

This research explores how trade unions in 20 European countries can play a role in sustainability, guided by the question: Instead of focusing narrowly on wages and working conditions, in which ways can unions help drive the green transition while promoting social justice?



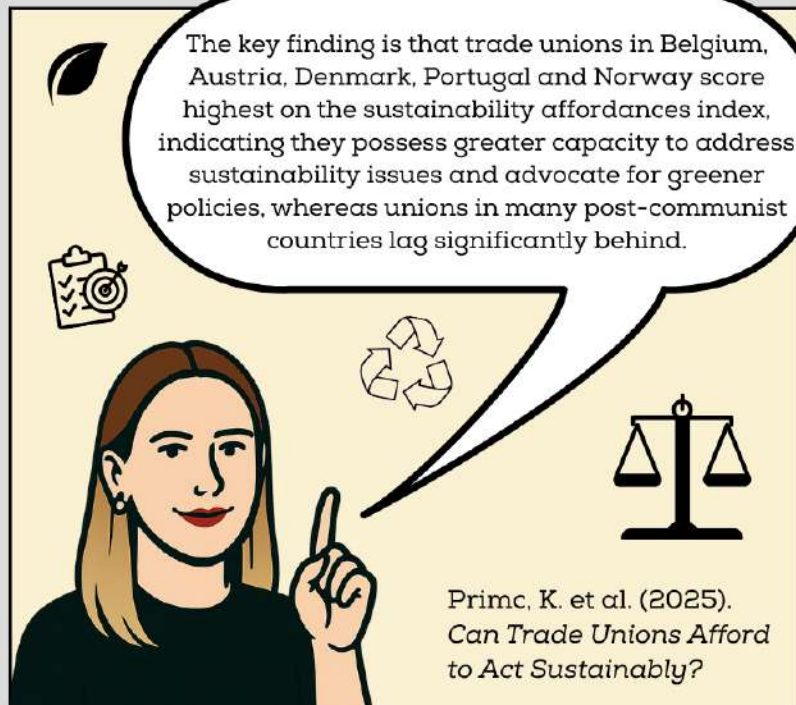
We constructed a composite index by merging data from the ICTWSS and ISSP databases on the institutional-economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability to encompass the factors ("affordances") that enable trade unions to engage with sustainability issues.

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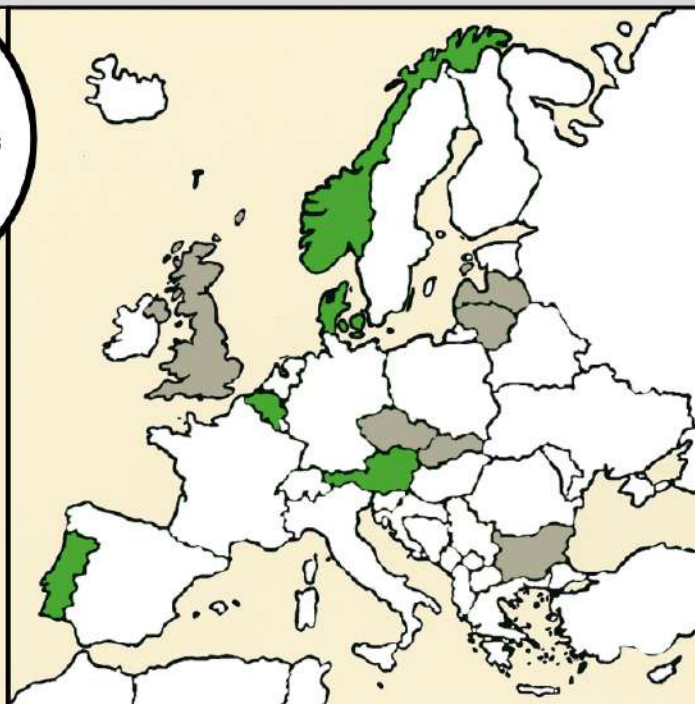
by scientist™



The key finding is that trade unions in Belgium, Austria, Denmark, Portugal and Norway score highest on the sustainability affordances index, indicating they possess greater capacity to address sustainability issues and advocate for greener policies, whereas unions in many post-communist countries lag significantly behind.



Primc, K. et al. (2025).
Can Trade Unions Afford to Act Sustainably?



 These results matter because they highlight where trade unions have the capacity to support a just transition, and where additional policy support or internal reforms are needed to support their role in shaping a fair and sustainable future for us all.  