

# Industrial relations for a green economy

Innovative bargaining processes for a sustainable growth and a quality employment



Project VS/2014/0405 co-founded

by

DGESAI - DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS and INCLUSION

**Case Germany:**  
**Climate Discourse North Rhine-Westphalia (*Klimadiskurs NRW*)**

# Industrial relations for a green economy

Innovative bargaining processes for a sustainable growth and a quality employment



Project VS/2014/0405 co-founded

by

DGESAI - DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS and INCLUSION

## PRESENTATION (IDENTITY CARD OF BEST PRACTICE)

### ▪ **Name of initiative/project/ intervention/agreement**

Climate Discourse North Rhine Westphalia (*Klimadiskurs NRW*) – a civil society approach for conflict resolution in a climate protection policy

### ▪ **Brief description**

Social innovation: Klimadiskurs NRW (KD) is an independent network of more than 60 players (local authorities, companies, trade union, environment protection organisations, scientific organisations, church organisations, individuals – no political parties, no federal state government organisations). KD wants to institutionalise the dialogue between relevant players in climate protection policy. It concentrates on conflict issues and tries to overcome the contradictions by engaging the involved parties in a dialogue.

The trade unions are members of the initiative; DGB is a member of the board of the association.

### ▪ **Geographic, territorial, sectorial localisation,**

Federal State (NRW). The approach is unique in Germany.

### ▪ **Period of activity**

KD was founded in Oct. 2012.

KD has a 3-year funding period by two foundations. This period has to be used to find enough members who collaborate and contribute to KD in order to establish a financial basis, so that the association can exist when the funding phases out.

### ▪ **Players / promoters**

#### ▪ **Players/ partners involved, their main functions**

Founding members of KD were environment protection organisations (*BUND NRW* [= friends of the earth], *NABU NRW*), a competence network of 120 municipalities involved in sustainability activities (*Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft Agenda 21*), a consumer organisation (*Verbraucherzentrale NRW*) and an institution of the protestant church (*Institut Kirche und Gesellschaft*).

In January 2014, DGB NRW became a member of KD. In the same month the meeting of members elected the DGB representative to the board of the association.

In 2010, DGB NRW and NABU NRW presented a common declaration concerning a new ecological industrial policy, which was a unique activity at that time (unique, because in the “classical” industrial location of NRW, trade unions and environment protection organisations seemed to be antagonists).

# Industrial relations for a green economy

Innovative bargaining processes for a sustainable growth and a quality employment



Project VS/2014/0405 co-founded

by

DGESAI - DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS and INCLUSION

In 2012, DGB, the German League for Nature, Animal Protection and Environment (DNR) and initiatives from the protestant church arranged a tremendous “transformation congress” with more than 1.500 participants on a national level. This congress was helpful in making good progress in civil society collaboration.

The vision of KD:

- Greater efforts in climate protection
- Intelligent solutions regarding climate change adaptation
- Sustainable energy supply with due regard to climate protection, securing bio-diversity and social compatibility
- Responsible use of natural resources

The aims of KD:

- Specific and constructive discussions among conflicting parties
- Institutionalisation of the dialogue
- Overcoming opposed interests and resume talks regarding specific topics of climate protection (such as energy, heat, mobility, building)
- Create a network of all relevant players within NRW and initiating new cooperation activities
- Awareness-raising with regard to climate protection and the necessary adjustment processes

Tasks:

- Independent support of the common project “climate protection” in NRW
- Identifying and addressing (conflicting) key issues of climate protection
- Initiation of new cooperation and collaborations
- Specific PR-activities for media, decision makers and the general public

Service portfolio:

- Different event formats with changing key subjects
- One flagship conference every year (2014: key speaker EU commissioner for energy, G. Oettinger)
- Proactive knowledge transfer between economy, politics and civil society
- Information supply, like best practices and new approaches referring to the facilitation of climate protection

Target groups of KD:

- Responsible players that wish to discuss and advance climate protection within NRW beyond their own immediate sphere of activity.
- Stakeholders from e.g.
  - companies
  - trade unions
  - local authorities
  - NGOs
  - scientific institutions

# Industrial relations for a green economy

Innovative bargaining processes for a sustainable growth and a quality employment



Project VS/2014/0405 co-founded

by

DGESAI - DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS and INCLUSION

-- Churches

- **Types of Beneficiaries (direct/indirect):**

KD is a service to the public

- **Human resources involved in the bargaining process and their competencies**

- No bargaining
- The association's office: 1 manager, 2 agents
- A large amount of voluntary work by the members (networking, convincing players to collaborate, political support etc.)

- **Indicators for monitoring and evaluating activities**

- Regular monitoring and control of activities of KD

**DESCRIPTION (please consider it a tool to describe the case; if it is impossible to follow exactly, just leave the fields blank)**

- **Starting point of the initiative/project/intervention as related to the territorial context (societal, economic, political)**

See description of the case "Klimaschutzplan NRW"

- **Description of the socio-economic, territorial, corporate context in which the initiative is based.**

See description of the case "Klimaschutzplan NRW"

- **Is it possible to describe the "philosophy" inspiring the best practice?**

No single player is able to deal with climate change. Climate protection is a joint project of the economy, politics and civil society. Problems and contradictions definitely exist but there is also room for manoeuvre for (political) action. The instrument to identify this room for manoeuvre is dialogue. The basis of dialogue is trust.

- **What problems/ general needs are the interventions trying to address? What specific ones are there?**

Some examples of KD-events:

- Financing a climate-friendly public transport system
- The role of brown coal in energy transition
- Acceptance of problems in renewable energy projects (wind energy plants, pumped storage hydro power et al.)
- Effective climate policy from Brussels to Düsseldorf (governance of climate policy)
- The new energy market design

- **What goals/ends does the intervention try to achieve? What bargaining dynamic had been in place?**

# Industrial relations for a green economy

Innovative bargaining processes for a sustainable growth and a quality employment



Project VS/2014/0405 co-founded

by

DGESAI - DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS and INCLUSION

see “aims of KD”

▪ **What activities and instruments does the intervention operate through?**

see “services of KD”

▪ **How actions can increase knowledge and support overcoming specific problems**

- Exchanging controversial perspectives and arguments, starting new collaborations
- Less ideology, more concrete problem solving

▪ **What are the most innovative aspects of the initiatives concerning the territorial context? And why ?**

Innovative:

- Cooperation of players - who are not natural born partners – in the difficult policy field of climate policy.

Cultural dimension:

- Expanding the culture of social partnership (typical for NRW, but traditionally mainly restricted to the production sector)
- New dimension of structural change: understanding climate change as the next big wave, like the economic structural change from the old industries of coal and steel in the 1960s to the service economy in the 1970/80s and the so-called knowledge economy in 2000ff.).

▪ **What are the “internal quality factors” of the initiatives? (sustainability, internal efficiency, effectiveness?)**

- Please ask for an evaluation of the adequacy of the initiative in the territorial /social context.

▪ **Is it possible to transfer the initiative to another context?**

▪ **Is the initiative reproducible in different contexts?**

▪ **Do joint monitoring instruments also involve the contemplated stakeholders?**

▪ **Please point out communication instruments (website, documents, booklets) concerned with the initiative.**

[www.klimadiskurs-nrw.de](http://www.klimadiskurs-nrw.de)

Documents: on the website

▪ **Please write down your final considerations?**

KD has the potential of becoming a dialogue platform for relevant players in NRW: how can we shape a sustainable society? The transition process will create a lot of target conflicts and contradictions of interests. It will be a key question as to whether we create instruments to overcome these conflicts or whether we will fight against each other – creating a few winners and probably a large number of losers.