlements. Whereas collective agreements originally were a tool to improve individual living conditions, the labour market now has become key to value creation, fair redistribution and economic stability. A smoothly functioning tax system is thus a prerequisite for the welfare state.

### **5.1 Redistribution of wealth through wages**

Wage formation is the most important redistribution mechanism because it tips the balance between work and capital, ensures income and fundamentally affects rates of employment and unemployment, as well as competency and gender parity.

Coordinated wage formation, where wage increases are obtained primarily through centrally bargained settlements is a prerequisite for ensuring a fair redistribution between different wage groups and enables us to use collective bargaining to leverage social reforms. The bargaining model in which industries that compete internationally settle first and set the ceiling for subsequent bargaining, provides for fair redistribution between professions, underpins the national economy and slows down unemployment. This bargaining model sets the framework for the entire labour market but does not prevent compensating groups that have consistently lagged behind in their wage development. The future of the coordinated wage formation depends on our maintaining trade union density. In that respect, increasing the deductible amount for trade union membership fees is an effective tool.

#### **LO will:**

- Ensure workers' share of value added.
- Further develop and strengthen the industrial bargaining model and coordinated wage formation.
- Prioritize low wage groups and equal pay in collective bargaining.

### **5.2 Redistribution of wealth through taxation**

An efficient and redistributive tax system is decisive for the financing of social welfare and for ensuring a reasonable after-tax income redistribution. The wealthiest should pay more. Wealth tax is important to achieve equalization and fair redistribution.

The tax system must be geared towards ensuring a broad tax basis so that everyone contributes to the collective good while simultaneously preventing tax-motivated relocation and aggressive tax planning. Companies that operate through digital media and platforms must be regulated efficiently to make these players also contribute to the welfare state. Increased taxation of the financial sector would help to both finance the welfare state and achieve more smoothly functioning financial markets. Tax Norway needs a well-developed control apparatus to prevent tax evasion and to secure tax revenues.

#### **LO will:**

- Work towards a tax system that offers business and industry good operating conditions while also ensuring a fair redistribution between different groups and sufficient funding to social welfare.
- Work towards greater financial transparency and combat tax-motivated relocation, tax havens, corruption and tax evasion.

- Support national and international initiatives to increase taxation of the financial sector and introduce a tax on cross-border financial transactions.

### 5.3 Redistribution through subsidies and public services

Subsidies through the welfare state help to prevent poverty and reinforce equalization between groups by redistributing wealth from the haves to the have-nots when equalization through wages and tax is insufficient. This is particularly relevant for groups that have no labour market attachment and working people dependent on financial aid.

Universal, collectively financed welfare schemes that are not means-tested, and public services, including health and education, with small or no charges are pillars of the Norwegian the welfare state. This system design is most important to those that have the least but universal services ensure broad support for the social welfare system among the entire population. It is a fundamental value of the Norwegian social system that everyone, independent of economic standing and class background, has access to the same services and institutions. This strengthens trust and solidarity among the population and the effect is redistribution from the haves to the have-nots.

#### LO will:

- Work towards strengthening universal welfare schemes that are not-means-tested as pillars of the Norwegian the welfare state.
- Work towards health services, including dental health completely free of cost, or with small patient charges.
- Maintain full pay during sickness.

## 6. Safeguarding

To LO, it is a fundamental goal that as many members of society as possible are able to support themselves and their family through their own work. A living wage ensures personal freedom of choice and enables the participation of everyone in value creation and the funding of the collective welfare. A society based on paid work and private ownership must also ensure the livelihood of those who are unable to work. An important feature of the Norwegian model is that society steps in during unemployment, sickness and disability. This underpins the adaptability of business and industry and afford security to the individual.

Good public welfare services, solid public health policies, good learning environments, preventive activities and conducive youth and child policies foster free and secure persons, who, in turn, are more creative and productive. There is a close link between creating, sharing and protecting. Welfare services and schemes must cover everybody and people who for some reason or other are not working must be secured a decent life, independent of the duration of their dependency.

### 6.1 A strong welfare state

Norway needs a strong welfare state to ensure fair redistribution of income and wealth, and quality welfare services for the entire population. Public sector growth must be at least on a par with growth in the private sector. This will ensure the stability of public welfare. The public sector must be subject to political governance based on professionalism and confidence in employees. This will lead to better services than under the current market management principles of micromanagement and the ensuing fragmentation of responsibility.

**LO will:**

- Work towards a tax level and tax basis that is able to support a smoothly functioning welfare state.
- Ensure the financial basis of the welfare state through measures to fight undeclared work, labour market crime, tax evasion and corruption.
- Work towards at the implementation of a confidence reform in the public sector.

## **6.2 Social, not commercial services**

Market forces are an important tool for the production and exchange of goods and services. However, these forces also have important limitations. Public services and National Insurance schemes gradually evolved to provide better solutions, more security and more equality than the profit-oriented, private market insurance can afford.

Collective welfare schemes are challenged by rising private wealth, which allows many people to buy faster or better services in the private market than what the public sector is able to offer. This not only undermines the universality of the public schemes but also produces sharp competition for competent labour and is a threat to trade union rights and workers' pensions. Welfare schemes must be strengthened in line with other public services and society's prosperity. People's expectations of public services, including health services, increase proportionally with private prosperity. The quality of public services must be so high that there is no need to buy private services. LO will push for the specialist health services to come under stricter democratic governance and effective control by popularly elected bodies. LO is against privatizing and tendering public social services. Accounting principles designed for the private sector must not be applied to public administration.

**LO will:**

- Work towards welfare services financed by the public purse and under public ownership.
- Strengthen welfare schemes in correlation with increased prosperity to plug the demand for private solutions.
- Work towards removing the possibility of making profits on welfare services.

## **6.3 National Insurance benefits, pensions and financial assistance**

Paid work and a living wage are key to subsistence and self-realization. Nevertheless, most of us go through life phases in which we depend on public subsidies and services. These benefits must be designed to ensure adequate life-long incomes and smooth transitions between employment and National Insurance. Family allowances must continue to be a universal right.

In the National Insurance, Norway has a well-developed system for retirement and disability pensions, reinforced by service pensions and collectively agreed pensions schemes in the private sector (AFP). A broadly organized pensions system must safeguard people's right to change jobs with no pension loss, cost-effective management, and equal premiums and benefits independent of gender. People with disabilities shall be protected against longevity adjustments also after 2018. Child supplements need to be further developed and not reduced. Financial assistance is a supplement to the National Insurance benefits and must be means-tested and subject to individual consideration.

**LO will:**

- Work towards a publicly financed and governed pensions and a National Insurance system in which users have control over benefits and management through democratic bodies or collective bargaining.

- Work towards total pensions at 67 years of age providing an income of at least two-thirds of wages. Workers who are unable to stay on the job until pensionable age must have an effective possibility of early retirement.
- Push for national, recommended standards based on Consumption Research Norway's (SIFO) rates that ensure a decent and necessary subsistence.
- Push for persons with disabilities to be protected against longevity adjustments even after 2018. The ceiling on total disability benefits and the number of children that give rights to child supplements must be removed. Accumulation of rights must continue until 67 years of age.

## 6.4 Housing

The cost of entry into the housing market through the purchase of a freehold flat is too high, and a proactive housing policy is needed to ensure everyone equal rights to a roof over their heads and the security of a home. Rent-to own schemes must be used efficiently. Both the central and local governments must take greater responsibility for young people who have difficulties in gaining access to the housing market. Housing must be made less attractive as a speculative investment objective. The Norwegian State Housing Bank must provide reasonable and stable finance and more student dwellings should be erected.

### LO will:

- Strengthen local governments' capacity to build and operate non-commercial rental housing.
- Ensure access by all people to suitable housing.
- Secure the role of the Norwegian State Housing Bank as an important player in the implementation of housing policies and social housing.

## 6.5 Security in our daily lives

Security in respect of our lives, health and valuables is one of the girders of the democratic state governed by the rule of law, and decisive for maintaining the mutual trust that has been a salient feature of the Nordic model. This security is threatened by the risk or fear of war and belligerent behaviour, terrorism, crime and natural disasters. This necessitates developing a total preparedness that includes risk recognition, vulnerability analyses, and societal safety and civil protection, always balanced against the protection of democratic rights and the right to a private life.

Societal protection and emergency planning must improve through clear delimitations of responsibilities, and coordination and cooperation between public entities and other enterprises.

All children must have an effective right to secure and safe conditions during childhood and youth. Preventive child and youth work must be made a statutory public responsibility. The child welfare services are subordinate to local governments and need strengthening through national guidelines on staffing strength and systematic competency development.

The fear of becoming a victim of crime has in itself a restrictive effect on people's freedom. The goal of reducing crime to a minimum must be attained by comprehensive investment in the prosecution process, including crime prevention, investigation, judgment and the execution of the sentence. Effective police presence must increase in rural areas as well. LO does not support a general arming of officers.

The Norwegian Correctional Service needs strengthening in order to attain the goal of reduced recidivism rates. LO's goal of a society with high welfare levels and small social differences between people will help to reduce crime rates.



**LO will:**

- Strengthen emergency planning and coordination between public entities.
- Improve the standards of prisons, strengthen the content of the serving of a sentence in prisons and halfway houses, strengthen aftercare of delinquents and ensure broad, interdisciplinary competency among correctional officers.
- Strengthen coordination on local crime prevention, including activities to prevent radicalization and extremism.

## **6.6 Immigration, refugees and integration**

Immigration makes Norway a more diverse country and enriches our society. This requires a proactive integration policy and active work against racism, xenophobia and discrimination in the world of work and other areas of society.

People from minority backgrounds need protection against discriminating hiring practices. Language training, efficient recognition of foreign educations, investment in competency and proactive labour market policies are important elements in ensuring good integration and countering the growing trends of social dumping and wider social gaps. There is a particular need for actions to integrate immigrant women into the labour market. The au pair regime has evolved from a means to promote cultural exchange into a scheme for disguising import of low-income labour. LO accordingly believes the regime should be scrapped.

There are more than 60 million refugees and internally displaced people in the world. The Norwegian government must provide emergency assistance to people in need internationally and work towards better safety during their flight. Norway must adopt a decent asylum and refugee policy in line with advice from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and base decisions on unaccompanied minors' applications on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In principle, reception centres should be operated by a public entity or their operation be awarded through dedicated tendering among not-for-profit organizations.

**LO will:**

- Work towards granting work permits to known-identity asylum seekers having legal residence in Norway. This also applies to non-returnable asylum seekers whose applications have been definitely rejected, until they can be returned.
- Work towards making the introduction programme for recently arrived refugees more employment-oriented and for plans for employment-oriented activities and/or education to be set up for participants to at the very beginning of the programme.
- Help to ensure a comprehensive and consistent social effort throughout the asylum chain with a view to the best possible social inclusion of asylum seekers, both children and adults. The responsibility for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers should rest with the child protection authorities, and all work with children must comply with the Child Welfare Act.

# 7. Organising and mobilizing

LO's influence, and thus our ability to promote members' interests, depends on our strength in numbers and representativity. LO affiliates have members in all occupations and at all levels of the companies. The breadth and numbers of our membership determine our strength. We gain political influence by being part of the country's economic governance through coordinated wage formation



and thus contribute to policies that lay the foundation for growth, more balanced redistribution and reforms that underpin our collective welfare.

LO's role in shaping society rests on our ability to be a responsible trade union confederation that organizes and mobilises people on all parts of the Norwegian world of work. Workers that have no formal qualifications, skilled workers and workers with tertiary education all have their natural place in the LO community, as do people connected to the labour market in ways other than as traditional wage earners. LO aims to broaden our services to these groups and to further develop our work to promote the interests of self-employed members of our affiliates. LO's stated goal is to become Norway's biggest workers' organization in all industries and professions. This will demand recruiting more national unions into LO, and that affiliates attract more members, especially in industries and lines of business with low trade union density. The percentage of workers holding higher education degrees is on the rise and LO meets sharper competition from other confederations among these potential members. Our goal is to strengthen LO's position and influence in this group. LO shall be the preferred confederation even for highly educated workers and political and organizational efforts to give LO affiliates more visibility will be intensified.

### **7.1 Proactive stewards and local branches**

Healthy, well trained and competent stewards and proactive local branches at the workplace are the national unions' most important member benefits. Our affiliates translate collective agreements into realities on the shop floor; it is they who defend and promote individual members' interests towards employers and who create activity and enthusiasm at the workplace. In LO and affiliates, a central task is to enable stewards to handle these responsibilities in the best possible way, through information, training and practical support in their daily work. LO's local organizations play an important role, particularly in our political and trade union cooperation with the Labour Party and in coordinating national unions in the communities.

Learning and knowledge transfer takes place principally through joint training at the local and central levels. All training is based on the labour movement's ideology and history. The joint training council will facilitate binding cooperation between LO, Educational Association of Norway (AOF) and affiliates. The council will ensure optimum coordination of plans, marketing and the development of joint, cross-union courses, and guarantee the best possible effect of the organizations' economic and human resources.

#### **LO will:**

- Help to develop useful quality training schemes beyond the training offered by our affiliated national unions.
- Strengthen coordination between affiliates to prevent members leaking into other unions when changing jobs.
- Underline the value of collective agreements, proactive local branches and the LOfavør benefit programme as important membership benefits for existing and potential members.

### **7.2 Youth, pupils, apprentices and higher education students**

LO must be the organization of choice for all young people entering the labour market, and we must carry out actions to attract and train young people for elected positions in the trade union movement.

LO' Summer Patrol is pivotal in our work towards young workers. The Summer Patrol defends young workers' interests and highlights the importance of LO's work to secure a safe and healthy world of work.

Participation in the Summer Patrol provides future trade union representatives with unique opportunities for training and gaining knowledge. Affiliates have a particular responsibility for prioritizing resources and thus ensure broad and solid participation in the Summer Patrol.

Early awareness raising among pupils, apprentices and higher education students through LO's youth activities is instrumental for ensuring new members among tomorrow's workers. Visits to different educational institutions and schools are an important element of LO's youth activities as they are often the only encounter young people have with the trade union movement in the course of their education.

LO will coordinate efforts to attract higher education students to our national unions. LO Student Service will contribute to making LO and member unions more visible, and offer advice and guidance on the labour market, organizing and recruiting new members. This also includes ensuring that unionised higher education students who hold part-time jobs are cared for in their employment relationship. LO's work directed at higher education students will take place in many different arenas, particularly at schools and other places of study through the LO student- and pupil memberships.

Apprentices are the skilled workers of the future. There is a need to create awareness of the fact that apprentices are part of the ordinary world of work and need the protection and social fellowship that membership offers. In this Congress period, LO will in take the initiative to and assume a coordinating role in apprentice patrols across national union boundaries.

Joint youth training is decisive for recruiting new members and for training and developing future trade union representatives.

**LO will:**

- Further develop our training schemes for young members and stewards, in cooperation with affiliates.
- Carry out ambulatory information drives among pupils, higher education students and apprentices, and facilitate cooperation and joint activities for LO, affiliates and student organizations.
- Further develop and reinforce political and trade union cooperation with the Workers' Youth League (AUF), and join forces with relevant organizations to strengthen young people' input into the development of the labour movement's culture and policies.

### **7.3 Protection against discrimination**

Freedom from discrimination is a fundamental value to LO. In recent decades, the Norwegian society has made major progress towards acceptance of ethnic, religious and sexual minorities. Nevertheless, there is still systematic discrimination because of gender, ethnic, religious and cultural origins, functional ability, age, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression. The Sami population and national minorities suffer forms of discrimination that need to be treated seriously.

The trade union movement must lead the way in the fight against discrimination and hate speech in public debate and join together to further develop awareness-raising efforts against discrimination and racism. People from minority backgrounds must be given much more attention during hiring processes than at present. An important element to achieve this goal is to strengthen recruitment and training of people from different minority backgrounds. The trade union movement must work to gain knowledge about the conditions of LGBT people in the world of work and to put gay people on an equal footing with heterosexuals in connection to blood donation. All shop stewards and HES stewards should get better training in uncovering and handling discrimination.

**LO will:**

- Work towards stronger protection against discrimination in statutes and collective agreements, and strengthen the duty of action and reporting in legislation on discrimination.
- Facilitate the recruiting and training of members and stewards from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- Work towards making comprehensive anti-discrimination activities an integral part of stewards' training.

## 8. Harnessing globalization

Salient features of the Norwegian society are an open economy and a strong presence on the international arena through the United Nations and other international bodies that promote peace, security, human rights, the environment and development. We are a small country at the extreme North of the Earth; nevertheless, we are an important international player. This affords Norway great opportunities but also entails considerable responsibility and some challenges. The Norwegian and international trade union movement are challenged by globalisation, increased competition, cross border investments and changing labour markets. Armed conflicts, war and financial crises have caused vast job losses, social upheavals and heavy pressure on the trade union movement and acquired rights.

### 8.1 Democracy building

Trade union rights are fundamental human rights. The freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining and to collective action are essential to creating equitable and democratic societies. The trade union movement is spearheading the fight for better living and working conditions. The existence of peace, democratic rights, equitable distribution and strong trade unions is a precondition for economic and social development and for sustainable societies.

Strengthening trade union rights and defending workers' interests are at the core of LO's international work. In many countries, the trade union movement is an important corrective to governmental policies. Strong trade unions are central players in civil society, contributing to a more equitable distribution of social goods and benefits.

Migrant workers suffer difficult living conditions. Many are subjected to appalling working and housing conditions, racism and sexual harassment. Defending migrant workers' rights is an important task for the trade union movement.

**LO will:**

- Support the development of strong, representative and democratic trade union organisations internationally.
- Through our international work, we will support efforts to unionise workers in the informal sector.
- Play an active part in international trade union organisations of which LO is an affiliate.

### 8.2 Solidarity work

International trade union work is built on solidarity with workers worldwide. Gender equality, social justice, poverty reduction and the fight against human trafficking are recurring themes in LO's work, both towards Norwegian companies abroad, the ILO and in our joint activities with international

trade union organisations of which LO is an affiliate. The Norwegian People's Aid is LO's humanitarian solidarity organization. LO affiliates and local branches are important agents in the execution of this solidarity work.

**LO will:**

- Demand that the Norwegian government follow up on the ILO Strategy for Decent Work, and focus especially on gender equality and women's rights.
- Work towards incorporating the ILOs labour standards into regulations on international trade and into trade agreements entered into by Norway.
- Work towards making Norwegian companies operating abroad adhere to ethical guidelines and uphold human and trade union rights.

### **8.3 Defence and security policy**

LO will work towards a balanced, national defence based on domestic responsibilities. Important elements include general conscription and a home guard that covers the entire country. Norway must have a long-term defence and security policy that fosters stability and predictability. The use of Norwegian forces in international operations outside of NATO's territory must be justified under international law and take place under a UN mandate. The Norwegian military forces must contribute to the country's total defence and must have the necessary exercises, training and plans to jointly manage incidents and emergencies with other public entities and not-for-profit organizations

Norway needs to strengthen cooperation in the High North while also ensuring an active presence in order to control and exercise Norwegian sovereignty. New technologies, climate change and cross-border justice all require further developing our preparedness and security policies, and civilian-military cooperation. Security and emergency preparedness considerations mandate investing the Armed Forces with the necessary personell and internal competencies and these are thus not suited for privatization. The Armed Forces' legitimacy and credibility requires that they be under democratic control and governance. At the same time, ensuring that the Armed Forces can uphold the necessary materiel maintenance competency in Norway is imperative, both as an integrated part of the AF, and in the form of contracts with the domestic defence industry.

**LO will:**

- Continue the fight to institute an international ban on nuclear weapons and to eliminate all biological and chemical weapons.
- Work towards a predictable set of export regulations and towards the development of a norm binding on NATO member states on end user documentation in connection with weapon sales and acquisition.
- Work to ensure that the Armed Forces are guaranteed sufficient funding to reach the goal of making the defence budget approach 2 per cent of Norway's GDP.

### **8.4 International trade union cooperation**

LO will work towards closer cooperation between the Nordic countries on political and trade union matters. LO works with sister organisations and coordinates trade union efforts through the Council of Nordic Trade Unions. The Norwegian government must promote Norwegian and Nordic interests in Europe through an active intra-Nordic cooperation.

LO helps to shape trade union policies on Europe through our membership in the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). Being an active member of ETUC is LO's most important channel for influencing and determining developments in the fields of employment, social affairs, education and

gender parity in Europe and the EU. LO will prioritize our cooperation with the ETUC and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

Trade union and social rights are poorly developed in the newest EU member States and those that do exist are being attacked. LO will contribute to strengthening trade union rights and social dialogue in these countries through the Global Fund for Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue. The Fund should be extended in the upcoming negotiations on the EEA Grants.

**LO will:**

- Work towards upholding and further developing trade union rights in the EU and Europe.
- Strengthen our cooperation with Nordic and European trade union movements as a tool for promoting workers' interests in Europe, and be an active player in arenas that afford the unions influence on European issues.
- Contribute to improving trade union rights and social dialogue in the Eastern and Central European countries through the Global Fund for Decent Work and Tripartite Social Dialogue.



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