

Organisation leaders: “A lot is at stake in the EU elections – we must adhere to the climate goals”

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The leaders of the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), the Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (Akava), the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK), the Finnish Confederation of Professionals (STTK), Finnish Development NGOs (Fingo) and the Climate Leadership Coalition (CLC)) have published an open letter to appeal to the political leaders and citizens of the European Union and its Member States: let us not compromise on our ambitious climate policy; let us implement the green transition in a manner that promotes environmental responsibility, a sustainable economy and people’s well-being. The associations and confederations represented by the signatories have 15,000 member companies and two million employees.

Dear Political Leaders and Citizens,

Climate change is advancing at a very worrying rate. The global average temperature for the past 12 months was 1.61 °C above the pre-industrial average ([source](#)). Since 1980, Europe has been warming twice as fast as the global average, becoming the fastest-warming continent on Earth. This has been reflected in an increase in extreme weather events – storms, flooding, droughts and wildfires.

After the UN’s global stocktake in 2023, the parties to the climate negotiations are expected to step up their ambition level for climate action. The stocktake showed that emissions reductions were not at the scale required to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement, and the carbon budget to limit warming to 1.5 °C is rapidly diminishing ([source](#)).

Until now, the European Union has been the champion of climate action. It is important that it continues to hold this position. Should the EU’s attitude and goals towards ambitious climate policy be diluted, it is difficult to see a body that would take over and show sufficient leadership. This is why the forthcoming EU elections will have a crucial impact on issues such as climate change mitigation globally.

The progress of the green transition in Europe will be a key question in the EU elections. It has been argued that action for climate and nature should be cut down for the sake of the economy and existing jobs. We do not subscribe to this – the opposite is true. We are convinced that the green transition is an unprecedented opportunity to grow our economy – to develop new business, attract investment, create new sustainable jobs and, consequently, bring tax revenue to fund the services of the welfare society. The benefits of the transition have also been recognised by the EU’s competitors China and the United States, which are investing heavily in the development of low-carbon solutions.

In the context of increased international competition, the EU must sharpen its green growth strategy. It is important that the 2030 climate goals are effectively implemented and that a decision is soon made about the 2040 goal that is sufficient in terms of the Paris Agreement. To guarantee the political support required, the transition must be implemented in a regionally, economically and socially just manner. There must also be strong investment in competence development.

Political leaders and citizens of the European Union: the EU has many good reasons to maintain its leadership in climate action. We hope that each one of us works towards this goal to the best of our ability.

Kind regards,

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Eva Biaudet, Chair of the Board, Finnish Development NGOs (Fingo)

Jarkko Eloranta, President, Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK)

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